

May 16th, 2025

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend a meeting of the

Mid and East Antrim Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee

to be held on **Monday, 19th May 2025 at 6:30 pm** in **Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena and via remote access.**

Yours sincerely



Valerie Watts
Interim Chief Executive, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Agenda

1 NOTICE OF MEETING

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality, they may have in respect of items on this Agenda.

4 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION / DECISION

4.1 Annual Performance Report on the Corporate Key Health and Safety Priorities, including Key Achievements - circulated

📎 *Annual Performance Report on the Corporate Key Health and Safety Priorities.pdf* Page 1

4.2 Policy Briefing - circulated

📎 *Policy Briefing.pdf* Page 8

📎 *Appendix 1 Consultation Summary Report.pdf* Page 11

📎 *Appendix 2a DfC Disability Action Plan Consultation.pdf* Page 12

📎 *Appendix 2b Proposed Council Response.pdf* Page 36

4.3 Quarterly Complaints Report - circulated

📎 *Quarterly Complaints Report.pdf* Page 37

4.4 Bi-Annual Information Governance Performance Report - circulated (14.05.24)

📎 *Bi-Annual Information Governance Performance Report.pdf* Page 45

4.5 Update on Notices of Motion 2023 and 2024 - circulated

📎 *Update on Notices of Motion 2023 and 2024.pdf* Page 49

📎 *Appendix 1 - Approved Notices of Motion 2023.pdf* Page 51

📎 *Appendix 2 - Approved Notices of Motion 2024.pdf* Page 55

5 ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

6 TABLED QUESTIONS

Closed Committee - In accordance with Council policy, representatives of the Press will not be in attendance for this section of the Meeting.

7 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION / DECISION – CLOSED COMMITTEE

7.1 Procurement Update - circulated

📎 *Procurement Update.pdf*

Not included

7.2 Licences/Agreements enacted under Scheme of Delegation - October 2024 to March 2025 - circulated

📎 *Licences Agreements enacted under Scheme of Delegation October 2024 to March 2025.pdf*

Not included

📎 *Appendix 1 - Licensor MEA 10.24 - 03.25.pdf*

Not included

📎 *Appendix 2 - Licencee MEA 10.24 - 03.25.pdf*

Not included

8 ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL – CLOSED COMMITTEE

Open Committee

9 FORWARD PLAN FOR CORPORATE RESOURCES, POLICY & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - circulated

📎 *May CRPG Forward Plan.pdf*

Page 58

Council/Committee:	Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee
Date:	19 May 2025
Report Title:	Annual Performance Report on the Corporate Key Health and Safety Priorities, including Key Achievements
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Diane Irwin, Health and Safety Manager
Approver:	Steven Bailie, Facility Management and Maintenance Manager

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on performance activity in line with key Health and Safety priorities during 2024/2025.

2. Background

- 2.1. This is the annual report outlining the performance of the Council's Health and Safety function and covers from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 This report reflects the health and safety performance for the last year in building the safety culture, reducing risk and enhancing the workplace for our staff and service users. It provides a summary of these key achievements and shows compliance status as well as strategic priorities for the next financial year.

3.2 Accident Statistics

During the reporting period, the Health and Safety Management Software System was procured for another three years to allow for the ongoing digital recording and collation of accidents and incidents. The system is accessed by Line Managers to record incidents and accidents, and these are reviewed by Corporate Health and Safety.

Last year, training for Line Managers on Accident Reporting was provided by the Council's broker on behalf of insurers via a bursary, encouraging near misses and accidents to be reported. As a result of the training, which has raised awareness, this has then resulted in an increase in reporting, and this is reflected in the information below.

The table below shows the set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against the Actual Number reported covering both accidents and RIDDOR.

	Annual KPI Set: Reduce the number from 2023/24 baseline	Actual Number from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
Accidents	11	16
RIDDOR	2	9

It can be noted that the number of accidents reported for the year 2024/25 exceeded the baseline of 11 by 5. In addition, the number of RIDDOR (*Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations*) reports had significantly exceeded the baseline set, with nine of the accidents requiring a RIDDOR report.

RIDDOR Accidents:

All accidents are checked and reported by the Health and Safety team if they fall under RIDDOR.

All accidents, including those which are reportable under RIDDOR, are reviewed and investigated to consider the improvements needed to prevent future recurrences as well as to learn lessons.

The HSENI reviews all accidents (reported under RIDDOR), including the actions taken by the Council.

No further actions have been taken by HSENI with regard to these accidents.

All accidents and incidents are reviewed at the time of occurrence and followed up with line managers to ensure immediate actions are taken and processes reviewed. If any trends are identified these are identified and followed up with the Service Manager.

The Health and Safety Manager has met with the Insurance and Risk Officer to discuss claims and again to consider any further measures which can be put in place to reduce the risk.

A benchmarking exercise on RIDDOR incidents (no personal information discussed) with other Councils via the Safety Network takes place quarterly to raise awareness and discussion around potential risks and mitigations, as well as learning lessons.

3.1. Corporate Health and Safety Committee

During the year 2024/25 the Corporate Health and Safety Committee met on three occasions, 11 June 2024, 1 October 2024 and 21 January 2025

respectively, to oversee the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Framework.

The Committee has a set Agenda which covers:

- Policy development
- Risk Assessment update
- Inspections and audits
- Training
- Legislation updates as well as
- An overview of new claims/insurance updates.

The Terms of Reference for the Corporate Health and Safety Committee have been under review with the members and will now be revised in the new financial year to reflect current structural changes and also see the addition of other services to be represented at least annually.

3.2. Policy Progress

The key Policies to note are:

(a) The **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy**

The PPE Policy was reviewed and updated by the end of March 2024 and approved in April 2024. This Policy has been circulated to all staff and key operational managers. Operational Managers were provided with additional information for their teams, including a toolbox talk and workplace checks, such as the display of mandatory signage.

The Health and Safety Manager also participated in the PPE procurement along with the Waste Manager.

(b) Proposed **Drugs and Alcohol Policy with testing**

Arrangements for drugs and alcohol testing have now progressed with Radox procured as the competent organisation to support Council in establishing the arrangements. The key priority will be the completion of the Policy to a final draft, ready for consideration by SMT.

(c) The **Personal Safety at Work Policy (including verbal abuse and lone working)**

This Policy is under review with a focus on the lone working element. To date a Working Group has been established alongside the trial of some personal safety devices which are to be used to raise the alarm to summon help in an emergency situation. The updates to this Policy will continue to develop and progress this year.

Following a review of Policy documents held within the public drive, it is noted that a number of these require an update, and a schedule is in place to start to take this forward.

3.3. Risk Assessments

A Risk Register had started to be built and populated to record and capture the risk assessments' progress as well as an overview of the Services status with these.

Following on from the training last year, health and safety continued to provide advice and guidance to support line managers with the completion of their workplace activity documentation, including updating risk assessments.

Comprehensive reviews and updates of risk assessments are progressing with the operational areas. Health and Safety are devising office activity risk assessments, which will be progressed in the new financial year.

3.4. Training

Over the last 12 months, training has taken place across the Council for various services to enhance employees' knowledge and skills, and an overview of some of the main courses is highlighted as follows:

- External classroom training undertaken showing numbers:
 - **First Aid at work** for various staff (61 trained)
 - **Work equipment** (Telehandlers, bin lifts, excavator, dumper) for operational staff (73 trained)
 - **Manual Handling** for various staff (88)
 - **Drivers Rules at Waste Transfer Stations** Waste Services Drivers (60)
- The **eLearning training** using the iHASCO system continues to be utilised for a number of safety modules such as
 - Personal Protective Equipment (296 completed)
 - Emergency First Aid & First Aid Refresher (83 completed)
 - Health and Safety related (55)
- **Bespoke in-house** Health and Safety training has been developed over the year for:
 - Emergency arrangements for evacuation.
 - General health and safety awareness training was delivered to some Community Centre staff.
 - Risk Assessment training for operational line managers and supervisors.
 - Manual handling training.
 - Incident reporting and investigation.
- **Induction training**

All new starters receive Health and Safety Induction training, which raises awareness on how to work safely, respond to an emergency, how to report accidents, and raise concerns to their line manager. During this period, a total of 64 inductions were completed.

3.5. Inspections and audits

A schedule of inspections and audits had been in place throughout the year to check compliance with legislation and best practice ensuring control measures were working to reduce accidents and injuries. All recommendations are shared and discussed with the relevant Manager before leaving the site and this is followed up either by email or report.

It can be noted that the KPI target for the year was to complete 50 inspections, and at the year-end there were 50 inspections completed. The inspections and audits cover a range of workplaces across Council as well as checking documentation in place. The Health and Safety Advisor had invited the Trade Union Representatives who are members of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee to join him with some of these.

In addition, the Health and Safety Manager liaised with the Insurance and Risk Officer and the Council's broker to discuss property surveys. Three property surveys were undertaken by the Council broker on behalf of the insurer, and it was noted that there were no concerns and only a few minor recommendations were made. The properties were Ahoghill Community Centre, Eden Community Centre and Redlands HRC.

3.6. Emergency Arrangements

The Health and Safety Manager in conjunction with the Learning and Development Advisor and Procurement has successfully tendered for a competent organisation to provide Fire Warden training across the Council with the training commencing in May 2025 to ensure ongoing compliance with emergency requirements.

