



Performance Self-Assessment Report 2024/25

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

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Foreword

Welcome to our Performance Self-Assessment Report for 2024/25.

As a council, it is our duty to work in better ways to improve the quality of life and environment of our ratepayers and communities, and we have a framework in place to help us achieve this.

This framework aligns the priorities of the Community Plan for Mid and East Antrim with our own strategic and operational plans.

As I look back on the past year, I am incredibly proud of the collective efforts made by our officers and our partners. While we may not have achieved everything we set out to, I am confident that you can see the positive impact we have had right across the borough.

As we move into another year, addressing the needs of Mid and East Antrim remains our top priority, and we are committed to working with our citizens and other stakeholders to ensure a prosperous and sustainable borough for the generations to come.

Valerie Watts

Interim Chief Executive

Part 1: Duty to Improve

Duty to Improve:

- Under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, councils have a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions.
- 'Improvement' means an activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities. It is more than gains in service outputs, efficiencies, or in internal effectiveness.
- We must set Improvement Objectives and have arrangements in place to achieve them. A Performance Improvement Plan, setting out these objectives, must be published by 30 June each year.
- The objectives should bring about improvement in at least one of the following areas:
 - Strategic effectiveness
 - Service quality
 - Service availability
 - Fairness
 - Sustainability
 - Efficiency
 - Innovation

- Each year, we must also publish an assessment of our performance in:
 - Discharging our duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement, and
 - Meeting our self-imposed performance indicators, improvement objectives, and statutory performance indicators applicable to that year.

- The publication must include an assessment of our performance in exercising our functions during a financial year compared with:
 - Previous financial years, and
 - So far as is reasonably practicable, our performance during that year and the previous financial years of other councils.

- The assessment must be published on our website by 30 September each year.

Arrangements to Secure Continuous Improvement

- Our arrangements to secure continuous improvement are set out in our Performance Management Framework. This framework drives performance at all levels within the organisation by linking our corporate strategies, aims and objectives to each employee's individual work plan. These arrangements are audited by the Northern Ireland Audit Office every year.

Table: Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Performance Management Framework

<p>Community Plan</p> <p>“Putting People First”</p> <p>(2017-2032)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This 15-year plan sets the vision for Mid and East Antrim as “a strong, vibrant, safe and inclusive community, where people work together to improve the quality of life for all”. • It was developed by partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, and is led by Council. • For more information, visit: www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/resident/community-planning/putting-people-first
<p>Corporate Plan</p> <p>(2024-2028)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is Council’s 4-year strategic plan. • It adopts the same vision as the Community Plan and delivers our ambitions through the 4 pillars of People, Place, Planet and Performance. • For more information, visit: www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/corporateplan
<p>Performance Improvement Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is Council’s annual improvement plan. • It sets out our Improvement Objectives and aligns with the aims of the Community Plan and Corporate Plan. • For more information, visit: www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/performance
<p>Business Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This annual plan is developed by each of our service areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sets the priorities and targets for the year ahead, and links to the Corporate Plan and Performance Improvement Plan.
Employee Personal Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This annual plan links our strategic objectives to each employee's individual work plan. It also identifies learning and development needs.

Identifying Areas for Improvement

What we are responsible for:

- Environmental Health, Animal Welfare and Dog Control
- Tourism, Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Bin Collection and Recycling
- Planning and Building Control
- Parks, Cemeteries and Open Spaces
- Community Planning and Development
- Public Conveniences
- Council-operated off-street car parks
- Economic Development
- Leisure, Recreation and Sport
- Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships
- Licensing

What we are not responsible for:

- Roads, potholes, footpaths, streetlights, bridges and on-street parking:
 - Contact: Department for Infrastructure
 - Website: www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk
- Water and sewage, including septic tank clearance:
 - Contact: Northern Ireland Water
 - Website: www.niwater.com
- Electricity:
 - Contact: Northern Ireland Electricity
 - Website: www.nie.co.uk
- On-Street Parking Tickets (Penalty Charge Notices):
 - Contact: Parking Enforcement Processing Unit
 - Website: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/parking-tickets-penalty-charge-
notices](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/parking-tickets-penalty-charge-
notices)
- Housing:
 - Contact: Housing Executive
 - Website: www.nihe.gov.uk
- Flooding:
 - Contact: Flooding Incident Line
 - Telephone: 0300 200 0100 (24-hour)

What is Improvement:

- Improvement means focusing on the issues that are important to our citizens and communities, helping us achieve our vision of improving the quality of life for all.
- Self-Imposed Indicators and Standards
 - This is how we, as a council, have decided to measure our own performance. These indicators are set at a strategic level within our Corporate Plan and at an operational level within our annual business plans.
 - Our Corporate Plan is based on the priorities of the Community Plan for Mid and East Antrim, the Programme for Government, regional statistics, our own surveys, strategies and policies, and feedback from our staff and customers.
- Improvement Objectives
 - Our Improvement Objectives are based on local needs and our ability to meet those needs.
 - We use a range of information to inform the development of our objectives. This includes feedback from the general public and staff, regional statistics, a review of legislation and statutory guidance, and the priorities set out in the Programme for Government, Community Plan and our own Corporate Plan. We also look back on our

performance during previous years, for example, Performance Self-Assessment Reports and audit results.

- Benchmarking
 - We carry out a wide range of benchmarking activities and best practice learning throughout the year.
 - The Department for Communities sets statutory indicators in the areas of Planning, Economic Development and Waste. We publish our results every three months and can compare our performance with other local councils.
 - We also benchmark levels of absenteeism, invoice processing times and our general day-to-day performance.
- Performance Audits
 - Our arrangements to secure continuous improvement are subject to an audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office each year, in accordance with section 93 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice for local government bodies. These audits help us to identify areas for improvement.
 - The latest audit took place in autumn 2024. The Local Government Auditor noted the Council had discharged its performance improvement and reporting duties and had acted in accordance with the guidance. They found the Council is likely to discharge its duties during 2024/25 and had demonstrated a track record of improvement. No issues were

identified requiring a formal recommendation under the Act, and there were no proposals for improvement (which represent good practice).

- One prior year proposal for improvement remains active “The Council should continue to work with other councils and the Department for Communities to agree a suite of self-imposed indicators and standards that would allow for meaningful comparisons to be made and published”. To progress this proposal, we continue to participate in the Local Government Performance Improvement Working Group, whose membership includes the Department for Communities, the Northern Ireland Audit Office and each of the 11 Northern Ireland councils. A sub-group has been formed to look specifically at benchmarking.

Monitoring, Reporting and Governance

- Our monitoring, reporting and governance arrangements are designed to ensure proper oversight, accountability and transparency.
- The Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee oversees the Council’s performance improvement responsibilities. The role of the committee is to:
 - Review corporate performance and make recommendations for course correction when targets are not met, and
 - Consider opportunities for innovation and best practice to ensure quality service delivery and continuous improvement.

Table: Performance Management Framework Reporting Arrangements

Community Plan “Putting People First” (2017-2032)	Reported to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Panel every quarter, • The Strategic Alliance every 6 months, and • The Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee as appropriate.
Corporate Plan (2024-2028)	Reported to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senior Management Team and Full Council every 6 months.
The Performance Improvement Plan	Reported to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senior Management Team and the Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee every quarter.
Business Plans	Reported to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assigned Director every quarter.
Performance Self-Assessment Report	Reported to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senior Management Team and Full Council every year.

Part 2: Performance Assessment

This section discusses our performance in meeting our Self-Imposed Performance Indicators, Improvement Objectives and Statutory Performance Indicators during 2024/25.

Self-Imposed Indicators and Standards

- Our self-imposed indicators and standards are set out within our Corporate Plan and are included within our annual business plans.
- Our Corporate Plan helps us achieve our vision through the 4 pillars of People, Place, Planet and Performance. Of 61 indicators used to track progress:
 - 74% were achieved or on track (45 of 61)
 - 15% were delayed but progressing (9 of 61)
 - 11% were not achieved (7 of 61)
- Key achievements include:
 - £7million was invested in playparks, MUGAs, community centres and more.
 - Over 4,700 people engaged in enterprise and employability activities.
 - Almost 6,600 people took part in 144 outdoor recreation activities.
 - Over 97,000 visitors were welcomed at our strategic visitor attractions.
 - 50 town centre events and activities were held.

- 32,655 meals were collected through Community Fridges.
 - 300 museum and heritage events and 80 community arts events were held.
 - We received the NILGA “Local Government Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award” for our Autism-Friendly Borough initiative.
 - Year 2 of our Equality and Disability Action Plans were delivered.
 - “Fields Good”, Northern Ireland’s first regenerative agriculture festival, was held.
- Biodiversity Spotlight:
 - We are proud to be championing biodiversity across the borough, restoring habitats, empowering communities and inspiring future generations. From town woodlands to family events, our efforts are helping ecosystems recover and flourish through practical conservation and local collaboration. Our communities are at the heart of our work.
 - In Ballymena, the Friends of ECOS have long led the way in habitat management and citizen science. From creating a new hazel walk to restoring wildflower meadows, their work supports pollinators and other species. This year alone, the group have planted almost 6,000 trees to help address ecological imbalances, and their butterfly monitoring partnership with Butterfly Conservation NI is a model of local environmental action.
 - In Carrickfergus, the Friends of Bashfordland Wood are restoring balance in woodland and meadow areas. Traditional techniques like

tree thinning and glade creation are bringing light and life back into the woodlands, while the removal of invasive species, such as bamboo and salmonberry, is encouraging the return of native flora and fauna. To inspire and educate the next generation, our Biodiversity University continues to grow. Delivered in August each year across Larne, Carrickfergus and Ballymena, the programme reaches over 250 families. Through fun hands-on activities and wildlife experiences, children and parents are building lasting connections with nature and developing the skills to care for it.

- Our most recent initiative in Larne Town Park is beginning to take shape as the pilot site for our new Nature Recovery Plan. Here, we're combining habitat restoration with community action. Volunteers and local schools have created a thriving community orchard and introduced new wildflower planting, while grassland areas are left uncut in summer for the benefit of pollinators and small wildlife. Woodland edges are being carefully restored by gradually removing invasive species and the planting of native trees will support long-term ecological health. Plans are underway to develop a looped nature trail, making the park even more accessible for people to experience nature up close. When the pilot is complete, the Nature Recovery Plan will go to public consultation, ensuring our long-term vision for biodiversity is shaped by those who use and care for these spaces most.

Further details on each of our Corporate Plan pillars is discussed on the following pages.

People

Our ambition:

- By 2028, Mid and East Antrim will be a safe, inclusive and welcoming borough, where diversity and cultural differences are celebrated, and communities live in peace. Our people will have equity of opportunity and support to achieve their full potential in a professional and personal capacity. Individuals and communities will be empowered to be independent and self-sustaining, enabling us to concentrate our efforts on those who need it most.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work in partnership, with employers and stakeholders, to support people seeking employment, provide upskilling support, improve access to the labour market for people with disabilities and promote skills pathways.
- Promote the benefits of offering apprenticeships and work experience opportunities to enhance skills development and bridge the gap between education and employment.
- Support and deliver opportunities for our citizens to improve their physical, mental and emotional health.
- Explore ways to help vulnerable and marginalised individuals feel welcomed and supported in their local communities, removing feelings of isolation or exclusion.

- Lead by example to improve equality, accessibility and inclusion across the borough by embedding it into everything we do.
- Work alongside partners to encourage good relations, enhance community pride and reinforce a strong sense of belonging in our communities.
- Strengthen community safety and boost public confidence by forging collaborative partnerships that focus on proactive and comprehensive crime prevention.

Under this pillar:

- 93% of indicators were achieved or on track (13 of 14), and
- 7% were not achieved (1 of 14).

What you see:

Measure	Deliver activities and programmes through the Mid and East Antrim Labour Market Partnership.
Status: Achieved	A total of 365 participants took part in a wide range of employment and skills academies, including programmes in Cleantech, Hydrogen, Welding, Childcare, Phlebotomy, Classroom Assistant, Administration and Enterprise, resulting in 377 qualifications. Despite a late start due to delayed funding, 83 participants gained employment by the end of March 2025 with a further 36 gaining employment from April to June 2025.

Measure	Deliver the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Intervention Programme by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	The programme ran between April and September, and included a range of activities to raise awareness of STEM subjects and career opportunities. Offered free of charge, 8 schools participated, with 454 students attending in-school workshops and 326 participating in 2 full-day events. A Teacher Insight Day and a celebration event were also held.

Measure	Deliver activities to promote and secure apprenticeship and work placement opportunities across the borough by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	<p>A total of 1,035 individuals engaged in Northern Ireland Apprenticeship Week activities in February and the Apprenticeship E-Hub. Apprenticeship Week included 400 employer visits to schools, 40 school visits to employers and 80 creative industries school takeovers. It also featured 2 key events, the Northern Regional College's Higher Level Apprenticeship event with 228 attendees and a construction sector takeover event with 66 participants.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship E-Hub continues to grow, with 199 applications submitted, 16 companies registered, and 6 apprenticeships commenced. In total, 215 individuals and businesses have actively engaged through the platform.</p>

	<p>Across all programmes, 41 apprenticeship and placement opportunities were secured, 19 through the Work Connections Programme and 6 via the E-Hub. The newly launched Placement Insights Programme also supported 16 participants in its first cohort, offering hands-on industry experience to boost employability and career readiness.</p>
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Measure	Deliver 15 internal work placement opportunities by 31 March 2025.
Status: Not Achieved	<p>We provided 9 placements across our various departments, including Climate Change and Sustainability, Tourism, Arts and Culture, and Parks and Open Spaces.</p> <p>We are developing a Work Placement policy to focus on actively promoting placement opportunities and strengthen collaboration with educational institutions.</p>

Measure	Deliver the MEActive programme.
Status: Achieved	<p>Over 10,300 people participated across 1,400 MEActive sessions throughout the year. Over half were female and a third had a disability or lifelong illness. A range of activities were delivered, including AquaFit, Pilates, Danderball, Dodgeball, Men's Over 50's Circuits, Pickleball and Racket Club, catering to all ages and abilities.</p>

Measure	Deliver the GP Referrals scheme.
Status: Achieved	The Physical Activity Referral Scheme received 282 GP referrals across the year. Of 110 people enrolled, 53 successfully completed the full 12-week programme and are now paying a reduced gym membership fee of £15 per month.

Measure	Deliver the Veterans programme by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	The Veterans Programme delivered a successful year of activity, with 5 key events focused on honouring and connecting local veterans. Highlights included visits to Stormont and the RUC GC Memorial Garden, a historical talk with live music in Ballymena, and group visits to the Royal Ulster Rifles Museum, the Museum of Orange Heritage and Drumalis House in Larne. Events were well attended, with strong engagement, positive feedback and growing interest, prompting additional activities to meet demand and encouraging new participants to join the programme.

Measure	Deliver actions through the Poverty Action Group.
Status: Achieved	The Poverty Action Group has continued to support low-income families and individuals across the borough through financial advice, food distribution, essential resources and wellbeing programmes. With group support, we also provided vital assistance ahead of the new academic year through the borough-wide School Uniform Scheme.

	<p>The group did not formally meet during the year, however, members remained active in addressing local needs. To improve coordination, the Council will take on facilitation and assign a dedicated staff resource to resume regular meetings, ensuring more effective partnership working and ongoing support for vulnerable citizens.</p>
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Measure	Deliver programmes through the Loneliness Network.
Status: Achieved	<p>The Mid and East Antrim Loneliness Network is dedicated to combating loneliness and fostering community connections across the borough.</p> <p>A range of initiatives were delivered throughout the year, including Chatty Benches, Chatty Cafés, 17 Loneliness Champions, Kindness Post-Boxes, a Connected Walk and a Christmas Event.</p>

Measure	Deliver Age-Friendly actions across the borough.
Status: Achieved	<p>The launch of the Age-Friendly Strategy and Action Plan (2024–2027) in September marked a key milestone in our commitment to supporting older people.</p> <p>A series of events and workshops highlighted available services, resulting in several onward referrals. Our new Age-Friendly information booklet also prompted a number of direct support requests. Agewell’s reflective tool ‘See Things from My Age’ was</p>

	presented at a meeting of the Age-Friendly Alliance, alongside health and wellbeing initiatives on energy efficiency and home accident prevention. In partnership with Agewell and funded by the Arts Council NI, our Arts team also delivered the Rural Engagement Arts Programme and the Arts and Older People Programme, engaging over 500 older people through drama, storytelling and creative workshops.
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Measure	Progress internal Autism-Friendly actions.
Status: Achieved	<p>Over the year, we've made strong progress in making our services and spaces more accessible and welcoming for autistic people.</p> <p>Autism-Friendly Action Plans are being implemented across 4 key cultural venues, including The Braid Museum and Arts Centre, Larne Arts Centre, Carrickfergus Museum and Andrew Jackson Cottage. Sensory spaces, accessible signage and pre-visit guides are being introduced, with the aim of achieving the Autism NI Impact Award by the end of the year.</p> <p>To strengthen our support network, we trained and accredited 4 additional Autism Champions, bringing the total to 17 champions across our parks, leisure, arts and museum services. We also developed and launched an Autism-Awareness Communications Plan, which includes the promotion of Quiet Hours in our parks and new</p>

	<p>resources for Autism Acceptance Month, such as an Employability Guide and Training Model developed in partnership with the Northern Area Autism Forum.</p> <p>The Council received the Local Government Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award at the 2025 Northern Ireland Local Government Association Awards, in recognition for this initiative.</p>
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Measure	Deliver actions under the Equality and Disability Action Plans.
Status: On track	<p>Significant progress has been made in delivering our Equality and Disability Action Plans.</p> <p>Some key achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability swimming lessons in each of our leisure centres. • Inclusive activities during 'Love Parks Week'. • Engagement of pupils with special educational needs in tree planting activities. • PAN Disability clubs in each of our leisure centres. • Graduate Build programme in partnership with Disability Action. • Rollout of our Autism-Friendly Borough initiative. <p>Our internal Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network plays a key role in this work, meeting quarterly to monitor progress, provide feedback and share best practices across departments. Newly established and</p>

	dedicated roles, including an Inclusion and Equality Manager and a Consultation and Engagement Officer, will strengthen our capacity to deliver on these commitments.
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Measure	Deliver programmes within the Good Relations Action Plan.
Status: Achieved	<p>Due to reduced funding, the Good Relations Action Plan was streamlined to the following programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating Culture Safely: 9 cultural beacons were distributed across the borough, supporting safe and respectful celebration of local traditions. • Integrate: Following a procurement process, the Inter-Ethnic Forum (Mid and East Antrim) was appointed to deliver this programme, promoting inclusion and engagement with diverse communities. • Good Relations Audit and Strategy: A contract has been awarded to carry out a borough-wide consultation to inform a new strategy. <p>We were pleased to participate in Good Relations Week in September 2024, joining local groups and organisations to celebrate the theme 'OpportUNiTY'. The week featured workshops, theatre, talks, exhibitions and performances, showcasing the rich diversity and shared values within our community.</p>

Measure	Deliver actions under the Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) Action Plan.
Status: Achieved	<p>The partnership has been reconstituted with new members, supported by induction and training, and 3 working groups have been established to focus on key priorities including anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol, and domestic and sexual violence. Formal meetings were held quarterly, and Community Safety Wardens played an active role in engaging with local communities.</p> <p>We continued to support the Inter-Ethnic Forum, funded bilingual services, and delivered successful initiatives such as the Four Tier Home Security scheme and Small Grant Funding for local safety projects.</p>

Place

Our ambition:

- By 2028, Mid and East Antrim will be widely recognised as an ideal place to live, visit, work and do business. We will have vibrant, clean, and harmonious shared spaces, designed to showcase our natural and built heritage and assets. Our tourism offering will be filled with diversity and richness of culture, history and heritage, attracting visitors on a global scale. Businesses, new and existing, will have the required support to grow and prosper, leading to an economically innovative and sustainable borough, offering stable employment, inclusive growth and an ideal place to invest.

To achieve this, we will:

- Support the development of a sustainable, dynamic and prosperous local economy that helps businesses to grow, and promote the borough as an ideal place to do business for new and existing companies.
- Help drive sustainable economic growth by promoting the borough as a leading visitor and cultural destination, utilising our natural and built heritage and assets.
- Support our towns and villages to help regenerate and stimulate economic activity, while protecting and conserving our natural and historic landscape.

- Enhance and expand our amenities, parks, open spaces and built heritage, making sure they meet the needs of all, while encouraging their respectful and mindful use.
- Conduct Council business in a way that encourages economic prosperity within the borough.

Under this pillar:

- 72% of indicators were achieved or on track (13 of 18),
- 17% were delayed but progressing (3 of 18), and
- 11% were not achieved (2 of 18).

What you see:

Measure	Progress the i4C Innovation and Cleantech Centre and the HyTech Centre by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	<p>We have made strong progress in both projects. A design team has been appointed for the i4C Innovation and Cleantech Centre and value engineering is underway to ensure cost-effective delivery. Elected Members have also approved the appointment of an operator.</p> <p>The final Outline Business Case For the HyTech Centre was submitted to Invest NI in February and is under appraisal. A funding</p>

	decision is expected in October. As part of this project, we continue to lead 3 local hydrogen testbed trials in partnership with industry and local universities.
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Measure	Deliver the Go Succeed programme.
Status:	Across the year, 325 participants were supported through Go
Achieved	Succeed.

Measure	Deliver 16 civic events by 31 March 2025.
Status:	A total of 34 events were delivered, including annual commemorations
Achieved	such as the Knockagh Somme, Merchant Navy Day, Princess Victoria Memorial and Emergency Services Day, alongside special events marking the Normandy anniversary and the unveiling of 3 UDR Greenfinch memorials. Initiatives such as Democracy Week engaged over 1,800 participants, particularly from schools, while both Irish Language Week and Ulster Scots Language Week saw increased attendance compared to previous years, with total participation estimated at over 6,000 people.

