



Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report 2025-2026

September 2026

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report. This year's report reflects on the progress we have made as we continue to pursue our vision for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council: fostering a happy, healthy, and connected community, building a vibrant and sustainable economy, and creating appealing places for living, working, and learning.

Over the past year, we have celebrated significant milestones that demonstrate both our resilience and commitment to growth. Highlights include the completion of the Banbridge Public Realm Scheme which was named Social/Community Public Realm and Landscaping Project of the Year at the Construction Employers Federation Excellence Awards 2025. We also celebrated the successful completion of the Armagh City Townscape Heritage Scheme, a transformative initiative that has revitalised 12 historic properties across the city centre.

We were also proud that our places have been acknowledged with Navan Centre and Fort recognised with a Tripadvisor Travellers Choice Award; Armagh City and Banbridge both shortlisted in the Let's Celebrate Towns Awards, and Dromore shortlisted for High Street of the Year. These nominations are a testament to the hard work, creativity and collaboration happening across our borough and demonstrate that we remain committed to supporting our towns and communities to thrive.

In February, our Council agreed the lowest rate increase across Northern Ireland representing a measured and responsible approach, balancing the need to protect essential services and invest in local communities, while recognising the ongoing financial pressures facing households and businesses.

These examples of awards and achievements received in 2025/26 not only showcase our dedication to excellence but also reflect the hard work, passion, and commitment of our staff throughout the year.

Reflecting on our achievements and monitoring performance is a vital exercise that informs decision-making and ensures accountability. This process demonstrates progress on our Corporate Plan (2023–2027) actions and commitments and allows us to track whether we are delivering on the objectives we set out to achieve. It also provides an evidence base for shaping plans for the next financial year, including identifying new performance improvement objectives.

This report provides an overview of Council's performance against the self-imposed measures set out in our Corporate Plan 2023–2027, 2025/26 Business Plans, Service Standards, and Performance Improvement Plan. It also details our performance against the statutory performance improvement indicators for Waste, Planning, and Economic Development.

In addition, the report includes a summary of our financial performance, the Annual Report on Complaints Handling, and, as required by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), our Annual Rural Needs Assessment Report.

By publishing this Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report Council fulfils the statutory requirement for self-assessment under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, relating to the discharge of our general duty in respect of performance improvement arrangements.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) will carry out an audit of how Council has implemented its statutory performance improvement duties. Subsequently, the NIAO will

produce an independent audit report, which will be published on the Council's website, usually before 30 November 2026. Previous audit reports are available at the following link:

<https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/performance-improvement>

Throughout this report, we draw on statistical evidence and supporting narratives to demonstrate how we performed in 2025/26 against a defined set of targets and standards. Where appropriate, we also benchmark our performance against previous years and against other councils. This approach also highlights how we are implementing our Performance and Quality Management Framework and ensuring that robust performance improvement arrangements are in place.

2.0 CORPORATE PLAN ACHIEVEMENTS

The Corporate Plan 2023-2027 outlines the vision, values and priorities of Council and captures the essence of who we are and how we will achieve a positive impact within the Borough. It demonstrates our commitment to upholding the highest standards for the betterment of **'Our People, Our Place and Our Future.'** It is linked to our Community Plan, Business Plans and a number of other strategies and plans or corporate projects which we use to plan and manage our business effectively. The 'golden thread' between all these documents helps to determine and direct the work of services, departments, teams, and individuals.



A copy of the Corporate Plan can be found at the following link:

<https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/corporate-publications/>

As a Council we will focus on and deliver services across five key priorities: **Environment and Place**, **Community Wellbeing**, **Economic Growth**, **Service Delivery** and **Staff Leadership and Resources**.

In the Corporate Plan, we outline why each priority matters to us and set out three specific commitments for each. To support these commitments, we provide examples of actions that will help us achieve them. These examples are not an exhaustive list of everything we are doing, but rather a selection of activities considered particularly relevant. Every action in each department's business plan is linked to the commitments it contributes to.

Appendix 1 provides an update on progress in relation the actions detailed within the Corporate Plan up to the end of the 2025/26. Alongside the delivery of the business plans and the performance improvement measures these give an indication of how we are progressing in the delivery of our key priorities and commitments. It should be noted, that as these actions span the lifetime of the Corporate Plan, they will be progressed at different rates and have differing timeframes.

In reviewing Council performance for 2025-26 we assessed delivery of services and activities during the year that contribute to the 5 priorities and 15 commitments contained within the Corporate Plan.

Below is a snapshot of our achievements across all priorities.

Priority	Commitments
Environment and Place	- Actively Respond to the climate crisis and support others to do likewise - Seek investment to preserve the uniqueness of our heritage and places - Shape our places to be attractive, accessible, healthy, safe, and clean.
	How have we demonstrated our commitments? - Climate and Sustainability Action Plan agreed. - Armagh Township Heritage Scheme complete with 13 building brought back into commercial use. 3 Environmental Improvement Projects commenced worth £2m, with £1m assigned to Active Travel projects.

Priority	Commitments
Community Wellbeing	- We will encourage participation in arts, culture, heritage, and physical activity. - Provide opportunities which improve quality of life and wellbeing for our communities and staff. - Support and empower communities.
	How have we demonstrated our commitments? 5,945 people availed of the learn to swim programme. 431,161 users visited community centres and town halls engaging in a wide range of community-based activities and services. £1,517,277 awarded to community and voluntary organisations across the Borough through the Financial Assistance Programme.

Priority	Commitments
Economic Growth	- Maximise the potential of our Mid South West (MSW) Growth Deal and Regional Economic Strategy. - Provide and facilitate opportunities for growth, investment, productivity, and skills development in our local economy. - Seek investment in infrastructure and connectivity.
	How have we demonstrated our commitments? £563,000 grant support administered to 114 local businesses via the small settlements scheme. - Completion of £6m Banbridge public realm scheme. £4.5million secured via the Local Economic Partnership to help tackle barriers to economic development

Priority	Commitments
	Continuously review to improve our services.

Service Delivery	• Monitor and communicate our performance. • Seek and use regular customer engagement and feedback.
	How have we demonstrated our commitments?
	• Continued roll out of our Quality Management System providing core management information. • Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report published in September 2025. • 55 public consultations/surveys with 2434 responses issued via the Consultation Hub.

Priority	Commitments
Staff Leadership and Resources	• Value staff and be civic leaders. • Communicate and engage with staff, communities, and others. • Strengthen our governance and review efficiency of our resources and assets.
	How have we demonstrated our commitments?
	• 42 staff completed indoor leisure employee pathways programme. • 13% increase in media coverage across print, broadcast and online. Internally, digital screens in depots to improve communication with staff. • Global Internal Audit Standards implemented.

3.0 SELF IMPOSED STANDARDS AND INDICATORS

3.1 Business Plans

Annual business plans are aligned with the Corporate Plan commitments and actions, performance improvement objectives, statutory and self-imposed performance indicators, and standards. They developed and approved each year taking into consideration any outstanding actions from the previous year and any other priorities for the coming year. Each Business Plan contains specific self-imposed performance measures. As part of Council's Performance & Quality Management Framework, review and monitoring of all business plans and associated performance measures are reported quarterly to the Executive Management Team and 6-monthly and annually to service committees and Council. From March 2024, the Performance and Audit Committee receive a quarterly Corporate Performance Report which includes quarterly update on progress of business plans.

A summary of business plan progress was reported to the Performance & Audit Committee in December 2025 through the 2025/26 Mid-Year Performance Report. Comprehensive annual progress updates were presented to service committees in June 2026 relating to 2025/26, with the Performance & Audit Committee receiving an annual summary report as part of the Corporate Performance Report in June 2026. The minutes of service committees are available to view at the link below:

[Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council - Meetings \(public-minutes.com\)](https://public-minutes.com)

In 2025/26, Council committed to undertaking 162 actions across 18 business plans. Corporately, 72.7% of standards/targets were met with 11.2% falling slightly behind schedule and 16.1% of targets not achieved. The table below illustrates performance at year end and for comparative purposes includes previous years delivery of the Corporate Plan.

2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	Key
72.7%	79.9%	81.0%	Standards/targets were met
11.2%	11.5%	12.25%	Standards/targets fell slightly behind schedule
16.1%	8.6%	6.75%	Standards/targets were missed/not achieved

Performance against standards and targets has declined over the three-year period. In 2025/26, 72.7% of standards and targets were achieved, compared with 79.9% in 2024/25 and 81.0% in 2023/24. While there has been a small improvement in the proportion of targets that fell slightly behind schedule, the percentage of standards and targets that were missed or not achieved has increased substantially, from 6.75% in 2023/24 to 16.1% in 2025/26. This increase in unmet targets has contributed to the overall reduction in performance and highlights the need to focus on areas where delivery is proving most challenging. Reasons for the increase in the number of targets missed include recruitment delays and difficulty in recruiting for certain posts; staff absence and redeployment of staff due to changing priorities; and the increased number of households within the borough adding additional pressure to service delivery.

Comprehensive year end Business Plan progress reports for 2025/26 were presented to relevant Committees in June 2026. Any outstanding actions were taken into consideration during the business planning process for 2026/27

As part of a validation exercise and in line with our commitment to continuous improvement, we sampled a small number our 2025/26 Business Plans to ensure we are capturing the correct information, that it is accurate and ensure our performance improvement objectives are aligned to the business planning process. As part of this annual self-assessment report, we sampled 3 of the annual business plans looking at the targets, where the information was

recorded and any supporting information. Appendix 2 outlines the business plans that were sampled internally along with the findings.

This exercise will be developed in the next year and included as part of an internal verification process. For this exercise we also partnered with the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) who carried out a number of independent validation exercises across some service areas. The findings from both the internal and external validation will help identify future areas for improvement and will ensure that when benchmarking across other councils we are sharing information that is accurate and comparable.

3.2 Service Standards

In March 2022, Council developed and approved a suite of service standards to support the monitoring and improvement of service delivery. These standards apply across several service areas including Building Control, Environmental Health, Planning and Waste Management, and focus on response times and administration processes for both internal and external services. At year end:

- 70% of service standards were met more than 90% of the time
- 21% of service standards met 75% to 90% of the time, and
- 7% of service standards were met less than 75% of the time.
- 2% of the service standards were not tested.

For those standards that fell short of the target contributing factors included staff absence, recruitment delays, and weather related delays. Service standards will be integrated into and reported via business plans going forward. The table below shows 2024/25 and 2023/24 performance for comparative purposes.

2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	Key
70%	75%	72%	Service Standard met more than 90% of the time
21%	11%	9%	Service Standard met 75% to 90% of the time
7%	9%	13%	Service Standard met less than 75% of the time
2%	5%	6%	Service Standard not tested due to nil request

Overall performance against service standards improved during 2025/26. The percentage of standards achieved at least 75% of the time increased to 91%, compared with 86% in 2024/25 and 81% in 2023/24. At the same time, the proportion of standards achieved less than 75% of the time continued to decline, falling from 13% to 7% over the three-year period. Although the percentage of standards exceeding 90% compliance was slightly lower than the previous year, overall compliance improved due to a significant increase in standards performing within the 75% to 90% range. This indicates a broad-based improvement in service performance and consistency.

4.0 STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND STANDARDS

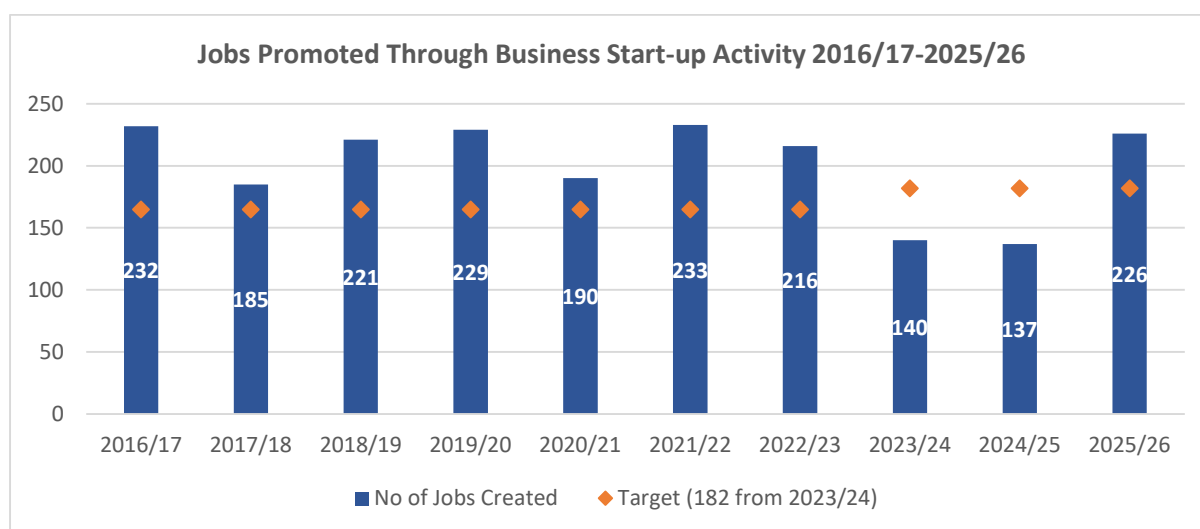
Under the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, performance indicators and standards are set for each of the 11 Northern Ireland councils. These indicators and standards will continue to apply until an amending order, or new order is enacted and include Economic Development, Planning and Waste Management functions.

The aim of the performance measures is to promote the consistency and improvement of service delivery in these three service areas across all councils.

Appendix 3 outlines performance from 2016 – 2025 for the 7 statutory performance improvements indicators. For those actions that fell behind target, this report includes information on the reasons for this.

4.1 Economic Development

The Department of Economy set the Economic Development indicators and standards as part of the governance and performance management arrangements for the Economic Development functions. Information on the 11 Councils performance for 2025/26 is set out in Appendix 4. The economic development indicator relates to the number of jobs promoted by Council through business start-up activity.



In 2025/26, a total of 226 jobs were created through business start-up activity. This is a marked increase on the last 2 years and is above the statutory target of 182. The 2025/26 figures are provisional and subject to verification by the Department for the Economy.

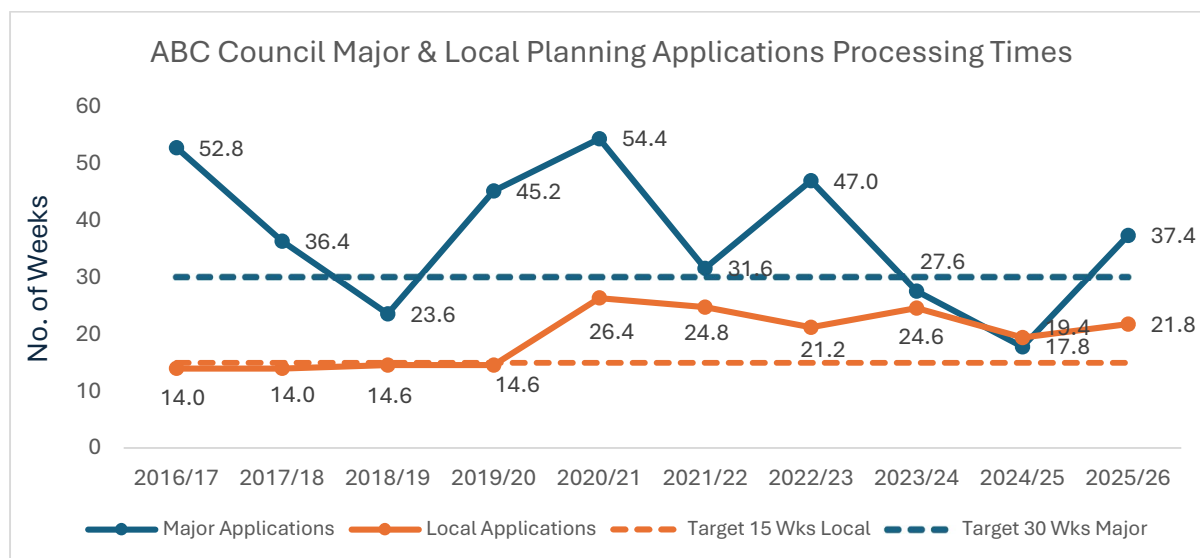
The Northern Ireland Enterprise Support Service, branded Go Succeed, is funded by the UK Government - a multi-million-pound investment in local entrepreneurs and businesses. It offers tailored, holistic support at every stage of the business journey, including mentoring, masterclasses, peer networking, access to grant funding, and business planning support. While Go Succeed has a wider remit than previous programmes, it is important to note that broader outputs are not captured in the job creation figure and the method for calculating job creation remains under review.

Fostering an entrepreneurial culture that supports business start-up, and growth continues to be a key corporate priority for the Council. We work collaboratively with the other 10 councils to enhance the delivery of the NIESS and strengthen Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) across Northern Ireland. Locally, we maintain strong partnerships with enterprise support organisations, including local enterprise agencies, colleges, schools, social economy networks, and other stakeholders, to ensure the programme is widely promoted and accessible to all members of the community.

4.2 Planning

The Department of Infrastructure set the Planning indicators and standards as part of the governance and performance management arrangements for Planning functions. The Department publishes performance by council area on a quarterly basis through the NI Planning Statistics Report. Information may be accessed using the following link:

[Northern Ireland planning statistics April 2025 - March 2026 | Department for Infrastructure](#)



During 2025/26 the average processing time in Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council for **major** planning applications was 37.4 weeks. Whilst this exceeds the 30 week target it was lower than the average processing times across all councils which was 41.4 weeks. During 2025/26 only 2 of the 11 councils met the 30 week target.

The average processing time for the Council to decide **local** applications during 2025/26 was 21.8 weeks, which is outside the 15 week statutory target. The 2025/26 average processing times across all councils was 19.6 weeks. Only 3 of the 11 councils met the statutory target of 15 weeks in 2025/26.

It should also be noted that the Department for Infrastructure has reported that the number of planning applications received across Northern Ireland was a similar number to the previous financial year. In our Borough, the number was down by 3.6% on the previous year. The following factors should be borne in mind when interpreting the data provided and when making comparisons with other time periods.

During 2025/26:

- 975 applications were received (4th highest across Northern Ireland) a decrease of 36 on the previous financial year.
- 839 applications were decided (4th highest across Northern Ireland) – a decrease of 88 on the previous financial year.
- 269 enforcement cases were closed (3rd highest across Northern Ireland) – an increase of 13 on the previous financial year.