During the reporting period, Health and Safety liaised with Officers to ensure fire drills had taken place, in particular for office buildings.

In addition, a review of First Aiders across the Council is ongoing to ensure that sufficient arrangements are in place.

The Health and Safety Manager, in liaison with the Head of Public Protection, Health and Wellbeing, promoted Shoctober during the week of October ensuring that all staff were aware of the importance of life saving skills in the workplace covering CPR etc.

3.7. Support, advice and promoting safe working practices:

The Health and Safety team continues to provide support and advice across Council on a daily basis via email, meetings and during site visits ensuring compliance with legislative requirements.

3.8. Other areas of interest to note:

- Health and Safety Executive NI (HSENI)
Throughout the year there were five email communications as well as three external visits undertaken by Health and Safety Executive NI.
- Occupational Health Surveillance
The programme of mandatory health checks has been arranged and completed with 75 staff requested to attend an appointment with the Occupational Health nurse from the following work areas of Parks, Facilities, Waste Management, and Garages.

Also, during this year, the operatives involved with the glass collections had audiometry tests completed as well as noise surveys carried out beside the bin lorries to determine exposure levels and to review current arrangements and make recommendations as necessary for hearing protection.

- Legislative Guidance Update
During this reporting period, the main update was with HSG179, Health and Safety in Swimming Pools.

The Health and Safety team, along with the Leisure Services team, reviewed the changes to ensure risk assessments and safe working practices reflected the updates.

- Health and safety Resourcing
The Health and Safety Advisor resigned from their post on 31 December 2024, and the Manager had been trying to recruit to fill the post using an agency worker. In addition, the permanent Health and Safety Advisor post has since been advertised, and it is hoped this will be filled over the incoming months in the new financial year.

3.9. **Looking forward** to the key activities for the year ahead:

- Delivering on the **Business Plan and KPIs** set for 2025/26.
- To progress **Drugs and Alcohol Policy with testing**.
- To have in place suitable arrangements for employee roles which are identified as lone workers with the **Personal Safety Policy updated** to reflect this.
- To finalise **Terms of Reference for Corporate Health and Safety Committee**

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. There are no required financial considerations required for this report as this is an update on previous work which has already taken place with budgets agreed.

- 4.2. There are no Human Resources considerations at this time as this is an updated report on previous work which has already happened. The aim of the key health and safety priorities are to improve working conditions and to reduce absences allowing for service delivery.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. To continue with the implementation of the Corporate Health and Safety framework and focus on the key health and safety priorities and business plan to ensure compliance with statutory and legislative requirements.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. It is recommended that Council/Elected Members note the report.

7. Appendices / Links

- Not applicable.

Council/ Committee:	Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee
Date:	19 May 2025
Report Title:	Policy Briefing
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director – Business Support
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate and Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members in respect of matters that fall within the remit of the Policy Team.

2. Background

- 2.1. Within the Corporate and Support Services directorate, the Policy team is responsible for managing Council's responsibilities in relation to information governance (Freedom of Information, Environmental Information Regulations and Data Protection/UK GDPR), complaints, public consultations, equality & diversity and rural needs.
- 2.2. Policies and guidance for Elected Members are available in the 'Policies' section of MinutePad.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

3.1. Public Consultations

Public consultations published by the NI Executive are centrally registered by the Policy team and considered by the relevant service areas, with responses drafted to those that are relevant to Council and/or the Borough. Draft consultation responses are submitted to the most relevant Committee for Elected Members to review and approve the response prior to submission.

A summary of these consultations is produced to the Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee each month. This month's consultation summary is set out in **Appendix 1**.

- 3.2. Council will respond to the Department of Communities (DfC) consultation on their draft Disability Action Plan 2025-2030. The plan sets out the actions that the DfC will take forward over the lifespan of the plan to promote positive

attitudes towards; and encourage participation in public life by disabled people. The consultation papers are available at Appendix 2a to provide context and Council's proposed response is attached at Appendix 2b.

Council responded positively to the Northern Ireland Assembly's Call for Evidence regarding the Sign Language Bill. The Bill consists of a statutory duty on prescribed public organisations to take reasonable steps to make their services and the information they provide as accessible to individuals in the deaf community as they are to individuals who are not in the deaf community. Council plans to submit further feedback during the public consultation stage.

3.3 Information Governance

A programme of work has been designed to ensure Council's compliance in all areas of information governance. The redesign of the Corporate and Support Services Directorate will support the team in taking forward this significant programme of change. The Bi-Annual Information Governance Performance Report is available in a separate report scheduled for this meeting of the CRPG.

3.4 Complaints

A summary of Council's complaints data for Q4 of 2024/2025 (1 January until 31 March 2025), along with end of year (EOY) figures are available in the quarterly complaints report scheduled for this meeting of the CRPG.

3.5 Equality & Diversity and Rural Needs

Council's internal EDI Network of officers continues to meet quarterly and report on the progress of Council's Disability Action Plan and Equality Scheme to the Inclusion & Equality Sub-Committee.

3.6 Training Modules

The training programme is ongoing. The purpose of the training is to provide staff with the appropriate tools to carry out their responsibilities in handling data lawfully and in compliance with council policies and procedures as well as how to manage complaints and fulfil Council's screening obligations. A further update is provided in the accompanying Bi-Annual Information Governance Performance Report.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1 Responding to relevant public consultations is necessary for Council to publicly demonstrate its policy position and work towards achieving optimum outcomes on behalf of the residents of the Borough.

- 4.2 The training modules will assist Council in achieving its information governance, complaint handling and screening obligations which in turn will minimise any associated risk.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. N/A

6. Recommendation or Decision

It is recommended that Elected Members:

- (i) Note the Public Consultation summary report at **Appendix 1**.
- (ii) Approve Council's response to the Department for Communities consultation on their draft Disability Action Plan 2025-2030.

7. Appendices / Links

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|-------------|--|
| Appendix 1 | Consultation Summary Report |
| Appendix 2a | DfC's Draft Disability Action Plan 2025-2030 |
| Appendix 2b | Council's proposed response to the DfC's Consultation on their draft Disability Action Plan 2025-2030. |



Consultation Register Summary Report **Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee**

19th May2025

a) Consultations where Council is the stakeholder

Title and Closing Date	Consulting Department/Organisation	Proposed Dept and Committee
Developer Contributions for Wastewater Infrastructure Deadline: 27/06/2025	Department for Infrastructure	Acting Director of Development to review
Consultation on Disability Action Plan 2025-30 Deadline: 30/05/2025	Department for Communities	Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee 19th May 2025
Consultation on Neurodiversity in the Workplace Guidance Document Deadline: 22/05/2025	The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland	Human Resources to review

b) Consultations being conducted by Council

Title	Consulting Department	Comments/Link to Consultation Documents
N/A	N/A	N/A



Department for
Communities

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Commonities

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Draft Disability Action Plan 2025-2030 Consultation Document

April 2025

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4. Disability Strategy	7
5. Disability, Diversity and Policy Champions	8
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7. Action Measures	10

1. Introduction

1.1. Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), the Department for Communities (DfC) is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

These are referred to as the 'disability duties'. For the purposes of section 49A of the DDA 1995, a public authority is defined in the same way as in section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Department for Communities is designated as a public authority for the purposes of section 75 and must take its disability duties into account when carrying out its functions.

1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, the Department for Communities is required to submit a Disability Action Plan to the Equality Commission, showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

1.3 The Department is fully committed to the effective implementation of this

plan. All necessary resources in terms of people, time and finance will be made available for this purpose.

1.4 We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to all staff and will provide guidance for staff in relation to their responsibilities.

1.5 We are committed to engaging effectively with people with disabilities and their representative groups in the development, implementation and review of this plan.

1.6 This document is available in a range of formats. To request an alternative format please contact:

DfC Equality Unit
 Department for Communities
 Causeway Exchange
 7th Floor
 1-7 Bedford Street
 Belfast
 BT2 7EG

Telephone: **028 9082 3440**

E-mail: **equality.unit@communities-ni.gov.uk**

2. Consultation

2.1. We welcome feedback on the draft Disability Action Plan we are presenting during a 8 week consultation which will run from 3 April 2025 to 30 May 2025.

2.2 This consultation will be hosted online at the following website: **<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/dfc/disability-action-plan-consultation>**. The Citizen Space website has been specially designed to be as user friendly and welcoming as possible for those who wish to complete the consultation. It also allows DfC to rapidly collate results. For this reason, we would encourage anyone who is interested in responding to this consultation to utilise Citizen Space as the method of their response.

If this is not possible, you can however respond to this consultation via email to **equality.unit@communities-ni.gov.uk** or you can respond in writing to the following address:

DfC Equality Unit
Department for Communities
7th Floor,
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast BT2 7EG

2.3 When responding via email or in writing, please state whether you are responding as an individual, or representing the views of an organisation (please state the name of the organisation). Please also quote the following reference in your response: "Disability Action Plan Consultation". Responses must be received by 30 May 2025.

3. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 This Disability Action Plan sets out the actions that the Department for Communities plans to take forward over the 5 year period of the plan. It is intended to remind all staff of our commitment to people with disabilities both within the department and those who engage with the department. It also demonstrates our commitment to our service users and the wider community. It will be treated as a live document to which other actions can be added throughout its lifespan.
- 3.2 We are committed to monitoring and reviewing our policies and practices to ensure that they have no negative impacts on people with disabilities or any of the other Section 75 categories. We do this through the process of equality screening and we will provide annual progress reports to the Equality Commission outlining the steps we have taken to ensure that we continue to deliver an effective service to people with disabilities.
- 3.3 We will carry out a review of this Disability Action Plan in 2030 when we will also review the department's Equality Scheme. The review will be submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and published on the Department's website.