Measure	Welcome at least 35,000 people to Council and partner events in person by 31 March 2025.
Status:	Following a review of the events programme, the original schedule was streamlined to focus on delivering the most impactful and high-

Not Achieved	quality experiences. As a result, some planned events did not proceed, which reduced overall attendance figures. A total of 27,250 attendees were recorded for the year. The events that were delivered were engaging, accessible, and aligned with community needs and Council's strategic priorities.
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Measure	Launch the Neighbourhood Tourism Scheme by 31 October 2024.
Status: Achieved	The Neighbourhood Tourism Scheme was successfully launched, enhancing visitor experiences in Gracehill, Cullybackey, Broughshane, Carnlough and Whitehead through branded visitor information stands, digital marketing materials and interactive iPads.

Measure	Welcome at least 90,000 visitors to our strategic tourist attractions (Carrickfergus Castle, The Gobbins, US Rangers Museum, Andrew Jackson Cottage and Arthur Cottage) by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	We welcomed 97,310 visitors across the year.

Measure	Develop a regeneration strategy, in conjunction with the Larne Business Forum and the Larne Community Wealth Building Hub by 31 March 2025.
Status: On track	Due to increasing vacancy levels and pressing regeneration needs, Larne was selected as a pilot area in our 2024 borough-wide

Dereliction Strategy. Strong progress has been made in shaping focused regeneration in collaboration with the Larne Business Forum and Larne Community Wealth Building Hub. A strategic regeneration report identified several key challenges, including economic underperformance, high levels of dereliction, low business confidence and wider community wellbeing concerns.

We are in the final stages of designing a package of regeneration interventions that align with local priorities and support a shared vision of inclusive and sustainable renewal for Larne. While further feasibility work, funding identification and community consultation are still required, we are actively engaging with property owners to assess interest in a proposed grant scheme aimed at tackling dereliction and unlocking redevelopment opportunities.

Measure	Deliver the Town Centre Revitalisation Scheme by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	<p>A range of projects have been implemented to enhance public spaces, support local businesses and encourage increased footfall.</p> <p>Activities include vibrant street art in Ballymena and Larne, new feature lighting and festive decorations, and over £700,000 in external funding to support revitalisation initiatives, including shop front grants, seasonal lighting and the development of a pop-up park in Larne.</p>

Measure	Maintain or exceed a score of 66% on the Street Cleansing Index as part of Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	This index assesses the effectiveness of street cleaning efforts by measuring various aspects of urban and rural environments such as the presence of litter, graffiti and general maintenance conditions. The aim is to ensure public spaces are kept clean and welcoming. Our index score is 70%.

Measure	Completion of phase 1 of the Cullybackey to Galgorm Greenway by 30 September 2025.
Status: Delayed but progressing	The design consultants were appointed in June 2024 and, following necessary revisions to the proposed route, the Board approved the outline designs in November. The planning application was submitted in June 2025, and while a phased approach to delivery has been agreed, completion dates are yet to be confirmed.

Measure	Development of Carnfunnock Country Park for completion by 31 March 2026.
Status: Delayed but progressing	The public consultation is complete, and planning approval is secured. A budget shortfall identified during the procurement process necessitated a detailed review of the project. Following successful value engineering and budget re-profiling, procurement is now complete, with work commencing during the summer. This ambitious project will see the creation of a state-of-the-art visitor centre, a fully

	inclusive adventure play park, new amenity facilities for caravan park visitors and a bike park, among other improvements. The delivery timescale has extended to 31 March 2027.
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Measure	Begin the process of developing a Green Spaces Strategy for formal launch in 2026/27.
Status: Delayed but progressing	Despite initial planning and consultation activities having taken place, it has been agreed the Green Spaces Strategy will be included within a broader Parks and Open Spaces Strategy scheduled for completion by March 2026.

Measure	Ensure at least 50% of suppliers or performers, for each Council ran event, are from the borough.
Status: Achieved	71% of performers at our events were from the local area.

Measure	Ensure that a minimum of 60% of payments to suppliers are made within 10 working days.
Status: Achieved	76% of payments to suppliers were made within 10 working days. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Measure	Ensure that a minimum of 80% of payments to suppliers are made within 30 calendar days.
Status: Achieved	94% of payments to suppliers were made within 30 calendar days. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Measure	Major planning applications processed within an average of 30 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status: Not Achieved	Between April 2024 and March 2025, the average (median) processing time was 45.2 weeks. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Measure	Local planning applications processed within an average of 15 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Between April 2024 and March 2025, the average (median) processing time was 5.8 weeks. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Measure	Ensure at least 70% of enforcement cases are concluded within 39 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Between April 2024 and March 2025, 81.3% of cases were concluded within 39 weeks. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Planet

Our ambition:

- By 2028, Mid and East Antrim will be at the forefront of balancing progression with sustainability. We will be an emerging NI hub for innovation, environmental and cleantech skills training, and green economic growth. Our commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 will have set a standard for excellence across the region. Our dedication to safeguarding our natural and built heritage and preserving the environment through climate change mitigation and adaptation will ensure a thriving and resilient future for generations to come.

To achieve this, we will:

- Empower, educate and work in partnership with our citizens, communities and businesses to progress the borough towards net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- Support local communities to create an environmentally resilient and sustainable borough that is equipped to deal with emergency situations, including climate adaptation.
- Protect our natural environment, enhance biodiversity and retain or increase Council's current levels of carbon capture.

- Lead by example and reduce the impact of our own operations to progress our organisation towards net-zero emissions by 2040 by embedding sustainability and climate adaptation into all decision-making.
- Deliver an effective and efficient waste service that supports citizens, communities and businesses to reduce waste and promote a more circular economy.

Under this pillar:

- 82% of indicators were achieved or on track (9 of 11),
- 9% were delayed but progressing (1 of 11), and
- 9% were not achieved (1 of 11).

What you see:

Measure	Deliver the Mid and East Antrim Net Zero (MEANZ) Business Programme.
Status: On track	The Net Zero Insights webinar series concluded with over 200 participants across 8 sessions, with subjects including Emissions Reduction, Decarbonisation, Energy Efficiency, Sustainable Investment, Carbon Accounting and Green Practices. A companion video series featuring 5 local companies also launched in June 2025.

	<p>Support from 6 Innovate UK Technical Assistance Partners enabled Council-specific workshops on Net Zero Data, Finance and Citizen Engagement.</p> <p>Other activities included a best practice clean-tech visit to the Midlands, launch of an Emissions Reporting Toolkit for Cleantech CGN Members, CleanTech CGN training, a HyTech NI Communications and Engagement Plan and a borough-wide Carbon Baselining Exercise.</p>
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Measure	Engage with local schools and communities to provide environmental education programmes.
Status: Achieved	<p>We continue to make strong progress delivering environmental education to local schools and communities. Targets relating to community engagement on topics such as recycling, circular economy, energy conservation, waste reduction and sustainable living have been exceeded. Sessions have been delivered to a wide range of groups including U3A, Inner Wheel, Cairncastle Women's Institute, Ballymena Probus Club and the Carson Project.</p> <p>The number of Eco-Schools with Green Flag status also increased by 5%, with an awards ceremony held in June 2025 to recognise participating schools.</p>

Measure	Continue to actively engage with the Regional Community Resilience Group (RCRG).
Status: Achieved	<p>We continue to engage with the Regional Community Resilience Group, while supporting local community groups to build resilience through the Five Sources of Resilience.</p> <p>We contributed to regional workshops that included government departments, academia and the community sector, helping to shape the Strategic Investment Board report which was presented to the Northern Ireland Executive, recommending stronger departmental leadership, resources and greater community sector involvement.</p> <p>We continue to promote the Community Resilience Toolkit and explore funding to support its wider use. Plans are underway to establish a Community Resilience Network, with 4 co-produced workshops to be delivered across the borough in the year ahead.</p>

Measure	Plant 100,000 trees across the borough through the Climate Canopy Project by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Almost 370,000 trees have been planted across the year, the majority at Woodburn Forest and the remainder via local schools and community groups.

Measure	Continue to be an active member of the Energy Managers Forum.
Status: Achieved	<p>We remain actively involved in the Energy Managers Forum. Our Energy Manager will serve as Chair for the next 2 years and will lead a joint energy procurement effort for 10 local authorities.</p> <p>A sub-committee has been established to oversee annual energy procurement.</p>

Measure	Deliver energy saving and clean energy projects within Council buildings by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	<p>We successfully delivered 8 energy saving projects this year, exceeding the target of 6.</p> <p>Projects included LED lighting upgrades at the Showgrounds, Larne Leisure Centre, People's Park, Oakfield Community Centre, Carrickfergus Civic Centre, Carrickfergus Town Hall and the Sir Thomas Dixon building.</p> <p>In addition, 4 clean energy projects were completed, with Solar PV installations at the Sullatober Depot and Portglenone Marina, and battery storage installed at Springwell Street car park and the Sullatober Waste Transfer Station.</p>

	Data logging technology and analytics platforms were also added to 7 sites to inform future investment in renewable generation and storage.
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Measure	Finalise internal Council strategies and procedures to further progress sustainability by 31 March 2025.
Status: Delayed but progressing	Sustainability strategies have been drafted and are under review to allow for alignment with the updated and revised Asset Management Strategy and Fleet Decarbonisation Strategy. The completion of this work has been carried into 2025/26.

Measure	Ensure at least 50% of household waste collected is sent for recycling by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	From April 2024 to March 2025, 50.73% of household waste collected was sent for recycling. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Measure	Ensure a maximum of 16,387 tonnes of biodegradable collected municipal waste is sent to landfill by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	From April 2024 to March 2025, 13,611 tonnes of biodegradable collected municipal waste was sent to landfill. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Measure	Ensure less than 75,797 tonnes of collected municipal waste arisings by 31 March 2025.
Status: Not achieved	From April 2024 to March 2025, there were 75,880 tonnes of collected municipal waste arisings. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Measure	Delivery of 5 circular economy initiatives by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	<p>We successfully delivered 5 key circular economy initiatives to support our local communities, promote sustainability and reduce waste. These included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The School Uniform Scheme, which gifted almost 2,000 items to families ahead of the new school year. 2. The Christmas Toy Container Scheme, which ran from October to December, and diverted 3.1 tonnes from landfill, generated charity revenue and provided affordable gifts. 3. Over 11 tonnes of food was donated through the borough's Community Fridges; this equates to 32,655 meals. 4. The Community RePaint Scheme collected 1,690 litres of paint and redistributed 1,321 litres to local groups and individuals. 5. The Spectacle Reuse Scheme collected 1,500 pairs of glasses for reuse. <p>These schemes will continue during 2025/26.</p>

Performance

Our ambition:

- By 2028, we will operate as a single entity, fully embracing the vision of the Reorganisation of Public Administration (RPA 2015). We will be a sustainable, customer-focused organisation and employer of choice, attracting and retaining the right people with the right skills to deliver our vision for the borough. We will provide value for money services by building solid foundations, learning from our mistakes and instilling sound governance arrangements.

To achieve this, we will:

- Redesign the organisation to work more effectively and efficiently, ensuring financial competence and resilience, delivering social value and offering good value for money services in a sustainable manner.
- Develop our key support services to help us achieve our goals, underpinning and enabling us to operate effectively and meet our core, statutory and regulatory obligations.
- Continue to work alongside our partners to progress the delivery of the Community Plan and other Council strategies, sharing knowledge, skills and best practice, to create synergy and influence decision-making to achieve the best outcomes for the borough at an affordable cost.

- Empower and equip our staff through comprehensive skills development initiatives, fostering a culture of continuous learning, innovation and growth, ultimately enhancing individual and organisational capabilities.
- Prioritise employee health and wellbeing, encompassing physical, mental and emotional health, creating an environment where everyone feels valued, motivated and confident, enabling them to thrive personally and professionally.
- Invest in our Elected Members, providing them with the required skills and knowledge to effectively govern.
- Include stakeholders in our decision-making processes through consultation, communication and engagement, in order to increase satisfaction levels.

Under this pillar:

- 55% of indicators were achieved or on track (10 of 18),
- 28% were delayed but progressing (5 of 18), and
- 17% were not achieved (3 of 18).

What you see:

Measure	Utilisation of technologies to improve service delivery.
Status: On track	We have made strong progress harnessing digital tools to drive efficiency, accuracy and compliance. Processes such as prepayments and recurring journals have been automated, reducing manual effort

and improving consistency. The use of an Accounts Payable portal is also being explored, and the automation of invoice processing will soon be rolled out. Staff training has supported the in-house development of systems-based reports, including an automated balance sheet and improved income and expenditure reporting. Self-service reporting for managers is also progressing.

Financial management has improved with a new month-end checklist, Finance Workday calendar and enhanced reforecasting, increasing the visibility of actuals versus budgets and supporting more accurate year-end forecasts. Control accounts and workflows have been refined to enhance recurring journals and balance sheet reconciliations.

HR and Payroll implementation has commenced, and work is advancing on new Sourcing and Inventory modules. Business process changes are under review to support implementation. Access Management needs have also been identified, with scoping and staff training scheduled.

Measure	Implementation of the Good Governance Review.
Status: On track	The majority of actions from the Good Governance Review have been completed. The remaining actions are underway, with relevant updates being brought to Elected Members.

Measure	Robust budget arrangements and sound financial management.
Status: On track	<p>We continue to strengthen our financial management and budgeting processes. Based on current projections, efforts are underway to increase the General Fund, bringing it closer to the mid-range of the approved target. In light of the current economic climate and rising unexpected costs, this increase is necessary to ensure greater financial stability and to enable us to mitigate unforeseen expenses and financial risks.</p> <p>External borrowing is well within policy limits, and we have made strong progress delivering timely and accurate monthly management accounts. This has improved financial oversight and informed decision-making across the organisation. We have also introduced a forecasting process to provide a more accurate and timelier picture of our financial position, which will support better planning and decision-making.</p> <p>Debt management processes have significantly improved, with the proportion of outstanding debt over 90 days reduced steadily over the year. This reflects the implementation of a revised Debt Management Policy and ongoing collaboration across service areas.</p> <p>Investment activities have been managed in line with Treasury Management parameters. Policy updates were introduced during the</p>

	year to ensure continued compliance, while also supporting effective cashflow and risk management.
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Measure	Review and update our Asset Management Strategy by 31 March 2025.
Status: Delayed but progressing	Work is underway, though progress has been slower than expected due to organisational priorities. Engagement with key stakeholders has taken place to ensure alignment and inform the development of the strategy. The review will continue into 2025/26 to allow for a more comprehensive and informed update.

Measure	Ensure all information requests under Freedom of Information (FOI) and/or Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) are processed within the statutory timeframe of 20 working days.
Status: Not Achieved	<p>Across the year, 92% of requests for information under FOI and/or EIR were processed within the statutory timeframe.</p> <p>Delays were mainly due to the time required to gather comprehensive information, which often involved coordination across multiple service areas. In some instances, additional time was also needed to obtain legal advice, secure appropriate approvals and ensure careful consideration of exemptions in relation to more complex requests.</p>

Measure	Ensure all subject access requests are processed within the statutory timeframe of one calendar month.
Status: Not Achieved	Across the year, 81% of subject access requests were processed within the statutory timeframe. While the target of full compliance was not met, all requests were carefully managed to ensure lawful and accurate disclosure. Where delays occurred, these were primarily due to the need for thorough review and appropriate approvals to safeguard the rights of individuals and uphold data protection standards.

Measure	Ensure the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) does not issue any decision notices overturning our FOI/EIR decisions.
Status: Achieved	The ICO did not overturn any of our decisions this year.

Measure	Implement changes to ensure effective utilisation of resources within the Corporate and Support Services Directorate.
Status: On track	The restructuring of the Corporate and Support Services Directorate is underway. The primary objective is to ensure the directorate is appropriately resourced to deliver high quality services in an efficient and cost-effective manner. By realigning functions and roles, the restructure will enhance capacity to support other service areas, drive greater value for money and deliver improved outcomes for citizens.

	Significant progress has been made, with many staff transitioned into their new roles and a number of vacancies advertised.
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Measure	Deliver 10 programmes against the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) by 31 March 2025.
Status: On track	We continue to make significant progress in delivering actions aligned with all 17 Goals and the target of 10 programmes has been exceeded. A placement student from Queen's University Belfast has compiled a comprehensive progress report on our achievements so far.

Measure	Continue to work in partnership with various community, business and tourism stakeholders to progress various initiatives and support programmes.
Status: On track	<p>This year, we continued to collaborate with a wide range of community, business and tourism stakeholders, including Government departments, the Public Health Agency, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and local groups.</p> <p>Whilst impossible to list all partners, these collaborations have been essential in progressing initiatives that support public health, community cohesion and local business development.</p>

Measure	Ensure at least 1.5 days are spent, per full time equivalent (FTE), on employee learning and development by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Across the year, 1.57 days were spent per employee on learning and development.

Measure	Deliver a minimum of 100 training courses to staff by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Almost 260 individual courses were completed.

Measure	Develop action plans based on the results of the 'Listening to Staff' survey by 31 March 2025.
Status: Delayed but progressing	A comprehensive strategy will be developed on the completion of the Corporate and Support Services Directorate restructure. The action plans will outline the necessary steps to effectively respond to the survey results.

Measure	Develop a Learning and Development Strategy for staff by 31 March 2025.
Status: Delayed but progressing	The development of this strategy will progress on the completion of the Corporate and Support Services Directorate restructure. An Organisational Development and Talent Manager role will lead on the development and implementation of this strategy.

Measure	Deliver a minimum of 2 health and wellbeing initiatives for staff by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	We launched several staff health and wellbeing initiatives this year, including World Mental Health Day, Shoctober Week, Hearing Aid Support Services and a StayWell focus on Financial Health. The Corporate and Support Services Directorate restructure includes the creation of an Employee Inclusion and Wellbeing Officer role who will progress health and wellbeing initiatives for staff.

Measure	Ensure annual staff absence levels do not exceed 15 days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employee by 31 March 2025.
Status: Not Achieved	Across the year, 17.18 days per employee (FTE) were recorded. A scrutiny panel was established during the year to review sickness absence, with several contributing factors identified. Targeted initiatives have been developed, informed by best practice and recommendations from the Northern Ireland Audit Office, to support staff wellbeing and improve attendance. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Measure	Develop and implement a Learning and Development programme for Elected Members by 31 March 2025.
Status:	Significant progress has been made in developing and implementing the Learning and Development programme for Elected Members. Membership of the Councillor Development Charter Sub-Committee

Delayed but progressing	has been agreed and the committee held its inaugural meeting in September. Subsequent meetings were held throughout the year. A training needs analysis is under review by Elected Members. The development of the programme will continue into 2025/26.
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Measure	Develop a Consultation and Engagement Strategy to ensure stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes by 31 March 2025.
Status: Delayed but progressing	As part of the ongoing restructure of the Corporate and Support Services Directorate, a new Consultation and Engagement Officer role has been established. This officer will lead on the development of a comprehensive strategy aimed at ensuring our consultation processes are inclusive, transparent and effective, strengthening stakeholder involvement in decision-making.

Improvement Objectives

- Our Improvement Objectives are set out within our Performance Improvement Plan and are included within our annual business plans.
- Our Improvement Objectives for 2024/25 were:
 - People: We will work with partners to improve the lives of citizens.
 - Place: We will maintain and improve our local areas.
 - Planet: We will reduce our environmental impact and improve sustainability.
- Of 56 indicators used to track progress:
 - 87% were achieved or on track (49 of 56)
 - 9% were delayed but progressing (5 of 56)
 - 4% were not achieved (2 of 56)
- Further details on each of our objectives are discussed on the following pages.

Objective 1 - People: We will work with partners to improve the lives of citizens

By:

- Fostering local enterprise and economic growth.
- Supporting skills development and improving employment outcomes.
- Helping citizens lead healthy and active lives.
- Supporting people who are vulnerable or marginalised, and promoting an equal, diverse, inclusive and accessible borough.

Why did we do this:

- Developing skills and job prospects and support to reduce poverty were two of citizens' top priorities for making the borough a better place to live in. Only 28% of citizens agreed the area was a good place for job opportunities (MEABC Citizens Survey 2022), and the number of financially insecure households had increased.
- Almost 50% of citizens said they wanted to see more support services for children and families, and for people with disabilities (MEABC Citizens Survey 2022). The issue of inclusion was highlighted during the review of the Community Plan (2022), particularly for people with disabilities and learning difficulties. People from ethnic minority backgrounds, young people and older people were identified as being 'at risk'.

- This objective aligned with the Department for the Economy's vision for Northern Ireland of creating jobs, increasing incomes, improving productivity and providing opportunities for all. The actions provided opportunities for skills development and employment progression, offered health and wellbeing support, and helped improve equality of opportunity, accessibility and inclusivity.

Under this objective:

- 94% of indicators were achieved or on track (17 of 18), and
- 6% were delayed but progressing (1 of 18).

What you see:

Outcome: Opportunities to start your own business.	
Measure	240 participants supported through start-up assistance via Go Succeed by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	There were 325 participants supported through Go Succeed. (These figures are subject to quality assurance and may change).

Measure	107 jobs promoted through business start interventions by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	There were 144 jobs promoted through business start interventions. These figures are subject to quality assurance and may change. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Outcome: An active Mid and East Antrim Manufacturing Task Force.

Measure	At least 3 new Manufacturing Task Force members by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	4 new organisations joined the Task Force during the year.
Measure	£40,000 of members' in-kind time contributions by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Members' collective in-kind time contributions were £43,560.