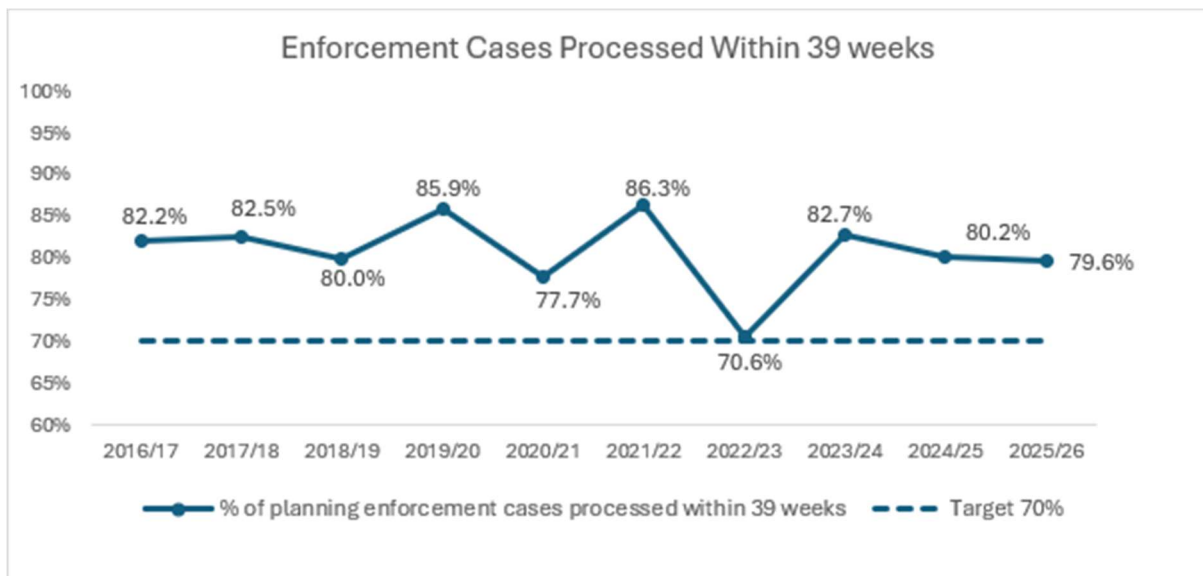
The number of major applications received in 2025/26 was 17. These included:

- 1 major retail development
- 4 major residential developments

- 2 major industrial/warehousing developments
- 2 major educational developments
- 1 major railway infrastructure scheme
- 1 major energy/waste development
- 1 mixed use development
- 1 major agricultural development
- 3 major tourism development
- 1 major sport and recreational development

These applications above represent not only major investment into the regeneration of the Borough, but extensive work from our Planning Department. During 2025/26, 16 major applications were determined, which included a major retail investment in Craigavon Town Centre determined in 18 weeks and several housing, commercial and community developments.

The number of planning applications referred to above relate to those applications which contribute to the statutory targets and has been taken from an official statistical bulletin published by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). It should be noted that the above figures do not include applications which do not contribute to the statutory targets, such as discharge of planning conditions, certificates of lawful development, non-material changes etc. In 2025/26 the Council received 266 such applications which, whilst not contributing to the statutory targets, still require a similar level of resource to process.



During 2025/26, the Council processed 79.6% of its enforcement cases to a conclusion within 39 weeks, which is significantly above the statutory target of 70% and is the 4th highest across all councils.

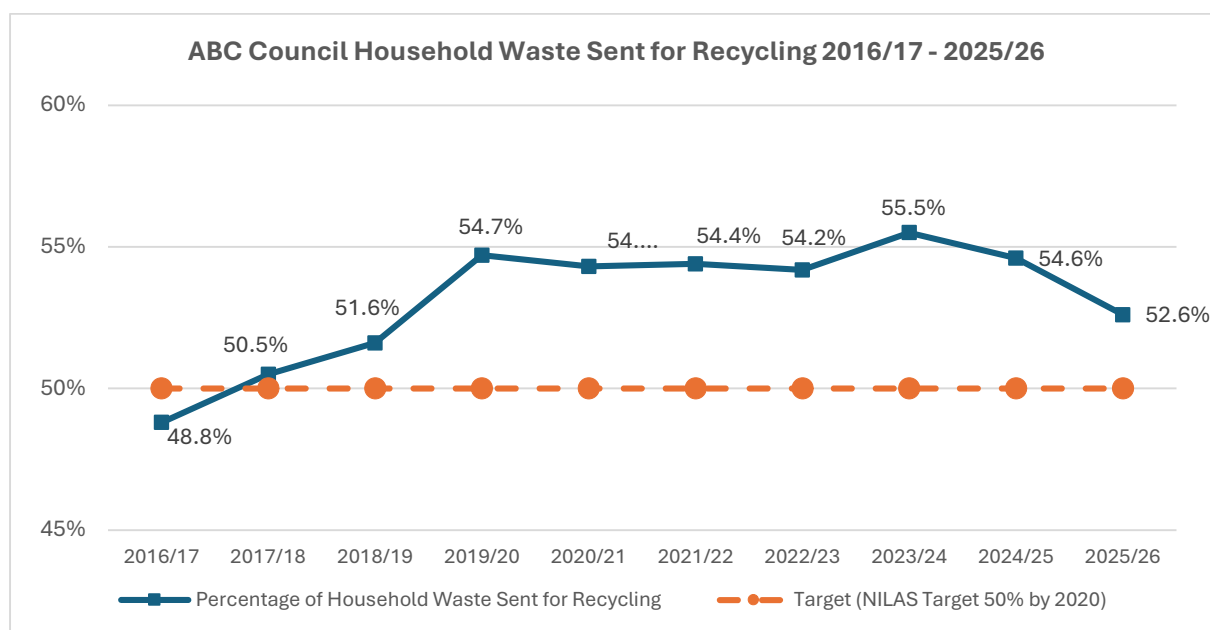
4.3 Waste Management

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEARA) set the Waste Management indicators and standards. The Department publishes performance by council area on a quarterly basis through the NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics report. Information may be accessed using the following links:

[Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#)

The current unverified figures for 2025/26 show the percentage of **household waste** sent for recycling is 52.6% against a target of 50, a slight decrease on the previous year.

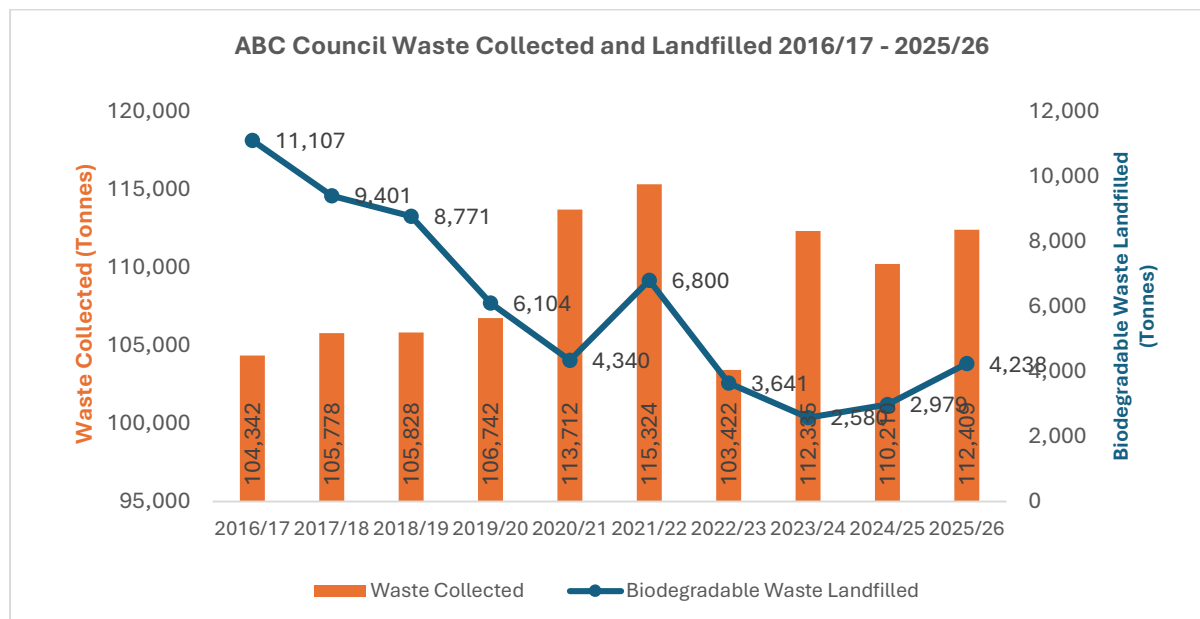


Waste targets were historically focused on household and biodegradable waste however going forward they are focused on municipal waste, encompassing household and commercial waste. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 requires for at least 70% of waste to be recycled by 2030 and The Waste (Circular Economy) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 has targets for recycling and landfill diversion as detailed below:

- by 2025, the preparing for re-use and the recycling of municipal waste shall be increased to at least 55% by weight.
- by 2030, the preparing for re-use and the recycling of municipal waste shall be increased to at least 60% by weight; and
- by 2035, the preparing for re-use and the recycling of municipal waste shall be increased to at least 65% by weight; and
- measures to be taken to ensure that the amount of municipal waste landfilled is reduced to 10% or less of the total amount of municipal waste generated (by weight) by 2035.

The **municipal waste** sent for recycling rate for 2025/26 is 51.9%, is slightly short of the target of 55% by 2025, as outlined by the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. Despite this, Council are confident that they are on track to achieve the 70% target by 2030.

It should be noted that the statutory target referred to above, 50% by 2020, (as set out on the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015) has not been replaced by the new Climate Change Act and therefore Council continues to report against it as required for the purpose of this report.



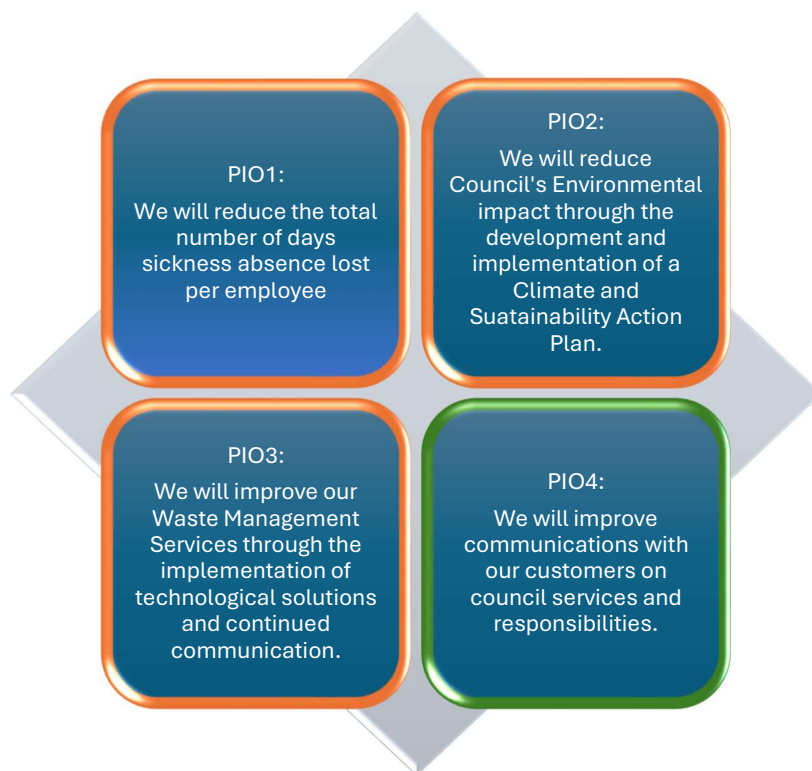
The total amount of waste collected had been increasing since 2016/17, reaching a high of 115,324 tonnes in 2021/22. Waste collected fell slightly in 2024/25 but has risen again in 2025/26 to 112,409 tonnes. It is important to note that there has been an increase in households across the borough which has an impact on waste arisings.

The chart shows that the amount of biodegradable waste being landfilled has fallen from 3,641 tonnes in 2022/23 to 2,580 tonnes in 2023/24, 2,979 tonnes in 2024/25 and risen to 4,238 tonnes in 2025/26. This is typically an economic decision by the waste processor and not something that Council can ultimately control. No new targets have been set for the landfilling of biodegradable municipal waste, (NILAS Scheme ended in 2020) however as referenced on page 12, The Waste (Circular Economy) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 require measures to be taken to ensure that the amount of municipal waste landfilled is reduced to 10% or less of the total amount of municipal waste generated (by weight) by 2035. The unverified rate for our Council for 2025/26 is 7.52%.

5.0 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES

Within the Performance Improvement Plan 2025/26, we identified specific areas we wanted to improve. We have reviewed, monitored, and assessed how we have performed on these.

Council selected four Performance Improvement Objectives for 2025/26. The graphic below indicates progress during 2025/26.



In agreeing the above objectives, Council identified key actions and associated performance measures to ensure achievement of the objectives and improvements that benefit residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

Gathering data from relevant departments, and analysis of the progress of the Performance Improvement Objectives agreed for 2025/26, showed that Council successfully achieved PIO4 and fell slightly behind schedule on PIO1, PIO2, and PIO3. It is acknowledged that PIO1, PIO2 and PIO3 are complex objectives that require long term investment, both financially and through other resources.

The following tables contain detailed information and narrative on the achievement of these objectives during this period. Reference to performance data from previous years, where relevant, has also been included to identify trends in continuous improvement.

Improvement Objective 1: *We will reduce the total number of days sickness absence lost per employee.*

Why	• This objective has been carried forward from 2024/25. • Trends remain largely unchanged with Chest/Respiratory, Stress/ Depression Mental Health and Musculoskeletal as the main reasons for absence. • The management of absenteeism continues to receive a high focus within Council and therefore remains as an improvement objective for 2025/26.
What Action will we take?	• Provide support to line managers enabling them to effectively manage staff absence. • Implement the updated Attendance Management Policy/Procedure and additional appropriate training for managers • Develop and implement an annual Staff Health & Wellbeing Action Plan. • Deliver initiatives / activities aligned to the main reasons for absence. • Maintain a minimum of 85% of Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) Champions within Council and provide as required provide refresher training. • Communicate MHFA Champions to staff • Develop and implement Hybrid Working procedure.
How will we measure progress?	• Target of 16 days or lower, for the total number of days sickness absence lost per employee. • Attendance Management Policy implemented, and training delivered by 30 September 2025 • Staff Health & Wellbeing Action plan delivered by 31 March 2026. • Health and wellbeing initiatives/activities delivered across the main themes of absence by 31 March 2026 • Maintain a minimum of 85% Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) provision in March 2026. • 2 targeted communications on MHFA services issued to staff by 31 March 2026 • Hybrid Working procedure developed and implemented June 2025.
Progress at Year End 	• Sickness position at year end is 19.89 days per employee • The Attendance management policy was implemented on 1 April 2025 with training delivered to managers. • Absence triggers are closely monitored with meetings held with line managers with HR support. • Monthly Directorate meetings focused on review of absence in each team. These meetings are attended by the Deputy Chief Executive, the Director and each Head of Department. • The annual Staff Health and Wellbeing Action Plan was developed and delivered with over 50 events delivered engaging with almost 1000 attendees. • 36 Mental Health First Aider Champions in place, representing 95% of the original list of those trained. Refresher training was provided for these Champions. • Poster in place setting out contact details of our Mental Health First Aid Champions, displayed in staff communal areas and on our staff intranet. • Hybrid Working Procedure in place.
Benefits to you	This objective will contribute to the overall health and well-being of our Borough, as a large majority of our employees reside in the Borough. If progress is made, then it should also result in better continuity of service delivery.

Who is responsible	The Senior Responsible Officers (SRO's) for this Objective in conjunction with the HR&OD Department are • Interim Chief Executive. • Director of Development, Community & Wellbeing • Director of Regulatory Services, Facilities & Assets • Director of Environmental Services & Sustainability
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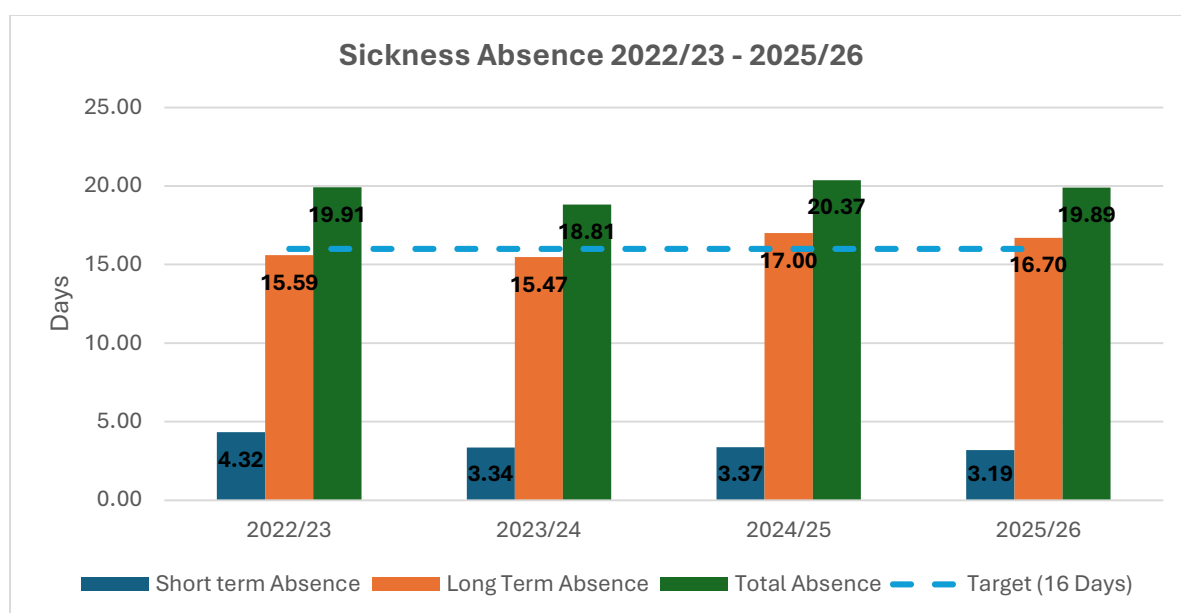
How did we perform?

Progress has been made in establishing clearer processes, enhancing data visibility, promoting well-being, and supporting managers to take a more proactive approach to absence management.

Staff absence

The year end performance against 2025/26 targets for staff absences is as follows:

	2025/26 Target (Days)	2025/26 Actual	2024/25 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2022/23 Actual
Average Days Lost	16.00	19.89	20.37	18.81	19.91



Comparing the year end position at 2025/26 with the 2024/25 position the average days, long-term and short-term absence rates have reduced slightly reflecting the scale and complexity of particularly long-term absence and cultural factors. This will require sustained work to embed consistent management practices and support to address underlying causes where possible.