4. Disability Strategy

- 4.1 The Department is specifically responsible for disability in relation to the promotion of the social inclusion of disabled people in Northern Ireland. This work includes developing and maintaining the overarching policy and legislative framework in respect of providing for equality of opportunity for people with disabilities; coordination of information in respect of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) across Northern Ireland Civil Service departments; and awareness raising about the issues faced by disabled people in our society.
- 4.2 The Department is leading on the development of a new Disability Strategy, which is being developed using a co-design approach, with involvement from disabled people and their representative organisations throughout the process. Once a draft Strategy has been prepared and considered by the Minister for Communities and his Executive colleagues, a separate public consultation exercise will be carried out in relation to this work.

5. Disability, Diversity and Policy Champions

- 5.1 The Northern Ireland Civil Service has a Disability Champion who has responsibility to promote equality and inclusion for staff with a life-long or acquired disability or a serious health issue. The Disability Champion works with the Disability Working group to promote greater awareness and understanding of disability issues. The Working Group has delivered a number of initiatives to promote equality and inclusion for disabled colleagues within the Civil Service and launched a Northern Ireland Civil Service Disability Staff Network during 2021. The NICS Disability Staff Network (DSN) is a support, social, educational, and consultative group, aimed at raising awareness of disability issues and supporting the working lives of disabled colleagues.

regularly come together to discuss all things related to diversity and inclusion across our Department and identify a number of key issues to take forward within the yearly Action Plans. Chaired by the DfC Diversity Champion the group meet regularly throughout the year with the aim of creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace culture within the Department, where we each understand and value differences and gain insight through different perspectives. Additionally, group members have the opportunity to contribute to the development of staff communications, offering insight on topical issues and promoting awareness events.
- 5.2 The Department has its own Diversity Champion who, in conjunction with representatives from all departments, looks at what the Northern Ireland Civil Service needs to do in overall terms to advance awareness, knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity issues. The Department has established a Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group made up of a group of volunteers who
- 5.3 The Policy Champions Network is a group of senior civil servants, whose role it is to build capability in policy making across the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Every department, including the Department for Communities, has a dedicated Policy Champion responsible for leading the work to grow policy capability and capacity across the NICS. The group provides a forum to consider all aspects of policy development, including the needs of people with disabilities and section 75 groups, and to improve communication and best practice.

6. Training

- 6.1 Since April 2017, responsibility for the Human Resources function in all Northern Ireland Civil Service departments has passed to NICSHR which is located in the Department of Finance.
- 6.2 Equal Opportunities training for civil servants is provided by the Centre for Applied Learning. Further information, including details of proposed training in relation to the disability duties, is contained in the Department of Finance's Disability Action Plan.
- 6.3 Managers within the Department for Communities can, on a one-to-one basis with their staff, agree required training, which may include disability training, as needed. In addition, Department specific training can be instigated; this would include training such as JAM card awareness training as the Department is a JAM card friendly employer and also autism awareness training for front-line staff.

7. Action Measures

- 7.1 The following pages detail actions, performance indicators/targets, timescales and intended outcomes to display due regard to the disability duties.

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
1.	Develop and publish a Disability Strategy to promote social inclusion of disabled people.	To issue draft Disability Strategy for public consultation within the current Assembly mandate (subject to Executive approval).	Publication of a Northern Ireland Disability Strategy.	Director Central Policy
2.	Take action to raise awareness via UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPWD) events and increase DfC's visibility as the provider of services that are disability friendly	Annually through to 31 March 2030.	<p>To deliver an IDPWD event annually.</p> <p>To promote event on the DfC Intranet.</p> <p>To promote event via Communities Connect.</p> <p>Record and monitor the number of people who attend the event annually.</p>	Director Central Policy
3.	To keep disability legislation under review and to introduce new legislation as appropriate.	To complete a comprehensive scoping exercise on disability legislation within the current Assembly mandate (subject to the availability of resources).	International standards such as UNCRPD and national standards in neighbouring jurisdictions	Director Central Policy

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
4.	<p>To ensure the boards of our Arm's Length Bodies reflect the rich diversity of our society by drawing members from the widest talent pools through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer of Guaranteed Interview Scheme for those with a disability - Engagement with disability representative groups to raise awareness of public appointment opportunities - Offer of reasonable adjustments to help public appointees carry out their duties, as well as being offered support for interviews - Appointment of a diversity champion on each selection panel - Engagement with the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI and The Executive Office Central Appointments Unit to ensure appointment processes in place reflect best practice 	31/03/2026 and annually thereafter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update of the Guaranteed Interview Scheme - The level of engagement with disability representative groups - The level of support offered - Annual public appointment statistics published by the NI Research and Statistics Agency - Feedback from the selection panel diversity champion 	Director of Governance and Commercial Services

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
5.	To continue to actively encourage disabled people and representative groups, e.g. IMTAC/ Disability Action, to participate in working groups established for consultation and engagement purposes for Urban Regeneration.	31/03/2026 and annually thereafter	<p>Regional Development Office will collaborate with local councils to ensure that disabled people and representative groups are consulted and engaged in the development and implementation of Public Realm / Environmental Improvement Schemes.</p> <p>Belfast Regeneration Directorate will continue to engage with representative groups to encourage active participation in working groups established for consultation and engagement purposes in the development, design and delivery of capital infrastructure schemes, such as the Five Cs, Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 5 Blackstaff Square and Grosvenor Road and Sandy Row Public realm schemes.</p>	<p>Director Regional Development</p> <p>Director Belfast Regeneration Directorate</p>

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
6.	To enhance the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities, we will build capacity within our referral partnerships to provide information on energy efficiency and support resources through the DfC website and internal/external communications, and conduct focus groups to capture real-life experiences that inform policy decisions for both people with disabilities and their carers.	31/03/2028	<p>To keep the lived experience of fuel poverty at the centre of the Fuel Poverty Strategy, by holding 6 focus groups and/or engagement events with people with disabilities/caring responsibilities, building their confidence and capacity to engage/participate.</p> <p>By 31 March 2028, DfC will have developed and published clear resources on energy efficiency measures and behavioural change actions for people with disabilities.</p>	Director of Climate Change Division
7.	To continue the promotion of disability inclusion and the improvement of life experiences, health and well-being of people living with physical, sensory and learning disabilities through participation in sport and physical activities through sport.	31/03/2026 and annually thereafter	<p>The percentage of people with disabilities participating in sport and recreation (to encourage an increase against the 2022/23 baseline of 26%).</p> <p>This will be measured using data from the Continuous Household Survey.</p>	Director Active Communities Division

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
8.	Develop and introduce to the NI Assembly a Sign Language Bill	To introduce a Sign Language Bill to the Assembly in the current mandate; and monitor the implementation of the Sign Language Act annually thereafter.	Introduction of a Sign Language Bill	Director of Culture

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
9.	<p>Through the work of the Sign Language Partnership Group, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide personal and social development programmes to redress the educational academic under achievement of Deaf people in order to reach their full potential and gain better employment prospects • Build capacity to enable all services to become accessible to allow the sign language user to be fully included • Provide additional support to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to enable them to seek further education and qualifications, including providing sign language and personal development programmes for deaf children 	31/03/2026 and annually thereafter	<p>a) Family sign language in the home training to deaf children & families</p> <p>b) British Sign Language (BSL) courses to deaf children, their families and professionals working with them</p> <p>c) BSL and Irish Sign Language (ISL) training to people in the North West to improve communication with users in the region</p> <p>d) BSL/ISL deaf awareness courses to voluntary and community groups to improve access to their services for BSL/ISL users</p>	Director of Culture

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
10.	To continue to deliver an effective approach to external stakeholder engagement in relation to the planning and development of the next phase of implementing Universal Credit - Move to UC, to include appropriate representation by disability groups.	31/03/2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of organisations supporting people with disabilities involved in the engagement - The action taken on the feedback 	Director of Universal Credit Programme and Working Age Services
11.	To continue to engage with all relevant stakeholders on all aspects of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Finance Support (including Discretionary Support) delivery.	31/03/2026	<p>Number of meetings held with various disability groups.</p> <p>Number of presentations delivered on how to access ESA and Finance Support</p> <p>Utilise feedback from stakeholder organisations to offer support for anyone with an enhanced need, including referrals to Make the Call for outreach visits.</p>	Director of Working Age Services

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
12.	<p>To provide support and assistance through a suite of programmes that will support 11,000 people with disabilities and/or health conditions progress towards, secure, and retain employment. The programmes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Work (NI) • Workable (NI) • Condition Management Programme 	31/03/2026 and annually thereafter	The number of people supported by the programmes	Director of Work and Wellbeing
13.	Labour Market Partnerships (LMP's) will develop programmes for people with disabilities to increase their employability and move them closer to the labour market	31/03/2027	LMP Action Plans are agreed annually in March, prior to the start of each financial year. The performance indicators will provide the number of people and employers participating in disability related provision.	Director of Work and Wellbeing
14.	Continue to connect employers with job seekers who have disabilities, Disability Consortia and the NI Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE) through a range of networking/engagement opportunities including Job Fairs.	31/03/2026	- Participation of Disability organisations at Job Fairs.	Director of UC Operations