Outcome: Opportunities to take part in skills and employability programmes.

Measure	200 people participating in programmes by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	There were 365 participants up to March 2025, and a further 90 up to June. Programmes included Transportation, Fibre Skills, Excel, Classroom Assistant, Childcare Upskilling, GP Administration, Phlebotomy, Cleantech Hydrogen, Welding and more. Future updates will be provided to the Council's Environment and Economy Committee.

Measure	100 participants gaining employment via employment academies by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Despite a late start due to delayed funding, 83 participants had gained employment by the end of March 2025, with a further 36 gaining employment by June. Future updates will be provided to the Council's Environment and Economy Committee.
Measure	150 participants securing qualifications by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	There were 377 qualifications secured by the end of March 2025, and a further 130 by the end of June. These ranged from Excel and Mathematics to Pediatric First Aid, Safeguarding, Classroom Assistant, Customer Service, Food Hygiene, HGV, Telehandler and more. Future updates will be provided to the Council's Environment and Economy Committee.

Outcome: Support to lead a healthy and active life.	
Measure	MEAqua Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan (including the expansion of toddler and disability sessions) delivered by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	<p>Several improvements were made to the MEAqua programme during the year, including the expansion of swimming classes for parents and small children and the provision of Disability Swimming lessons in our 3 leisure centres.</p> <p>Our development plan for 2024-2027 will see further expansion for all age groups and abilities, from toddlers and learners to high-</p>

	performance groups. Future updates will be provided to the Council's Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee.
Measure	12 outdoor events to involve a wide range of abilities by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	There were 150 events delivered from festive trails, petting farms, crafting, bird box building and tree giveaways, to food and walking events, grandparent days, orienteering and more. Over 6,500 people attended these events.

Outcome: A borough that values, engages and supports everyone.	
Measure	MEA Age-Friendly Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan launched by 30 June 2024.
Status: Achieved	The Age-Friendly Strategy and Action Plan (2024-2027) were both launched in September 2024.
Measure	Establish an Older Person's Forum by 31 December 2024.
Status: Achieved	To ensure the voices of older people are heard across the borough the Agewell Lived Experience Group will act as the Older Person's Forum and will attend meetings of the Age-Friendly Alliance.
Measure	MEA Age-Friendly Year 2 Action Plan confirmed by 28 February 2025.
Status: Achieved	The action plan was agreed in January 2025.

Measure	Autism-Friendly Action Plans implemented in 4 Council venues by 30 September 2024.
Status: Delayed but progressing	We have made strong progress in making our services and spaces more accessible and welcoming for autistic people. Our Arts and Museums centres are the latest of our services to act by introducing sensory spaces, and developing accessible signage and pre-visit guides. It is hoped these venues will complete their action plans and achieve the Autism NI Impact Award by the end of the year. Future updates will be provided to the Council's Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee.
Measure	4 additional Autism Champions developed within Council by 30 September 2024.
Status Achieved	We trained and accredited 4 additional Autism Champions in September 2024, bringing the total number to 17. These individuals are dedicated to ensuring positive experiences for autistic people and their families when using our services.
Measure	An Autism-Awareness initiative Communications Plan developed by 30 September 2024.
Status: Achieved	Our Autism-Awareness Communications Plan has been developed and launched.
Measure	4 arts and culture events delivered to address loneliness and improve accessibility by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	A range of events have been delivered, including a Rural Engagement Arts Programme and an Arts and Older People

	Programme, exhibitions, reminiscence sessions, a film screening, and an arts and nature-based workshop.
Measure	8 Council-managed community centres connected to full-fibre broadband by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	All Council-managed community centres now have working internet and Wi-Fi.

Outcome: Collaboration with the Mid and East Antrim Poverty Action Group.	
Measure	Attendance at Poverty Action Group meetings and support of initiatives.
Status: On track	This objective is partly achieved. Although the group did not formally meet during the year, members continued to actively support people across the borough. The Council will take on facilitation and assign a dedicated staff resource to resume regular meetings, ensuring more effective partnership working and ongoing support for vulnerable residents.

Objective 2 - Place: We will maintain and improve our local areas

By:

- Enhancing our amenities, parks, and open spaces.
- Bolstering our town centres.
- Nurturing community-led tourism.
- Delivering an effective and efficient Planning Service.

Why did we do this:

- The actions set out to achieve this objective aligned with the key priorities identified through public consultation, including improvements to playparks and provision for outdoor recreation, and support to improve and revitalise the borough's town centres.
- Community tourism can help boost local economies by encouraging visitor footfall, increasing jobs and generating revenue for local businesses. This can increase civic pride and help to develop more sustainable and prosperous communities.

Under this objective:

- 81% of indicators were achieved or on track (17 of 21),
- 14% were delayed but progressing (3 of 21), and
- 5% were not achieved (1 of 21).

What you see:

Outcome: New or improved playparks.	
Measure	Marine Gardens playpark completed by 31 August 2024.
Status: Achieved	The play park is now an exciting space for children of all ages and abilities with an impressive ship, zipline, swings and climbing provision.
Measure	Larne Skate Park completed by 31 October 2024.
Status: Achieved	Designed to cater to all skills levels and abilities, the skate park opened in October 2024. It accommodates a range of wheeled sports from skateboarding and BMX to scootering and inline skating.
Measure	2 additional new or refurbished playparks completed by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Oakfield playpark in Carrickfergus completed in May 2025 and Bardic Drive in Larne completed in June. A brand-new playpark was constructed in Fisherwick in Ballymena and the Knockan Road playpark in Broughshane was also partially refurbished.

Outcome: Greater provision for outdoor recreation.	
Measure	Carnlough, Glynn and Portglenone MUGAs or kickabouts completed by 30 June 2024.
Status: Achieved	All 3 areas completed in summer 2024.
Measure	Carrickfergus Amphitheatre 2G pitch upgraded to 3G by 31 July 2024.
Status: Achieved	The upgrade is complete.
Measure	Phase 1 of the Cullybackey to Galgorm Greenway completed by 30 September 2025.
Status: Delayed but progressing	<p>The greenway has been delayed due to necessary revisions to the proposed route, with completion dates still to be confirmed.</p> <p>With a phased delivery now agreed, the planning application has been submitted. Future updates on this project will be provided to the Council's Environment and Economy Committee, and the Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee, as relevant.</p>

Measure	Development of Carnfunnock Country Park completed by 31 March 2026.
Status: Delayed but progressing	The public consultation is complete, and planning approval has been secured. The contractor has been appointed and work commenced during the summer. Completion is now expected in 2027. Future updates will be provided to the Council's Environment and Economy Committee, and the Neighbourhoods and Communities Committee, as relevant.

Outcome: Delivery of the Town Centre Revitalisation Scheme.

Measure	Sound systems installed in Ballymena and Carrickfergus town centres by 30 June 2024.
Status: Delayed but progressing	On the agreement of property owners for cabling works, the sound systems will be installed imminently. Future updates will be provided to the Council's Environment and Economy Committee.
Measure	2 street art schemes in Ballymena and Larne town centres by 31 July 2024.
Status: Achieved	A Street Art Festival in Larne and 3 murals in Ballymena have been delivered, including an abstract piece in Ballymoney Street, a giant Flamingo in Greenvale Street and an outdoor adventurer in Church Street.

Measure	Feature lighting installed in Ballymena and Larne town centres by 30 September 2024.
Status: Achieved	Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus all received new Christmas trees for the 2024 festive season. Gobo projectors have also been installed in Pat's Brae Ballymena and Carrickfergus Civic Centre. Larne will benefit from new festive lighting in 2025/26.
Measure	Additional funding application submitted to the Department for Communities by 30 September 2024.
Status: Achieved	Funding of £105,000 has been awarded for artificial Christmas trees in our 3 main towns, £315,000 for Revitalise 2 (Shop Front Grant Scheme and marketing campaign), £135,000 for enhanced seasonal lighting in each town centre and a seasonal lighting trail in Carrickfergus, and almost £154,000 for a Pop-Up Park in Larne town centre.
Measure	25 groups utilising Pop-Up Shop opportunities by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	The Pop-Up Shop initiative exceeded expectations with 31 community groups and entrepreneurs taking part. Several events were also held in the properties throughout the year.
Measure	15 events or activities held within Ballymena, Carrickfergus, and Larne town centres by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	We delivered 50 events and activities to encourage town centre footfall and support our local businesses, including festive events, markets, craft fairs and more.

Outcome: Delivery of the Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme.	
Measure	10 buildings of historical and architectural interest restored in Carrickfergus by 31 July 2024.
Status: Achieved	10 buildings have been restored to the highest of conservation standards. The final property completed in January 2025.
Measure	Increased floor space for retail, commercial or residential use in Carrickfergus by 31 July 2024.
Status: Achieved	We restored 12 residential properties and 2 derelict buildings, an increase of almost 900 square feet, nearly 2.5 times the original footage. A historic exhibition space was also created.
Measure	Closing event and publication issued on the Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative by 31 July 2024.
Status: Achieved	A celebration event was held in November, during which a booklet telling the story of the initiative was shared.

Outcome: Locally led tourism.	
Measure	Neighbourhood Tourism Scheme launched by 31 October 2024.
Status: Achieved	The Neighbourhood Tourism Scheme was successfully launched, and will enhance visitor experiences within our smaller settlements.
Measure	3 local Neighbourhood Tourism participants by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	The Old School House Gracehill, The Hub Cullybackey, Broughshane House Broughshane, The Heritage Hub Carnlough, and the Whitehead Centre are all participating in the initiative.

Outcome: Achievement of our statutory Planning Service targets.	
Measure	A processing time for major planning applications within an average of 30 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status: Not achieved	Between April 2024 and March 2025, the average (median) processing time was 45.2 weeks. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.
Measure	A processing time for local planning applications within an average of 15 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Between April 2024 and March 2025, the average (median) processing time was 5.8 weeks. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.
Measure	At least 70% of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Between April 2024 and March 2025, 81.3% of cases were concluded within 39 weeks. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Objective 3 - Planet: We will reduce our environmental impact and improve sustainability

By:

- Moving towards cleaner energy and reducing our consumption.
- Delivering an effective and efficient Waste Management Service.
- Supporting biodiversity.
- Reaching environmental standards and targets.
- Sharing learning and best practice.

Why did we do this:

- The actions set out to achieve this objective aligned with the key priorities identified through public consultation. They demonstrated how the Council is leading by example, whilst also working to engage and educate on sustainability. They assisted the development of the borough's electric vehicle charging network, focused on providing an effective and efficient waste management service, and demonstrated support for biodiversity.
- Our citizens identified help to reduce consumption, waste and litter, and awareness and assistance in tackling climate change as the two most important things the Council could do to be more environmentally friendly. Adopting environmentally sustainable transport ranked third and protecting plants and animals ranked fourth (MEABC Citizens Survey 2022).

- Measures to address climate change, environmental awareness and the importance of respect for the local and natural environment, were points raised throughout the Community Planning Review (2022) consultation.
- The phase out date for the sale of new petrol and diesel cars is 2035.

Under this objective:

- 88% of indicators were achieved or on track (15 of 17),
- 6% was delayed but progressing (1 of 17), and
- 6% were not achieved (1 of 17).

What you see:

Outcome: Energy-saving and clean energy projects within Council buildings.	
Measure	6 energy-saving projects delivered by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	We delivered 8 energy saving projects this year. For more information, please see Self-Imposed Indicators and Standards section of this report.
Measure	4 clean-energy projects delivered by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	We delivered 4 clean energy projects this year. For more information, please see Self-Imposed Indicators and Standards section of this report.
Measure	Approximately 77,000kg CO ₂ e savings by 31 March 2025 (lifecycle saving - 1.5m kg).
Status: Achieved	A reduction of 77,301kg CO ₂ e has been achieved.

Measure	Approximately £80,000 savings through energy projects by 31 March 2025 (lifecycle savings - £1.6m).
Status: Achieved	Annual savings increased to £85,756.

Outcome: Expansion of electric vehicle chargepoints within the borough.

Measure	12 fast chargers procured through the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) by 30 September 2024.
Status: Achieved	Procurement completed in December 2024.
Measure	Installation date for ORCS chargers confirmed by 31 March 2025.
Status: Delayed but progressing	With the renegotiation of the contract terms delaying confirmation of the installation date, completion is now expected around March 2026. Future updates will be provided to the Council's Environment and Economy Committee.
Measure	6 upgraded charge stations through ESB by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	All 6 charge stations have been installed and are located at Tower Road Larne, Narrow Gauge Larne, Havelock Carnlough, Coast Road Glenarm, Larne Link Road Ballymena and Henry Street Ballymena. A supercharging hub was also installed in Larne.

Outcome: Achievement of our statutory Waste Management targets.	
Measure	At least 50% of household waste collected sent for recycling by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	From April 2024 to March 2025, 50.73% was recorded. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.
Measure	A maximum of 16,387 tonnes of biodegradable collected municipal waste sent to landfill by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	From April 2024 to March 2025, 13,611 tonnes were recorded. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.
Measure	Less than 75,797 tonnes collected municipal waste arisings by 31 March 2025.
Status: Not achieved	From April 2024 to March 2025, 75,880 tonnes were recorded. For more information and analysis, please see Benchmarking section of this report.

Outcome: Delivery of our Tree and Woodland Management Strategy.	
Measure	5,000 trees planted within the borough by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	Almost 370,000 trees were planted or distributed for planting across the borough last year.

Outcome: Achievement of environmental targets and accreditations, where viable.	
Measure	Re-certification of International Management Standard ISO14001 by 31 August 2024.

Status: Achieved	Re-certification was obtained for another 3 years in August. No non-conformances or observations for improvement were identified.
Measure	A minimum of Gold Status in the NI Benchmarking Survey by 30 November 2024.
Status: Achieved	We achieved Platinum level and were the top performing council in Northern Ireland.
Measure	Gaps identified in the 2023 NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey addressed by 31 October 2024.
Status: Achieved	We have developed and agreed waste harmonisation plans to improve recycling performance, delivered LED and solar PV installations to increase renewable energy generation, completed flood-risk mapping, and progressed several biodiversity projects. We also monitor and report on Scope 1, Scope 2, and four categories of Scope 3 carbon emissions.

Outcome: Opportunities to engage in environmental education programmes.	
Measure	10 community engagement sessions held on Waste and Recycling, and Climate and Sustainability by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	We delivered 10 community sessions and engaged local businesses as they developed their Climate Action Plans through the Collaborative Growth Network.
Measure	Support for the Eco-Schools programme, with a 5% increase in the number of schools with Green Flags by 30 June 2025.

Status: Achieved	The number of schools with Green Flag status has increased by 5%.
Measure	Delivery of 5 circular economy waste initiatives by 31 March 2025.
Status: Achieved	We delivered 5 key circular economy initiatives during the year. These will continue to be delivered during 2025/26. For more information, please see Self-Imposed Indicators and Standards section of this report.

Benchmarking

- Benchmarking helps identify where we are performing well and where we need to improve. We can compare our performance with other local councils for three types of statutory performance indicators, as well as absenteeism and prompt payment performance. We also participate in best practice learning and a wide range of working groups.
- The data tables for the charts within this section, alongside examples of our benchmarking and best practice activities, can be found within the Appendices.

Statutory performance indicators and standards

- The Department for Communities sets statutory targets for councils in the areas of Planning, Economic Development and Waste Management. We also set our own internal targets to ensure continuous improvement within these areas.
- The Department for the Economy, the Department for Infrastructure, and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs collate this information and publish the results. We also publish this information on our website at: www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/performance
- The statutory indicators are monitored through our annual business plans and Improvement Objectives.

Table: Summary statutory performance indicator results – Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (2024/25)

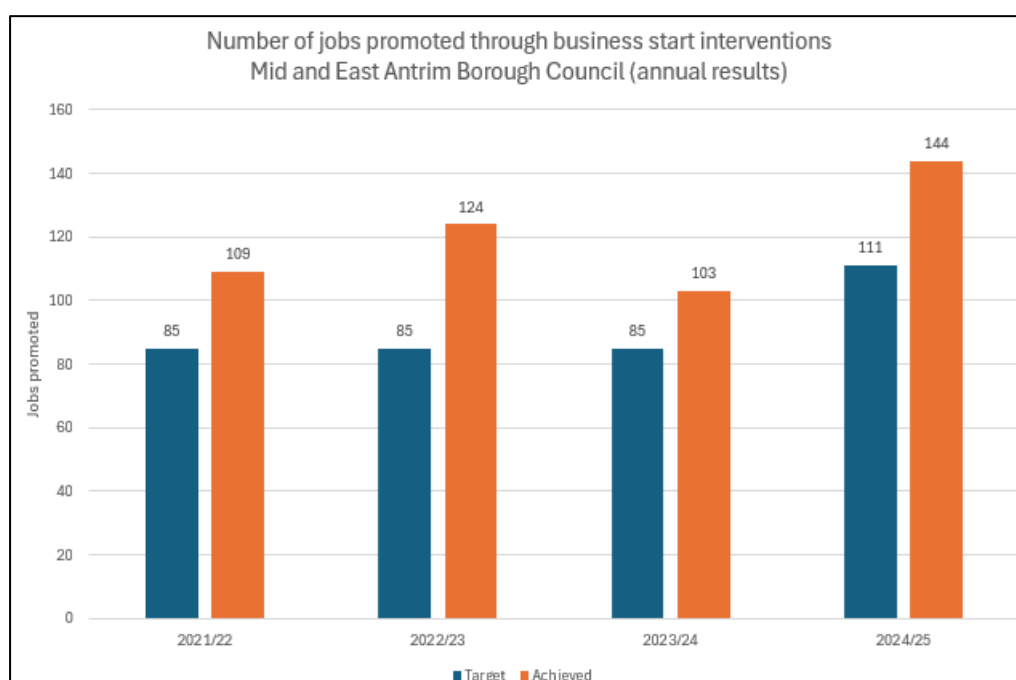
Indicator: The number of jobs promoted through business start interventions		
Target: Minimum 111 jobs	Year-end result: 144 jobs	Status: Achieved
Indicator: The average processing time of major planning applications		
Target: Maximum 30 weeks	Year-end result: 45.2 weeks	Status: Not achieved
Indicator: The average processing time of local planning applications		
Target: Maximum 15 weeks	Year-end result: 5.8 weeks	Status: Achieved
Indicator: The percentage of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks		
Target: Minimum 70%	Year-end result: 81.3%	Status: Achieved

Indicator: The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling		
Target: Minimum 50%	Year-end result: 50.73%	Status: Achieved
Indicator: The amount of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled		
Target: Maximum 16,387 tonnes	Year-end result: 13,611 tonnes	Status: Achieved
Indicator: The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Arisings. (Note: The Department for Communities requires that each council sets and monitors its own individual target for this indicator annually).		
Target: Maximum 75,797 tonnes	Year-end result: 75,880 tonnes	Status: Not achieved

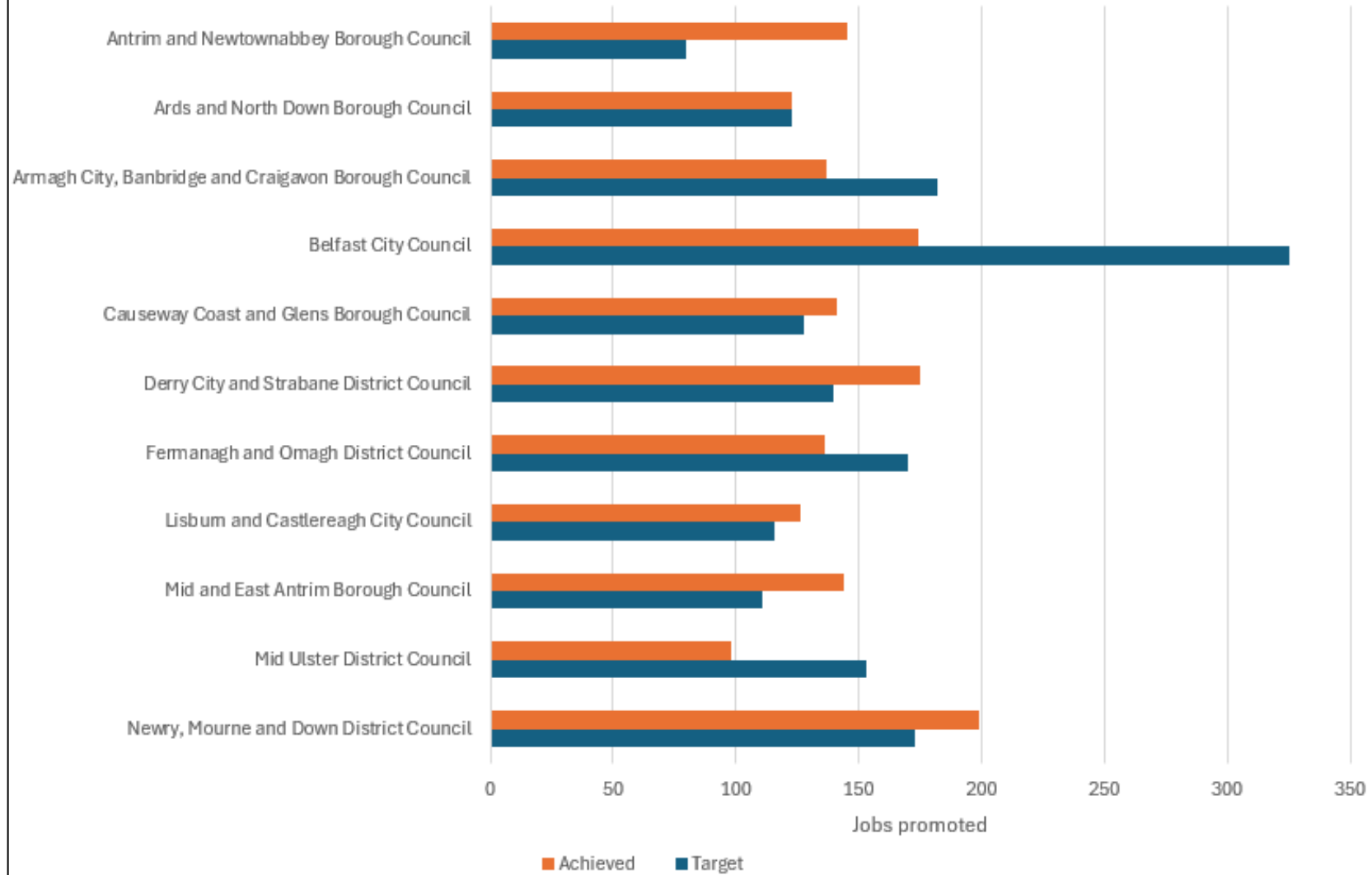
Economic Development

- This statutory indicator measures the number of jobs promoted through business start interventions via the Go Succeed service. The results are subject to quality assurance and may change. In 2024/25, 144 jobs were promoted in the borough through business start interventions, up from 103 jobs in 2023/24. Of the 11 Northern Ireland councils, 7 achieved their target. Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council gained top position at 85% over target, with Mid and East Antrim positioning 2nd at 30% over target.