A revised Managing Attendance Policy and Procedure was implemented on 1 April 2025 with training delivered to all managers. Further training for line managers will continue as part of a core management programme.

Monthly Directorate meetings include a focus on absence in each team and meetings are attended by the Interim Chief Executive, the Director and each Head of Department. Absence triggers are closely monitored, and meetings are held with line managers with support from Human Resources.

Health and Wellbeing

During 2025/26, non work-related Stress/Depression/Mental Health/Fatigue, Musculoskeletal issues and work related Stress/Depression/Mental Health/Fatigue are the top three causes of absence. The annual Staff Health and Wellbeing Action Plan was developed and delivered over 50 events engaging with almost 1000 attendees.

Improvement Objective 2: *We will reduce Council's environmental impact through the development and implementation of a Climate and Sustainability Action Plan.*

Why?	• Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and has a statutory duty to address Climate Change. • The Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027 has 5 priorities one of which is Environment & Place. This includes our commitment to actively respond to the climate crisis and support others to do likewise.
What Action will we take?	• Adopt & implement 'Climate & Sustainability Action Plan' aligned with the goals of Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 to: ◦ Prioritise action required to tackle climate emergency ◦ Avoid new emissions & cut existing emissions • Establish a cross departmental working group, enlisting department champions. • Develop a Sustainable Procurement Policy & adopt Sustainable NI Screening Tool • Adopt 'Invest to Save' pipeline project proposals regarding renewables within the estate facility portfolio. • Through EMS & ISO 14001 – identify & improve systems & processes relating to energy usage and cost savings • Monitor & review mandatory training for all staff
How we will measure progress.	• Working Group Established & meetings held throughout 2025/26 • Consultation Action Plan completed & submitted for approval June 2025 • Initiate 4 pipeline 'invest to save' renewable project proposals (subject to review) • 5% reduction in energy consumption across estates facilities portfolio (subject to review) • Continue to update Intranet page – Climate Sustainability & EMS • 70% of staff trained by 31 March 2026 (subject to review)
Progress at Year end. 	• Climate and Sustainability Working Group established, and meetings held regularly since January 2026. • 2025 – 2030 Climate & Sustainability Action Plan approved by Council in September 2025. • 'Invest to save' project proposal forms have been submitted. Further detail outlined in the 'How did we perform?' section. • 20% of staff trained in Sustainability Screening for decisions • An analysis of energy consumption is being prepared; current est. figure 5.85% increase in consumption. • Communication Plan has been drafted, and the intranet has also been updated. • Staff training ongoing. Mandatory e-learning module 'Environmental Awareness at Work' 87% completion for those on e-learning platform. Other training includes Corporate Induction and Bitesize webinars.
Benefits to you.	• In the long term there will be a reduction in energy costs • There will be a positive impact on the health and well-being of our citizens. • Our actions will support nature-recovery, enhancing biodiversity • Delivery of the action plan will support climate resilience.
Who is responsible?	The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this Objective in conjunction with the Climate, Sustainability & Parks Services Department is the: • Director of Environmental Services & Sustainability.

How did we perform?

Year-end progress has been steady and productive, especially raising staff awareness through multiple forms of training for both staff and elected members. The Climate and Sustainability

Working Group continue to meet monthly to progress Council's Climate & Sustainability Action Plan 2025-2030.

Additionally, the climate team have met the DAERA regulatory reporting deadlines for both mitigation 31st October 2025 and adaption 31st March 2026.

Early estimates of current 2025/25 energy consumption indicate there was an increase of approximately 5.85%. The DAERA mitigation report took into consideration scope 1 & 2 emissions. Council can learn from and improve their reporting for both mitigation and adaption going forward especially in identifying and creating necessary systems and processes for all future reporting.

A business case for small scale solar photovoltaic 'invest to save' projects at 3 locations across the borough has been developed and will be presented at council in July 2026.

Other achievements to report are as follows:

- EMS ISO 14001 maintained in 2025.
- 11 officers completed Carbon Literacy training.
- Climate and Sustainability awareness training is now delivered at all Corporate Induction Training Sessions for New Employees; reaching operational staff who do not have access to e-learning module.
- Awareness training delivered to leisure centre staff during December 2025; supporting QUEST accreditation.
- Staff & elected members availed of hourly bitesize training webinars hosted by Sustainable NI.
- Climate, Sustainability & EMS Communication Plan ensures that staff are made aware of the Climate issues and also training opportunities.
- MSW Green Energy District – ongoing – this project was submitted as a case study in DAERA adaption reporting. Project Proposal incorporates Carn Depot, Craigavon Civic Centre, and South Lakes Leisure Centre.
- Water Refill Stations & Cycle Racks – completed March 2026.

Improvement Objective 3: *We will continue to improve our Communications to our customers on Waste Management Services.*

Why	- This objective has been carried over and revised for 2025/26 as several planned actions were impacted by operational issues in 2024/25. - Analysis of a number of sources of data including Info@ analysis / social media /Council's Consultation Hub etc suggest that there is still an opportunity for improving communications on waste management.
What Action will we take	- Implement an in cab digital data information system as part of the Environmental Services improvement project. - Continue review of the Waste Management section of the Council's main website - Provide standardisation of relevant, accurate and up to date information on appropriate communication channels - Regular Analysis of Customer communication methods including Contact Us/ complaints@/ ES reports/ Website hits/ ABC Council App Usage/social media. - Environmental Services to undertake a customer satisfaction survey
How we will measure progress	80% of waste collection service using in cab technology by March 2026 - Quarterly updates of Waste Management section on website, including frequently Asked Questions - Copies of publicity/PR posted on all communication channels as required. - Quarterly review of all communication channels - Quarterly review of ABC Council App usage statistics - Quarterly review/monitoring of the number of hits on website section - Customer satisfaction survey carried out by March 2026
Progress at Year end. 	0% of waste collection staff are currently using in-cab technology. - Waste Management section on website, including frequently Asked Questions updated quarterly - Copies of publicity/PR posted on all communication channels as required. Examples of events supported below. - Quarterly performance data updates are presented at ES Committee. - ABC Council Apps usage statistics outlined below. - A customer survey was undertaken at the Recycling Centres in Quarter 4.
Benefits to you	- Increased customer satisfaction with information about Waste Management Services. - Customers will have improved accessible information on Waste Management Services on a range on channels
Who is responsible	The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this Objective in conjunction with the Head of Environmental Services and Communications Team is: Director of Environmental Services & Sustainability

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

The overall route optimisation programme has been delayed due to several operational issues. However, extensive work has been undertaken within the past year, and the overall programme is to be commenced in Autumn 2026. The introduction of in-cab technology forms part of this programme and will improve communications and steam-line processes between refuse crews, administration team, and the public.

This is an extensive programme that will impact all residents of the borough and will lead to more efficient working. Communication is therefore key to the successful roll out. A project specific communication plan has been developed and will reach as wide an audience as

possible, using a variety of communication methods including the corporate website the ABC Residents App and social media platforms.

Statistics on the ABC Council App at year end are as follows:

- App Installs (since launch) 36,279
- Active Users 14,409
- Notification Subscriptions 22,330

The waste management communications section has supported several regional campaigns and run its own local events including Compost awareness week, Recycle Week, Bicycle repairs, Eco Schools, and No dig initiative. Work continues with local schools and community groups to further promote the waste hierarchy.

A customer survey was undertaken at the Recycling Centres during the last quarter of 20025/26 and received 495 responses. An analysis of the responses will be presented to the relevant committee later in the year and actioned as appropriate.

Improvement Objective 4:

We will improve communications with our customers on Council services and responsibilities.

Why	• This improvement objective has been carried over from 2024/25. • From analysis of email communication there is an opportunity for improvement on communications around Council Services and responsibilities.
What Action will we take	• Review website and include a user-friendly section that outlines the services and responsibilities that Council is responsible for. • Review, update and profile generic email addresses for Council departments and functions. • Provide contact details or links to other public bodies/ external organisations responsible for non- Council services • Use social media channels to send out communications at prescribed times in relation to Council services and responsibilities.
How we will measure progress	• Updated user-friendly section website by 31 March 2026. • Quarterly monitoring of the number of hits on website section • 5% reduction in email enquiries via the Council mailboxes and JotForm in relation to Council & non-council services • Quarterly monitoring of enquiries received by Council that relate to external organisations • Quarterly monitoring of the Social Media Posts
Progress at Year end 	• Design upgrade on website to include more user friendly sections completed. This includes detail of Council's Departments, what they are responsible for and generic email address for each Council Departments. • Website Home Page now features a How we can Help You Section, with Tiles more aligned with common customer enquiries and links to public bodies/ external organisations for non-Council services. These are more prominently positioned for customer ease. • Ongoing monitoring of enquiries received by Council / hits on website has informed the redesign of Home page, providing consumers with the correct information in reduced clicks as possible. • Since 2024/25 to 2025/26, there has been a 14% reduction of email enquiries received. • Standard practice by Communications Team to issue communications at prescribed times in relation to Council services and responsibilities.
Benefits to you	• A dedicated /user friendly section on the website will give customers the assurance that they are contacting the correct Department directly and the correct external organisation in relation to the service they require. • This should reduce the time Council staff spend redirecting service requests • This will improve customers understanding of the range of Council services and responsibilities.
Who is responsible	The Senior Responsible Officers (SRO) for this Objective in conjunction with Communication Team are. • Interim Chief Executive • Director of Environmental Services & Sustainability • Director Of Regulatory Services, Facilities & Assets • Director of Development, Community & Well Being

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

The main actions under this Performance Improvement Objective have been to review the Council's website Homepage and to include a more user-friendly section that outlines the services and responsibilities that Council is responsible for.

During the year, research on best practice, reviewing websites from other Councils and other organisations has taken place. Reviewing analytics also informed where currently our customers spending most time on our website. This data informed the re-design of the Website sections.

Each Department confirmed and stated their main generic email address by which their customers can contact them for all enquiries. Contact details, along with information of the main functions delivered by each Department, was collated and agreed. This information is now included in a newly designed section on the Website: Council Departments.

Based on evidence and data reviewed and analysed, the majority of public enquiries received via JotForm and info@ falling both within Council's remit and outside Council's remit, included:

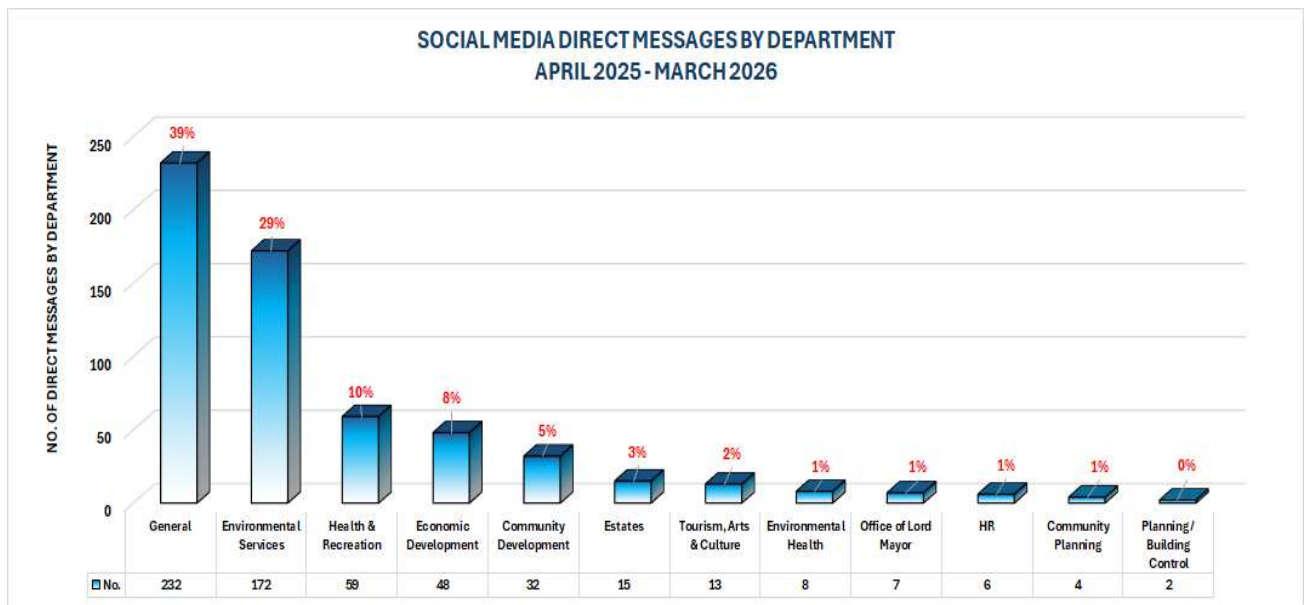
	Council responsibility	Non Council responsibility
1st	General Enquires	Marketing/Advertising enquiries
2nd	Bins, Waste Collection and Recycling.	Department of Infrastructure (Potholes/ Street lighting)
3rd	Animal Welfare	NI Housing Executive
4th	Community Related	Citizens Advice
5th	Health & Recreation	NI Water

This information has been used for the re-design of a user-friendly tiles on the Home page on the corporate website. The most common, recurrent public enquiries are now easier identifiable on the Home page; bringing the customer directly to the answer/ Department / service they need. This will be continually monitored with the flexibility of amending the Home page Tiles to align with the most common public enquiries. The refreshed Home page also now places information/contact details on non-Council services e.g. Department of Infrastructure (Potholes/streetlighting) under Report a Problem tile, which sub-divides issues the public may have into Council and non Council services.

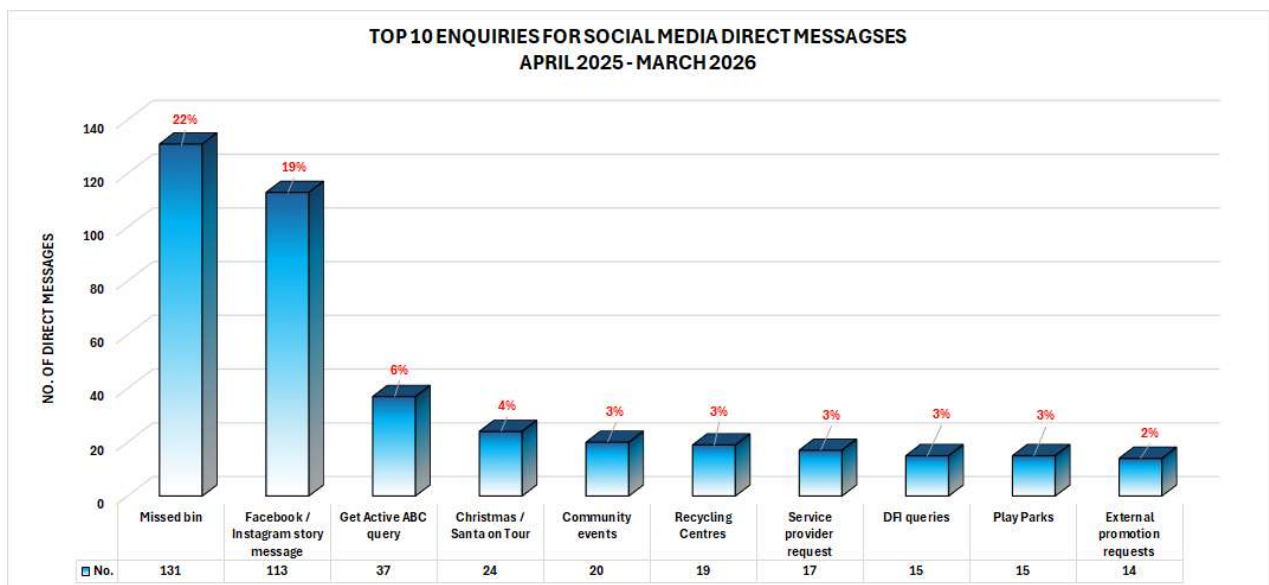
With regards to the volume of marketing and advertising /SPAM enquiries received, ICT have a software system in place to identify and block unsolicited emails. Emails into the info@ is further monitored by the Performance team and where relevant emails are blocked at this point also. The volume of marketing and advertising enquiries received via info@ is relatively low in comparison across the whole organisation and the ICT Team remain vigilant in tackling these.

The Communications team is responsible for the council's Corporate social media presence and can report for the period April 2025 to March 2026, **3,189** social media posts have been issued on corporate channels with a total impression/reach of **13,005,014** and total engagement rate of **562,940**.

Social media direct messages are a convenient way for residents and customers to contact the council. A total of **598** direct messages were received via the corporate social media channels, which include Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X, from April 2025 – March 2026.



The vast majority of direct messages received concern queries/issues regarding Environmental Services most notably missed bins, which is a recurring statistic regardless of reporting period. The recurring nature of this query can be attributed to a number of reasons including staff absence, recruitment issues, mechanical issues, and weather impact. While the issue of staff absence and recruitment issue can be addressed internally by the council, issues of mechanical and weather issues are unfortunately out of council's control.



Messages received via the corporate social media channels relating to departments who host their own social media platforms, i.e. Getactive ABC and Visit Armagh has reduced on corporate channels, compared to previous reporting periods, which suggests that the profile of those sites has increased and customers are engaging directly in the first instance with the relevant source.

Due to a change in message reporting by Meta, Facebook and Instagram stories tagging the council from external sources are now included as direct message notifications, however as a story is only active for a very short period, actual content capture is not possible once the story has expired.

Spam messaging continues to occur, mainly via Facebook and Instagram with a noticeable increase in the number of chatbot and AI created messages received. There are also a recurring number of messages received that relate to the remit of other government departments i.e. Department of Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Health. The refreshed Home page on Council's website will address this.

In January 2026, a new social media content management system, Orlo, was implemented to replace the previous system, Sprout Social. Initially hosting the corporate social media channels, Visit Armagh and Urban ABC platforms have now been introduced with other additions, including Getactive ABC to be added in the near future. Training in the use of Orlo, for each of these department will be provided by the Communications team.

The system has the capacity to add all council associated social media platforms, allowing all channels to be managed from a single central source, providing increased analytical and reporting capabilities, enhanced technical support and offers a more secure system due to UK based servers. The implementation of Orlo is currently on a one-year trial basis however early findings suggest the system should be retained on a longer-term basis to allow the organisation's digital presence to develop, improve and grow.

The progress detailed within this Annual Self-Assessment Report confirms actions within this area of improvement are now complete, and therefore this objective was removed from the Performance Improvement Plan 2026/27.