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
15.	<p>The Department endeavours to meet the requirements of the international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2, which were introduced by legislation passed in 2018. The Guidelines require all public bodies to ensure that websites are more accessible by making their content 'perceivable, operable, understandable and robust'</p> <p>Continue to improve accessibility and usability of Department's webpage and other social media outlets.</p>	Annually	<p>DfC Corporate Communications Web Team ensure compliance with international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2, by checking all content (including documents) being published to the website.</p> <p>All Images have alternative text added to support screen readers.</p> <p>All videos have an accompanying SRT file produced and uploaded to vimeo to ensure closed captions are available for users.</p> <p>An annual accessibility audit is carried out to test accessibility and the website</p> <p>Accessibility statement is updated periodically following any changes.</p> <p>Drupal 10 migration on 5 November 2024 has ensured many previous developer issues impacting accessibility have been rectified.</p>	Director Machinery of Government

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
16.	<p>Identify opportunities to promote positive attitudes to disability through images on the Departments website, on social media and in Departmental publications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easy read documents for key departmental publications on the website in liaison with the business area. - BSL and ISL signed Videos 	Annually	<p>Number of publications featuring positive imagery</p> <p>Easy read documents which convey the key information for important departmental publications on the website are produced, for example the DfC Budget EQIA and Employment Support Scheme.</p> <p>Signed videos to convey the key information for important departmental messages on the website are produced, for example the DfC Budget EQIA and Employment Support Scheme</p>	Director Machinery of Government

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
17.	DfC, through internal briefing mechanisms such as the Department's intranet, will publish articles to promote awareness of the Disability Action Plan and statutory duties as appropriate.	Annually	Number of publications featuring positive imagery	Director Machinery of Government
18.	<p>To align to the NICS commitment to the Mental Health Charter by :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promoting wellbeing amongst staff via the monthly Wellbeing Matters ezine - promotion and participation in any NICS initiatives 	Annually	<p>Number of ezines published</p> <p>Number of events attended & number of attendees</p>	<p>Director Machinery of Government</p> <p>Director, People & Property/ (Organisational Development Branch)</p>

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
19.	Work Psychology Service (WPS) will provide support to front-line Jobs & Benefits office (JBO) staff to build their skills and confidence to engage with UC customers with health conditions and disabilities to support them to move into the labour market or towards a health journey.	31/03/2026 and annually thereafter.	WPS action plans are agreed prior to the start of the financial year and will provide the number of Work Psychology engagements with JBO staff to support UC customers with health conditions and disabilities. This includes number of office visits or contacts made to support front line teams, as well as case conferences, clinics and bitesize training sessions facilitated by Work Psychologists to build the skills and confidence of frontline JBO staff.	Director of Work and Wellbeing
20.	Induction training for all new entrants, including information on the disability duties.	Bi-annually	Post event evaluation forms will capture information on awareness raising	Director, People & Property/ (Organisational Development Branch)

No.	Action Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators	Branch/Contact
21	Implement the NICS Policy on reasonable adjustments by ensuring all line managers are knowledgeable of the disability duties and associated relevant legislation.	Annually	<p>Number of Enrichment sessions for line managers to ensure awareness</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments in place</p> <p>Established accessible guidelines that outline the reasonable adjustment process.</p> <p>Continuous support and advice to both staff and line managers.</p> <p>Regularly review effectiveness of reasonable adjustment process</p>	Director, People & Property/ (Organisational Development Branch)

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Do you broadly agree with the action measures that have been included in the draft Disability Action Plan?

Yes

Please tell us why?

MEABC commends the overall tone and positive intention of the draft Disability Action Plan in regard to the Department for Communities' commitment to people with disabilities both within the department, those who engage with the department, service users and the wider community.

MEABC's view is that the action plan is well rounded and covers an encouragingly broad range of matters, including the commitment to develop a Disability Strategy to promote social inclusion of disabled people. MEABC's recognises that social exclusion is a very real issue for people living with disabilities and as such have introduced key initiatives such as the Loneliness Network that have recognised Loneliness Champions who reduce loneliness and isolation in their local areas.

Council applauds the Strategy's vision for drawing members from the widest talent pools such as engagement with disability representative groups to raise awareness of public appointment opportunities and to appoint a diversity champion on each selection plan. Indeed, Council's own disability action plan reflects this sentiment.

MEABC is pleased to note the aim to enhance the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities by partnering up with those with lived experience and as well as those people with caring responsibilities. By promoting engagement from these groups, the department will gather invaluable information regarding the real impact of fuel poverty.

Are there any actions not included that you feel should be included? If so, please outline these below:

No.

Have you any other comments to add?

There are no other comments to make in regard to the draft Disability Action Plan.

Council/ Committee: Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee

Date: 19 May 2025

Report Title: **Quarterly Complaints Report
Q4: January – March 2025**

Publication Status: Open

Author: Sarah Williams Assistant Director – Business Support

Approver: Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate and Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the complaints processed by Council during Q4 of 2024/2025, i.e. between 1 January and 31 March 2025.
- 1.2 This is the last quarterly report of the year and as such will also give a breakdown of the end of year figures (EOY) for 2024/2025.

2. Background

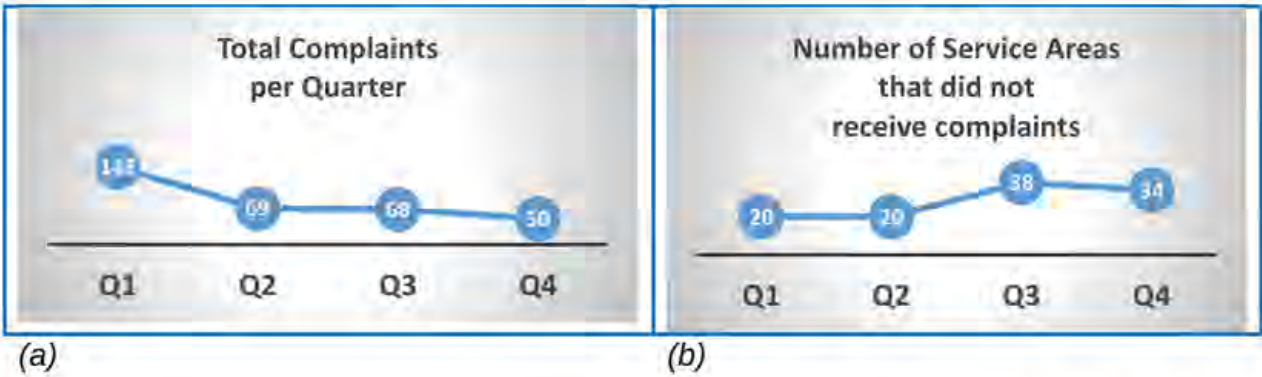
- 2.1 The Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy is in place to provide guidance to those making a complaint, comment or compliment.
- 2.2 In compliance with the policy, Council is required to produce quarterly complaint performance statistics, analysis of the trends and outcomes and lessons learned.
- 2.3 Council's complaints performance data and reporting compliance have been included as mandatory KPIs within each service area's business plan. Consequently, we are pleased to see there has been an increase in the number of returns submitted from each service area for Q4.

3 Key Issues for Consideration – Q4 2024/2025

- 3.1 Overall, Council received **335 complaints during 2024/2025**.

Number of complaints by quarter

- 3.2 Chart (a) illustrates the number of complaints received by the Council per quarter. During Q4 24/25, Council received 50 complaints part of a decreasing trend throughout the year.
- 3.3 Chart (b) illustrates that during Q4 there was a slight decrease in the number of service areas that did not receive complaints. **Table 1** provides a list of those departments.



No complaints

Table 1 – Service areas who did not receive complaints during Q3

Directorate	Department	Service Area
Corporate Services	Citizen Focus	Media Relations
		Digital Comms
		Branding
		Performance and Improvement
		Policy Team
	Support Services	Reception – Carrick & Ardeeven
		Legal Services
		Democratic Services
		Human Resources
		Organisational Development
		ICT
		Procurement
		Audit and Risk
		Insurance
		Good Relations
		Grants
		Community Development
		PCSP
		Community Centres
	Public Protection, Health & Wellbeing	Leisure General
		Registration
		Allotments
	Capital Works & Regeneration	Capital Works
		Regeneration
Development	Tourism	Gobbins Visitor centre
		Marketing & Development
		Events
		Arts & Culture & Museum
	Economic Development	Business Growth
		Town Centre
		Skills & Entrepreneurship
	Planning & Building Control	Building Control

Directorate	Department	Service Area
Operations	Neighbourhood Services	Climate & Sustainability
	Facilities & Maintenance	Facilities