2024/25 performance summary			
Standard: 111	Result: 144	NI council position: 2 nd	Status and trend: Achieved, improvement on previous year



Number of jobs promoted through business start interventions by Northern Ireland council (2024/25 results)



Planning

- Our performance for all 3 statutory Planning indicators is summarised below.

Table: Planning results – Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Indicator: The average processing time of major planning applications. Standard: Less than 30 weeks.			
Past results			
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
39.2 weeks	34.7 weeks	47.6 weeks	67.4 weeks
2024/25			
Our result: 45.2 weeks	Status and trend: Target not achieved. Significant improvement in performance.	Northern Ireland council average: 39.6 weeks	Our comparative council position: 6 th

Indicator: The average processing time of local planning applications. Standard: Less than 15 weeks.			
Past results			
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
10.4 weeks	9.6 weeks	8.6 weeks	9.4 weeks
2024/25			
Our result: 5.8 weeks	Status and trend: Target achieved. Significant improvement in performance.	Northern Ireland council average: 19 weeks	Our comparative council position: 1 st

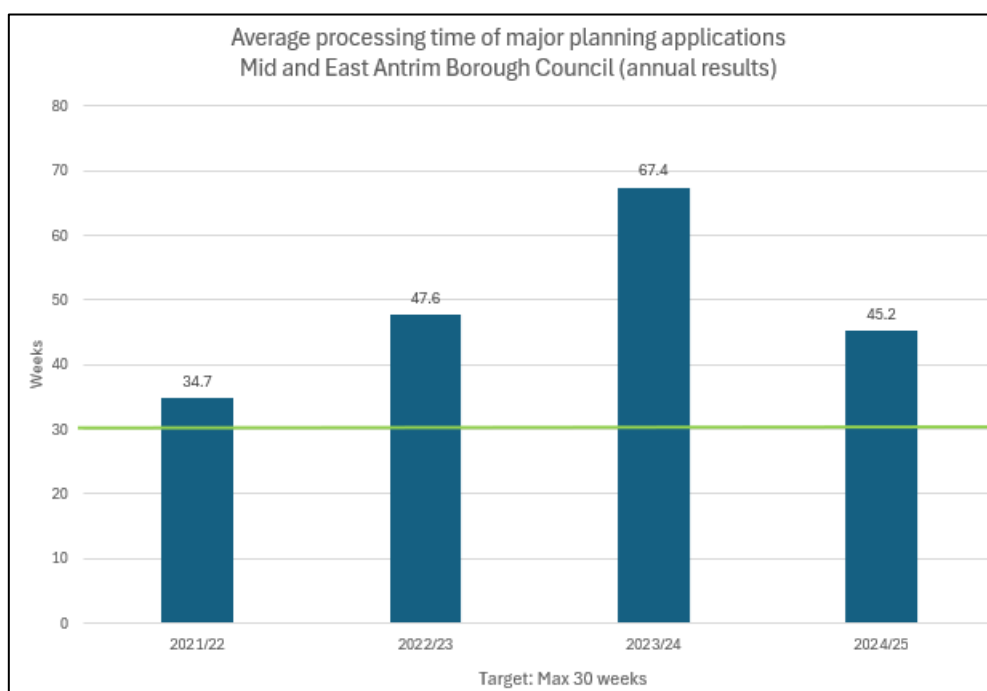
Indicator: The percentage of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks. Standard: Greater than 70%.			
Past results			
2020/21 82.6%	2021/22 90.5%	2022/23 91.2%	2023/24 87.3%
2024/25			
Our result: 81.3%	Status and trend: Target achieved. Decline in performance.	Northern Ireland council average: 70.7%	Our comparative council position: 3 rd

Indicator: The average processing time of major planning applications

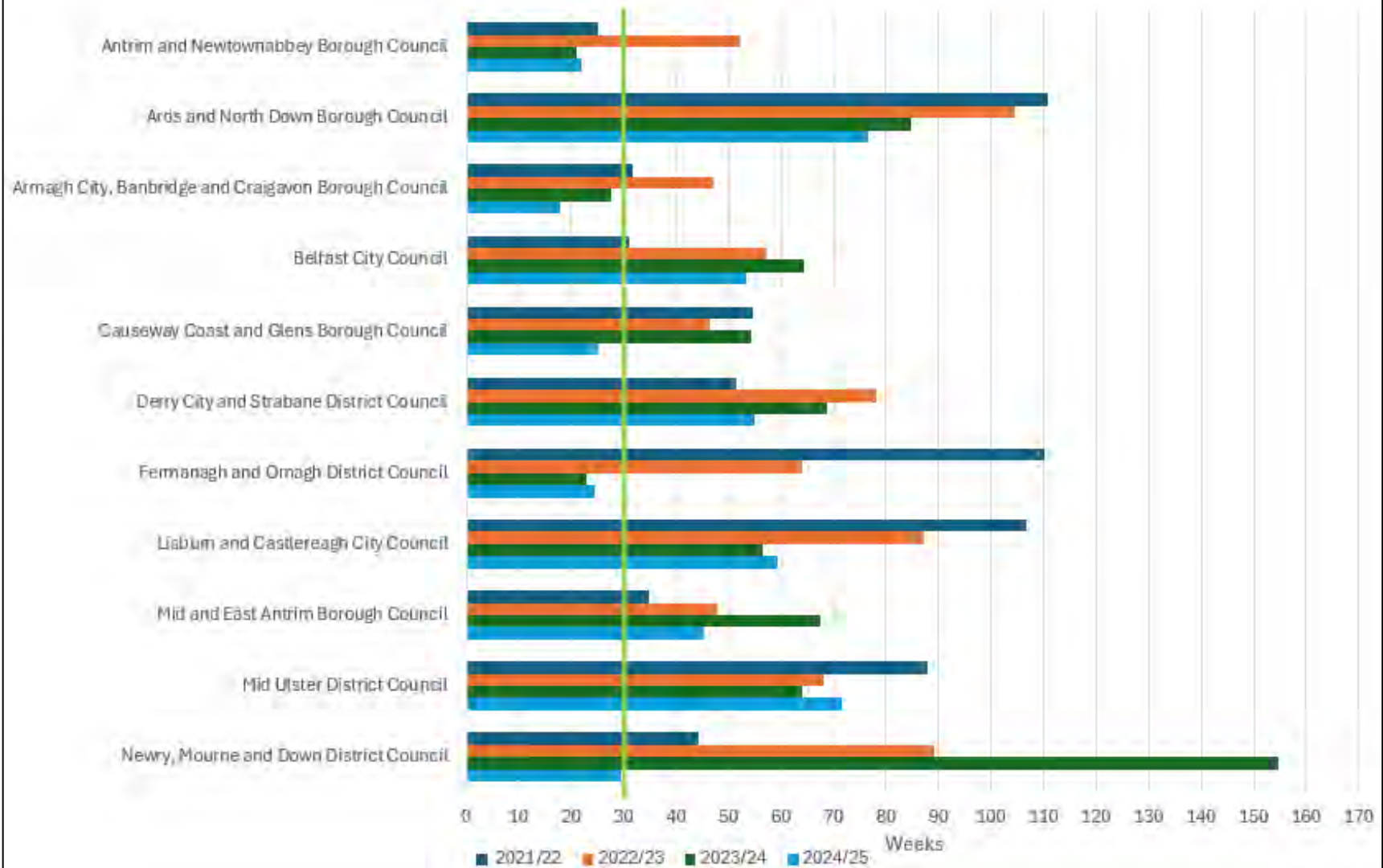
- Major planning applications relate to large-scale developments such as housing estates and commercial projects that can have a significant impact on local infrastructure, the environment and surrounding communities. Due to the complexity of major planning applications and the involvement of multiple external consultees, processing times are not always within our direct control. Input is often required from a range of statutory and external consultees including environmental bodies, transport authorities, utility providers, safety regulators and heritage organisations. These organisations assess traffic impact, infrastructure capacity and the protection of historical sites etc.
- Internally, we play a key role in ensuring all decisions align with policy and reflect local priorities; this includes engaging with residents, businesses and community groups. We have experienced considerable challenges in meeting the 30-week target over the last 6 years.
- In 2024/25, our average processing time was 45.2 weeks, and while this is a significant improvement on 2023/24, it exceeds the 30-week target and the Northern Ireland council average of 39.6 weeks. During the year, we received 7 new major applications. With 12 applications carried over from previous years, the total number of applications under consideration was 19. Of these, 10 were determined (2 from 2024/25, 5 from 2023/24 and 3 from 2022/23).
- The percentage of cases processed within the 30-week target improved from 11% in 2023/24 to 20% in 2024/25. The Northern Ireland council average was 42.6%. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council reported the

shortest average processing time of 17.8 weeks, with 84.2% of applications processed within the target. As we move into 2025/26, 9 applications remain decision-pending, 5 from 2024/25, 1 from 2023/24, 2 from 2022/23 and 1 from 2017/18.

- To improve decision-making times, we are developing a Pre-Validation Checklist in line with legislative changes introduced by the Department for Infrastructure. This checklist will define the information and documentation required for each type of Planning application to ensure applications are valid and complete at the point of submission. This will reduce delays caused by incomplete or poor-quality submissions and will enable quicker consultee response times. We are also open to working with the Department of Infrastructure and other stakeholders to explore more realistic and meaningful measures of performance.

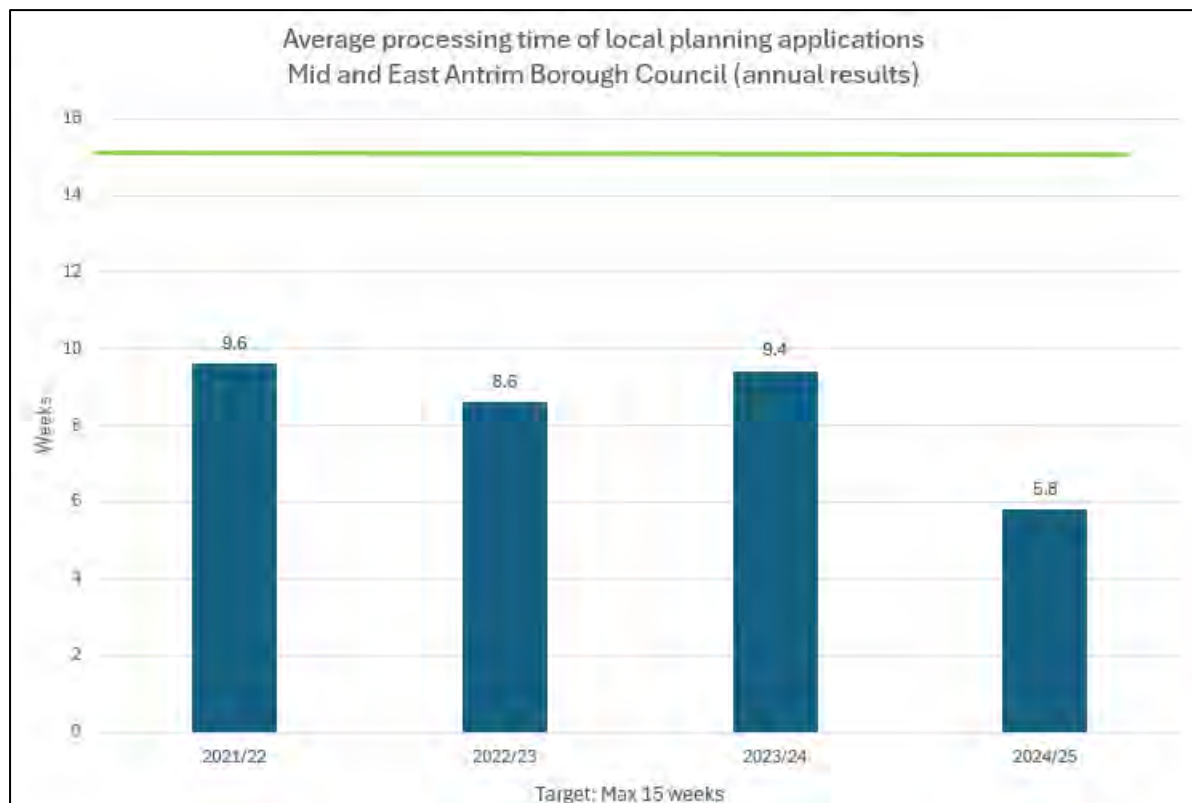


Average processing time of major planning applications
by Northern Ireland council (annual results)

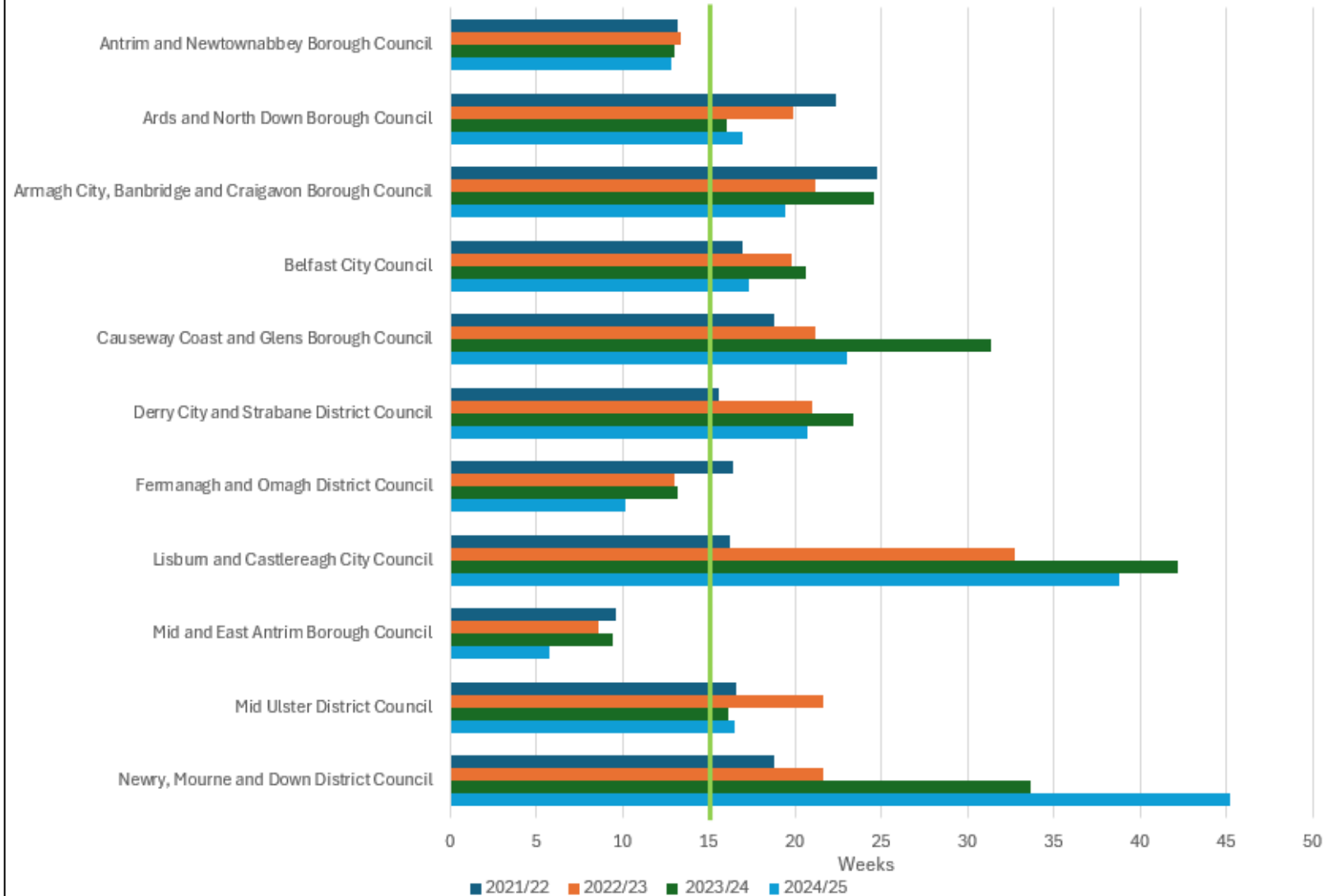


Indicator: The average processing time of local planning applications

- Local planning applications typically relate to smaller-scale developments or changes to properties such as residential extensions, minor commercial works or alterations to existing buildings. These applications are generally subject to a more straightforward assessment process, but efficient handling is crucial for applicants, developers and the wider local economy.
- During 2024/25, at 5.8 weeks, we achieved the fastest average processing time of all 11 councils in Northern Ireland for the 6th consecutive year. This was a significant improvement on 2023/24 at 9.4 weeks, and is well below the Northern Ireland council average of 19 weeks. In total, 648 local planning applications were decided during the year, of which 614 were approved and 34 refused, resulting in an approval rate of 94.8%. Notably, 83.2% of approved applications were processed within the statutory 15-week target. Of the 11 local councils, 8 recorded improvements in average processing times during 2024/25. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council improved by 8.4 weeks, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council by 5.2 weeks, and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council by 3.6 weeks.



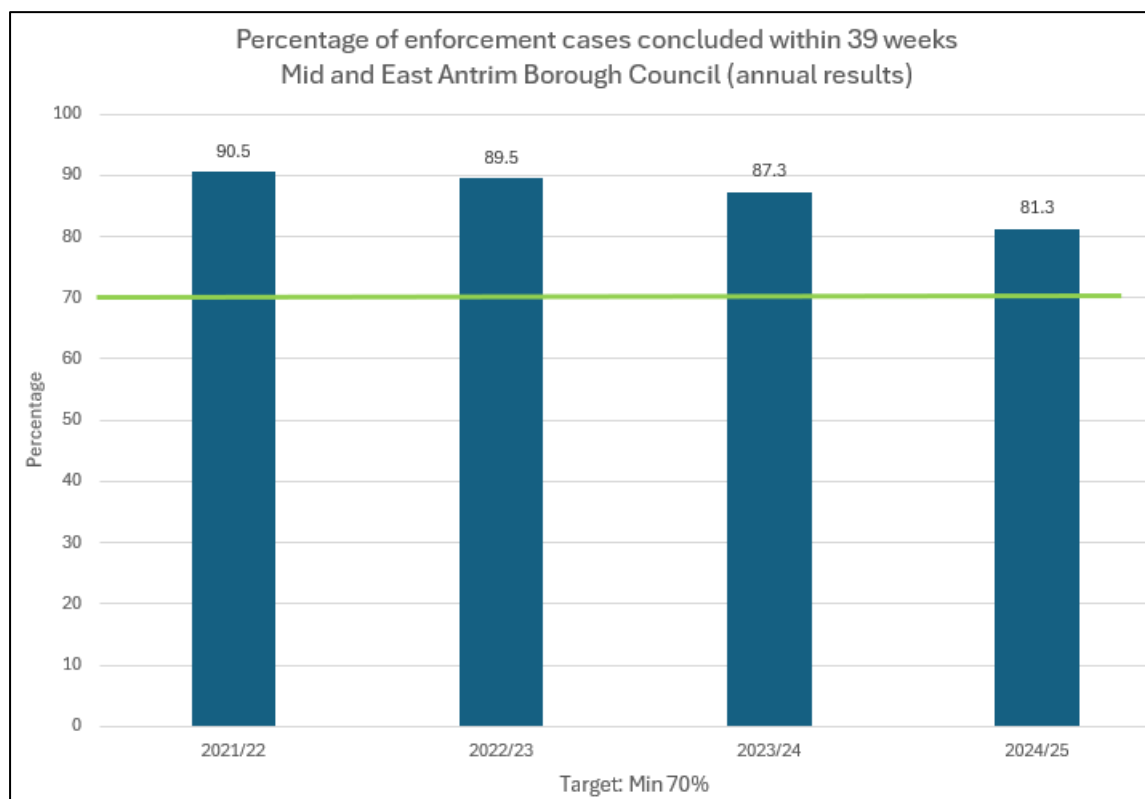
Average processing time of local planning applications
by Nothern Ireland council (annual results)