6.0 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

During the 2025/26 financial year, Council continued to apply rigorous scrutiny to budgets and income and expenditure positions, closely monitoring and reporting on variances to Directors and Heads to enable them to take corrective actions to address under and overspends, as necessary. This approach helped to ensure that resources remained available to support service delivery within affordable limits, while continuing to deliver budget reductions and maintain strong financial governance and control. These measures were fundamental to protecting frontline services and maintaining Council's long-term financial sustainability. Council's risk management, business planning and budget-setting processes were also regularly reviewed and adaptations made if required in response to emerging financial challenges, ensuring that key risks were identified, assessed, and effectively managed.

During the annual Estimates Process each year Council is obligated to ensure that it has adequate resources to deliver the services expected by local ratepayers, both business and non-business alike. To this end in 2025/26 Council projected a requirement of net funding in the amount of £92.8m of which £85.9m was to be raised by way of Rates Income along with total projected Central Government grant funding of approximately £6.9m (i.e. Rates Support Grant, Transferred Functions Grants, and De-Rating Grant).

Following the rates setting process in February 2025, budgets for the 2025/26 financial year were aligned to the four directorates as follows:

- Development Community & Wellbeing: - £17.6m
- CEO & Deputy CEO: - £14.7m
- Regulatory Services, Facilities & Assets: - £12.9m
- Environmental Services & Sustainability: - £35.2m
- Other Services: - £0.3m

Council also budgeted for various capital projects and set aside approximately £12.1m capital financing to support these.

Council recognises the importance of responding effectively to external financial pressures while maintaining strong financial stewardship and protecting essential services. Challenges such as inflation, pressures on public sector funding and wider economic uncertainty continue to impact local government finances. To address these challenges, there are approved business plans aligned to corporate objectives as well as regular reviews of budgets and financial strategies to ensure resources are managed effectively and priorities can continue to be delivered.

Council has also secured significant external funding to support economic growth and investment across the borough, including funding through the Levelling Up Fund, Shared Island initiatives and the City and Growth Deal. Council will continue to pursue future funding opportunities that help deliver investment, improve infrastructure, and enhance outcomes for local communities.

At the end of each financial year Council publish their Statement of Accounts outlining how we have used public money throughout the year. They are prepared on an accruals basis and are intended to present to readers a true and fair view of financial activity during the 2025/26 financial year. They demonstrate to ratepayers how the funding available to Council (i.e. government grants, domestic and business rates) for the year, has been used in providing services in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by councils.

More detailed information on Council's Income & Expenditure is presented within the Annual Statement of Accounts: <https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/finance-information>

7.0 COMPLAINTS HANDLING

A Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) for Local Government came into effect on 1 January 2024. As part of the new procedure, councils are required to publish an annual complaints report including any learning from complaints received and action to prevent them reoccurring. Appendix 5 provides a comprehensive report with further detail on lessons learned, and continuous improvement as a result of complaints received.

- During the 2025/26 financial year, 327 complaints were received. 36 were escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2.
- Of the 327 complaints received, 211 were resolved, 24 upheld, 46 partially upheld and 45 not upheld, at stages 1, 2 and after escalation to stage 2. One complaint remained 'live' (Environmental Health) and therefore no outcome recorded as of 31 March 2026.
- On average Council responded to stage 1 complaints within 4.3 days and stage 2 complaints within 19 days. Complaints escalated from stage 1 to stage 2 were responded to within 17.9 days.

8.0 BENCHMARKING

Understanding current levels of performance is a prerequisite to understanding what improvements might be possible in the future. Benchmarking is one approach that can be used to identify both efficient and inefficient activities in the public sector. Understandably given the changing priorities, need for recovery and challenging circumstances local and central government have faced throughout the last few years, the proposed work to explore the development of an NI Regional benchmarking framework has been delayed.

Council are currently members of the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), a networking community that assist local authorities who are striving to improve their frontline services. Membership allows us to engage with and learn from other councils and provides insights into our performance in relation to other member councils.

In compliance with the Statutory Guidance on the General Duty, benchmarking information forms part of our assessment report and we have included comparisons with other councils in relation to prompt payment and staff absenteeism data within Appendix 6 and 7.

9.0 RURAL NEEDS MONITORING

The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (The Act) came into operation for government departments and district Councils on 1 June 2017. The Act requires policy makers and public authorities to have due regard to rural needs when developing and implementing policies and when designing and delivering public services.

In order to fulfil its obligations under section 1 of the Act, policy makers within Council completed 32 Rural Needs Impact Assessments for the year 2025/26. This information is attached in Appendix 8.

During this period, Council provided further training on the Rural Needs Duty to Senior Managers and relevant policy makers. This training includes some of the training materials that were provided by DAERA.

Guidance for developing Council policy and the Framework for developing a Strategy includes advice for Officers on the Rural Needs Act and the duty to rural needs impact assess policies/strategies. These guides together with relevant rural statistics and the Guide to the Rural Needs Act provided by DAERA are made available on the Council Intranet. Rural Needs Impact Assessments are placed on the policy section of the website alongside the equality screening exercises.

During this period 4 Council policies were relevant to rural needs and evidence of the due regard duty was detailed in the rural needs impact assessment. This information is summarised in the template attached.

Council's Statistical Data Analysis Officer has assisted policy makers in collating relevant rural statistics to complete the Rural Needs Impact Assessments.

10.0 COMMITTED TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND GENERAL DUTY TO IMPROVE

Council wants to assure all residents, businesses, and all other stakeholders that it is fully committed to delivering services that are efficient, economical and of an exemplary standard. Council looks forward to working with residents, local businesses, our statutory partners, and all other stakeholders to ensure that this happens.

Every year presents many challenges for Council and residents, and it is vital we provide the right services in the right way to meet the needs of our customers and to improve customer experience and satisfaction.

In terms of continuous improvement and our General Duty to improve, Council acknowledges the importance of setting meaningful performance measures, realistic but ambitious targets. This will be integral and taken on board as part of our annual Business Planning processes.

Officers continue to develop the ways in which performance and quality management data is collated and monitored internally by Senior Managers; and presented to Elected Members, helping us identify how it can be used to focus resources where needed to ensure continuous improvement.

Council performance related documents are also available to view on our website using the following link:

<https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/performance-improvement/>

11.0 HOW TO CONTACT US

We welcome your ongoing feedback, comments, and suggestions on how we might improve any of our Council services.

Please use one of the following ways to contact us:

Website: <https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/contact-us/>

Email: performance@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 0300 900

In writing: Strategy & Performance Department
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Armagh Old City Hospital
Abbey Street
Armagh
BT61 7DY

Elected Members:

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has 41 democratically elected members, representing 7 District Electoral Areas.

Further details on each elected member can be found at:

www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

This document is available in a range of formats upon request using the contact details above.

Progress on Corporate Plan Actions 2025-26

ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE PRIORITY ACTIONS	Update at year end 2025/26
Develop a Council Climate Action Plan with KPI's	Action plan was agreed by Council in September 2025.
Create a community and business climate toolkit and develop associated green initiatives	Energy Security and Decarbonising Our Economy is identified as a key theme in the Economic Growth Delivery Plan 2025-2035 (under development).
Work in partnership with the other Royal Sites of Ireland and partners in progressing World Heritage for Navan and support Armagh Observatory and Planetarium in their bid for World Heritage status	The Royal Sites is progressing with monthly operational meetings and quarterly strategic meetings. Plan to submit formal bid by 2031. Observatory bid continues to progress with MOU signed between the sites. Staff sitting on both working groups.
Secure investment for development of our city and town centres including opportunity to support the heritage led regeneration agenda	The Townscape Heritage Schemes in Armagh has completed and Lurgan is coming towards a close and have resulted in significant enhancements in both places. Heritage Strategy approved and application made to National Lottery for implementation. Funding has been received from DfC for phase 1 of the Lurgan linkages scheme to regenerate Black's Court Laneway.
Develop place plans for six urban centres by 2027	Place plans have been developed for Armagh, Banbridge and Dromore with work commenced in 2025 on the plans for Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown.
Develop a Blueway and Greenway (Blue/Green) Plan and Active Travel Master Plan	Under the agreed Climate and Sustainability Action Plan targets have been set for the establishment of an active travel team. The team will assist DfI in taking forward the NI Active Travel Strategy.
COMMUNITY WELLBEING PRIORITY ACTIONS	Update at year end 2025/26
Extend F.E McWilliam Gallery and Studio by 2026	The project is near completion and due for handover October 26.
Provide a programme of high quality, nurturing opportunities to participate in arts, culture, and heritage activities, which will help improve physical, mental, and social wellbeing. With 200 participants per annum of which 90% will testify that participation had benefited their mental health and/or wellbeing	We are making good progress on this action across our venues and through our community outreach programme. We have secured funding through 'Going Places' to enhance this offering over the next 2-3 years. Outreach programme working well across the borough.
Establish a measure of Quality of Life in our Borough and seek to improve this baseline	The QoL measures have been agreed under the revised Community Plan with a set of indicators identified relating to Connected, Healthy and Welcoming Community.

Increase the range of programmes for people least likely to participate in sport and physical activity by 9% by 2027	The delivery of the Get Moving ABC Framework is the focus of the departmental business plan. In 2025/26 the target of programmes for people least likely to participate in sport and physical activity was 512 and 515 was achieved. The target has been met every year from 2023/24, and we are on track to achieve the cumulative 9% increase in 4 years.
Use Participatory Budgeting (PB) as an opportunity for everyone to engage in community life and shape decisions by continuing our PB Grants process and trialling a mainstream PB project by 2027	A fourth successful PB grants process was undertaken in 2025.
Work with the community and voluntary sector to develop sustainable initiatives which support people to improve their quality of life	The Community and Voluntary Sector Panel continue to support the sector and have contributed to the updating of the community planning plan and associated action plan. Within 2025/26, we have supported approximately 500 community and voluntary organisations with over £1 million, to sustain, develop and support local community activity. As a result, groups have successfully delivered a wide range of programmes and events which seek to improve community connections and overall health and wellbeing through volunteering, skills development, reducing isolation and providing opportunities for communities to meet. Work with the community and voluntary sector to develop sustainable initiatives which support people to improve their quality of life. We have facilitated a partnership and co-design approach to addressing poverty through the ABC Crisis Support Network, benefitting 13,962 individuals this year.
ECONOMIC GROWTH PRIORITY ACTIONS	Update at year end 2025/26
Through MSW develop business cases for investment of reinvigoration in Armagh Gaol, Green Energy District in Carn - Seagoe and an Agri Bio Innovation Centre by 2030	Outline business case development is underway for all projects. Armagh Gaol, Green Energy District and Agri Bio Innovation Centre OBC due to be submitted to Government Departments for review and approval in the Autumn.
Develop an Inclusive Growth Strategy and Plan by 2025. Deliver opportunities in growth and investment	The Strategy has evolved into an Economic Growth Delivery Plan for 2025-2035 which is under development. It will focus on delivering results by harnessing inclusive, sustainable economic growth across five themes.
Increase the value of the Borough's tourism economy by 10% annually	Due to the fluctuations in the updating of the regional statistic this was to be based on, officers will instead track holiday visits and website visitors in which we aim to see an annual increase. This year numbers in these areas increased by 4% and 9%, respectively. Jobs in tourism continue to be strong in ABC.
Deliver the Agriculture Strategy by 2027	Delivery of the Agriculture Strategy continues across a wide range of departments in collaboration with key stakeholders, local farms, and businesses. Events, engagement and profiling the importance of the Borough's agrifood sector continues as part of the Food Heartland.

Develop an Infrastructure Strategy to evidence the need, priority, and deliverability of critical infrastructure across the Borough	Initial evidence gathering is being undertaken. Individual elements such as the rail strategy are underway.
Facilitate and seek the delivery of schemes that will increase access to sustainable and active transport, providing links to key local amenities and improving connections between settlements	Individual schemes are being progressed through the capital plan process. Under the Climate and Sustainability Action Plan targets have been set for the establishment of an active travel team. The team can assist in taking forward the NI Active Travel Strategy.
SERVICE DELIVERY PRIORITY ACTIONS	Update at year end 2025/26
Progress service improvements as identified by a review of Environmental Services	Work on service improvements are ongoing with positive engagement with staff and trade unions to date.
Fully embed our Quality Management System (QMS) across council to improve our services by usage of data and evidence	A new Working Group has been established and a project plan to embed and grow the next phases of QMS.
Publish our annual Performance Self-Assessment Report	Council's Annual Self – Assessment Performance Report is published on 30 September each year. This is a statutory requirement and will be achieved in year as in all previous years.
Publish the Community Planning Biennial Statement of Progress	The current statement produced in Nov 2025 is available on the Council website. The next statement is due in the 27/28 financial year
Ensure all new or updated strategies and policies adhere to our standards for public consultation	Directors and Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that any new strategies or policies comply with our Public Consultation Policy as new strategies and policies are developed.
Provide training for staff on communication, consultation, and engagement.	Training is and will be provided as required and identified with managers for example during PDC's.
STAFF, LEADERSHIP & RESOURCES PRIORITY ACTIONS	Update at year end 2025/26
Develop a People and Culture Strategy by 2027	Our People Programme was established in June 2024 and is delivered through a Steering Group and a number of workstreams. Its focus is to enhance current people management practices and improve our workplace culture.
Retain Elected Member Development Charter Plus status	Charter Plus reassessment was undertaken in December 2025 and the status was retained.
Ensure all staff receive at least two Personal Development Conversations a year	Target % completion and timeframes are included within departmental business plans to help achieve this. Progress is regularly monitored.
Issue a regular E-Zine to staff containing corporate information updates, news, and acknowledgements	Inside line e-zine is circulated monthly to all staff (excluding July).

Harmonise terms and conditions and HR policies	Management has identified and scoped all outstanding terms and conditions that need harmonisation. Negotiations have been ongoing for several months, with regular meetings scheduled to facilitate discussions. These negotiations will only affect certain sections of the organisation, and contractual and policy arrangements will be taken into account. Environmental Services transformation has made good progress, with an understanding in place on harmonised T&Cs
Conduct an asset review by 2027	Progressed the strategic review and optimisation of the Council's property portfolio to improve efficiency and long-term financial sustainability. Delivered key capital investment and asset improvement projects across the estate, enhancing facilities for residents and service users. Strengthened asset governance, compliance, and property data management to reduce risk and support evidence-based decision making.

Business Plan Validation 2025/26

Department Business Plan	Green	Amber	Red	Comments
Health & Recreation	65.5%	11.5%	23%	Evidence available to support the achievement of those actions that fell into the Green category. Validation information available on the GOALS system and taken from internal monitoring software and finance system. Actions that fell within Amber and Red categories were mostly operational and due to staff shortages. This was verified through committee reports and the internal Quality Management System data.
Tourism, Arts, and Culture	75%	25%	0%	Evidence available to support the achievement of those actions that fell into the Green category. Information available on the GOALS Platform and through several internal and external communications. Staffing pressures have impacted on the actions that fell within the Amber categories. Several ongoing building maintenance and infrastructure issues across facilities have had an impact on some deadlines. Work is progressing in collaboration with Estates. This was verified by committee reports and the internal Quality Management System data.
Economic Development	83%	4%	13%	Evidence available to support the achievement of those actions that fell into the Green category. Validation information available on the GOALS system, taken from internal monitoring including finance system, attendance records, and external organisations. Actions that fell within the Amber and Red categories were mostly due to staff shortages and difficulties in recruitment. This was verified through committee reports and the internal Quality Management System data. Other issues included the challenges faced to Council when working with funding bodies.

Appendix 3

Summary Table: Statutory performance improvement indicators and standards for the functions of Economic Development, Planning and Waste.

Ref.	Statutory Performance Indicators	Standards/ Targets set for 2024/25	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
ED1	Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity.	Target from 2023/24 182	232	185	221	229	190	233	216	140	137	226* 
P1	Average processing time of major planning applications.	Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawn within an average of 30 weeks .	52.8 weeks	36.4 weeks	23.6 weeks	45.2 weeks	54.4 weeks	33 weeks	47 weeks	27.6 weeks	17.8 Weeks	37.4% Weeks 
P2	Average processing time of local planning applications	Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawn within an average of 15 weeks .	14 weeks	14 weeks	14.6 weeks	14.6 weeks	26.4 weeks	24.8 weeks	21.2 weeks	24.6 weeks	19.4 weeks	21.8 weeks 
P3	Percentage of planning enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks.	70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.	82.2%	82.5%	80%	85.9%	77.7%	86.3%	70.6%	82.7%	80.2%	79.6% 
W1	Percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste	NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (50% by 2020) Non-Statutory Targets: (i)by 2025, the	48.8%	50.5%	51.6%	54.7%	54.3 %	54.4%	54.2%	55.5%	54.6%	52.6* 

	prepared for reuse).	preparing for re-use and the recycling of municipal waste shall be increased to at least 55% (ii)by 2030, the preparing for re-use and the recycling of municipal waste shall be increased to at least 60% (70% in Circular Economy Package) (iii)by 2035, the preparing for re-use and the recycling of municipal waste shall be increased to at least 65%										
W2	Amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled.	NI Landfill Allowance Scheme No statutory standard has been set for 2024/25.	11,107 tonnes	9,401 tonnes	8,771 tonnes	6,104 tonnes	4340 tonnes	6,830 tonnes	3641 tonnes	2580 tonnes	2979 tonnes	4,238* tonnes 
W3	Amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arising.	No statutory standard has been set for 2024/25	104,342 tonnes	105,778 tonnes	105,828 tonnes	106,742 tonnes	113,712 tonnes	115,324 tonnes	103,422 tonnes	112,334 tonnes	110,210 Tonnes	112,409* Tonnes 

* Unverified figures

Appendix 4

Economic Development

Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council unverified figure for job creation in 2025/26 is 226 against a target of 182.

UNVERIFIED FIGURES	Actual BPA	Actual Jobs	Total BP Target	Statutory Target (2023 order)	Variance BP	Variance Jobs	
Antrim & Newtownabbey	292	175	133	80	159	-95	219%
Ards & North Down	298	179	205	123	93	-56	145%
Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon	377	226	303	182	74	-44	124%
Belfast	547	328	542	325	5	-3	101%
Causeway Coast & Glens	291	175	213	128	78	-47	136%
Derry & Strabane	314	188	233	140	81	-48	135%
Fermanagh & Omagh	231	139	283	170	-52	31	82%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	268	161	193	116	75	-45	139%
Mid & East Antrim	267	160	185	111	82	-49	144%
Mid Ulster	308	185	255	153	53	-32	121%
Newry Mourne & Down	393	236	288	173	105	-63	136%
Totals	3586	2,152	2,835	1,701	753	-451	126%

Annual Report on Handling Complaints 2025/26

INTRODUCTION

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council is committed to providing excellent services to all our residents, businesses, and visitors to the Borough, or to anyone with whom we engage. There may, however, be times when customers feel that our services have fallen below the standard they might expect.