Stage 1 and 2 Response Times

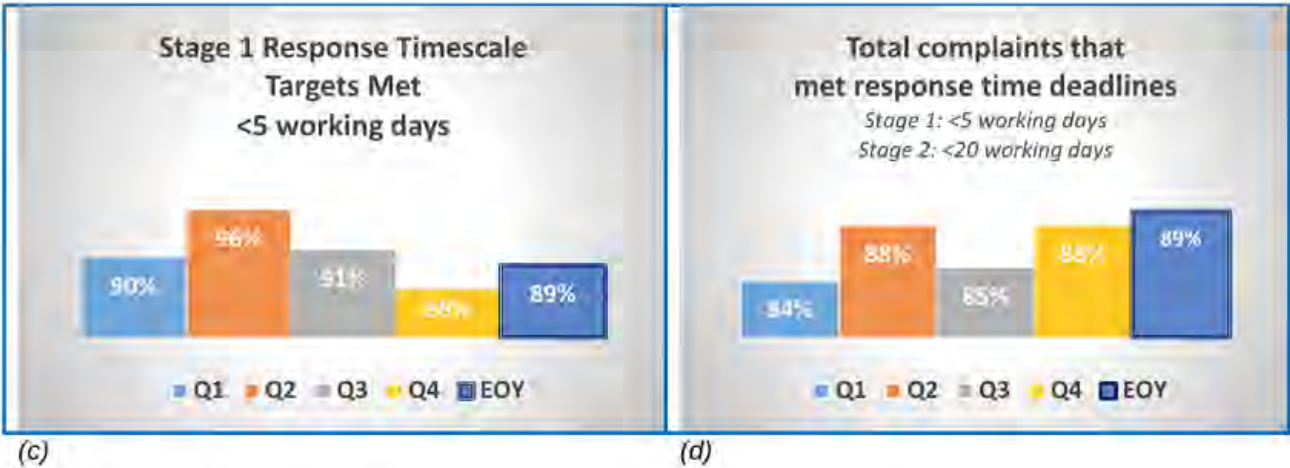
- 3.4
- Under the reviewed Complaints, Comments & Compliments Policy, officers are encouraged to address complaints directly and resolve them at Stage 1 - Frontline Resolution where possible and appropriate.
- 3.5
- Chart (c) illustrates that during Q4, Council responded to 86% of complaints within the stipulated timeframe (within 5 working days) at **Stage 1**. This is a reduction compared to the previous quarters of 2024/2025.

End of Year (EOY) figures for whole period of 2024/2025 show that Council met the Stage 1 5-day response target for 89% of complaints.

- 3.6
- Chart (d) provides a breakdown of how well Council met the timeframes for **both Stage 1** (5 working days) **and Stage 2** (20 working days).

There was an increase in Q4 where Council met timeframes at a higher rate than some previous quarters.

Overall, the end of year figures for 2024/2025 show that Council met the timeframe targets for 89% of total complaints.



Escalated complaints

- 3.7
- Chart (e) shows that during Q4, 12% of complaints were escalated to Stage 2 which is the highest quarter in the year 2024/2025.

End of year (EOY) figures for 2024/2025 show that overall 8% of complaints were escalated to Stage 2.

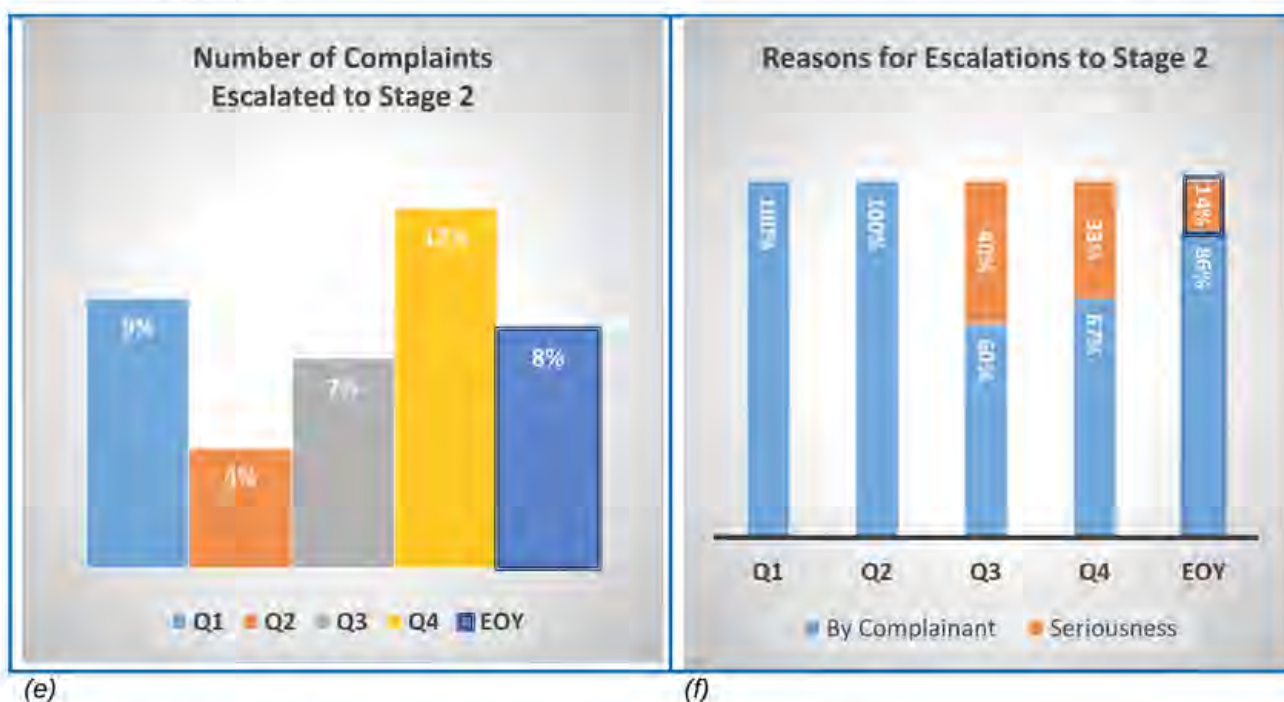
- 3.8
- Complaints can be escalated to Stage 2 via 3 channels:
- **By the complainant:** when dissatisfied with Council's Stage 1 response/action.
 - **Seriousness of the issue:** when the issue is serious requiring a full investigation.

- **No Stage 1 response:** if a complainant did not receive a response to a Stage 1 complaint.

3.9 Chart (f) highlights the reasons complaints were escalated to Stage 2 for each quarter and shows the overall end of year (EOY) figures.

The majority of escalations throughout the year were on the request of the complainant who remained dissatisfied with Council's Stage 1 response/action.

The end of year (EOY) figures shows that 86% were escalated by the complainant and 14% were escalated due to the seriousness of the issue. None of the escalated complaints were as the result of not receiving a Stage 1 response from Council.



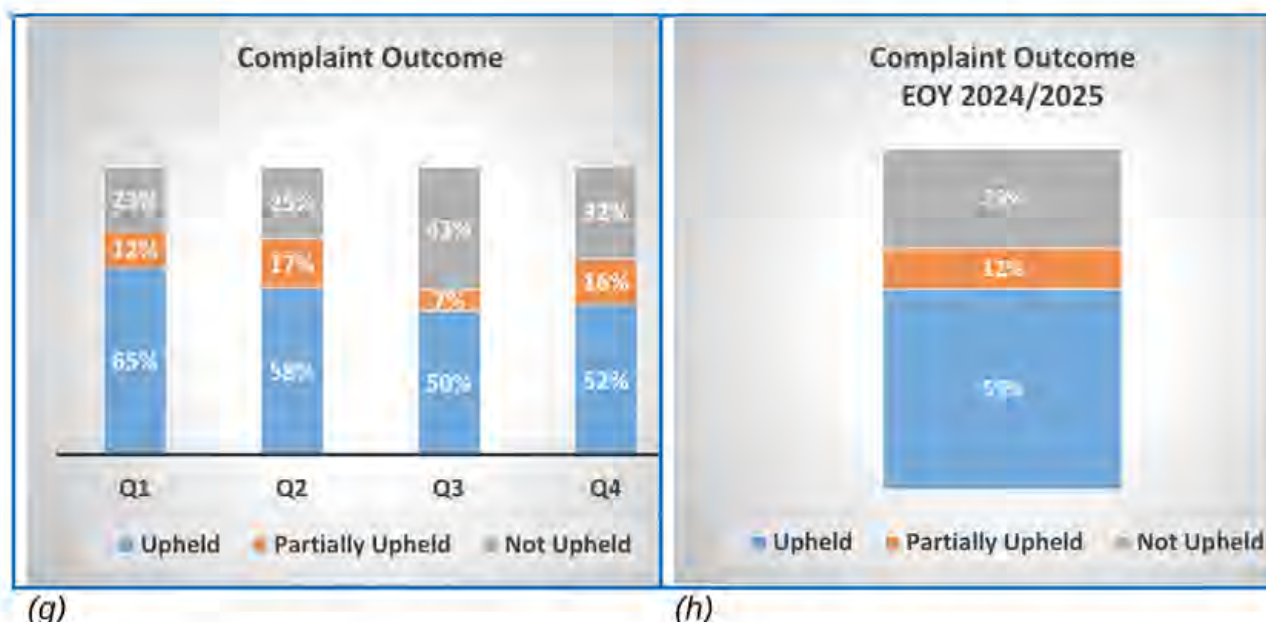
3.10 No complaints were referred to NIPSO during Q4.

Outcome

3.11 Chart (g) outlines the outcome of the complaints per quarter.

- **Upheld** - investigation determined Council was at fault
- **Partially upheld** – investigation determined Council was partially at fault
- **Not upheld** - an investigation determined Council were not at fault

3.12 Q4 shows an increase in upheld complaints when compared to Q3. In summary, during Q4, more complaint investigations determined that Council were at fault. This is reflected in the end of year (EOY) figures (Chart h) whereby 59% of total complaints were upheld.