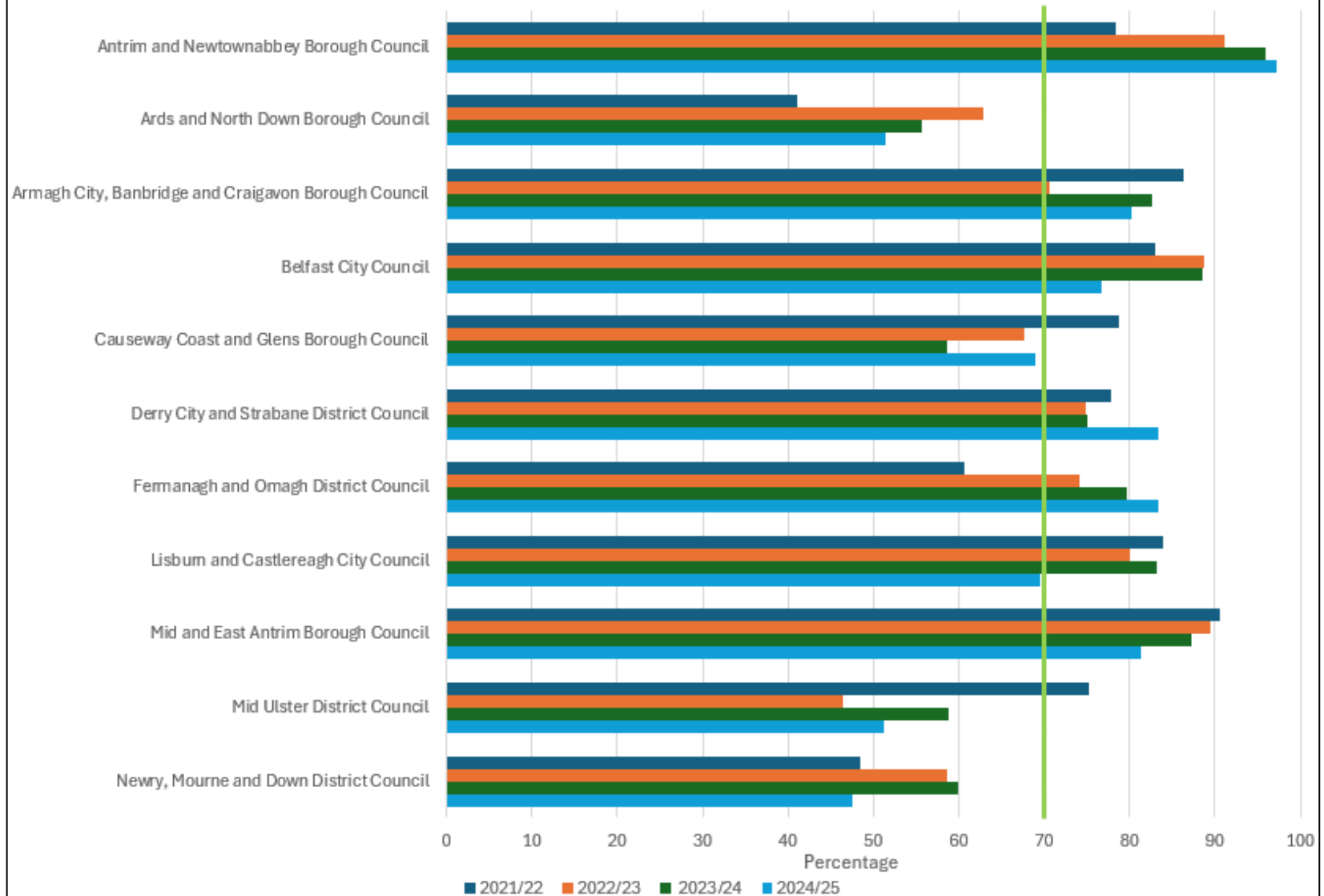
Indicator: The percentage of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks

- This indicator helps to maintain public confidence in the Planning system by ensuring development activity is carried out in line with approved plans and regulations, playing a vital role in safeguarding community interests and protecting the environment.
- Enforcement cases typically arise where there is a breach of planning control. These may involve unauthorised building works, such as construction or significant alterations carried out without necessary planning permissions; unauthorised changes of use, such as converting a residential property into a commercial premise without consent; breaches of conditions attached to planning approvals, such as failure to complete landscaping works, or non-compliance with formal planning notices, including enforcement and stop notices.
- In 2024/25, we concluded 81.3% of enforcement cases within 39 weeks, significantly exceeding the 70% statutory target. Even though we have remained significantly above the target figure each year, we have noted a downward trend in performance year on year. We are working to understand and address the reasons for this.
- Regionally, performance in enforcement timeliness declined during the year, with the Northern Ireland council average falling from 76.4% in 2023/24 to 70.7% in 2024/25. Only 6 councils met or exceeded the target, with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council reporting 97.3%, and Fermanagh and

Omagh District Council and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council both reporting 83.3%.



Percentage of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks
by Northern Ireland council (annual results)



Waste Management

- The results for all three statutory waste management indicators are summarised below. Figures are provisional, pending audit and verification by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

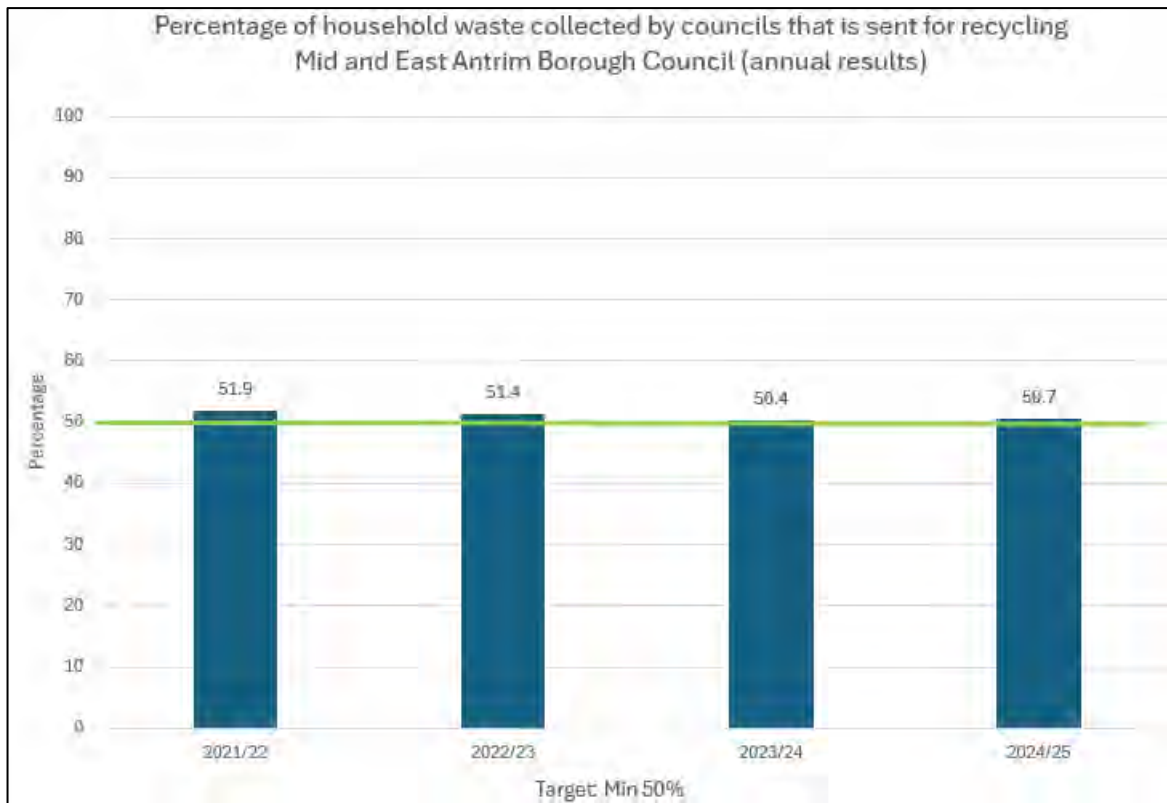
Indicator:	The percentage of household waste collected by councils that is sent for recycling.		
Standard:	A minimum of 50%.		
Past results			
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
50.8%	51.9%	51.4%	50.4%
2024/25			
Our result: 50.73%	Status and trend: Target achieved. Slight improvement in performance.	Northern Ireland council average: 50.93%	Our comparative council position: 5 th

Indicator:	The amount of biodegradable Local Authority collected municipal waste that is landfilled.		
Standard:	A maximum of 16,387 tonnes.		
Past results			
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
14,508 tonnes	14,528 tonnes	14,599 tonnes	15,239 tonnes
2024/25			
Our result: 13,611 tonnes	Status and trend: Target achieved. Significant improvement in performance	Northern Ireland council average: Not available	Our comparative council position: Not available

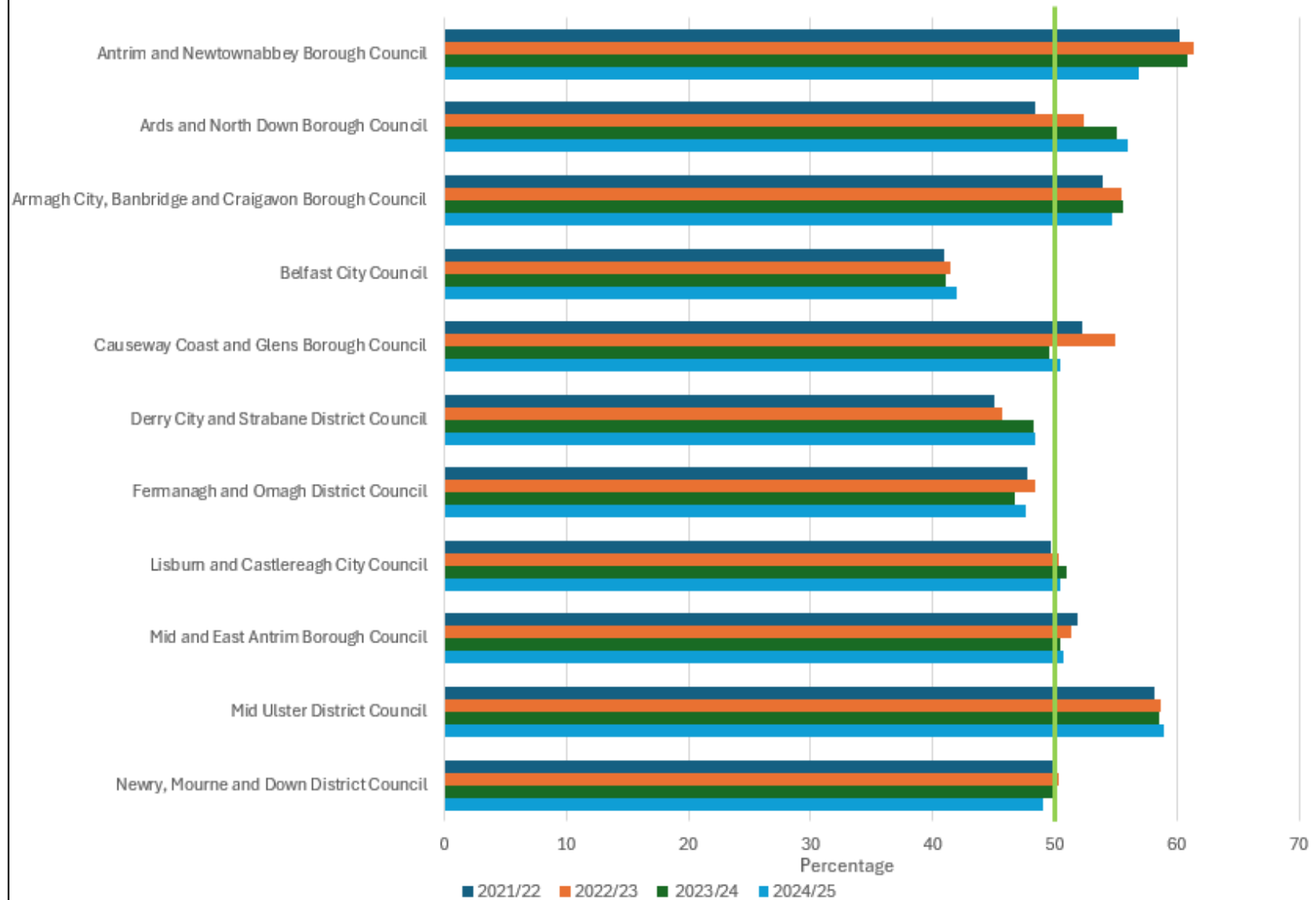
Indicator:	The amount of Local Authority collected municipal waste arisings.		
Standard:	A maximum of 75,797 tonnes.		
Past results			
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
78,986 tonnes	76,689 tonnes	73,433 tonnes	74,842 tonnes
2024/25			
Our result: 75,880 tonnes	Status and trend: Target not achieved. Slight decline in performance.	Northern Ireland council average: Not available	Our comparative council position: Not available

Indicator: The percentage of household waste collected by council that is sent for recycling

- As a council, we have collected more than the minimum 50% household recycling standard every year since 2017/18. Levels of household recycling can be impacted by household behaviours, holiday periods and seasonal waste generation. In 2024/25, at 50.73% household recycling rates in the borough were on par with the previous year at 50.4%. As with 2023/24, there was a marked reduction in recycling figures in the second half of the year from October to March compared with April to September.
- Borough household recycling figures do not compare unfavourably with other council areas. Whilst our recorded figure of 50.73% is slightly below the overall Northern Ireland Council average of 50.93%, Mid and East Antrim ranks 5th in terms of performance against other councils, up one place from last year.
- The Council made the decision in April 2025 to harmonise recycling collections across the borough. A new fully co-mingled collection service will be rolled out in 2026/27. This will mean that for the first time since the formation of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council the same system will be in place across Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne areas. Based on in-depth comparison of systems available, the co-mingled system was judged to be most cost-effective in terms of introduction and most likely to enable the Council to meet its medium to long-term household recycling targets.



Percentage of household waste collected that is sent for recycling
by Northern Ireland council (annual results)



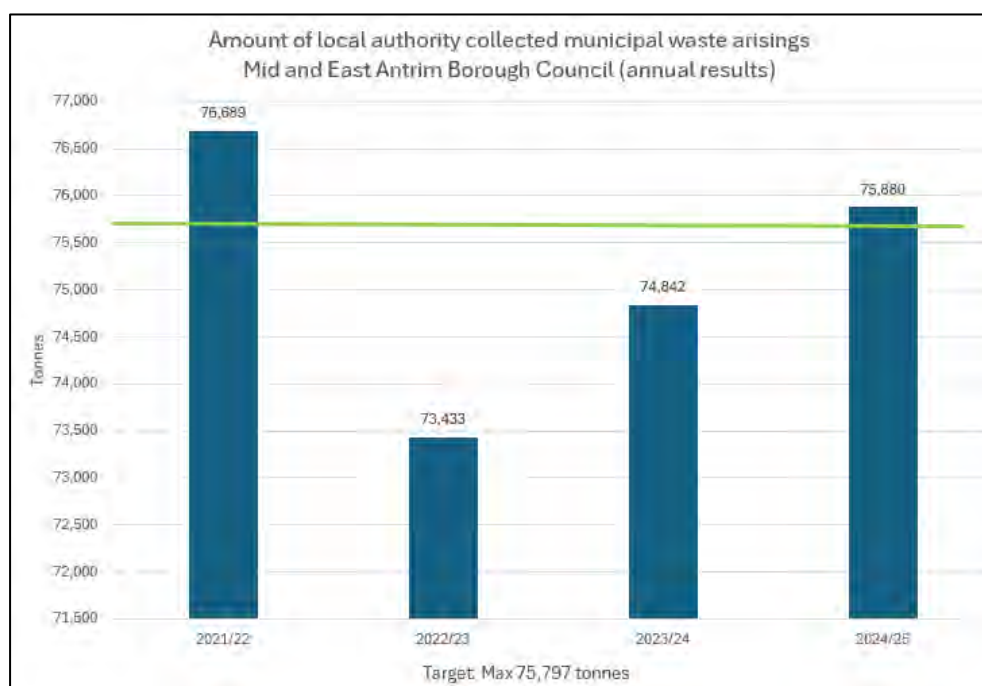
Indicator: The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable local authority collected municipal waste that is landfilled

- Biodegradable waste includes textiles, organic (food and green garden waste), wood, paper and cardboard. In 2024/25, the amount of biodegradable waste collected that was sent to landfill decreased to 13,611 tonnes, down 10.3% from the previous year and reverses a trend of 4 consecutive rises in the borough since 2019/20. This is lower than any year since 2019/20.
- The amount recorded in 2024/25 is also lower than the 16,387-tonne allowance set by the Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme, which was in place until 2019/20. Until clarity is provided on this indicator, we continue to use this allowance as an internal target. Practices are in place to help reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill, such as organic waste and dry recycling kerbside collections, textile and wood disposal services, and various communications campaigns.



Indicator: The amount of local authority collected municipal waste arisings

- This indicator relates to the total quantity of waste collected from households, businesses and institutional sources (recyclable and non-recyclable). No statutory standard is set for this indicator as we are required to collect waste presented at the kerbside, household recycling centres and commercial waste. In 2024/25, there was a modest increase in the volume of collected municipal waste arisings to 75,880 tonnes, up 1.4% from 2023/24.
- Various activities are in place to positively influence environmental practices within the borough, as outlined within our Corporate Plan (2024-2028) and Climate and Sustainability Action Plan (2023-2027). A number of programmes were delivered to support local communities and promote reuse, including the School Uniform Scheme, Christmas Toy Container Scheme, Community Fridges, Community Re-Paint Scheme, and Spectacle Reuse Scheme.

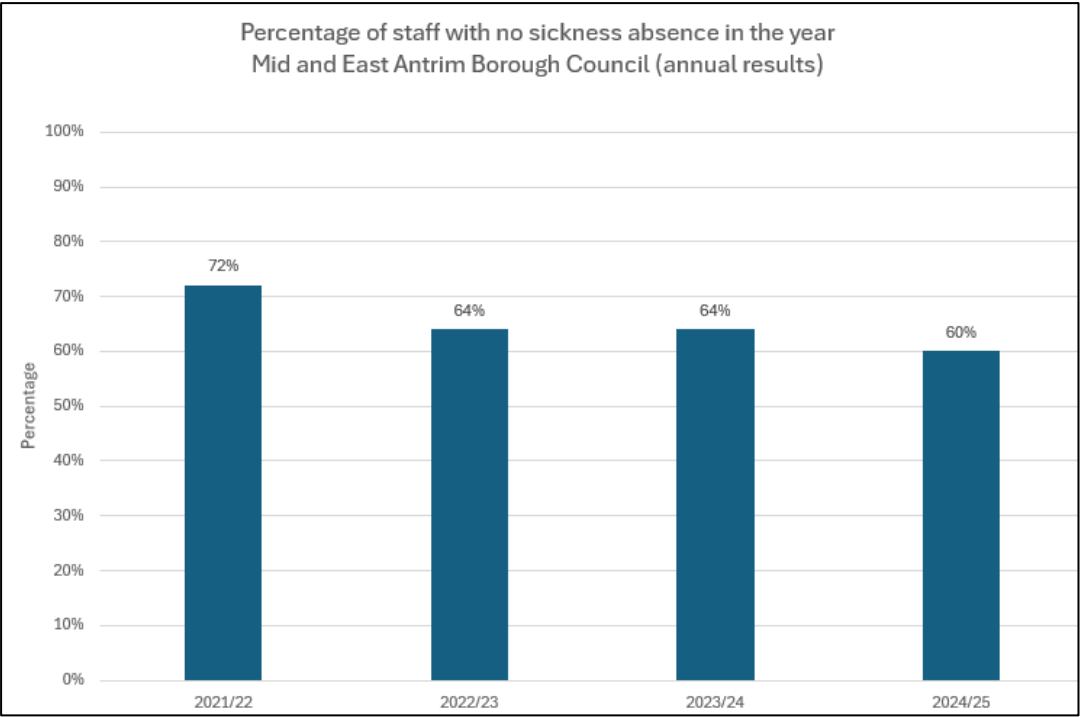


Absenteeism

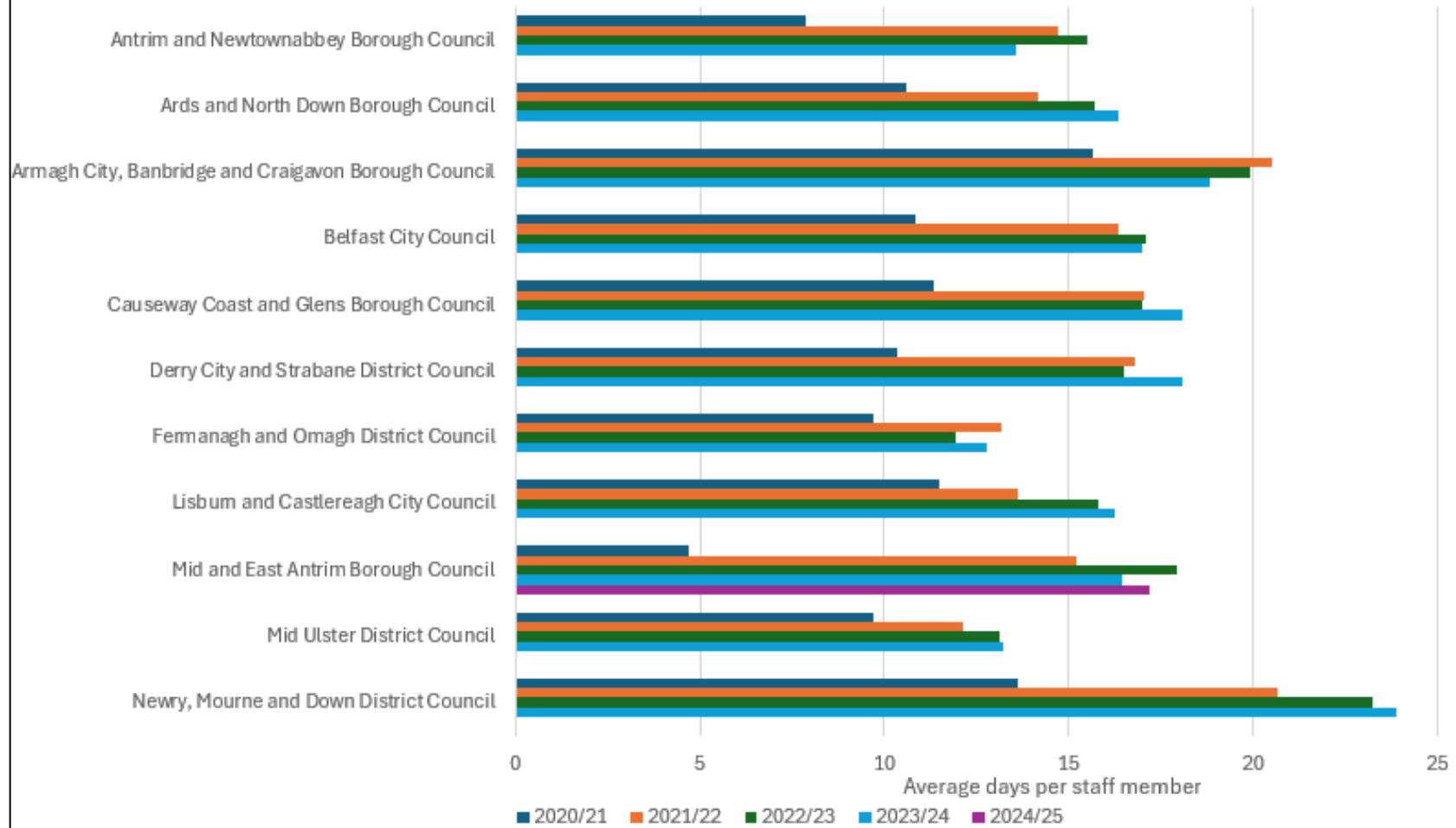
- Sickness absence levels across the United Kingdom have reached their highest levels in a decade (Source: CIPD Health and Wellbeing at Work Survey September 2023).
- Levels of sickness absence within Local Government continue to be higher than within Central Government (Source: Northern Ireland Audit Office). This gap increased from 10% in 2018/19 to 37% in 2022/23.
- In Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, in 2024/25 17.18 days were lost per full-time equivalent employee. This is similar to recent years but up 4% on last year. Mental health related absence continues to be the main reason for sickness absence.
- The latest comparable data with other councils in Northern Ireland is for the 2023/24 financial year, when the average rate of sickness absence across all councils was 16.77 days. We ranked 6th highest in terms of performance at 16.46 days, climbing 3 places from the previous year.
- 60% of our staff experienced no sickness absence during 2024/25 and 85% of all sickness absence was long-term i.e. 20 continuous working days or more. This indicates the high level of absence relates to a small number of long-term sickness absences, rather than a large number of frequent short-term absences. Factors relating to long-term sickness absence include staff

experiencing delays in accessing initial NHS consultations, diagnostics and treatments, and severe health events and diagnosis among staff.