We welcome this feedback about our services and will use it to continually improve service delivery and customer satisfaction. Good customer service and effective handling of complaints are key to ensuring that we capture issues and concerns to learn lessons and make improvements where necessary.

Overseen by the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO), a Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) for Local government was developed and came into effect on **01 January 2024**. The new model now sees all local councils in Northern Ireland work under a **two-stage complaints procedure**.

The new Model aims to:

- Bring consistency to how councils in Northern Ireland handle complaints.
- Make it easier for customers to communicate when things go wrong.
- Help all of us learn and make improvements to our service, faster.

Where a customer has taken the time to make a complaint, we will respond as promptly as possible to ensure a resolution and if they are still dissatisfied, we have a process in place to ensure that the complaint can be further investigated.

As a council, we are required to regularly report on and publish an annual report showing that we have learned from complaints and taken action to prevent them happening again.

The Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman (NIPSO) sets out the complaints information to be reported on and published annually by Local Government public bodies. This report details Council's performance against the NIPSO performance indicators during the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

OUR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Council's Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) follows the model developed by the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO). The model CHP applies to all local authorities. The Council's CHP is based on a two-stage process. The first stage is frontline resolution and the second is investigation.

Frontline resolution, Stage 1 is for issues that are straightforward and easily resolved, requiring little or no investigation. This means 'on the spot' apology, explanation, or other action to resolve the complaint within five working days or less. Complaints are addressed by staff or referred to the appropriate point for resolution. Complaint details, outcome, and action taken are recorded and used for service improvement.

Stage 2 investigations are for issues that have not been resolved at the first stage or that are complex, serious or 'high risk'. This means a response is provided within 20 working days following an investigation of the points raised.

Following investigation, if customers are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with their complaint, they can ask NIPSO to look at it. NIPSO cannot normally look at a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure first.

This report provides information on complaints handling within the Council during the periods 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026. It sets out our performance against the indicators set by the NIPSO.

Each Department has nominated Complaint Administrators and Complaint Handlers, and a Complaint Handling Working Group is in place with each department represented. At a regional level, a Local Government Best Practice Network has been established in conjunction with NIPSO so that Councils can share good practice and common queries. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council is part of this group which meets on a six-monthly basis. The Performance team within Council's Strategy & Performance Department, have responsibility for overseeing the co-ordination and implementation of Customer Relations and Complaints Procedure.

COMPLAINTS SUMMARY

1 April 2025– 31 March 2026

During 2025/26, 327 complaints were received, 36 of these were escalated from stage 1 to stage 2. In comparison, in 2024/25 we reported 229 complaints received, of which 18 of these were escalated from stage 1 to stage 2.

Of the 2025/26 complaints 92% of stage 1 complaints were closed within the target of 5 working days. With 74% stage 2 complaints were responded to within the target of 20 working days. 27 complaints were escalated from stage 1 to stage 2 within timescales. 28 complaints were closed in full at stage 2 within 20 working days.

An extension to timelines was granted on 15 complaints: 6 for Environmental Health department, 3 for Environmental Services department, 3 for the Planning department, 2 for Climate Sustainability Parks department and 1 for Tourism Arts and Culture department due to their complexity during this period.

As of 31 March 2026, out of the 327* complaints, 211 complaints **resolved**, 24 **upheld**, 46 **partially upheld** and 45 **not upheld**, at stages 1, 2 and after escalation to stage 2. One complaint remained 'live' (Environmental Health) and therefore no outcome recorded as of 31 March 2026.

The complaints escalated to stage 2 were more complex issues. This year an increased number of Departments received more complex complaints- this included Environmental Health, Environmental Services, Tourism, Arts & Culture, Climate, Sustainability & Parks, and Planning.

On average Council responded to stage 1 complaints within 4.3 days and stage 2 complaints within 19 days. Complaints escalated from stage 1 to stage 2 were responded to within 17.9 days.

Whilst overall annually Council met target response times, it is noted there were months within the year whereby responses times by Departments did not meet target response rates. The months of April, June, July, August and January, target response rate of 5 working days for Stage 1 complaints was not met. During June, August, September, January, and February 2026 average response times for Stage 2 complaints were not met, notably in June a 39.3 day response rate recorded against a target of 20 days.

Influential factors include staff absence, availability of Complaint Handlers to deal with complaints during this time of the year, alongside the probability of increase in users/customers of council facilities.

Comparative performance data for 2024/25 and 2025/26 is provided in Appendix 1. This also includes analysis at Directorate and Departmental level.

**It should be noted Complaints received towards the end of each month may not be fully closed until the start of the following month, which may result in variance of reported data.*

REPORTING ON NIPSO COMPLAINT PERFORMANCE AND INFORMATION

NIPSO requires Local Government sector public bodies to report on the following complaints information:

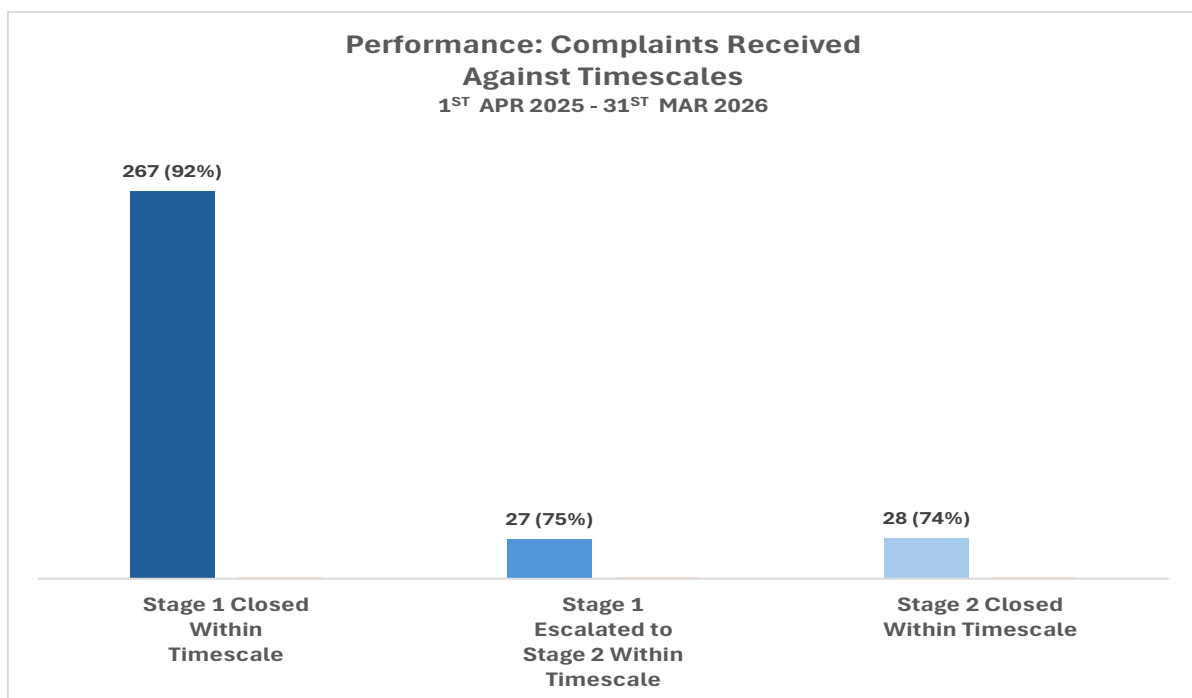
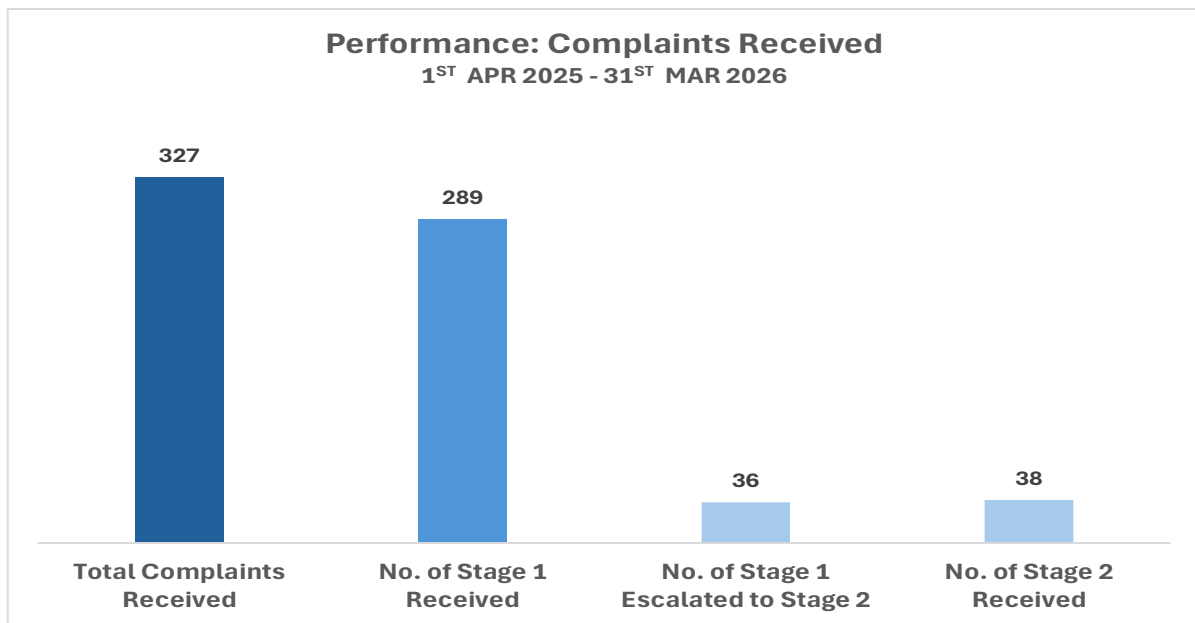
1. Complaints performance statistics

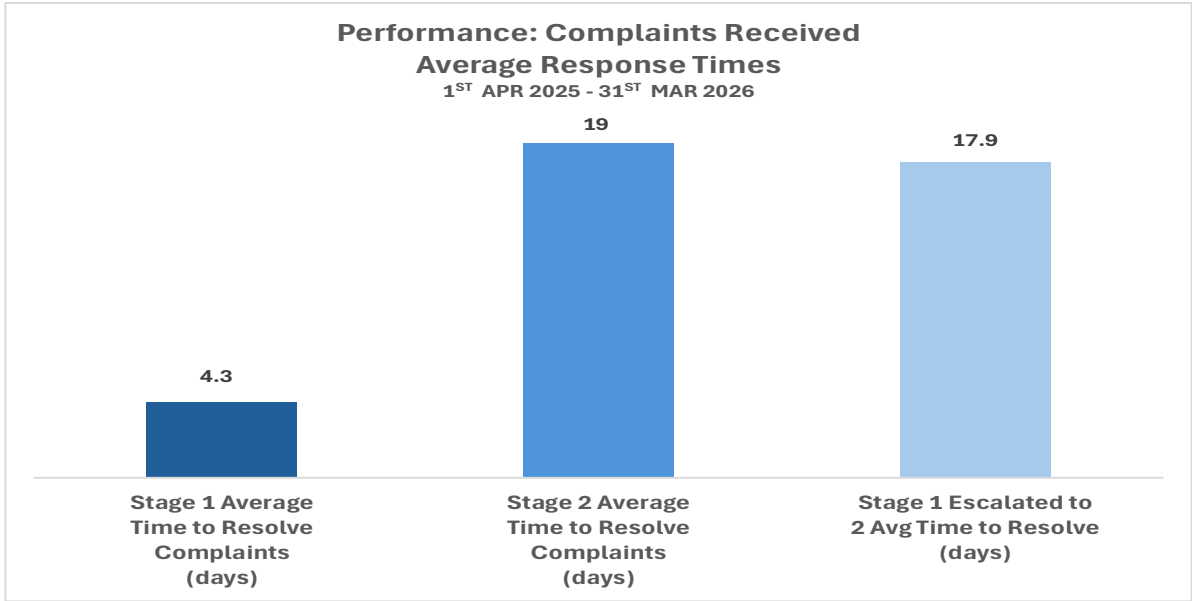
- **Complaints received**
- *Number of complaints received.*
- *Number of complaints escalated from stage 1 to stage 2.*
- **Performance against timescales**
- *Number of complaints closed in full at stage 1 within 5 working days as a percentage of all stage 1 complaints responded to in full.*
- *Number of complaints closed in full at stage 2 within 20 working days as a percentage of all stage 2 complaints responded to in full.*
- *Number of complaints escalated from stage 1 to stage 2 within timescale.*
- *Number of complaints closed in full after escalation within 20 working days as a percentage of all complaints responded to in full after escalation.*
- **Average response times**
- *Number of working days to respond in full to complaints at stages 1, 2 and after escalation to stage 2*
- **Complaints resolved, upheld, partially upheld, and not upheld**
- *Number of complaints 'resolved,' 'upheld,' 'partially upheld' and 'not upheld' at stages 1, 2 and after escalation to stage 2.*
- **Number of complaints where an extension was authorised**

- *Number of complaints at stages 1 and 2 where an extension was authorised.*

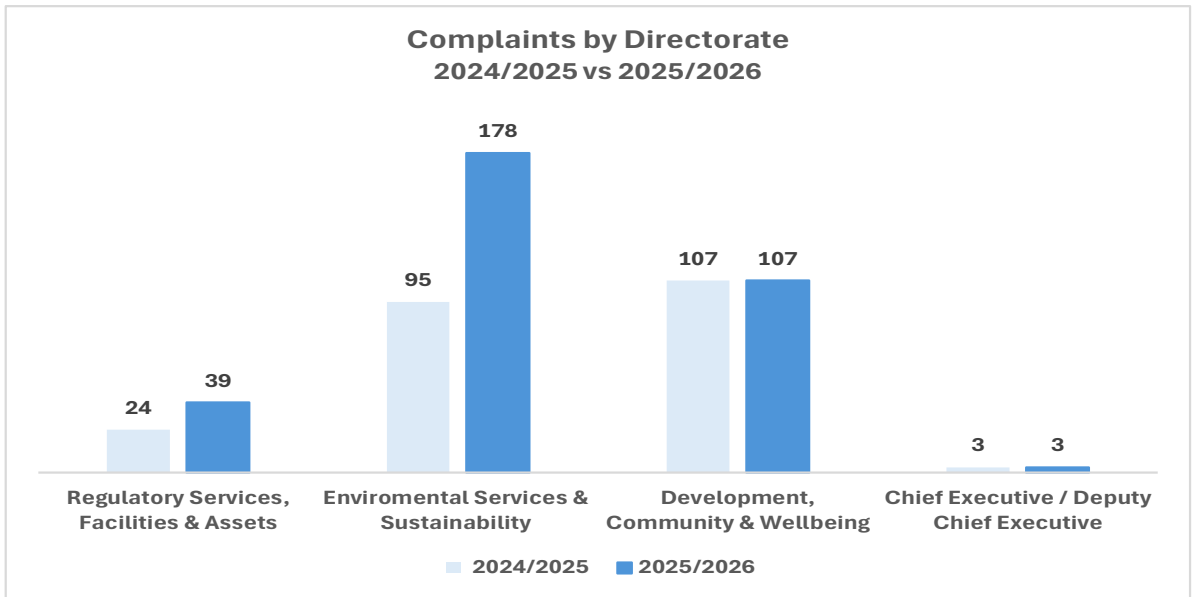
It is important to note, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon borough has the usual resident population of 218,656. This accounted for 11.5% of the Northern Ireland population. (Source: *Census Day: 21st March 2021*). This figure puts into context the comparatively small number of complaints received by Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Council. When received, we aim to resolve complaints quickly, and to employ corrective and preventative action appropriately to upheld cases.

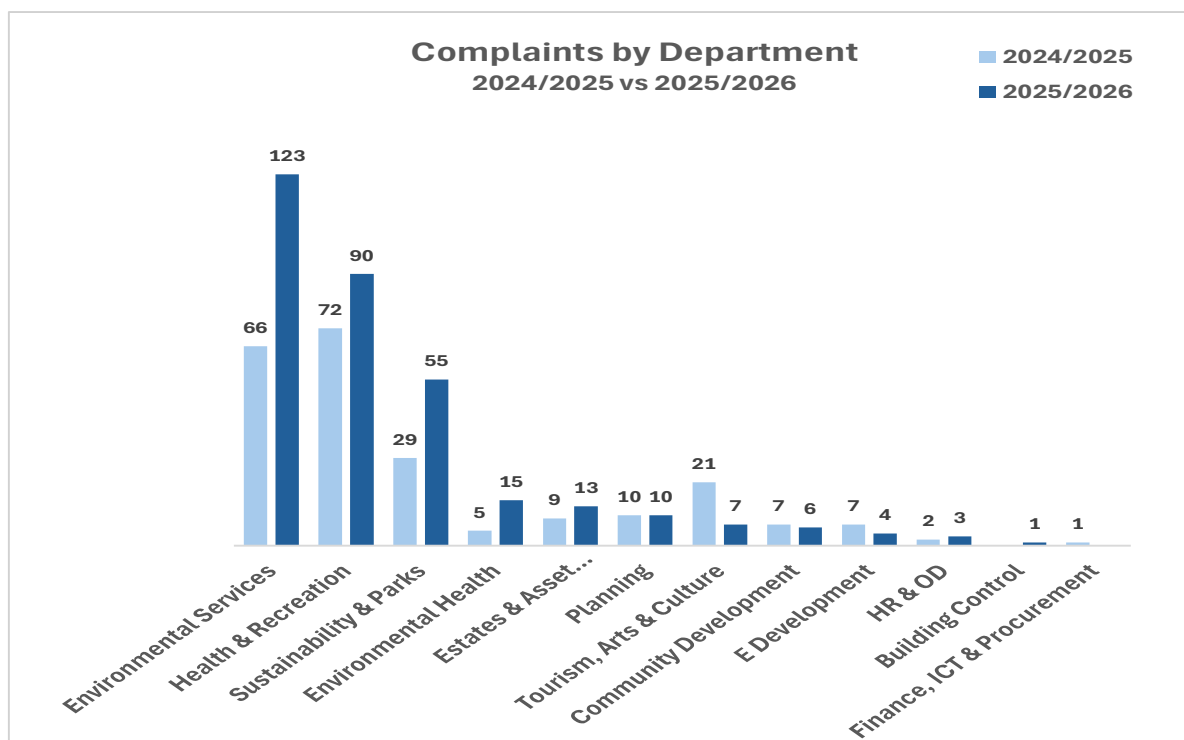
The following graphs present complaints data for the following period: 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026 and provides an overview per Directorate and Department.