Number of complaints

3.13 Table 2 provides the number of complaints received by the various service areas. Those marked '*unknown*' did not submit a data return during that quarter, therefore a quarter-by-quarter comparison is not available for those service areas.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	EOY
CEO Office	Unknown	0	2	1	3
Tourism Development	Unknown	1	0	0	1
Seven Towers LC	8	8	5	5	26
Outdoor Rec/PROW	0	Unknown	0	3	3
Events	Unknown	1	Unknown	0	1
Finance	Unknown	1	0	2	3
Amphitheatre	2	5	2	7	14
Waste Services	91	41	29	16	177
Democratic Services	2	3	0	0	5
Planning	5	2	4	1	12
Parks Ops	31	3	8	3	45
Parks Development	Unknown	Unknown	5	1	6
Larne Leisure Centre	3	4	5	2	14
Facilities	1	0	1	0	2
Environmental Health	4	Unknown	7	6	17
Investment & Place	0	Unknown	0	1	1
Community Planning	0	0	0	1	1
Harbours & Marinas	0	0	0	1	1

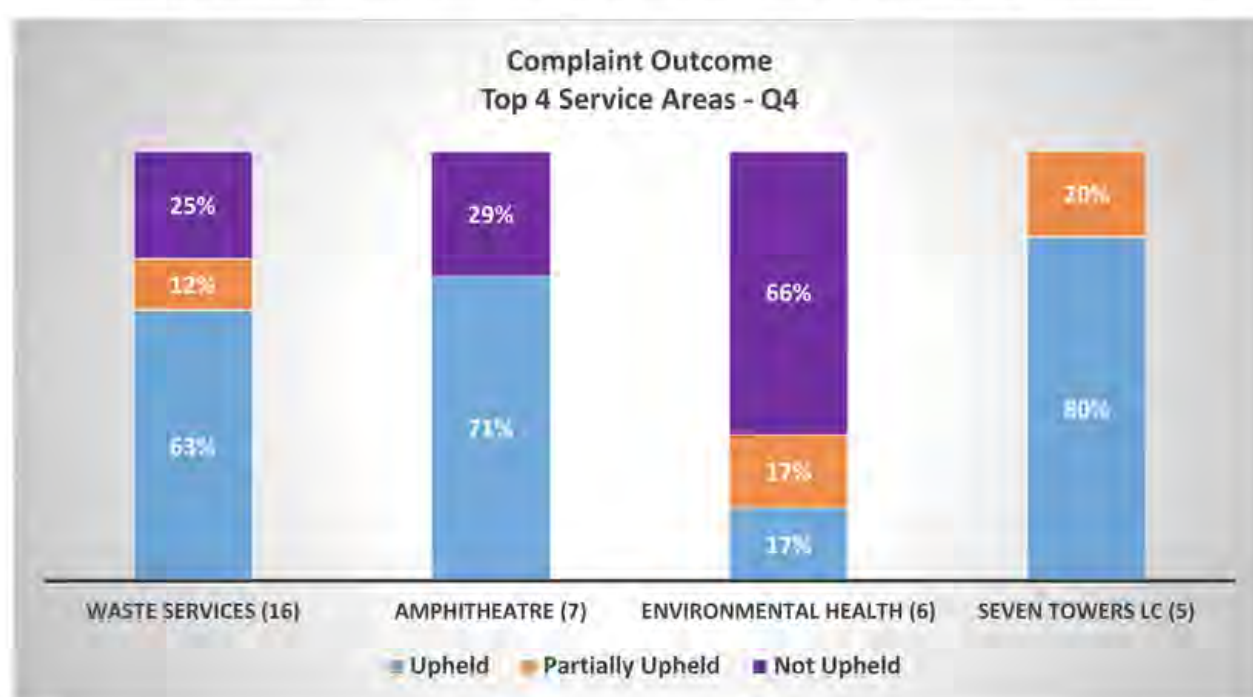
3.12 As requested by members, Table 3 highlights in yellow the top four services areas with the highest number of complaints during each Quarter. The service areas that received the highest number of complaints during Q4 are Waste, Amphitheatre, Environmental Health and the Seven Towers Leisure Centre.

Table 3 also highlights in green the top 4 service areas with the highest complaint figures for the end of year (EOY).

- 3.15 It is typical that frontline services receive the most complaints due to their much higher rate of interactive service delivery.

Table 3	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	EOY
Waste Services	91	41	29	16	177
Amphitheatre	2	5	2	7	16
Environmental Health	4	Unknown	7	6	17
Seven Towers LC	8	8	5	5	26
Parks Operations	31	3	8	3	45
Larne LC	3	4	5	2	14
Planning	5	2	4	1	12

- 3.16 As requested by members Chart (i) illustrates the breakdown of complaint outcome for each of the service areas with the most reported complaints for Q4.



(i)

Table 4 provides a breakdown of the types of issues reported for Q4 and any lessons learned.

Table 4

Service Area	Complaints	Issues
1. Waste Services	16 (32%)	<p>The majority of complaints pertained to Refuse Residual (black bin collections) such as missed lifts.</p> <p>Lessons learned/improvement measures</p>

Service Area	Complaints	Issues
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most bins were not collected due to the incorrect refuse in the bin. 2. Look at educating residents and staff re notices on bins to advise householders why their bin was not emptied e.g. bin contamination.
2. Parks Operations	3 (6%)	<p>Complaints re the maintenance of public areas.</p> <p>Lessons learned/improvement measures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regular inspections of public areas and carry out maintenance when required.
3. Environmental Health	6 (12%)	Complaints ranged from issues with staff members, dog fouling, breach of confidentiality and lack of progress on a service request.
4. Seven Towers Leisure Centre	5 (10%)	Complaints are general in nature such as leisure centre cleanliness to issues with customers leaving clothes in the cubicles and not using lockers.

3.17 During Q4 several service areas received compliments, including those that received the most complaints. Table 5 provides a summary of those compliments received.

Table 5

Service Area	Compliment
Larne Leisure Centre	Compliments about staff friendliness and willingness to help. The standard of the Yoga class was complimented.
Parks Development	<p>Compliments on the fairness of the new fee proposal for the new membership year at Bentra Golf Course. Comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'If the membership fee had to rise by a further 5% on the figures quoted, I think that is acceptable as well'. • 'Personally, I get a lot of enjoyment out of using Bentra, it's a great facility to have in the Carrickfergus area suiting both old and young golfers as well as novices and the more experienced players.' • 'I think the Bentra groundsman do a good job on the course, carrying out their work diligently and competently.'

4 General Considerations/Implications

- 4.1 Responding effectively to complaints is necessary for Council to demonstrate its commitment to continual improvement in the delivery of its services and facilities.

5 Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 The revised policy requires that Council's complaints performance data is reported on a quarterly basis.
- 5.2 Annual complaints data will also be published on Council's website.

6 Recommendation or Decision

Members are asked to note

- i. the quarterly complaint report for Q4 and end of year (2024/2025).

7 Appendices / Links

N/A

Council/ Committee:	Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee
Date:	19 May 2024
Report Title:	Bi-Annual Information Governance Performance Report November 2024 – March 2025
Publication Status:	Open
Author:	Sarah Williams, Assistant Director – Business Support
Approver:	Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate and Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with a bi-annual update in respect of Council's information governance.

2. Background

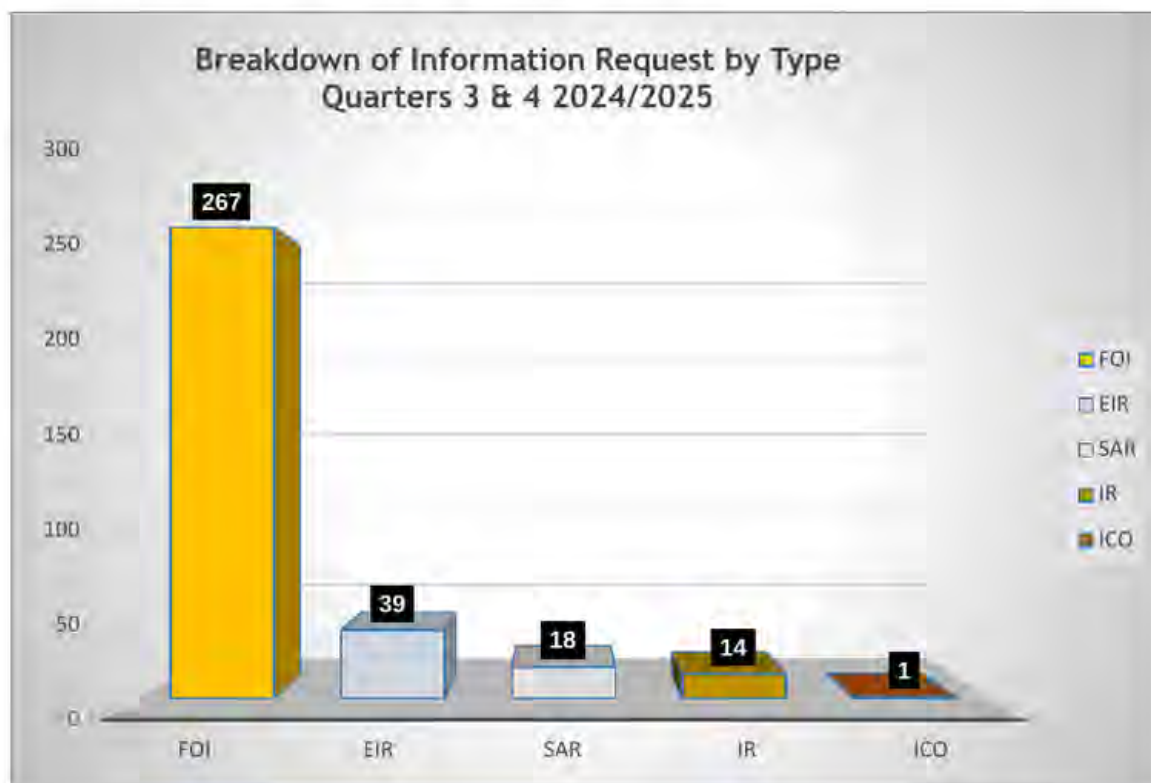
- 2.1 As a public authority, Council has several statutory duties in respect of information governance.
- 2.2 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) gives the public a general right of access to information held by public authorities, with the aim to increase openness and accountability in the public sector. The policy and procedures in relation to this are detailed under Council's Access to Information Policy.
- 2.3 The Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) gives an individual rights in respect of the information held by the Council about them. The policy and procedures in relation to this are detailed under Council's Data Protection Policy.
- 2.4 Each service area has ultimate responsibility for fulfilling its statutory duties in respect of information governance. The Policy team, which includes Council's Data Protection Officer, provides expert advice and guidance to all service areas within Council in respect of information governance matters to guide them towards full compliance. The Policy team also manages the Council's access to information function.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 This report will cover Q3 and Q4 of the 24/25 year.