- A review into sickness absence within the Council was completed during the year, with the agreed recommendations due to be delivered by March 2026. Actions will focus on promoting a strong attendance culture, prevention and early intervention, long-term absence, and measuring and analysing impact.
- A dedicated role has been established for a short-term period to focus on compliance with the Council's absenteeism policy. This will include equipping managers to fulfil their attendance management responsibilities, and more frequent monitoring and reporting on sickness absence to senior management.
- An Employee Inclusion and Wellbeing Officer role has also been established to develop and implement an employee wellbeing action plan. This will improve the capability of line managers to support people's mental health and will enhance employee wellbeing support.
- We also provide an Employee Assistance Programme which includes confidential counselling support, and a Health Cash Plan which offers financial assistance towards diagnostics, treatments, and counselling. There are 13 Mental Health Champions within the Council who have been trained in Mental Health First Aid, and 2 wellbeing hubs are also in operation.

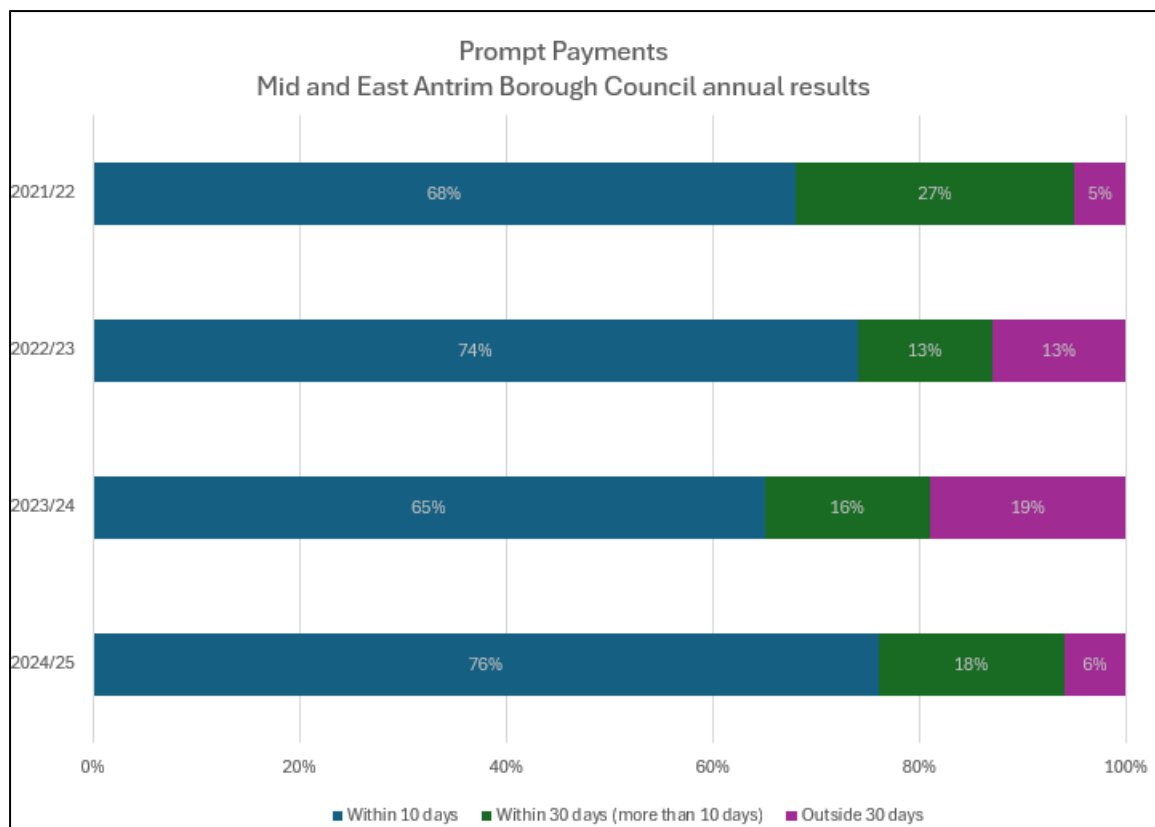


Absenteeism days across Northern Ireland councils (annual results)

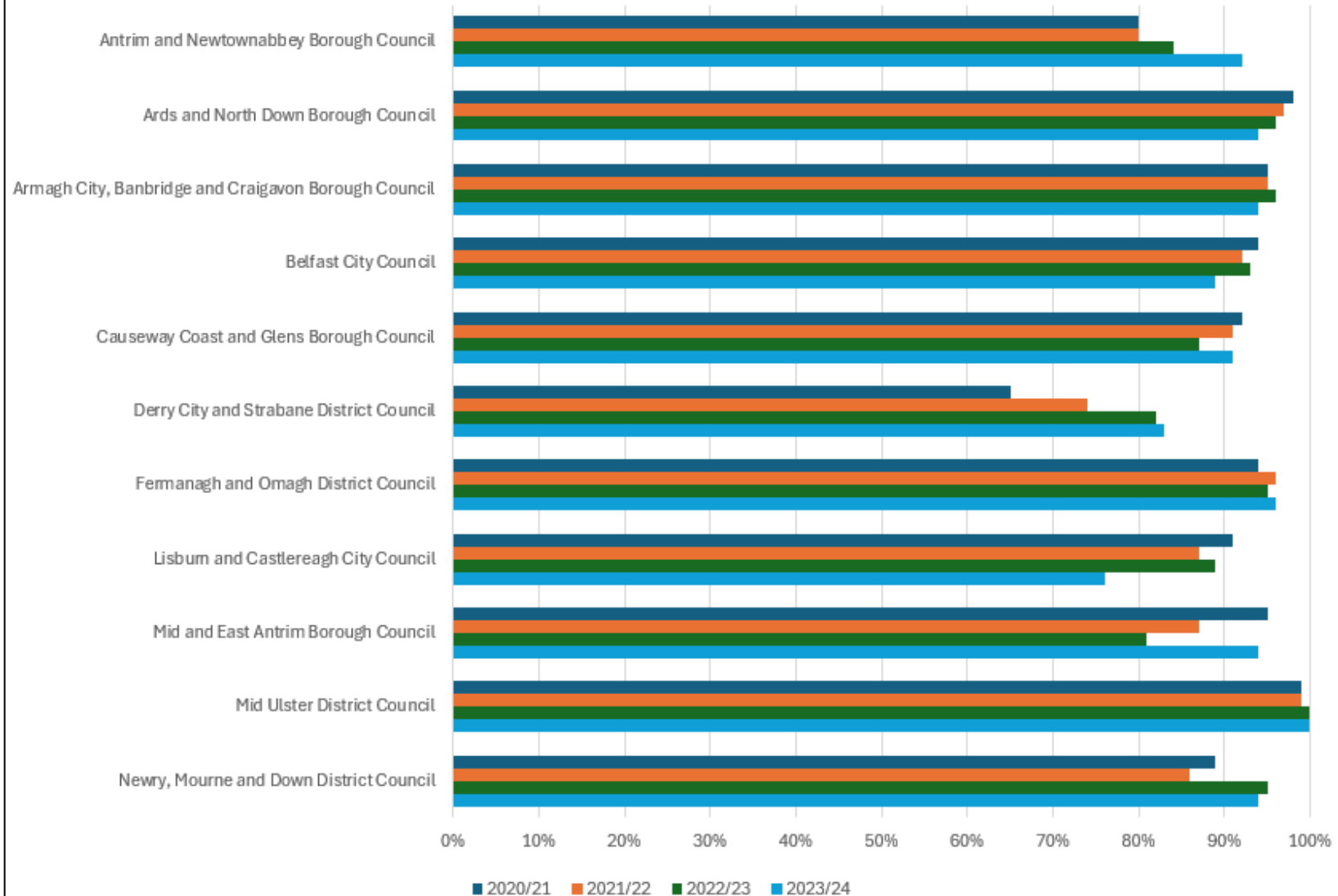


Prompt Payments

- Prompt payments relate to the length of time it takes us to process and pay our suppliers. During 2024/25, 76% of invoices were paid within 10 working days, exceeding our internal target of 60%. This is our highest performance within the last 6 years. A total of 94% of invoices were processed within 30 calendar days, surpassing our target of 80%, and our highest result since 2021/22.
- Compared with other Northern Ireland councils, our 94% 30-day compliance ranks among the top performers, on par with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. Only 2 councils achieved a higher percentage, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council at 96% and Mid Ulster District Council at 100%.
- Only 6% of invoices were paid outside the 30-day timeframe, a significant improvement on 2023/24 at 19% and 2022/23 at 13%. This reflects a series of targeted actions during the year, which enhanced our ability to process payments efficiently, including integration and optimisation of our financial management system and inclusion as an indicator within our Corporate Plan 2024-2028.



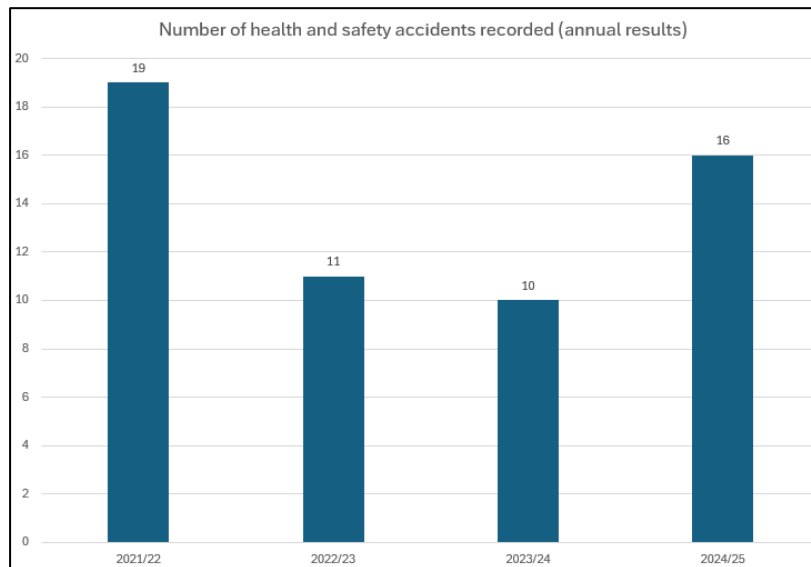
Percentage of payments made within 30 days
by Northern Ireland council (annual results)



Internal Benchmarking

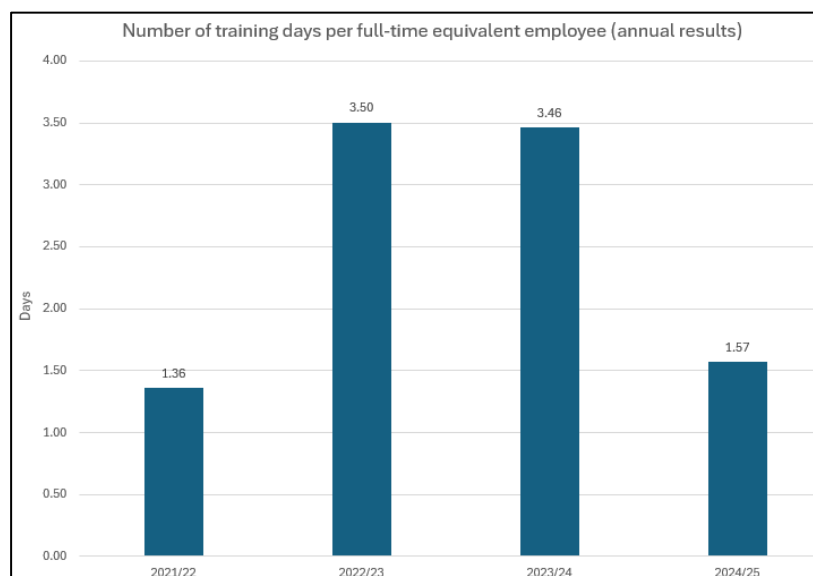
A small sample of our internal benchmarking activities is provided below. A detailed list is provided within the Appendices.

Number of health & safety accidents recorded



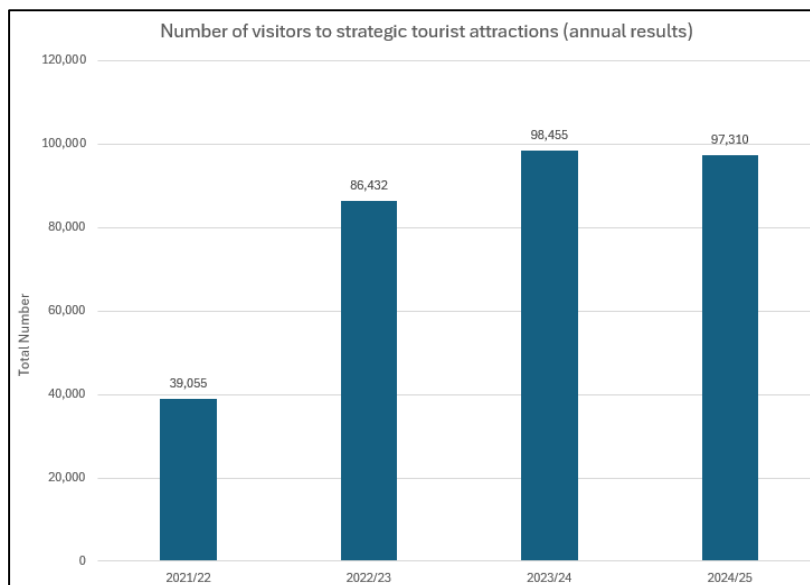
- There has been a significant reduction in accidents recorded over the last 5 years, from 49 accidents recorded in 2019/20. However, there was a 60% increase in recorded accidents from 2023/24 to 2024/25.

Number of training days



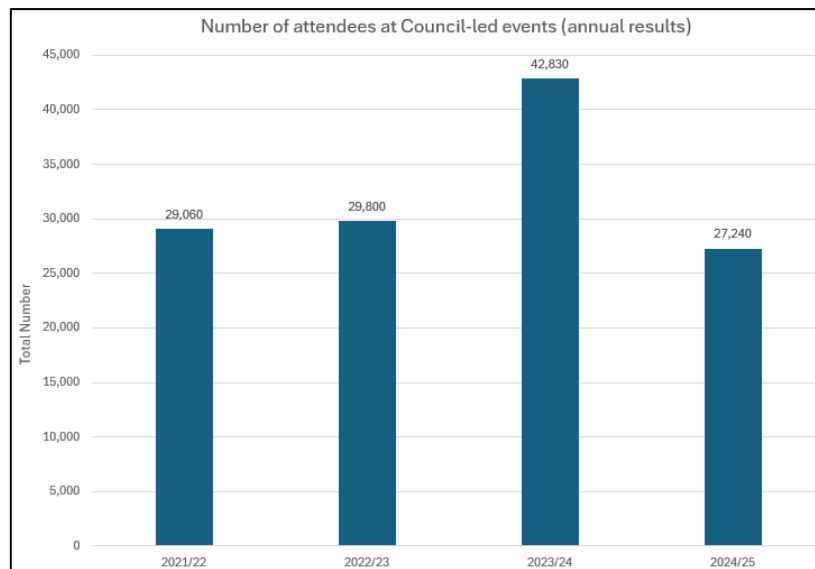
- We have demonstrated a consistent focus on enhancing skills and knowledge across our workforce, ensuring our teams are well-equipped to meet evolving challenges and deliver high-quality services. Whilst the number of training days is lower in 2024/25 than in 2022/23 and 2023/24, it exceeds our annual target of 1.5 days per full time equivalent employee.

Number of visitors to strategic tourist attractions



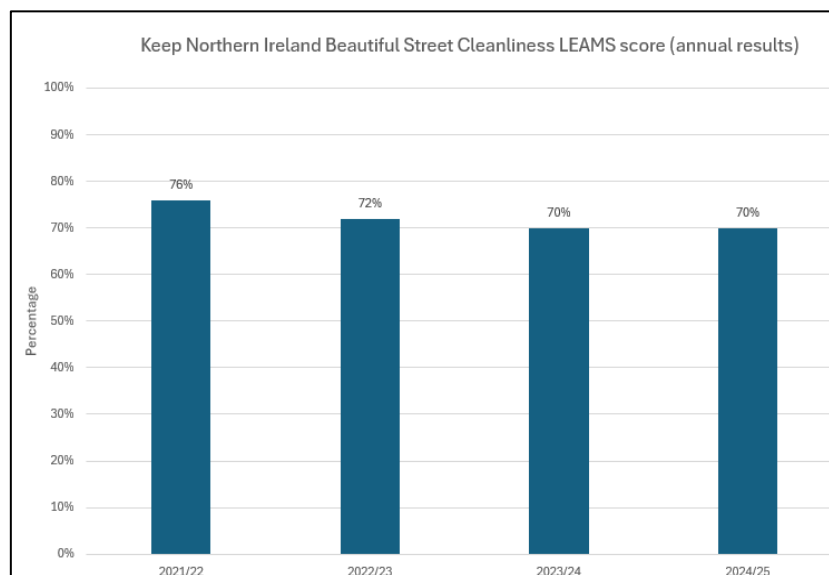
- Visitor numbers have grown strongly since reopening after the pandemic. There was a slight drop in visitor numbers in 2024/25, as the Gobbins site could not reopen in March 2025 due to rockfall damage.

Number of attendees at Council-led events



- A number of previously held events did not take place during 2024/25, resulting in a 36% reduction in attendee numbers.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful LEAMS score



- LEAMS scores represent how clean or littered an area is, with scores closer to 100% indicating better performance. 66% is considered 'acceptable'. Our results have remained at, or above, 70% for the last 4 years.

Part 3: Findings

Some key findings and areas for improvement are identified below.

Part 1: Duty to Improve

Arrangements to secure continuous improvement:

- The Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement were audited by the Northern Ireland Audit Office during 2024/25. The Local Government Auditor found the Council had discharged its performance improvement and reporting duties and had acted in accordance with the Guidance, the Council is likely to discharge its duties during 2024/25, and had demonstrated a track record of improvement. No issues were identified requiring a formal recommendation under the Act and there were no proposals for improvement.
- **Area for improvement:**
 - Despite an encouraging audit report, the Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement (as outlined within our Performance Management Framework) will be subject to review to ensure continued added value and fitness for purpose.

Identifying areas for improvement:

- Progress has been made in how the Council identifies areas for improvement. Despite this, it is acknowledged that we need to do more to enhance how we communicate, engage, consult and work together with our citizens and other stakeholders. This includes the further development of benchmarking capabilities with other local councils.

- **Areas for improvement:**
 - To strengthen stakeholder engagement and partnership working, new roles have been established within the Corporate and Support Services Directorate. One of these positions will be tasked with developing a new Consultation and Engagement Strategy for the Council, while two further positions will focus on exploring and developing strategic partnerships with our key stakeholders. It is anticipated this work will progress during 2025/26.