OVERVIEW COMPLAINTS BY DIRECTORATE AND DEPARTMENT





*No complaints were received for the following departments: Strategy & Performance / Community Planning & Policy & Resources, CEO Office, Legal, Governance & Monitoring Office

2. Complaints Outcomes

There are four outcome categories:

Resolved complaints are where Council has taken action **without** reaching any conclusions about whether there were any failings (for example, because the organisation agreed a solution with the complainant before it looked into/investigated the complaint).

Upheld: complaints can be considered “upheld” where an investigation found evidence to support the complaint. In other words, *a complaint where we investigated and found that something went wrong.*

Partially Upheld: if a complaint is made about several issues of complaint and one or more, but not all, of the issues of complaint are upheld then the complaint can be considered as “partially upheld.” In other words, *a complaint where we investigated and found some parts of the process had gone wrong.*

Not Upheld: a complaint can be considered “not upheld” in cases where an investigation has been undertaken and found no fault on the part of the organisation being complained about. *In other words, when there is no evidence to support any aspects of the complaint.*

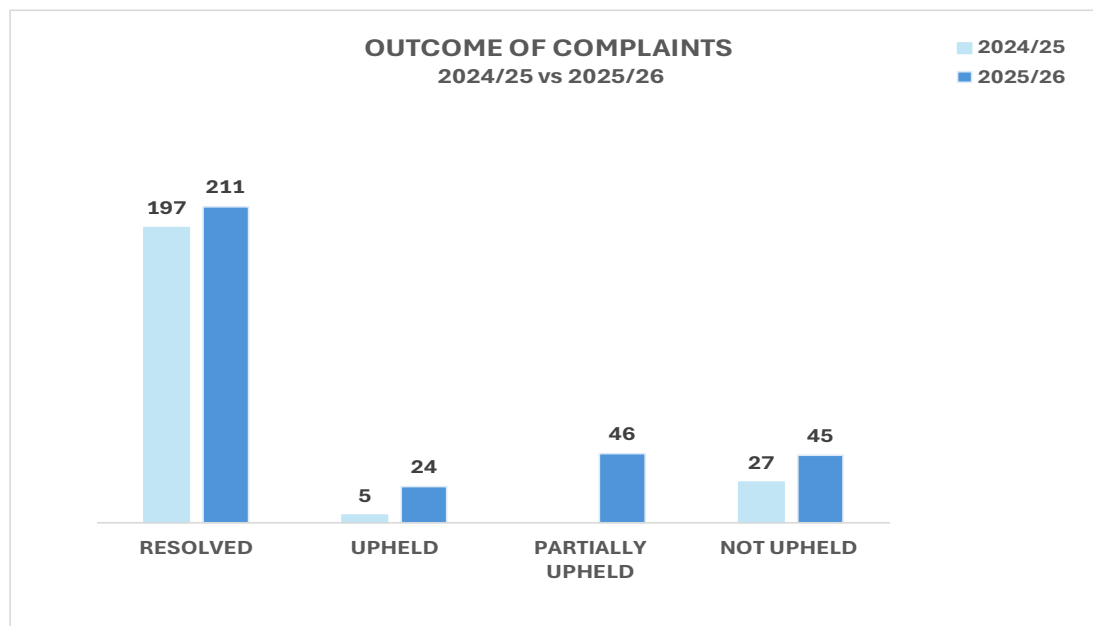
Complaints resolved, upheld, partially upheld, and not upheld: -

1st April 2025 and 31 March 2026

At year end, Council can report, we had 211 complaints resolved, 24 upheld, 46 partially upheld and 45 not upheld, at stages 1, 2 and after escalation to stage 2. 1 complaint remained ‘live’ (Environmental Health) and therefore no outcome recorded as of 31 March 2026.

It was noted throughout the year there was inconsistencies on reporting of Outcomes. Re-emphasises of the guidance to all Departments, resulted in some Departments making the necessary amendments to their reported Outcomes, and this is reflected in the Annual Report. *It should be noted Complaints received towards the end of each month may not be fully closed until the start of the following month, which may result in variance of reported data.*

The graph below helps illustrate this data.



Positive outcomes, including resolved, upheld, and partially upheld complaints, accounted for 87% of all outcomes in 2025/26. Despite handling more completed complaints, 87% resulted in a resolution, upheld or partially upheld outcome. This highlights both Council's ability to manage increased complaint volumes and its commitment to learning from customer feedback to drive service improvement.

Resolved complaints remained the dominant outcome, increasing by 7% to 211 cases. It was acknowledged there have been inconsistencies on reporting of Outcomes, however through the Complaints Handling Working Group, best practice, and re-enforced elements of the complaint handling procedure with Departments continue to be embedded.

3. Actions taken to improve services

On a regular basis, internally departments / services / teams have had discussions to look at what feedback or complaints are being received, identify any trends, implement service improvements, and improve customer satisfaction.

Some examples of actions that have been taken are highlighted below.

ANNUAL COMPLAINT PERFORMANCE REPORT: 1st APRIL 2025 – 31 MARCH 2026

DIRECTORATE	Service/ Department	Complaints Analysis	Service Improvement Action(s)
DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY & WELL BEING	Community Development	A customer complained regarding maintenance issues with council owned facility.	The customer was contacted and thanked for bringing the matter to Council's attention. The customer was advised Council invested in a full redecoration programme to refresh and update the facility. Disappointingly, new leaks have appeared following recent wet weather and this issue has been escalated to the Estates Team for assessment and repair. This work is currently being progressed. Staff continue to implement a regular cleaning rota across all areas of the centre however spot checks will be conducted to reinforce expectations and ensure high standards are consistently maintained. Workplans have been developed for all centre attendants and meeting with managers to review and escalate any repairs/issues.
		Complaints in relation to cleanliness of a facility	Customers were contacted and an apology made. Cleaning schedule in place and regularly checked by facilities staff with all staff communicated with and reminded of their responsibilities to ensure all rooms are fully cleaned after each use. Management continue to carry out regular spot checks to monitor cleanliness standards across the facility.
		Complaint in relation to booking confirmation, transition time between events and price increase	Online booking system has been developed to support payments and streamline booking process, this includes transition time between events and clarification on charges. The booking system seeks to reduce human error, and the customer received an apology and a refund of the additional amount charged.

	Tourism, Arts & Culture	A customer complained regarding maintenance of a tourism site and associated signage.	The customer was contacted and an apology made. An explanation provided to customer as to why the facility is not opened all year round, and that funding opportunities for signage could be looked at in the future. The customer also advised that the weed/ivy would be maintained.
		A customer complained regarding legal road closures.	The customer was contacted with explanation of process, communication attempts with residents and apology for distress was offered.
	Health & Recreation	Customers made complaints regarding staff conduct/ attitude.	Customers have been contacted, apologies issued and advised that the staff would be spoken with. The Head of Department are aware of the recurrent nature of complaints. A programme of Customer service training is being rolled out in the Department.
		Customers complaining regarding maintenance.	Customers contacted and an apology made. An explanation provided. Health & Recreation have engaged with Estates to proactively address these issues. 14 investment projects completed, 5 facilities painted, 8 gym /studio received investment, Banbridge Leisure Centre's sport hall floor replaced and new equipment purchased.
		Refunds issue raised by customers.	Refunds issued when needed and the refund procedure and process being reviewed.
		Several customers made complaints about the cleanliness standards in facilities.	Management brought these issues to the attention of staff to ensure that they are aware of the standard of cleanliness expected by customers. Management carries out regular inspections to ensure standard are kept to an acceptable level. Management is looking at ways of providing and ensuring a high level of cleanliness, e.g. number of cleaning staff required, Robot cleaners are being purchased for South Lakes Leisure Centre
		Several customers made complaints about	Customers have been contacted, apologies issued and advised that the staff would be spoken with. Management & Head of Department is aware

		cancellation of classes/activities.	of these recurrent complaints; and are actively recruiting new staff and have provided training to up skill existing staff.
DIRECTORATE	Service/ Department	Complaints Analysis	Service Improvement Action(s)
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES & SUSTAINABILITY	Environmental Services	A customer complained regarding the ongoing obstruction of their private driveway by household bins belonging to neighbouring properties.	The customer was contacted and advised of the action Council will take to address their complaint. This included an inspection to be carried out by supervisor to assess, advisory letters issued to residents in the surrounding properties reminding them of the appropriate collection point for their bins and asking them to be considerate when placing bins out for collection. The waste collection crew were informed of this issue and instructed to return bins in a manner that avoids obstructing driveways or causing access issues for residents.
		A customer complained that their recycling bin had not been emptied and a yellow tag had been placed on the bin indicating contamination. However, no contamination was present	The customer was contacted and a site visit made by a supervisor. The customer was advised that the tag was placed on the bin due to a large crack in the bin. The crews did not correctly indicate this on the yellow tag; Customer agreed to a new bin purchase and old bin removed. Customer advised that crews will be spoken to, to ensure all yellow tags are clearly marked with the cause of refusal in the future.
	Climate, Sustainability & Parks	A number of customers raised complaints about broken equipment in play parks, outdoor gym equipment, maintenance of trails etc	Customers have been contacted, apologies issued and advised that the matters would be actioned. Subsequently site inspections were conducted, equipment has been fixed, weeds /grass cut etc.
		Complaint received about the extended closure of Lurgan Park following a storm.	Work with Communications team to ensure timely release and update of messages to the public in relation to site closures.

	Environmental Services/Climate, Sustainability & Parks	Several customers made complaints regarding staff conduct/ attitude.	Customers have been contacted, apologies issued and advised that the staff would be spoken with. The Heads of Department are aware of the recurrent nature of complaints. A programme of Customer Relations training is being rolled out in the Departments.
DIRECTORATE	Service/ Department	Complaints Analysis	Service Improvement Action(s)
REGULATORY SERVICES, FACILITIES & ASSETS	Planning	A customer complained about the length of time taken to process the application.	The customer was contacted by telephone and provided with an explanation and the reasons for delay were discussed. The customer was content with the Planning Department's response.
		A number of customers complained about length of time for enforcement cases e.g. the time in which it took to investigate and outcomes	Customer informed issue raised in the enforcement case is being considered in a planning application as per the planning Enforcement Strategy.
	Estates & Asset Management	A customer complained and advised there was no street signs erected after a period of 6 years.	The customer was contacted and thanked for bringing this matter to Council's attention. A site inspection was conducted, and an order for signs made. The customer was advised this would be treated as a priority matter.
		5 complaints related to Off Street Car Parking due to a trial of new machines.	Information was uploaded in advance for the public and members were all updated. Issue arose as public had not come across the communications and the advice was therefore reissued for clarity.
	Building Control	A customer complained about service failure and maladministration of the application of Building Regulations.	All Building Control Officers reminded that accurate and timely records of inspections are essential as evidence of how services are delivered. Relevant documents were recirculated to Manager/Senior Officers. Officers requested to note the requirement for certificates for erection of timber frame structures and advised that this position has not changed. Officers must ensure detailed and accurate records of all inspections are kept.

	Environmental Health	A customer expressed dissatisfaction with the time taken by the Council to progress an investigation into an alleged abandoned vehicle.	The customer was apologised to for the delay and assured that the necessary removal arrangements were now in hand. The Department reviewed communication arrangements to ensure customers receive clear and timely updates where investigations are ongoing.
DIRECTORATE	Service/ Department	Complaints Analysis	Service Improvement Action(s)
CHIEF EXECUTIVE & DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	Human Resources & Organisational Development	Customer complained that offer letter stated different job salary than job advert ("pro rata" was missing on job advert)	The customer was contacted and apology made for admin error. HR recruitment team implemented second check on all adverts.
		Customer complained that job was pre-offered in error also had queries regarding waiting list.	The customer was contacted and situation was clarified with customer. HR recruitment team identified poor communication and admin error. Second check implemented.

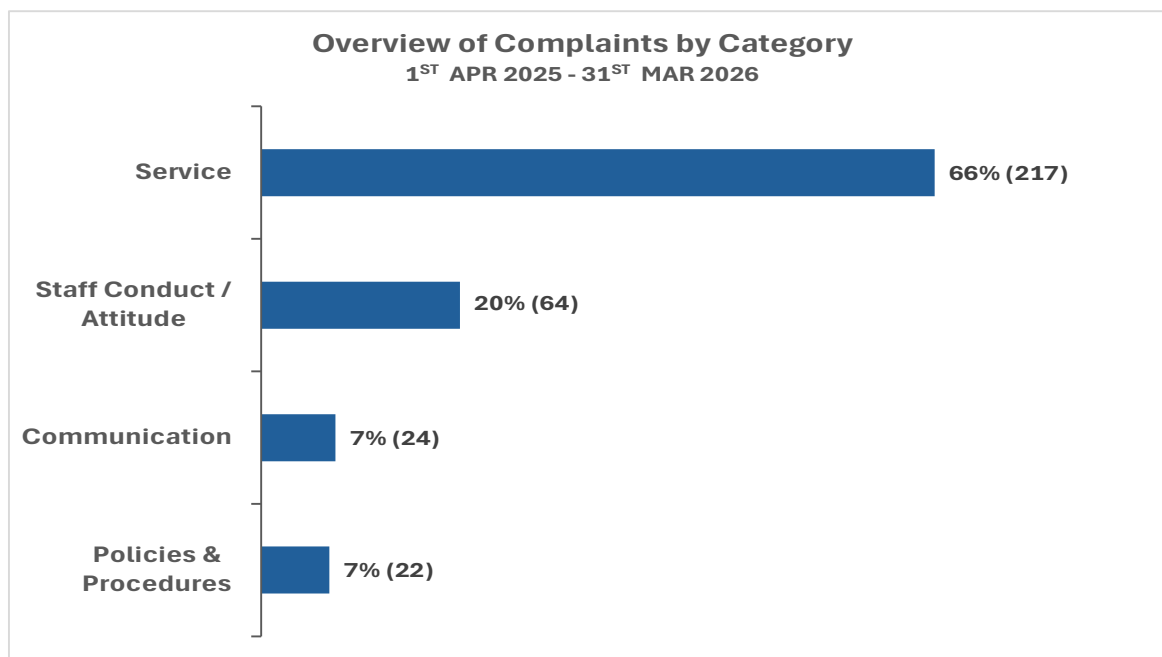
4. Complaint Trends and Lessons learned from complaints

NIPSO is clear that councils should have processes in place to help them learn from complaints, identify trends and review and change service delivery if required.

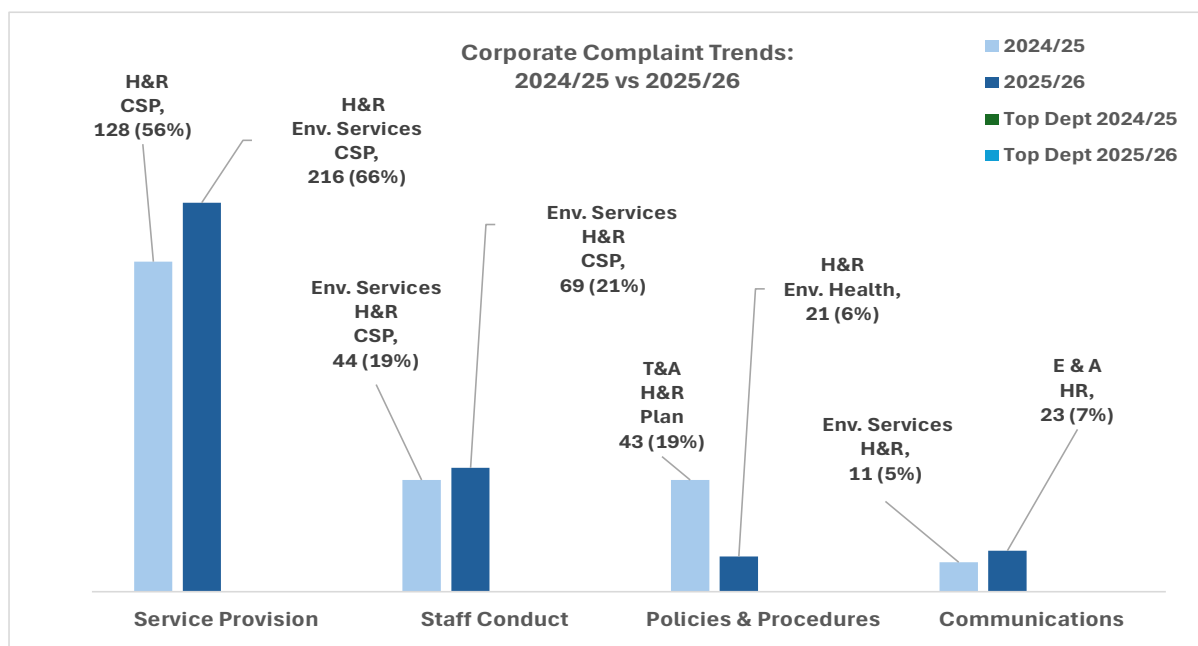
Corporately the following categories have been identified: Service Provision/Quality of Service, Staff Conduct, Policies & Procedures, and Communications.

OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS BY CATEGORY

1ST APR 2025 – 31ST MAR 2026



The table below helps illustrate the comparison of trends between 2024/25 and 2025/26 and identifies highest ranking Departments.



Many of all complaints recorded during 2025/26, fall into 2 main categories: Service Provision/Quality of Service and Staff Conduct. As with 2024/25 data, these top 2 categories remain unchanged.

The Environmental Services & Sustainability Directorate recorded the highest number of complaints. The Environmental Services & Sustainability Directorate is responsible for waste management, cleansing, recycling, fleet management, grounds maintenance, parks, and sustainability.

This was followed by the Development, Community & Well-Being Directorate. The Development, Community and Well Being Directorate is responsible for health, well-being and leisure services, community development, community facilities, arts culture and heritage, arts development, events, business support, and economic development. Specifically, the Health & Recreation Department recorded the highest number of complaints.

Service Provision/Quality of Service

The nature of complaints remained unchanged, with customers raising complaints on grounds maintenance including grass cutting/ weeds, broken equipment, bin collections, street cleansing, dog fouling, opening hours of facilities, cancellations of classes, and cleanliness of facilities.

Where complaints of this nature were raised management are carrying out regular reviews of equipment, reviewing cancellations process for indoor leisure, management are looking at cleanliness of facilities including introduction of robot cleaners, and have communicated to staff to ensure both the cleaning rota is enforced.