3.2 Access to Information

Between 1st October 2024 and 31st March 2025, there were a total of **390** information requests received and processed.



The majority (79%), of information requests were managed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. There has been an increase in requests processed under the Environmental Information Regulations and corresponding decrease in those under the Freedom of Information Act through a more robust consideration of requests in accordance with ICO guidelines.

Of the 267 FOI requests received over the above period, 107 (40%) were completed by the Policy Team upon receipt. These were a combination of:

- Requests for information relating to processes not carried out by MEABC. In response to these requests, information and guidance were provided to requestors in line with the requirements of FOIA, Section 16.
- Information already held by the Policy Team or accessible without placing extra burden on departments (where this information was confirmed to be correct at time of processing).

3.3 **Data Breaches**

In this period, four potential breaches of information were reported to the Data Protection Officer. All were investigated and, upon DPO risk assessment, were found not to represent a risk to those individuals affected and as such there was no requirement to report.

As recent data breaches related to emails being sent to the incorrect email address, a reminder email is being sent to all Council email users of the importance of checking email recipients are correct.

3.4 **Information Governance Training**

Modular training sessions commenced in Q4. The training schedule is designed to permit maximum attendance with minimal negative impact on each department's everyday work.

The number of staff completing the training to date is set out below. Training is continuing in the 2025/2026 financial year.

- Introduction to Information Governance – 139
- Access to Information Requests – 114
- Complaints Administration – 14
- Complaints Handling – Full Course – 45
- Data Processing and Sharing – 29
- Data Breaches – 96

Two further modules are scheduled to be delivered as from April 2025.

- Screening Requirements 1 – Equality Screening Requirements -
- Screening Requirements 2 – Data Protection, Rural Needs and Sustainability Screening Requirements. -

3.5 **Information Assets Register (IAR) and Record of Processing Activities (RoPA)**

A Council-wide exercise was commenced mid-Q3 to develop a register of all information being processed and/or held across all Council departments. This exercise is on schedule for completion early in the incoming financial year.

Article 30 of the GDPR requires Council to maintain a Record of Processing Activities which relates to our processing of personal information. The Policy team are currently reviewing the Council's RoPA and implementing any necessary resulting measures in line with best practice.

3.6 **Records Management**

Council has a statutory responsibility for the effective management of information throughout the lifecycle of all records i.e. creation, maintenance, use, security, storage and final destruction or transfer to archives and the management of associated risks.

The review of Council's Retention and Disposal Schedule is underway and is interlinked to the IAR and RoPA, the three being a significant piece of work. Upon ratification, approval will be sought to commence a Council-wide records review project to include appropriate archiving/destruction of information in accordance with the Schedule timelines.

4 General Considerations/Implications

- 4.1 Effective information governance is necessary for Council to fulfil its statutory duties and to demonstrate commitment to openness and accountability.

5 Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 An extensive programme of work has been commenced to advance Council's information governance practices. The Policy team will continue to implement the actions therein.

6 Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the Bi-annual Information Governance report for October 2024 until March 2025.

7 Appendices / Links

N/A



Council/Committee: Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee

Date: 19 May 2025

Report Title: **Update on Notices of Motion 2023 and 2024**

Publication Status: Open

Author: Sarah Williams, Assistant Director – Business Support

Approver: Laureen Donnan, Interim Director of Corporate Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report is to update on the progress of Notices of Motion from 2023 and 2024.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Council’s Protocol to Assess and Process a Notice of Motion includes a commitment to present a bi-annual report to Full Council. The report provides Council with a summary of the actions taken in relation to those motions agreed by Council.
- 2.2. Following the work on Good Governance it was agreed to reintroduce the reporting process on approved notices of motion for presentation to the Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee.

3. Key Issues for Consideration

- 3.1. A new process is in place with the senior management team to consider each notice of motion at their meeting immediately after each council meeting. This will ensure that actions and responsibilities are agreed. There will be a calendar year spreadsheet developed that covers all motions in that year and a report will be undertaken annually. This does not prevent more informal updates between members and colleagues throughout the year.
- 3.2. The two appendices attached cover the Notices of Motions approved at Full Council throughout 2023 (Appendix 1) and 2024 (Appendix 2), with updates on the position of each received before the end of April 2025.
- 3.3. The next update report will provide an update on any open Notices of Motion from 2023 and 2024 and also provide an update on the Notices of Motions for 2025.

4. General Considerations / Implications

- 4.1. Financial implications - there may be cost implications associated with some of the approved notices of motion and these will be reported on an individual basis where necessary back to the council meeting for further consideration.
- 4.2. Human Resources - there may also be staffing implications.
- 4.3. Equality Screening - this will be carried out and reported on as required for the individual notices of motion.
- 4.4. Alignment with Corporate Priorities and Link to Corporate Plan - submission of a bi-annual progress report ensures that Elected Members are informed of actions taken following adoption of a notice of motion.
- 4.5. Rural Proofing and Environmental Impact - this will be assessed as required.
- 4.6. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) these will be identified in respect of the individual notices of motion.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. Elected Members are asked to note the updates on Notices of Motion 2023 and 2024. Further updates will be provided to Corporate Resources, Policy & Governance Committee on a quarterly basis.

6. Recommendation or Decision

- 6.1. Elected Members are asked to note the updates on Notices of Motion 2023 and 2024.

7. Appendices / Links

Appendix 1 – Approved Notices of Motion 2023

Appendix 2 – Approved Notices of Motion 2024

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

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Meeting Date	Notice of Motion	Officer(s) Responsible	Update	Status
09.01.23	MEA to adopt a zero attitude to dog fouling throughout the Borough - Ald B Ashe & Cllr A Wilson	V Watts & P Thompson	In January 2023, a review of the existing dog control orders and a public consultation exercise was taken. Research suggests that alongside education and a strong enforcement approach, public condemnation of witnessed unacceptable behaviour is essential for irresponsible pet owners to change their behaviour and adopt positive habits.	Ongoing
06.02.23	Impact of the cost-of-living crisis on working families and childcare providers - Cllr E Reid & Cllr R Quigley	K Morgan	Noted – this motion indirectly has been dealt with by NI Assembly, key priority within the new Programme for Government	Closed
06.03.23	Positive impact of the MEA hub, incorporating affordable supermarket & good morning, Ballymena - Cllr K Turner & Cllr M Armstrong	K Morgan	New social supermarket 'Mid & East Antrim Affordable Food Club' serving Borough established at MEA Community Hub Oct 22 and continued to operate into 2024 (with funding from DfC). Club membership scheme gives access to food at reduced cost, plus a wraparound service to help address challenges contributing to food insecurity. Members can access the Club online.	Closed
03.04.23	Massed Bands – Re-affirm support for British Armed Forces and commit to	L Donnan	Armed forces covenant has been renewed and events are agreed through the events sub committee group, directing to grant funding where applicable and council funded when approved annually.	Closed

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

Meeting Date	Notice of Motion	Officer(s) Responsible	Update	Status
	organise a similar event at Carrickfergus Castle annually - Cllr M Collins & Cllr P Johnston			
12.06.23	Renaming of Broadway, Larne to Champions Square - Cllr G McKeen & Cllr A Clarke	J McGrandle	In relation to the renaming of the square at Broadway in Larne, Cllr Andrew Wilson is content for this to be no longer progressed at this time. JMcG followed up with Cllr McKeen as proposer to seek his direction on the way forward. Planning and Building Control have also be contacted, to understand if there are any issues with the proposed renaming of the square.	Ongoing
12.06.23	Review of 3G/4G pitch provision - Cllr A Clarke & Cllr G McKeen	P Thompson	Report was taken to E&E committee in August 2023 which agreed a way forward in the provision of additional 3g pitches in the Borough.	Closed
24.07.23	Renaming of Woodburn Play Park & installing inscribed bench - Ald B Ashe & Ald A Wilson	P Thompson	Bench installed at the Play Park	Closed
24.07.23	Take pride in our borough, its green spaces, towns and villages - Cllr J Hyland & Cllr C Harwood	P Thompson	Completed Roy McClean – NIHE contact Alan Keys – Dfl contact	Closed