 - To progress our capability to benchmark with other local councils, we will continue to participate in meetings of the Local Government Performance Improvement Working Group.

Part 2: Performance Assessment

Self-Imposed Indicators and Standards:

- Our self-imposed indicators and standards are set out within our Corporate Plan and are included within our annual business plans. Over a 4-year period, our Corporate Plan helps us work towards achieving our vision for the borough.
- Of 61 indicators used to track progress, 74% were achieved or on track (45 of 61), 15% were delayed but progressing (9 of 61), and 11% were not achieved (7 of 61). Of those 'not achieved or stopped', 2 are statutory indicators, and another relates to absenteeism; both of which are discussed later. Ongoing actions will be progressed during 2025/26.
- While we may not have achieved everything we hoped to, it is clear from our analysis the positive impact our officers and our partner organisations have had across the borough.

Improvement Objectives

- Our Improvement Objectives seek to improve the quality of life and environment for our citizens and communities through targeted, shorter-term interventions (typically within 1 year). Three objectives were agreed for delivery in 2024/25.

- Of 56 performance indicators used to track progress, 87% were achieved or on track (49 of 56), 9% were delayed but progressing (5 of 56), and 4% were not achieved (2 of 56). The 2 indicators which were not achieved are statutory indicators and are discussed later in this section.
- Ongoing actions from our 2024/25 objectives have not been included within our Improvement Plan for 2025/26. However, these actions will continue to be progressed and will be reported to the relevant committee, as appropriate.

Benchmarking:

- We participate in a wide range of benchmarking and best practice activities to secure continuous improvement in the delivery of our services.
- Of the statutory key performance indicators prescribed by the Department of Communities, 5 of the 7 standards were achieved during 2024/25. Where comparisons can be made, the Council compared favourably with other local councils for 'the number of jobs promoted through business start interventions', the 'average processing time for local planning applications', and the 'processing of planning enforcement cases'. The area positioned 5th for household recycling performance, slightly exceeding the 50% minimum standard, and 6th for 'the average processing time for major planning applications', where the 30-week standard was not achieved. Borough 'waste arisings' also exceeded our target for the year.

- Sickness absence continues to be higher within Local Government in comparison to Central Government. In 2024/25, there were 17.18 days lost per Full Time Equivalent employee in Mid and East Antrim Borough Council; this is similar to recent years but up 4% on last year at 16.46 days. In 2023/24, the average number of days lost across all Northern Ireland councils was 16.77 days. We carried out a scrutiny review into sickness absence during the year. As a result, a number of targeted actions are being taken to improve employee wellbeing and reduce levels of absence.
- In terms of prompt payment performance, in 2024/25, 76% of invoices were paid within 10 working days, exceeding our internal target of 60% and our highest performance within the last 6 years. A total of 94% of invoices were processed within 30 calendar days, surpassing our target of 80% and our highest result since 2021/22. Compared with other Northern Ireland councils, our 94% 30-day compliance ranks among the top performers. Only 6% of invoices were paid outside the 30-day timeframe. This is a significant improvement on the previous 2 years, reflecting targeted actions taken to enhance our ability to process payments efficiently.
- Benchmarking and best practice activities are extensive throughout the organisation. We are an active member of the Local Government Performance Improvement Working Group and are able to compare our performance with other local councils for statutory key performance indicators, absenteeism and prompt payments. However, there is scope to enhance our

benchmarking capabilities, as recognised by the Local Government Auditor as a previous year 'proposal for improvement'.

- **Areas for Improvement:**

- To support the achievement of the statutory standard for the average median processing time for major planning applications, the Council will continue to progress the establishment of a Pre-Validation Checklist during 2025/26.
- We will continue to actively develop and promote positive environmental practices to increase levels of recycling and re-use and reduce the level of waste arisings in the borough, including circular economy initiatives, education and the Eco Schools Programme.
- A number of actions will be taken during 2025/26 to support employee wellbeing and improve levels of sickness absence. These include the delivery of recommendations arising from our scrutiny review into absenteeism, focusing on promoting a strong attendance culture, prevention and early intervention, long-term absence, and measuring and analysing impact. There will also be a dedicated focus on compliance with the Council's absence management policy, including training and more frequent monitoring and reporting to senior management. A newly created Employee Inclusion and Wellbeing role will also focus on developing and implementing an employee wellbeing action plan, which will improve the capability of line managers to support people's mental health and will enhance employee wellbeing support.

- Within the Performance Improvement Working Group, a sub-group had been established to look at benchmarking opportunities.

Part 4: Looking Forward

- As we enter a new financial year, we will continue to improve the quality of life and environment for our ratepayers and communities through our Corporate Plan, Belfast Region City Deal projects, Performance Improvement Plan, and other strategies and plans.
- Corporate Plan (2024-2028):
 - This plan will help ensure value-for-money services, support economic prosperity, develop safe and inclusive communities, and protect and enhance our environment. To find out more, visit:
www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/corporateplan
- Belfast Region City Deal:
 - The Belfast Region City Deal will focus on long-term economic growth, driving productivity, and creating and sustaining jobs. £80m will be invested in Mid and East Antrim through 3 flagship projects, including:
 - The i4C Innovation Centre, Ballymena: An investment of £24m+. This project will regenerate the former St Patrick's Barracks in the heart of Ballymena, creating a total of 300 direct, indirect and induced jobs. It will be a major catalyst and enabler of inclusive growth, contributing £11.6m GVA to the local economy each year.

- The Gobbins Phase 2, Larne: An investment of £13m+. This project will establish The Gobbins as one of Northern Ireland's top paid attractions by 2033, contributing £3.1m GVA to the local economy every year. It will create a spectacular staircase structure to link the existing cliff top and coastal paths, as well as a fully accessible 360° virtual reality offering, catering for everyone in all weather conditions.
- Carrickfergus Regeneration: An investment of £42m+. This project will deliver improvements to Carrickfergus Castle, focusing on the visitor hub and historic walls, coupled with a public realm scheme to strengthen the Castle's connection to the town centre. There will be significant job creation, including 160 in attractions and 143 in construction.
- Performance Improvement Plan 2025/26
 - Our Performance Improvement Plan works alongside the Community Plan, Corporate Plan and City Deal projects to deliver the best outcomes for our citizens, communities, businesses and visitors. Our Improvement Objectives for 2025/26 are:
 - People: We will help to prevent violence against women and girls.
 - Place: We will help boost our local economy and town centres.
 - Planet: We will all play our part in making Mid and East Antrim a great place to live in and visit.
- To find out more, visit www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/performance

Play Your Part

We want you to help us make Mid and East Antrim the best that it can be.

Here are some of the key things you can do to help:

- Shop locally.
- Be a responsible pet owner.
- Bin your waste.
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle.
- Donate unwanted items to charity.
- Report problems, such as, fly-tipping, dog foul, and anti-social behaviour.
- Get involved in community and voluntary work.
- Support our older people.
- Support people who are vulnerable.
- As business owners, offer apprenticeships or work placement opportunities.
- Be safe on our roads.
- Use public transport when you can.

Part 5: Get Involved

- We would like your input, views and feedback. If you would like to tell us about something that you think needs to be improved, you can do so at any time throughout the year.
- Please contact us by any of the following methods:
 - Email: performance@midandeantrim.gov.uk
 - Telephone: 0300 1245 000
 - Post: Policy and Performance Team, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena, BT43 5EJ.
- If you live, work or study in Mid and East Antrim you can also submit questions directly to our Elected Members and Officers by completing a short form. More details can be found at:
www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/publicquestions

Part 6: Closing Remarks

Our dedication to realising our vision remains steadfast, and we will continue to build on the progress achieved to date. Looking ahead, we have identified a number of promising and innovative projects, and I look forward to sharing updates on these with you as the year progresses.

I want to take this opportunity to encourage you to stay connected with us through our website and social media channels where we will be sharing real-time updates and celebrating the work that continues to make Mid and East Antrim a strong, vibrant, safe, and inclusive community for all who live, work and visit here.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement.

Valerie Watts

Interim Chief Executive

Appendices

Appendix 1: External Benchmarking

- Age-Friendly NI Network Membership
- All Ireland Woman in Leadership
- All-Party Group on Climate Change
- Annual District Rates statistics
- Arc21 Waste Management Northern Ireland Joint Committee and Steering Group
- Association for Public Service Excellence (Annual Service Awards, Energy Membership and Network Queries)
- Association of Town and City Management Forum Membership
- Association of Visitor Experiences and Attractions
- Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management finalist
- Belfast 5G Innovation Region Showcase
- Better Beaches Forum
- BIG Spring Clean
- Building Control Northern Ireland Memberships (Committee Membership, Fire Safety Panel Membership, Standards Panel Membership, Training and Communication Panel Membership)
- Business in the Community Northern Ireland (Climate Action Pledge and Environmental Benchmarking Survey)
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Membership
- Chartered Institute of Waste Management Membership
- Chief Leisure Officers Association Northern Ireland Membership
- City Deal collaboration
- Climate NI Membership
- Cluster Acceleration Conference (Invest Northern Ireland)
- Conservation Officers Forum
- Creditor Prompt Payment Reports
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Northern Ireland Municipal Waste Data Reporting
- Digital Transformation Flexible Fund
- Eastern Transport Plan Project Board
- Enforcement Working Group
- Engagement and best practice with other councils on CCTV provision
- Environmental Health Fees and Charges comparison

- Environmental Health Northern Ireland Sub-groups (Food Safety, Health and Safety Liaison Group, Product Safety Sub-Group, and Tobacco Control Sub-Group)
- External security assessment reviews of museums and arts and cultural venues
- Finance Working Group
- Food Standards Agency annual returns and consistency exercises
- Food Standards Agency/Local Authority Port Operations Group
- Full Fibre NI Consortium Sub-Group and Steering Group
- Gold Anchor
- Go Succeed Service Group and Steering Group meetings
- Health and Safety benchmarking with other Northern Ireland councils
- Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland Annual Return
- Health and Safety Executive Visits (poolside operations and lifeguarding)
- Human Resources and Employment Law bodies membership
- Hydrogen Skills Alliance meetings
- Indoor Leisure Pricing Comparator
- Information Governance Network Membership
- Innovate UK Future Ready Programme
- International Environment Management Standard ISO14001:2015
- Investment benchmarking
- Invest Northern Ireland (Cluster Acceleration Programme Network meeting, LEAN Network, and referrals, briefings and monitoring)
- Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Cleanliness Index
- Land and Property Services meetings
- Lean Cluster NI meeting
- Legal Island Membership
- Leisure Managers Forum
- Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme, Eco Schools (Green Flag assessments) and Steering Group
- Local Authority Building Control (UK mainland) Membership
- Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee meetings
- Local Development Plan Working Group
- Local Government Absence Survey
- Local Government Apprenticeship Network Group
- Local Government Cyber Security NI Group
- Local Government Fire Safety best practice and improvements

- Local Government Energy data collection and analysis
- Local Government Events Managers Forum
- Local Government IT Managers Group
- Local Government Learning and Development Managers Forum
- Local Government Performance Improvement Working Group
- Local Government Procurement Officers Group
- Local Government Safeguarding Network best practice sharing
- Local Government Staff Commission
- Local Government Talent Management Task and Finish Working Group
- Local Government Training Group
- Local Government Travellers' Partnership Membership
- Local Policies Plan and best practice meetings
- Manufacturing Task Force/Invest NI Lean Network
- Metropolitan Spatial Area Planning Working Group
- Mid and East Antrim Agewell Partnership
- Mid and East Antrim Innovation Partnership
- Mid and East Antrim Labour Market Partnership
- Mid and East Antrim Manufacturing Task Force
- Mid and East Antrim Policing and Community Safety Partnership
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Delta Quarterly Borrowing Return
- Mobile and Telecoms MAP NI Digital Champions
- National Communications Action Plan meetings
- National Communications Advisory Panel
- Neighbourhood Renewal Programme
- Net Zero Delivery Meetings
- North-East Region Apprenticeship Week Working Group
- Northern Ireland Audit Office annual reports
- Northern Ireland Barometer
- Northern Ireland Building Regulation Advisory Committee
- Northern Ireland councils Electric Vehicle Consortium
- Northern Ireland councils Land and Property Services and IDOX IT Solutions
- Northern Ireland Dogs Advisory Group
- Northern Ireland Emergency Preparedness Working Group
- Northern Ireland Energy Managers Forum

- Northern Ireland Environmental Protection Group
- Northern Ireland Environment Compliance Assessment for Licensed Waste Management Facilities
- Northern Ireland Forest Schools Association Partnership
- Northern Ireland Local Government Association
- Northern Ireland Local Government Association commissioned Working Group on long-term recruitment strategies and Employee Value Proposition
- Northern Ireland Museums Council's Museum Accreditation Scheme and Mapping Museum Trends Survey
- Northern Ireland Parks Managers' Regional Forum
- Northern Ireland Resources Network Forum
- Outscape membership
- Playpark Development Forum
- Principal Planners Development Management Working Group
- Public Health and Housing Group
- Public Services People Managers Association Membership
- Quality Leisure Management meetings
- Regional Community Resilience Group Membership
- Regional Information Governance Group
- Regulatory Impact Assessment meetings
- Royal Town Planning Institute Northern Ireland
- Shared Environmental Service Local Development Working Group
- Social Enterprise NI
- Spatial Working Group (Planning GIS officers)
- Statutory Duty Network Equality and Diversity meetings
- Statutory Key Performance Indicators
- Steamhouse Makerspace
- Sustainable NI Membership
- Technical Advisors Group Northern Ireland Waste Management Membership
- The Executive Office Local Government International Relations Working Group
- Tobacco Returns to the Public Health Authority
- Tourism Northern Ireland visitor information centre statistics
- Town Centre Footfall monitoring
- Tree and Woodland Strategy Best Practice and Development
- Tree Forum Working Group

- UK Midlands visit to Mid and East Antrim's Net Zero project
- Ulster University Degree apprenticeships
- University of Ulster Economic Policy Centre
- Waste Industry Safety and Health forum for Northern Ireland
- Waste Resources Action Programme Forum Group Membership

Appendix 2: Internal Benchmarking

- Absence Management Scrutiny Review
- Absenteeism
- Annual Carbon Footprint Report
- Annual Climate Report
- Asset Management
- Autism Steering Group
- Business Client Manager Diagnostics
- Business Plan performance
- Capital Plan monitoring and reporting
- Carbon Reduction Analysis
- Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2023-2027
- Community Plan monitoring and reporting
- Complaints (general)
- Corporate Plan monitoring and reporting
- Customer satisfaction
- Direct Award Contracts
- Dog Foul, Fly-Tipping and Litter complaints
- Energy consumption
- Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan monitoring and reporting
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network
- Event and Campaign analysis
- Financial monitoring (Bad Debt, Budgets, Financial Accounts Management reports etc.)
- General Data Protection Regulation compliance tracking
- Information Governance Statutory Compliance training
- Health and Safety reporting and best practice dissemination
- Household Recycling Centre performance
- In-house performance management system
- Internal Audit Practitioner Group
- ISO14001:2015 International Environment Management System
- Labour Market Partnership review and capacity building
- Leisure centre memberships
- Leisure energy use and cost

- Local Development Plan 2030 annual monitoring and review
- Manufacturing Task Force stakeholder benchmarking
- MEAqua Development Plan and programme performance
- Mid and East Antrim Economic Outlook (Ulster University Economic Policy Centre)
- Mid and East Antrim Go Succeed programme performance monitoring
- Mid and East Antrim's Net Zero Business Action Plan monitoring
- Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme
- Outstanding internal audit recommendations
- Parks Supervisor benchmarking and best practice meetings
- Performance Improvement Plan monitoring and reporting
- Performance Self-Assessment Report
- Return to Work Interview (compliance)
- Service area Risk Assessments
- Shared Environmental Service requests and performance monitoring
- Social media analytics and reviews
- Staff Exit Interview feedback
- Staff Performance Monitoring (via regular meetings)
- Statutory performance indicators and standards monitoring and reporting
- Tascomi calls performance monitoring
- Tobacco Return meetings
- Tourism, Arts and Culture Interim Plan monitoring
- Tourism Monthly Management reports (including revenue)
- Town Centre Footfall
- Town Centre Surveys
- Trip Advisor reviews
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Report
- Utility Purchasing Analysis model
- Visitor numbers and feedback
- Website visits

Appendix 3: Benchmarking and Best Practice Case Studies

Council Department: Arts and Culture, Events, and Tourism

Details	Outcome
Bethlehem Pennsylvania, USA (October 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebratory event and learning opportunity for the future operation and management of the Gracehill Moravian Settlement (UNESCO site).
World Travel Market, London (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning opportunity to inform enhanced interpretation at The Gobbins Visitor Centre.
Local Government Events Managers' Forum (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting to discuss industry issues, lobby, collaborate and share best practice.
Waterford City and County Council (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exchange study trip to build connections and explore common interests in industrial heritage and art, through the Creative Communities on a Shared Island project.
Study Visits to view historic assets and inform the Carrickfergus City Deal project (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice learning and networking. Included visits to Caernarfon Castle and Town Walls, Conwy Castle and Town Walls, Caer Gybi Roman Fort, Chester City Walls and Cathedral Tower Tour.
Waterford City and County Council (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivery of the creative writing strand, through the Creative Communities on a Shared Island project.
Association of Visitor Experiences and Attractions Annual Forum (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview of tourism and hospitality performance, including industry research, business insights and new ventures.

Council Department: Climate Change and Sustainability

Details	Outcome
Live Here Love Here Steering Group, online (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of behavioural research and media campaign to inform future communications activities.
Launch of Utility Regulator's Corporate Strategy (2024-2029) and Consumer Protection Programme (2024-2029) (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informed Council's energy decarbonisation plans.
Northern Ireland Environment Link – Farming and Food Conversations Workshop (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshop to help shape Council's Climate and Sustainability Action Plan.
Our Planet, Belfast City Council Agenda (May 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice learning opportunity, focusing on Climate Commission, Resilience Boards, Energy Plans, Food, Data and Pathfinders, with insights into solar PV installations and district heating schemes.
Net Zero Delivery Meetings (Monthly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly internal meetings to support local businesses to decarbonise.
All-Party Group on Climate Change Executive-level Meetings, hosted by Sustainable NI (Bi-monthly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice and sharing information. Attended by Members of the Legislative Assembly, the Department for Economy and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs etc.
Enviro NI and AGM: Event for APSE NI member councils (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information on waste management strategies, renewable energies, alternative fuels, biodiversity, waste legislation and upcoming consultations.
Sustainable Development Forum meetings (Ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assisted in the development of Council's Tree and Woodland Strategy. Provided insights into the National Museums NI Sustainability Principles, the Department for the Economy's GeoenergyNI project, and included a visit to the Stormont Estate Geothermal site and an update by Belfast City Council on the Belfast Local Area Energy Plan. Information was also provided on the new Climate

	Regulations Public Body Reporting, as well as training on the Sustainability Screening Tool.
Northern Ireland Waste and Resource Management Conference (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This conference focused on sustainability, the circular economy, and transitioning to more efficient and environmentally friendly waste management.
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Meetings (Ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meeting attended by all Northern Ireland councils, with discussion on legislation, regulations and best practice on single-use plastics.
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Earth Hub Workshops (January – March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information shared on the Earth Hub online platform which when developed will provide users with information on climate change, environmental improvement projects, funding, training and more.
Department for Infrastructure Decarbonising Travel (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information exchange on the Department and Council's transport strategies and plans.
Northern Ireland Environment Link online workshop (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on the Department for Infrastructure's 'Active Travel Plan' proposals.
National Communications Action Plan meetings (various dates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helped inform Council's Food Waste communications campaigns.
Polysorb meeting (August 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research sharing on the removal of nano plastics from water bodies.
The Future Is Already Here (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networking opportunity.
Live Here Love Here Steering Group (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of behavioural research and media campaign to inform future communications activities on littering, cleansing, recycling and reuse.
Sustainable Development Forum meetings (Ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and discussion on upcoming training courses, Belfast City Council's approach to Scope 3 emissions, benchmarking of climate targets, and a roundtable discussion on Transport.
Collaborative Growth Network (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation by Council to local businesses on developing a Climate and Sustainability Action Plan.

Northern Ireland Resources Network (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council presentation to local entrepreneurs and social enterprises on the circular economy and how it is embedded within the Council.
Department for Communities Fuel Poverty Strategy Workshop (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of strategy proposals to assist in the development of a draft plan.
H2 Aberdeen online discussions (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to discuss using hydrogen technology to power fleet.
Department for Infrastructure, NI Water, Ballymena Community Resilience Group (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of ongoing flooding issues in the Toome Road area of Ballymena. The Department will undertake a feasibility study to identify potential mitigation to reduce likelihood and impact.
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Public Body Reporting Team (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codesign of Public Body Reporting on Climate Change (Mitigation).
Strategic Investment Board Procurement Regulations Training (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in new procurement regulations.
Mid and East Antrim Tree and Woodland Strategy development with Treeconomics (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with Treeconomics to shape the new strategy.
Arc21 Steering Group meetings, councils (Monthly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review waste management practices, contracts, recycling performance and active consultations.

Council Department: Community Planning and Development

Details	Outcome
Community Empowerment Division training (January and March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training on the Department for Communities' new Grants Portal.
Policing and Community Safety Partnerships private meeting (Monthly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly meeting as part of partnership delivery.
Policing and Community Safety Partnership meeting Online (Monthly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly meeting as part of partnership delivery.
Police Service Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Conference (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information update for Policing and Community Safety Partnership Managers and other stakeholders at police headquarters.
Department for Communities Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting to discuss the Ballymena Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan and programme.
Policing and Community Safety Partnership Managers Joint Committee, Department of Justice, and Northern Ireland Policing Board (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing of information and good practice to Policing and Community Safety Partnership Managers.
International Women's Day Event (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information sharing and networking opportunity.