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

Meeting Date	Notice of Motion	Officer(s) Responsible	Update	Status
04.09.23	Renaming of Larne Memorial Garden and Ballycarry Green to Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Garden and Ballycarry Queen Elizabeth II Green - Ald P Reid & Ald B Ashe	P Thompson	Request to rename The Braid was denied by The Cabinet Office – April 2024, this request was not upheld.	Closed
04.09.23	Inclusivity and accessibility for all residents of Mid and East Antrim - Cllr A Skinner & Ald B Adger	S Fisher	Report to Update on the NoM taken to FC on 27.11.23 – agreed to hold a development workshop to agree a way forward.	Ongoing
16.10.23	Support for the Executive Offices ending violence against women and girls' strategy - Cllr B Lyness & Cllr I Friary	P Thompson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEO launched a Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girl 16/9/24. • Jan 25, OFMDFM announced the launch of the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Local Change Fund. As part of a wider £3.2 million investment, this first step will see £2 million shared across all 11 councils to enable them to support EVAWG action in their local areas. • Work ongoing through Community Planning and PCSP • ONUS (Workplace Charter on Domestic Violence) 	Closed

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

16.10.23	Concern by the recent blooms of blue-green algae in our waters Cllr C Harwood & Cllr J Gibson	J McGrandle & L Cowan	Work ongoing by Lough Neagh Partnership – 2 Elected Members represent Council on the Partnership.	Closed
27.11.23	Financial hardship regarding the cost of school uniforms - Cllr G McKeen & Cllr P Johnston	P Thompson	Officers to take proposal forward Closed – Letter to Richard Pengelly and Mark Browne, EA 08.04.2025 Response received from the new Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education, 11.04.25	Closed
27.11.23	Council condemns the barbaric and premeditated attacks perpetrated by Hamas in Israel on 7 October 2023 - Cllr A Clarke & Cllr T Gaston	V Watts & L Donnan	Motion agreed.	Closed

Notices of Motion January - December 2024

Meeting Date	Notice of Motion	Officer/s Responsible	Update	Status
08.01.24	Improved Water Safety Measures - Cllr A Barr & Ald A Wilson	P Thompson	<p>An Officer has attended the new Water Safety Forum for NI. Which is attended by RNLA, MCGA, NIFRS, PSNI and other bodies.</p> <p>This year the Outdoor Recreation Team have organised events during drowning prevention week, shared information from RNLI on socials, worked with Swim Ulster (Sport NI) under their Get Wet Stay Safe initiative and have more events planned for 2025 with them.</p> <p>Further discussions have taken place with the MEAqua Officer to incorporate messages into swimming lessons.</p>	Closed
19.02.24	Action to reduce deaths due to road traffic accidents - Cllr J Minford & Cllr A Barr	P Thompson	The MEA PCSP carries out a programme of work in this area on an annual basis.	Closed
13.05.24	Cardiac Arrests, Defibrillators and CPR Training - Ald A Wilson & Cllr A Barr	P Thompson	<p>Update planned for N&C Committee - In response to this motion and ongoing work around defibrillators a report was taken to N&C in October.</p> <p>In the new year we will be progressing the actions that were approved by N&C committee including a replacement programme, registration of all council devices, implementation of a new AED council policy (from 01 April 2025) and taking steps to create a partnership approach within the borough for community resuscitation.</p>	Closed

Meeting Date	Notice of Motion	Officer/s Responsible	Update	Status
			<p>An invitation has been extended to Michael Allen (NIAS) to give a presentation to February N&C Committee is also to give further information/detail on this topic.</p> <p>Report taken through CRPG April 2025 and subsequently approved.</p>	
13.05.24	Congratulations to Larne Football Club and reception - Cllr G McKeen & Cllr A Clarke	S Morley / P Thompson	The Mayor conveyed congratulations to Larne Football Club and a small reception was held in May 2024 with club personnel.	Closed
10.06.24	Encouragement to Cancer Sufferers - Ald B Adger & Cllr R Glover	L Donnan	Recorded in published minutes and available on website	Closed
10.06.24	Temporary Closure of DfI Roads Depot at Kilwaughter – Cllr G McKeen & Cllr A Smyth	S Morley / J McGrandle	Update to be provided to Council, then report to E&E Committee	Closed
02.09.24	Trauma Informed Borough - Cllr M Donnelly & Cllr B Ferris	P Thompson / L Donnan	Details of a conference on a Trauma-informed approach in Jan 2025 will be circulated to Elected Members.	Closed
14.10.24	Purchase of Dog Faeces Collection & Disposal	S Morley	Update to be provided to Council in May 2025.	Ongoing

Meeting Date	Notice of Motion	Officer/s Responsible	Update	Status
	Units - Cllr L Philpott & Cllr G McKeen			
25.11.24	Opposition to the UK Government's Winter Fuel Payment policy change – Cllr R Beggs & Ald A Wilson	P Thompson	Letter issued to the Prime Minister. Posters issued for display in leisure centres and community centres and mailshot issued to community groups re checking eligibility for Pension Credit.	Closed
25.11.24	Increasing public concern around overgrown grass verges, paths and hedges – Cllr P Johnston & Cllr G McKeen	S Morley	The Council's GIS system currently holds information on all Council owned and leased lands, along with some ownership information from other government bodies such as the Department, NIHE etc. It also holds a record of maintenance in terms of roundabouts in the Ballymena Area. It is hoped to get all grass cutting mapped onto the system in the future. Officers are happy to show elected members what information is held on the GIS system.	Closed

Corporate Resources, Policy and Governance Committee Forward Plan

1. Planned Agenda Items Next meeting (16 June 2025)

Items	Purpose	Report by:
Policy Briefing	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Annual Equality Commission Submission	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
Performance Improvement Plan – 2024/25 Year End Report	For noting	Siobhan Fisher
VAT Update	For approval	Michelle Hegarty
Procurement Update	For noting	Michelle Hegarty
Fraud Policy & Response Plan	For approval	Michelle Hegarty
Members Code of Conduct	For noting	Sarah Williams
Constitution – Annual Update	For noting	Sarah Williams
Sickness Absence Update (Q1 & Q2)	For noting	Sarah Williams

2. Future Meetings

Meeting Date	Item	Purpose
28 July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Briefing Procurement Update Member Development/Councillor Development Charter Annual Equality Commission NI and DAERA (Rural Needs) Submissions Members' Annual Training Programme (including mandatory) 	For noting For noting For noting For noting For approval
08 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Briefing Quarterly Communications Update Procurement Update Quarterly Complaints Report Quarterly Budget Monitoring – Q1 Performance Improvement Plan – Q1 Update Asset Management Plan Pay Award Update Business Cases (if applicable) 	For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting
20 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Briefing Article 55 Review Report Procurement Update IT Cyber Security Policy Action Plan Reserves Policy Information Governance Framework Bi-Annual Information Governance Report (this will cover Q1 & 2 25/26) Licences/Agreements enacted under Scheme of Delegation 	For noting For noting For noting For noting For approval For approval For noting For noting

Meeting Date	Item	Purpose
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub Committee Terms of Reference • Draft Programme for Government 2024-2027 Consultation Response 	For noting For noting
01 December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Briefing • Technology One Programme Update • Quarterly Communications Update • Quarterly Budget Monitoring Q2 • Procurement Update • Sickness Absence (6 monthly update) • Modern Slavery Policy • Performance Improvement Plan Q2 Update • Events Sub Committee Report • National Pay Award Update • Quarterly Complaints Update Q2 • Article 55 Report • Workplace Charter Domestic Violence – Annual Update 	For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For approval For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting
19 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Briefing • Procurement Update • NIAO Performance Audit & Assessment 2025/26 • Approved Notices of Motion (June to December 2025) • Quarterly Events Update & Autumn Events Review • Sickness Absence Scrutiny Review • Quarterly Budget Monitoring Q2 	For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting
23 February 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Briefing • Procurement Update • Quarterly Complaints Report • Performance Improvement Plan Q3 Update • Treasury Management Annual Outturn Report • Bi-Annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Progress Report 	For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting
13 April 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Briefing • Quarterly Communications Update • Procurement Update • Quarterly Budget Monitoring – Q3 • Supplementary Consultation on Domestic Rating Measures 	For noting For noting For noting For noting For approval
18 May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Briefing • Quarterly Complaints Update • Procurement Update • Health & Safety Annual Report • Notices of Motion Status Update • Bi-Annual Information Governance Report (Q3 & Q4 24-25) • Licences/Agreements enacted under Scheme of Delegation - October 2024 to March 2025 	For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting For noting

3. Items to be Programmed

Item	Purpose
Council Publication Scheme	
Customer & Digital Strategy	
Consultation & Engagement Strategy	
Communications & Marketing Strategy	
Social Value Report	
Annual Investment Strategy	
Annual review: Statutory Equality and Good Relation duties	
Dual Language Street Naming Policy	
Annual Events Programme	
Notices of Motion - Update	
HR Policies / Strategic projects / industrial action as required	
Health and Safety Policies as required	
Staff survey actions (full council?)	
Learning and Development Policies as required	
IT Strategy	