Council Department: Economic Development

Details	Outcome
Ulster Bank, Belfast (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Event to connect stakeholders and promote ethnic minority entrepreneurship.
Time to Change, Stormont (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence-based recommendations for advancing the UK's ethnic minority businesses.
Placemaking Conference, Queen's University (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice event on regeneration activities throughout the UK and Ireland.
Labour Market Action Plan Review (May 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review workshop with the Department for Communities, Strategic Investment Board and Labour Market Partnerships from each council area.
Social Value Networking Event, NI Chamber (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice event on the importance of social value.
Co-designing a Labour Market Observatory for NI, Ulster University (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice approaches to data analysis in labour market interventions.
Social Enterprise Networking (August 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relationship building with Social Enterprise NI and their members.
Inclusive Entrepreneurship Conference (August 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice event with stakeholders representing the disability sector.
Institute of Enterprise Educators Conference Queen's University (September 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice event on enterprise education, outreach, outreach and approaches from across the UK.
Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce 'Festival of Business', St Georges Market, Belfast (September 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Networking.
Research Economic Development event,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation on school engagement and networking.

Carrickfergus Academy (September 2024)	
Udaras naGaeltchta, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, PeacePlus partners (April 2024 and September 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression of the 'Innovate Green' project, which seeks to develop and commercialise environmentally sustainable technologies and innovations. Sources of funding are currently being explored.
Hampton Conservatories, Portrush (September 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice visits in LEAN Manufacturing. Attendees included the Mid and East Antrim Manufacturing Task Force and Invest NI's LEAN Network.
The Executive Office Local Government International Relations Working Group (May and September 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of international activity.
Mid and East Antrim's Net Zero (MEANZ) Business Innovate UK, Birmingham and Midlands (October 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice visits to learn about net zero and sustainability at Keele University's HyDeploy Gas Blending Trial, JCB, the Birmingham Innovation Centre and Tyseley Energy Park, and Birmingham City University's STEAMhouse.
Future of Work Summit, NI Chamber (October 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability and skills discussion with public and private stakeholders and experts from the UK and Ireland.
Investment Fund for Northern Ireland Roadshow (October 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to learn about funding options, meet with funders and beneficiaries, and learn how funding has enabled businesses to grow. Widely attended by small to medium sized enterprises and business advisors.
A Networking Conference to "Celebrate the Contribution of Business Consultants, Mentors, Advisors and Coaches to our Economy" (October 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights into Northern Ireland's business support ecosystem.

Go Succeed Ultimate Pitch Final, Innovation Factory (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcasing of Northern Ireland's new business start-ups.
Association of Town Centre Management Northern Ireland meeting (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunity on town centre projects in other council areas.
Regeneration Engagement Forum (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from other councils on projects funded by the Department for Communities.
Institute of Small Business Conference, Sheffield (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and insights into excellence in small business and entrepreneurship.
Mid and East Antrim Food and Drink Network Go Succeed Peer Support Network Study Visit, CAFRE Food Innovation Centre (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights into Food and Drinks innovation.
NI Economic Conference (November 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic analysis and networking event.
Queen's University Belfast Innovation Centres (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with a range of industry sectors and discussion on the Belfast Region City Deal.
Innovate Local NI, Assembly Buildings Conference Centre (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning on Innovate UK's programmes and initiatives to support local businesses.
Dougies Goodies Best Practice Visit, Ballymena (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice visit to generate new ideas and improve business operations. Helped to inform the future direction of the Food and Drink Network.
Belfast 5G Innovation Region Showcase event (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunity.
Mid and East Antrim Net Zero Business project Sustainable Ventures,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice and benchmarking on maximising the value of local net zero planning.

Future Ready, London (February 2025)	
Manufacturing Task Force Lean Network, Hutchinson Engineering, Dungannon (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice visit on LEAN manufacturing.
Advanced Manufacturing Supercluster Visit Hutchinson Engineering, Kilrea (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice LEAN visit on Value Stream Mapping and digital applications.
State Aid/Subsidy Control Awareness Session (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunity on the UK Subsidy Control Regime, EU State Aid Rules and Article 10 of the Windsor Framework.
Women in Business Awards (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights into small business and entrepreneurship for females, and networking opportunities.
Northern Ireland Local Government Association Awards (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation of Council finalists at awards ceremony, best practice and networking opportunity.
Social Enterprise Champions Workshop (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop to explore future support programmes.
Future High Streets Conference, Retail NI (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunity on the future of High Streets.
Multiply Showcase, Belfast (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcasing of Council's Multiply Programme.
Place-Making Academy, Queen's University Belfast (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department for Communities workshop to explore best practice in town centre regeneration.

Council Department: Facilities

Details	Outcome
Emerging Technologies Conference - The Crown Estate, National Audit Office, and multiple councils (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conference to improve understanding and readiness across public and private sectors to adapt policies and procurement practices in response to emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence and big data. Led to greater emphasis on ethical use, data protection, inclusivity, and the integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria, supporting more informed investment decisions and responsible digital modernisation.

Council Department: Finance

Details	Outcome
Association of Local Government Finance Officers (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To review emerging issues and discuss the application and treatment of government directions and best practice policies.
Finance Working Group with the Department for Communities, Local Government Finance Officers, and the Northern Ireland Audit Office (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To review emerging issues and discuss the application and treatment of government directions and best practice policies.
Treasury Seminar (December 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To review the UK's economic climate and forecasted economic trends to inform policies on the structuring of the Council's investments and borrowing finances.
Treasury Management Webinar (various dates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advice on the correct preparation of year-end financial accounts.
Procurement Act Training (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clearer understanding of the significant changes introduced by the new Procurement Act, including enhanced awareness of the effect on contract management, supplier engagement and reporting obligations. Guidance also provided on compliance

	requirements to ensure procurement activities meet updated legal standards.
Tech 1 Sourcing Module Webinar (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunity to streamline and improve processes.
Tech 1 demonstration, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council (January 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunity to inform planning, improvements, system configuration and training needs within Council.

Council Department: Human Resources

Details	Outcome
Public Service People Management Association Northern Ireland (ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice learning and networking.
Hays and Northern Ireland Local Government Association Workshop (October 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss findings into long-term recruitment strategies and local government employee value proposition.

Council Department: ICT

Details	Outcome
ICT Managers Forum, Northern Ireland Local Government (monthly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and networking.
ICT NI Wide Cyber Forum (monthly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion, learning and collaboration with other local authorities and members of the National Cyber Security Centre.

Council Department: Parks Development

Details	Outcome
Balmoral Show (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning in woodland creation and tree protection, and networking opportunity.
All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Community Actions Awareness Event (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice on engaging communities and managing land for pollinators.
Green Flag Heritage Training (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practice learning on Green Flag areas.
Play Development Forum chaired by the Playboard NI (April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaboration and best practice learning. Site visits to Pond Field Playpark, Aurora Playpark and Hillsborough Forest Park.
Tree Officer Best Practice Visit, Ards and North Down Council (May 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning and networking opportunities.
Outscape Conferences (Various)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning opportunities on the use of natural surroundings for play.
Making Space for Nature Conference, Queen's University Belfast (May 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning opportunities on how to make urban spaces more biodiverse and resilient, including discussions on Biodiversity Net Gain, Nature Based Solutions and Urban Greening.
All Ireland Woman in Leadership Programme, Dublin (May 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning and networking opportunities.
Levelling-Up Support programme, Northern Ireland based, online (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peer support for successful UK Government funded projects across Northern Ireland.
Woodland Management Sustainable NI Forum (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing information and best practice, and site visit to Cultra Museum.
Peatland Regeneration: Practice and Prospects,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing information and best practice, and networking.

Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (November 2024)	
Nature's Recovery Workshop (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The UK made a commitment to protect and conserve a minimum of 30% of land and sea for biodiversity by 2030, known as 30x30. This workshop looked at progress and how we can meet the target.
Peace Plus funding, Northern Ireland Environment Link Online (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing event.
Tree Protection Bill NI Environment Link Online (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information session on proposed Bill which aims to strengthen legal protection for the region's oldest and most significant trees and woodlands.
Class on Grass best practice learning Online (February 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice on grassland management.
Sustainable NI online Forum (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable development discussion.
GROW NI Gairdín an Phobail, Belfast (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice and networking visit on engaging communities in community gardens.

Council Department: Parks and Open Spaces

Details	Outcome
Parks Managers Forum (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on herbicide reduction and networking.

Council Department: Public Protection, Health and Wellbeing

Details	Outcome
Leisure Managers Forum (April and October 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and Safety and best practice discussions.
Antrim and Newtownabbey Civic Centre (September 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safeguarding Coordinator presentation to the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and the Council's Senior Management Team on current safeguarding frameworks, governance and arrangements across all councils.
Local Government Safeguarding Network online (December 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland set up a workshop with local councils to address safeguarding issues identified from a recent audit. This included a presentation by the lead of the Safeguarding Board, including the sharing of best practice from other council areas.
Quality Leisure Management Lifeguard Zone Visibility Test, Online (March 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of the Lifeguard Zone Visibility Test for all centres, essential for pool operators to find optimal positions for lifeguards to ensure effective management pool hazards and to maintain high visibility.

Council Department: Waste

Details	Outcome
Bryson Recycling Visit (December 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educational visit by Elected Members and Council Officers.

Appendix 4: Data Tables

Number of jobs promoted through business start interventions – Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (annual results)

Chart Page 75

Year	Standard	Result
2021/22	85	109
2022/23	85	124
2023/24	85	103
2024/25	111	144

Number of jobs promoted through business start interventions by Northern Ireland council (2024/25 results, as per 2023 Order)

Chart Page 76

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	Target: 80 Actual: 145	Variance: +81%
Ards and North Down Borough Council	Target: 123 Actual: 123	Variance: 0%
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	Target: 182 Actual: 137	Variance: -25%
Belfast City Council	Target: 325 Actual: 174	Variance: -46%

Causeway, Coast and Glens Borough Council	Target: 128 Actual: 141	Variance: +10%
Derry and Strabane District Council	Target: 140 Actual: 175	Variance: +25%
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	Target: 170 Actual: 136	Variance: -20%
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	Target: 116 Actual: 126	Variance: +9%
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	Target: 111 Actual: 144	Variance: 30%
Mid Ulster District Council	Target: 153 Actual: 98	Variance: -36%
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	Target: 173 Actual: 199	Variance: +15%

Average processing time of major planning applications – Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (annual results)

Chart Page 80

Standard: 30 weeks	
2021/22	34.7 weeks
2022/23	47.6 weeks
2023/24	67.4 weeks
2024/25	45.2 weeks

Average processing time of major planning applications by Northern Ireland council (annual results)

Chart Page 81

Standard: 30 weeks				
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	2021/22 25.1 weeks	2022/23 52.1 weeks	2023/24 21.1 weeks	2024/25 21.8 weeks
Ards and North Down Borough Council	2021/22 110.8 weeks	2022/23 104.5 weeks	2023/24 84.7 weeks	2024/25 76.6 weeks
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	2021/22 31.6 weeks	2022/23 47 weeks	2023/24 27.6 weeks	2024/25 17.8 weeks
Belfast City Council	2021/22 31.0 weeks	2022/23 57.2 weeks	2023/24 64.4 weeks	2024/25 53.2 weeks
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	2021/22 54.6 weeks	2022/23 46.4 weeks	2023/24 54.2 weeks	2024/25 25.2 weeks
Derry City and Strabane District Council	2021/22 51.6 weeks	2022/23 78 weeks	2023/24 68.6 weeks	2024/25 55 weeks
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	2021/22 110.2 weeks	2022/23 64 weeks	2023/24 22.9 weeks	2024/25 24.5 weeks
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	2021/22 106.8 weeks	2022/23 87.2 weeks	2023/24 56.4 weeks	2024/25 59.2 weeks
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	2021/22 34.7 weeks	2022/23 47.6 weeks	2023/24 67.4 weeks	2024/25 45.2 weeks

Mid Ulster District Council	2021/22 88.0 weeks	2022/23 68.1 weeks	2023/24 64 weeks	2024/25 71.4 weeks
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	2021/22 44.3 weeks	2022/23 89 weeks	2023/24 154.8 weeks	2024/25 29.6 weeks

Average processing time of local planning applications – Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (annual results)

Chart Page 83

Standard: 15 weeks	
2021/22	9.6 weeks
2022/23	8.6 weeks
2023/24	9.4 weeks
2024/25	5.8 weeks

Average processing time of local planning applications by Northern Ireland council (annual results)

Chart Page 84

Standard: 15 weeks				
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	2021/22 13.2 weeks	2022/23 13.4 weeks	2023/24 13 weeks	2024/25 12.8 weeks
Ards and North Down Borough Council	2021/22 22.4 weeks	2022/23 19.9 weeks	2023/24 16 weeks	2024/25 17 weeks
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	2021/22 24.8 weeks	2022/23 21.2 weeks	2023/24 24.6 weeks	2024/25 19.4 weeks
Belfast City Council	2021/22 17.0 weeks	2022/23 19.8 weeks	2023/24 20.6 weeks	2024/25 17.3 weeks
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	2021/22 18.8 weeks	2022/23 21.2 weeks	2023/24 31.4 weeks	2024/25 23 weeks
Derry City and Strabane District Council	2021/22 15.6 weeks	2022/23 21 weeks	2023/24 23.4 weeks	2024/25 20.7 weeks
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	2021/22 16.4 weeks	2022/23 13 weeks	2023/24 13.2 weeks	2024/25 10.2 weeks
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	2021/22 16.2 weeks	2022/23 32.7 weeks	2023/24 42.2 weeks	2024/25 38.8 weeks
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	2021/22 9.6 weeks	2022/23 8.6 weeks	2023/24 9.4 weeks	2024/25 5.8 weeks

Mid Ulster District Council	2021/22 16.6 weeks	2022/23 21.6 weeks	2023/24 16.1 weeks	2024/25 16.5 weeks
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	2021/22 18.8 weeks	2022/23 21.6 weeks	2023/24 33.7 weeks	2024/25 45.2 weeks

Percentage of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks – Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (annual results)

Chart Page 86

Standard: A minimum 70% of cases concluded within 39 weeks	
2021/22	90.5%
2022/23	89.5%
2023/24	87.3%
2024/25	81.3%

Percentage of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks by Northern Ireland council (annual results)

Chart Page 87

Standard: A minimum 70% of cases concluded within 39 weeks				
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	2021/22 78.3%	2022/23 91.2%	2023/24 96%	2024/25 97.3%
Ards and North Down Borough Council	2021/22 41%	2022/23 62.9%	2023/24 55.7%	2024/25 51.4%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	2021/22 86.3%	2022/23 70.6%	2023/24 82.7%	2024/25 80.2%
Belfast City Council	2021/22 83%	2022/23 88.8%	2023/24 88.6%	2024/25 76.8%
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	2021/22 78.8%	2022/23 67.7%	2023/24 58.7%	2024/25 69%
Derry City and Strabane District Council	2021/22 77.9%	2022/23 74.9%	2023/24 75%	2024/25 83.3%
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	2021/22 60.6%	2022/23 74.1%	2023/24 79.6%	2024/25 83.3%

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	2021/22 83.9%	2022/23 80%	2023/24 83.2%	2024/25 69.6%
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	2021/22 90.5%	2022/23 89.5%	2023/24 87.3%	2024/25 81.3%
Mid Ulster District Council	2021/22 75.2%	2022/23 46.4%	2023/24 58.8%	2024/25 51.3%
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	2021/22 48.5%	2022/23 58.6%	2023/24 60%	2024/25 47.6%

Percentage of household waste collected that is sent for recycling - Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (annual results)

Chart Page 91

Standard: A minimum of 50%	
2021/22	51.9%
2022/23	51.4%
2023/24	50.4%
2024/25	50.7%

Percentage of household waste collected that is sent for recycling by Northern Ireland council (annual results)

Chart Page 92

Standard: A minimum of 50%				
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	2021/22 60.20%	2022/23 61.44%	2023/24 60.9%	2024/25 56.90%
Ards and North Down Borough Council	2021/22 48.34%	2022/23 52.33%	2023/24 55.1%	2024/25 56.00%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	2021/22 53.88%	2022/23 55.41%	2023/24 55.6%	2024/25 54.63%
Belfast City Council	2021/22 40.96%	2022/23 41.51%	2023/24 41.1%	2024/25 41.95%
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	2021/22 52.25%	2022/23 55.01%	2023/24 49.6%	2024/25 50.39%
Derry City and Strabane District Council	2021/22 45.08%	2022/23 45.74%	2023/24 48.2%	2024/25 48.43%
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	2021/22 47.73%	2022/23 48.43%	2023/24 46.7%	2024/25 47.68%
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	2021/22 49.72%	2022/23 50.28%	2023/24 50.9%	2024/25 50.42%

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	2021/22 51.92%	2022/23 51.39%	2023/24 50.4%	2024/25 50.73%
Mid Ulster District Council	2021/22 58.21%	2022/23 58.71%	2023/24 58.6%	2024/25 58.95%
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	2021/22 49.83%	2022/23 50.30%	2023/24 50.0%	2024/25 49.02%

Amount (tonnage) of biodegradable local authority collected municipal waste that is landfilled – Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (annual results)

Chart Page 93

Standard: A maximum of 16,387 tonnes	
2021/22	14,528
2022/23	14,559
2023/24	15,239
2024/25	13,611

Local authority collected municipal waste arisings – Mid and East Antrim
Borough Council (annual results)

Chart Page 94

Standard: A maximum of 75,797 tonnes	
2021/22	76,689
2022/23	73,433
2023/24	74,842
2024/25	75,880

Percentage of staff with no sickness absence in the year – Mid and East
Antrim Borough Council (annual results)

Chart Page 97

2021/22	72%
2022/23	64%
2023/24	64%
2024/25	60%

Absenteeism days across Northern Ireland councils (annual results)

Chart Page 98

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	2020/21 7.87	2021/22 14.7	2022/23 15.51	2023/24 13.59	2024/25 No data
Ards and North Down Borough Council	2020/21 10.59	2021/22 14.17	2022/23 15.70	2023/24 16.33	2024/25 No data
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	2020/21 15.67	2021/22 20.51	2022/23 19.91	2023/24 18.81	2024/25 No data
Belfast City Council	2020/21 10.86	2021/22 16.33	2022/23 17.09	2023/24 17.00	2024/25 No data
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	2020/21 11.34	2021/22 17.03	2022/23 16.99	2023/24 18.06	2024/25 No data
Derry City and Strabane District Council	2020/21 10.37	2021/22 16.8	2022/23 16.5	2023/24 18.07	2024/25 No data
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	2020/21 9.69	2021/22 13.15	2022/23 11.94	2023/24 12.80	2024/25 No data
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	2020/21 11.5	2021/22 13.6	2022/23 15.8	2023/24 16.26	2024/25 No data

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	2020/21 4.68	2021/22 15.21	2022/23 17.94	2023/24 16.46	2024/25 17.18
Mid Ulster District Council	2020/21 9.72	2021/22 12.11	2022/23 13.13	2023/24 13.22	2024/25 No data
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	2020/21 13.6	2021/22 20.66	2022/23 23.26	2023/24 23.90	2024/25 No data

Prompt Payments - Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (annual results).
(Unaudited data from the Department for Communities quarterly publications).

Chart Page 100

Invoices paid within 10 days			
2021/22 68%	2022/23 74%	2023/24 65%	2024/25 76%
Invoices paid within 30 days (but more than 10 days)			
2021/22 27%	2022/23 13%	2023/24 16%	2024/25 18%
Invoices paid outside 30 days			
2021/22 5%	2022/23 13%	2023/24 19%	2024/25 6%

Percentage of payments made within 30 days - By Northern Ireland council
(annual results)

Chart Page 101

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	2021/22 80%	2022/23 80%	2023/24 84%	2024/25 92%
Ards and North Down Borough Council	2021/22 98%	2022/23 97%	2023/24 96%	2024/25 94%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	2021/22 95%	2022/23 95%	2023/24 96%	2024/25 94%
Belfast City Council	2021/22 94%	2022/23 92%	2023/24 93%	2024/25 89%
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	2021/22 92%	2022/23 91%	2023/24 87%	2024/25 91%
Derry City and Strabane District Council	2021/22 65%	2022/23 74%	2023/24 82%	2024/25 83%
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	2021/22 94%	2022/23 96%	2023/24 95%	2024/25 96%
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	2021/22 91%	2022/23 87%	2023/24 89%	2024/25 76%

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	2021/22 95%	2022/23 87%	2023/24 81%	2024/25 94%
Mid Ulster District Council	2021/22 99%	2022/23 99%	2023/24 100%	2024/25 100%
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	2021/22 89%	2022/23 86%	2023/24 95%	2024/25 94%

Number of health and safety accidents recorded (annual results)

Chart Page 102

2021/22	19
2022/23	11
2023/24	10
2024/25	16

Number of training days per full-time equivalent employee (annual results)

Chart Page 103

2021/22	1.36 days
2022/23	3.5 days
2023/24	3.46 days
2024/25	1.57 days

Number of visitors to strategic tourist attractions (annual results)

Chart Page 103

2021/22	39,055
2022/23	86,432
2023/24	98,455
2024/25	97,310

Number of attendees at Council-led events (annual results)

Chart Page 104

2021/22	29,060
2022/23	29,800
2023/24	42,830
2024/25	27,240

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Street Cleanliness LEAMS score (annual results)

Chart Page 104

2021/22	76%
2022/23	72%
2023/24	70%
2024/25	70%