Staff Conduct/Attitude

Where complaints were about Staff Conduct/ Attitude the complaint has been addressed directly with employees, so they are aware of the impact on their customers. In addition, a Customer Relations Training Programme commenced in Winter 2025, and will continue to be rolled out in 2026/27.

Specifically, those Departments who received most complaints within this category have been prioritised for targeted training. Heads of Department from Environmental Services, Climate Sustainability & Parks and Health & Recreation are aware of the recurrent nature of these complaints and have committed to ensure staff attend Customer Relations/ Service training. During 2025/26- 12 training sessions were delivered, with 131 staff in attendance, delivering modules on: Customer Service Back to Basics, Dealing with Difficult Situations, Dealing with Difficult Customers,

As part of Council's People and Culture Strategy, work progressed on an agreed Values and Behavioural Framework. The Framework will set out a clear and consistent approach to how we work together and how we deliver services to our communities. It will define the standards we expect of ourselves and each other; it will also outline what good looks like in practice and will support a common understanding of expected behaviours. The focus in 2026/27 will be to launch the Values and Behavioural Framework and to begin to embed across the organisation.

Policies & Procedures/ Communications

A small number of complaints were received under the categories Policies & Procedures and Communications. Under Policies & Procedures, this included for example: refund issues and staff uniforms. It is noted these are similar complaints raised in 2024/25.

Under Communications, examples of complaints included incorrect information, or omission of information within correspondences issued to customers, unable to locate relevant information and/or inaccurate information on Council's website.

As part of Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2025/26, two areas for improvement identified were.

- *'To continue to improve our Communications to our customers on Waste Management Services (PIO3) and*
- *to improve Communications with our customers on Council services and responsibilities (PIO4)*

During the reporting period there were 15 social media posts specific to waste communications including updates and changes to bin collections and recycling. Over the social media channels this equated to approximately 188,810 views.

Other work that has been carried out in relation to waste communications include a landing page specific to the Food Waste Caddy to brown bin swap project was developed and live for mid-September, as well as a review of both the Council website and Council App to ensure collection information was relevant and up to date.

The main actions under PIO4 were to review the Council's Corporate website Homepage and to include a more user-friendly section that outlines the services and responsibilities that Council is responsible for.

Each Department confirmed their main generic email address by which their customers can contact them for all enquiries; these details, along with information on the main functions is now included in a newly designed section on the Website: Council Departments.

The council continues to have a clear commitment to listen to our customers and act on their feedback. Our learning from complaints will be a continuous process that helps the council to resolve common complaints and further improve the services that are provided. The next section of the report provides a sample of case studies and the service improvements and importantly the learnings taken from customer complaints/feedback.

Case Studies

Development, Community & Well Being Directorate

During the year, the Health & Recreation Department has received 90 complaints, the majority of which related to Service provision /Quality of Service including, difficulty of accessing services and cancellations of services, cleanliness, and Staff Conduct. These main categories of complaints for the Health & Recreation Department remain unchanged in both 2024/25 and 2025/26.

As part of reviewing and acknowledging the complaints raised, the Department is proactively looking at management of classes and delivery model options to ensure that cancellations of classes/swimming lessons are reduced in the future. There has also been an ongoing recruitment campaign for additional staff, and training is being looked at to upskill existing staff. In addition, the Department is revising the type of classes taking place in the facility, reviewing the range and type of activities provided. A review of the pool programme to consider when public swim times is available is also being conducted.

Where complaints were about Staff Conduct/ Attitude the complaint has been addressed directly with employees, so they are aware of the impact on their customers. Leisure staff attended Customer Relations Training in October/November/December 2025, Environmental Services staff attended Customer Relations Training in January/February 2026, and additional sessions have been scheduled for 2026/27. Management will be required to monitor the impact of the training to ensure best practice customer service is being implemented.

Health & Recreation Department continue to work alongside the Estates & Asset Management Department on regular maintenance schedules. During 2025/ 26, work is ongoing to upgrade facilities, including 14 projects completed, 5 facilities painted, 8 gym /studio received investment, and Banbridge Leisure Centre's sport hall floor replaced and new equipment purchased.

Cleanliness and standards are high on the agenda for the indoor leisure, meetings with staff have reinforced the standards expected, cleansing rota is monitored and management is looking at options to ensure a high level of cleanliness, e.g. number of cleaning staff required, robot cleaners are being purchased for South Lakes Leisure Centre.

A working group has also been established to look at the car parking issues at South Lakes Leisure centre.

Environmental Services & Sustainability Directorate

During the year, 55 complaints were received by Climate Sustainability & Parks and 123 were complaints received by Environmental Services Departments. This equates to 54% of the annual total complaints received by Council throughout the year; and aligns with the frontline nature and staff engagement with the public within this Directorate.

The main categories/ nature of complaints for 2025/26 were Staff Conduct/ Attitude and Service Provision/ Quality of Service, including street cleansing, bin collections, recycling, opening hours, dog fouling, grounds maintenance (grass cutting/tree pruning/weeds)

Having responsibility for delivery of waste management, cleansing, recycling, grounds maintenance, parks etc services across the borough of 218,656 residents, this represents a very small number of complaints; however, the Departments recognise the value in receiving these complaints and acknowledge the recurrent nature of the complaints between 2024/25 and 2025/26.

A pro-active, targeted series of Customer Care/ Customer Service Training sessions were delivered to staff in Quarter 4 of 2025/26, with continued roll out planned for 2025/26. Modules covered included: Dealing with Difficult situations, Dealing with difficult customers, Back to Basics Customer service.

The Directorate employs 40%* of Council's overall staff complement. As with all Departments, Heads of Department within Environmental Services and Climate, Sustainability & Parks are required to ensure Personal Development Conversations are conducted with employees. The launch of the Values & Behavioural Framework will assist these Personal Development Conversations and further enhance and embed the management of expected behaviours.

Where complaints were about the actions of employees (e.g. behaviour, conduct, etc.) apologies have been offered to the customer and the complaint has been addressed directly with employees, so they are aware of the impact on their customers. Given the recurrent nature of complaints regarding Staff Conduct /Attitude, supervisors have attended and will continue to attend future Customer Relations training, and Heads of Department will continue to monitor and ensure improvements.

**As at 31.03.26, does not include casuals*

Regulatory Services, Facilities & Assets Directorate

During the year, a number of complaints were received relating to Communications and Policies and Procedures, within this Directorate.

As part of identifying improvements from the complaints received, the Environmental Health Department took onboard feedback from the public and the importance of keeping customers regularly informed of progress while investigations are ongoing and well as clearly explaining Council's Policies and Procedures.

Estates & Asset Management Department recognised the importance of greater communications to members of the public prior to any commencement of change to service delivery. This was relevant in the change to Car parking services whereby the Department received most of their complaints.

Complaints relating to Other Authorities

During 2025/26, Council received 33 complaints that fell outside the remit of Council responsibilities. Specifically, the majority of these complaints related to matters which fall within the remit of Department for infrastructure. (DfI). Other complaints raised were related to services provided by NI Water Service, Citizen Advice Services, NI Housing Executive and PSNI.

As part of Performance Improvement Objective (PIO4), the most common, recurrent public enquiries are now easier identifiable on the Home page; bringing the customer directly to the answer/ Department / service they need. The refreshed Home page also now places information/contact details on non-Council services e.g. Department of Infrastructure (Potholes/streetlighting) under Report a Problem tile, which sub-divides issues the public may have into Council and non-Council services.

Cross Departmental complaints - lessons learnt

During 2025/26, we continue to ensure where complaints are of a cross departmental nature that Departments meet to identify a Lead Department and ensure that a 'one council' comprehensive response is co-ordinated. Shared learning and best practice are regular agenda items for the Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) Working Group. As part of the established Working Group, the correct process has been highlighted with all Departments, instructing them to initiate a co-ordinated approach when dealing with complaints of a cross-departmental nature.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman NIPSO

There has been continued engagement with NIPSO throughout the implementation of the Complaints Handling Procedure. In Quarter 1 2025, NIPSO launched a suite of Complaints Standards training videos and guidance resource package. These resources have been shared and made available to all Council Departments.

During 2025/26, 2 cases were presented to NIPSO. This included one case relating to Health & Recreation (Oct 2025), as time of report Council have not been advised of any further progress. The 2nd was relating to Building Control (Feb/March 2026) whereby NIPSO ruled they were content with Council's comprehensive response, case closed.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/ FUTURE ACTIONS

We aim to increase the knowledge and skill of all employees on allocating, handling and where required, escalating enquiries and complaints. This will ensure we can provide solutions to our customers quickly and efficiently. As part of Council's continuous improvement journey, there are a number of ongoing initiatives being delivered; these are detailed below.

Elearning Training on Complaints Handling Procedure continues to be monitored during 2025/26, with a completion rate on General Awareness of 81% completed, Stage 2 Investigation Training 79% completed as of 31 March 2026. The Performance Team continue to strongly encourage and follow up with those relevant Departments to ensure all staff/ relevant officers that require the training participate.

This is of particular importance to ensure Council consistently meets the response rate for handling complaints. Heads of Departments have been advised they require a minimum of 2 Complaint Handlers, to provide operational cover and business continuity, thus avoiding customer complaints being 'paused' until a relevant staff member is available again. Departments can of course have multi- Complaint Handlers. It is also fundamental that frontline staff are fully aware of the complaint handling procedure and can address and deal with complaints in an expedient manner. Specifically frontline services e.g. Health & Recreation, who may rely on seasonal/ casual staff (throughout June-August) are required to ensure that frontline staff are skilled and trained to deal with customer service/ complaint handling and that these are recorded in real time.

Through the Complaints Handling Working Group, the Performance Team have also shared best practice and re-enforced elements of the complaint handling procedure with Departments. This included improving the understanding of *How to Record Complaint Outcomes*. It was noted throughout the year there was inconsistencies on reporting of Outcomes. With the re-introduction of the guidance, some Departments made the necessary amendments to their reported Outcomes, and this is reflected in the Annual Report.

Council's Corporate Customer Relations Officer has proven to be an invaluable resource, providing an independent, impartial and lead advisory role to support departments with customer feedback, complaints handling and training. They assist also with customer consultation to further service improvement and performance.

Delivered by the Customer Relations Officer, a designated session on Customer Care is included in Council's Corporate Induction Training Programme. All new employees are provided with an overview of Council's Customer Charter, Values & Behaviours, acceptable / nonacceptable customer services and how Council handles complaints.

The Improvement Manager and Customer Relations Officer continued with the roll out scheduled meetings with all Heads of Department and Tier 4 Managers during 2025/26. This provided an opportunity for management to have in depth discussions on all Customer Relations areas of work, including identification of customer base, communications with consumers, business continuity, training needs, handling complaints, upcoming consultations, and the importance of shared learning across the organisation.

As referenced previously in this report, in 2025/26 Council will launch their Values & Behaviours Framework, which aims to build on our existing people management practices and staff feedback, to define and improve our workplace culture.

In March 2026, Council's revised Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy was approved by Committee. The aim of this Policy is to provide a safe and pleasant environment for our staff, and individual members of the public. It has been designed with complaints handling in mind

and aims to promote positive behaviour whilst ensuring that complaints are handled in the best way possible with service users. The Policy will be supported by a Managing Unreasonable Behaviour Procedure which be developed in partnership with all Departments and Trade Unions during 2026/27.

COMPLIMENTS

Part of Council's continuous improvement journey is the ongoing effort to improve services, improve processes and apply lessons learnt. It involves regularly reviewing performance, gathering feedback—such as customer complaints or compliments—and using that information to make informed changes. This report has illustrated the data captured on complaints, service improvements made, and lessons learnt.

It is however equally important to recognise Customer compliments. They can be a strong indicator of service quality and customer satisfaction. They reflect the positive impact that Council employees and services have on the community, reinforcing trust and confidence in the delivery of our public services.

Compliments not only boost staff morale and motivation but also highlight effective practices that can be replicated across departments. Positive feedback serves as a reminder that public service can meet and exceed expectations, contributing to a culture of excellence, accountability, and continuous improvement.

See below the positive feedback/ compliments received from customers relating to our services throughout Departments.

“Wonderful staff. XX was amazing and made our experience absolutely brilliant, thanks so much!”

“Great visit, staff lovely and very helpful”

“Lovely exhibition. Fabulous to meet XX and other staff – all very helpful.”

“I wish to express a gratitude for keeping our area clean. My husband and I are regularly picking rubbish in the vicinity of our street and have seen council workers on several occasions picking more rubbish every week. We would like to thank them for their work.”

“I am writing to highlight the outstanding attitude and exceptional level of service consistently provided by XX at the Dromore Waste Disposal site. Every time I visit, XX is unfailingly bubbly, cheerful, and welcoming. His positive energy genuinely brightens your day the moment you arrive.”

“I just wanted to compliment the staff at Armagh Amenity centre. I visited the centre earlier. The staff couldn't have been more polite and helpful. Staff assisted me with a heavy broken lawn mower from the car and then helped load lots of bags to the charity pods. I note the centre was spotless also.”

“I just wanted to take a moment to sincerely thank you and your team for the incredible service and support you've provided regarding this matter. Your help has been absolutely mind-blowing — you truly knocked it out of the park. The care, responsiveness and understanding shown made a situation that could have been quite stressful feel completely manageable, and I'm extremely grateful for that. Please pass on my thanks to everyone involved. It really does make a difference when people go above and beyond, and it hasn't gone unnoticed.”

“Thank you so much for all your help in preparing for the event. We are very pleased to say it went extremely well. The staff at Craigavon Civic Centre were incredibly helpful. The setup was exactly as requested—perfect in every detail—as were the catering and the timing of all activities. We were thoroughly impressed with how smoothly everything ran. We’d especially like to thank you and the on-site staff, including the catering team. The coordination and professionalism were outstanding, and we encountered no issues throughout the day. Everything was exceptionally well organised.”

“I’d never ran 5k in my life. I’m almost 53 years old. I didn’t think I’d ever manage a 5k run. I’d like to thank XX for all her advice, encouragement & help over the 8 weeks of the course. Definitely recommend to others who are a bit daunted by the thought of doing a 5k. It is delivered in realistically manageable chunks.”

“It was a brilliant programme. The coaches were great and our children couldn’t wait for each session. Well done to all involved. Hope it continues next year. Thank you!”

“Thanks again for your support and warm approach — you’re truly an asset to our community. I’ll definitely be in touch if anything else comes up.”

“Over on holiday and came in for a gym session. What really lovely reception staff, really welcoming and helpful. Your facilities are brilliant and what a view to look at while training. Thank you. See you again.”

Further Information / Contact Details

For further information please contact:

Customer Relations Officer

Strategy and Performance Department,
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council,
Armagh Office,
Armagh Old City Hospital,
Abbey Street,
ARMAGH, BT61 7DY

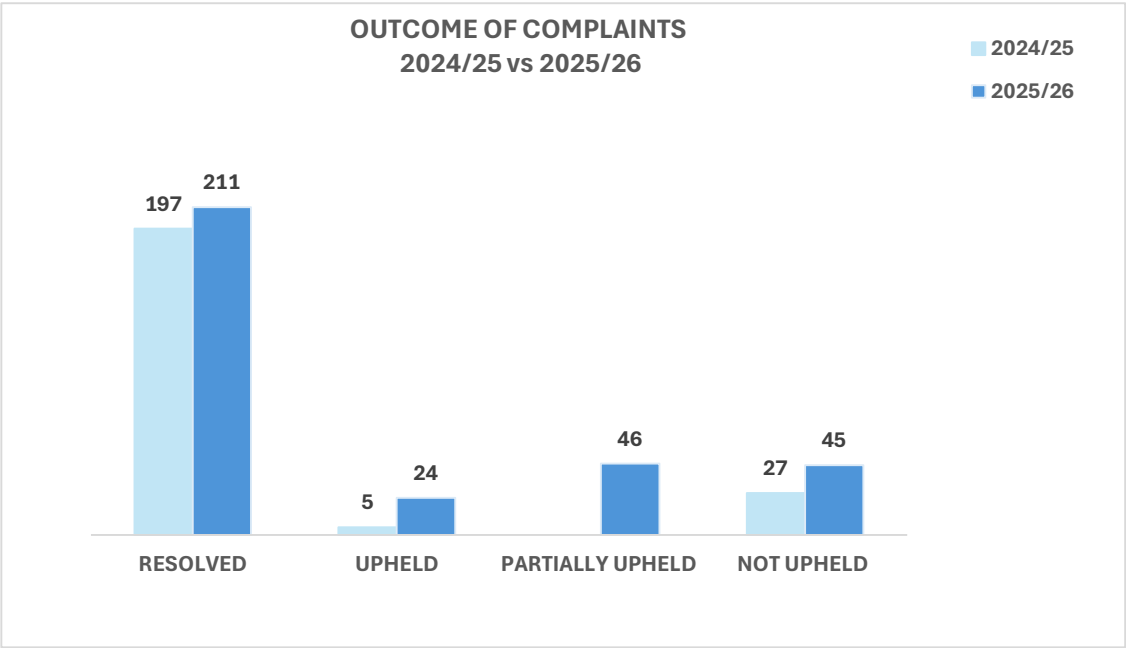
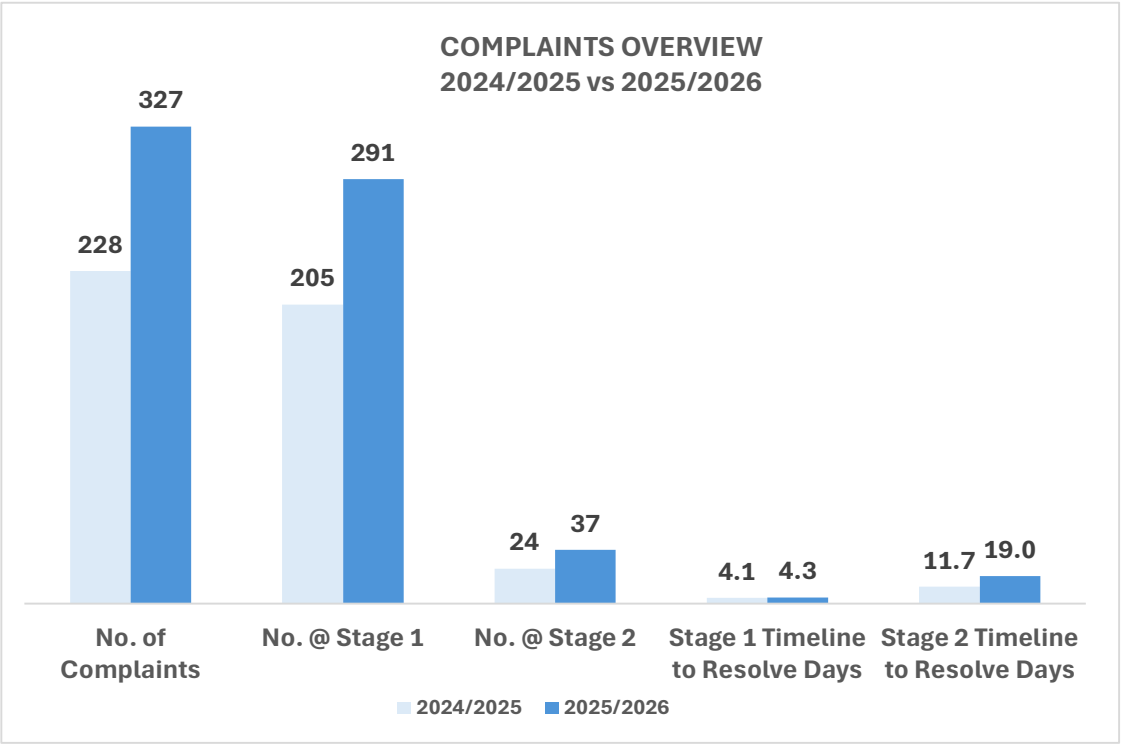
Email:

performance@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

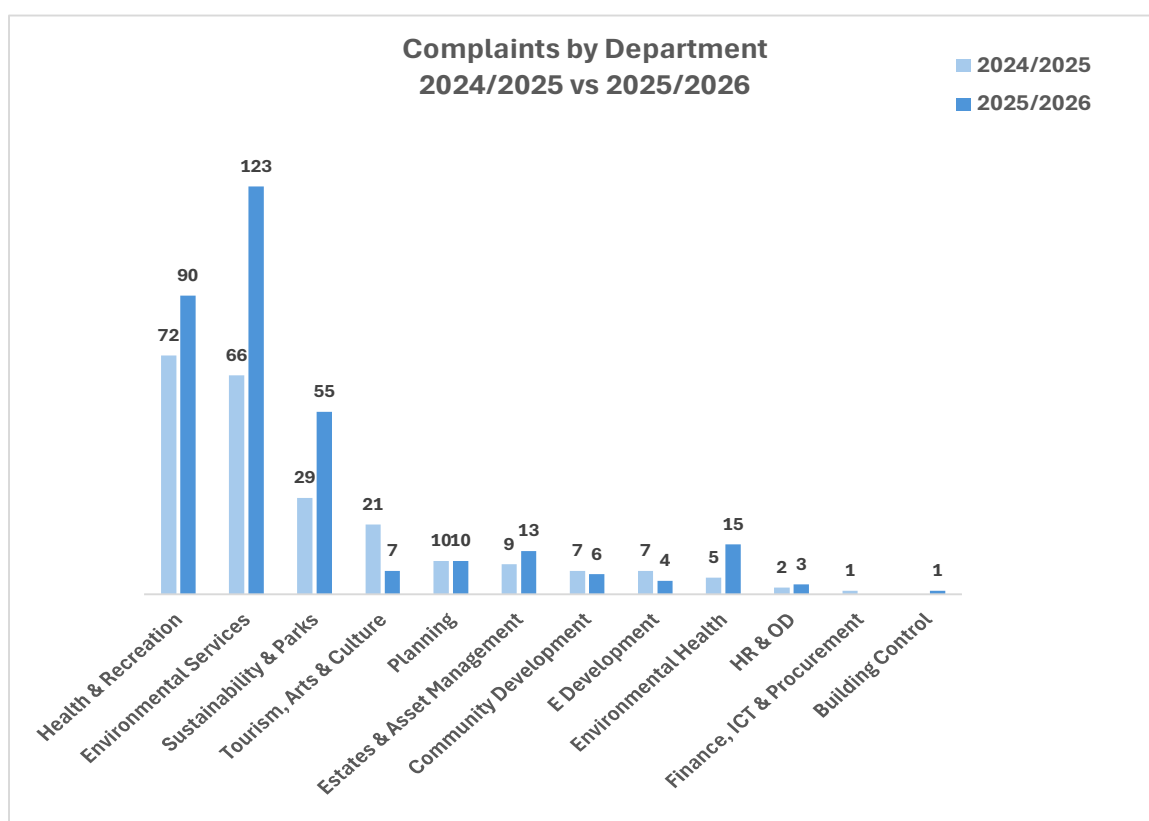
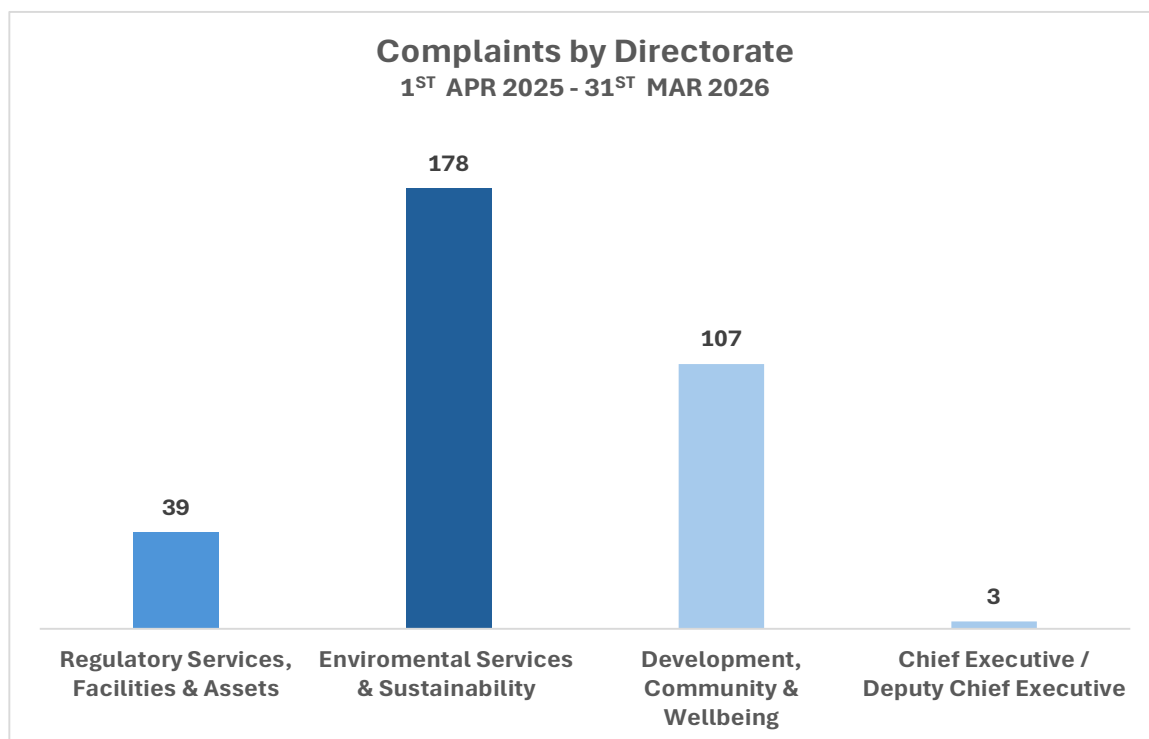
Telephone:

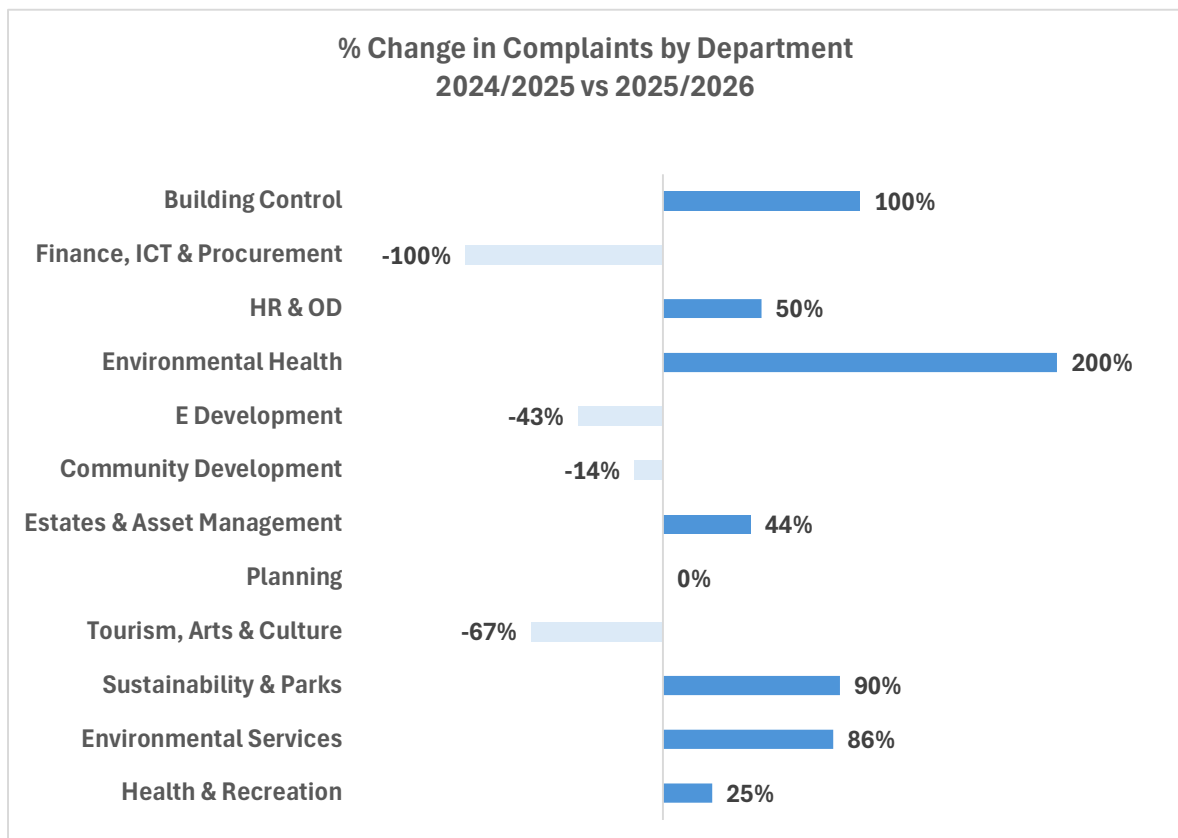
Strategy and Performance Department – [0300 0300 900](tel:03000300900)

Graphs illustrating Complaint Handling performance data.



OVERVIEW COMPLAINTS BY DIRECTORATE AND DEPARTMENT





**No complaints were received for the following departments: Strategy & Performance / Community Planning & Policy & Resources, CEO Office, Legal, Governance & Monitoring Office.*

Appendix 6

PROMPT PAYMENTS

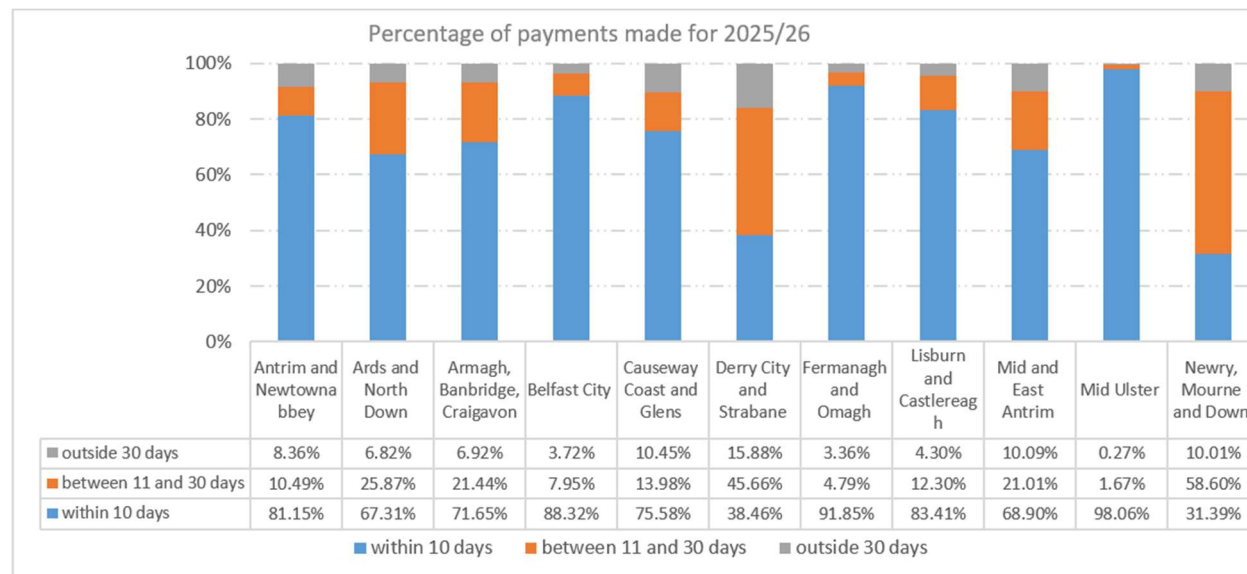
Council Name	20/21			21/22			22/23			23/24			24/25			25/26		
	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days
Antrim and Newtownabbey	12,792	15,284	1,817	13,855	17,101	4,232	12,999	17,938	4,625	18,300	22,083	4,315	17,912	20,239	1,801	17,309	19,547	1,783
Ards and North Down	10,576	12,706	549	13,649	15,826	329	13,997	17,468	626	12,702	16,842	634	14,558	20,179	1,398	14,573	20,173	1,477
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	9,272	17,204	1,766	11,957	20,659	1,053	15,408	21,457	1,209	18,850	22,706	885	17,390	22,365	1,357	17,924	23,287	1,730
Belfast City	39,959	48,218	3,375	57,882	66,649	4,553	72,656	79,378	7,081	61,301	70,456	5,173	53,191	61,691	7,433	87,557	95,441	3,692
Causeway Coast and Glens	14,614	18,361	2,705	17,823	23,839	2,117	17,367	23,220	2,421	20,126	24,146	3,507	21,660	25,631	2,454	21,799	25,830	3,013
Derry City and Strabane	6,305	13,894	3,755	5,375	13,311	7,273	7,881	16,838	6,066	8,390	18,074	3,897	8,733	18,476	3,870	8,828	19,310	3,645
Fermanagh and Omagh	14,888	16,183	1,048	14,553	16,077	1,095	15,431	16,957	751	14,615	15,548	901	14,369	15,101	581	14,605	15,366	535
Lisburn and Castlereagh	9,842	12,045	1,768	13,898	16,006	1,491	13,338	15,380	2,247	11,478	15,826	2,012	9,771	13,470	4,162	15,059	17,279	776
Mid and East Antrim	16,368	23,808	4,660	27,210	38,164	2,120	29,230	34,130	5,171	17,093	21,250	4,843	18,147	22,454	1,356	21,216	27,684	3,108
Mid Ulster	10,931	12,873	635	18,790	19,953	284	17,668	18,024	100	16,673	16,827	37	17,144	17,512	22	16,054	16,327	45
Newry, Mourne and Down	1,676	13,098	2,125	3,042	15,442	1,998	6,730	13,746	2,243	8,832	16,812	887	7,559	15,380	917	5,580	15,999	1,780
	147,223	203,674	24,203	198,034	263,027	26,545	222,705	274,536	32,540	208,360	260,570	27,091	200,434	252,498	25,351	240,504	296,243	21,584
		227,877			289,572			307,076			287,661			277,849			317,827	

Council Name	2020/21			2021/22			2022/23			2023/24			2024/24			2024/24		
	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	9,272	17,204	1,766	11,957	20,659	1,053	15,408	21,457	1,209	18,850	22,706	885	17,390	22,365	1,357	17,924	23,287	1,730
			28,242			21,712			22,666			23,591			23,722			25,017
	32.8%	60.9%	6.3%	55.1%	95.2%	4.8%	68.0%	94.7%	5.3%	79.9%	96.2%	3.8%	73.7%	94.8%	5.8%	77.6%	93.1%	6.9%

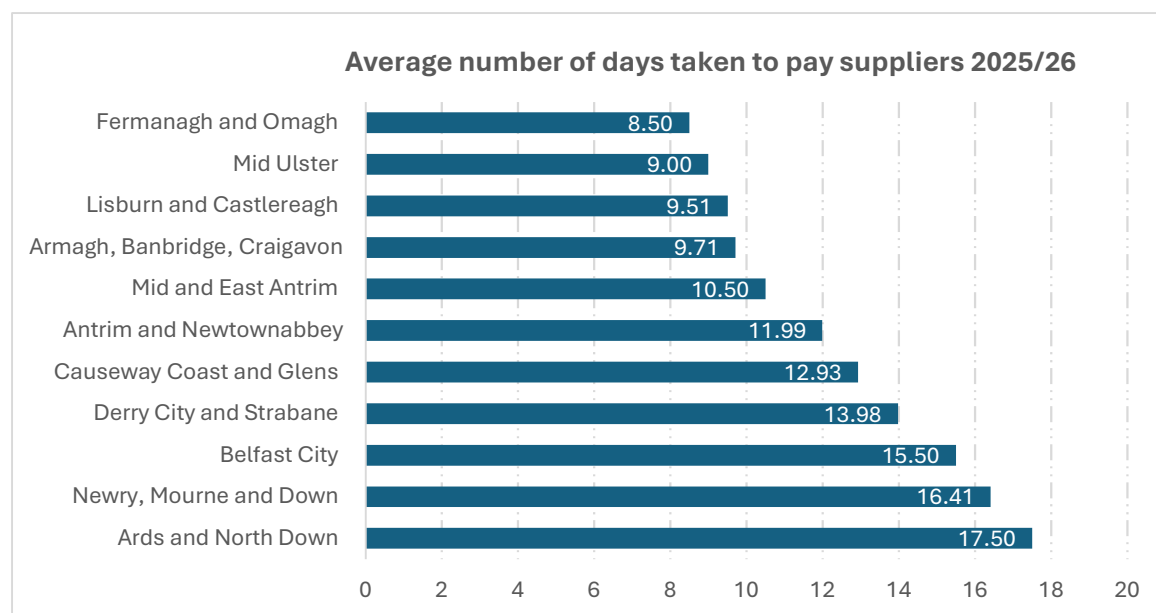
Source: Department of Communities

PROMPT PAYMENTS 2025/26

During 2025/26 Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon processed and paid 71.65% of their invoices within 10 days with just 6.92% of the payments being made outside of 30 days.



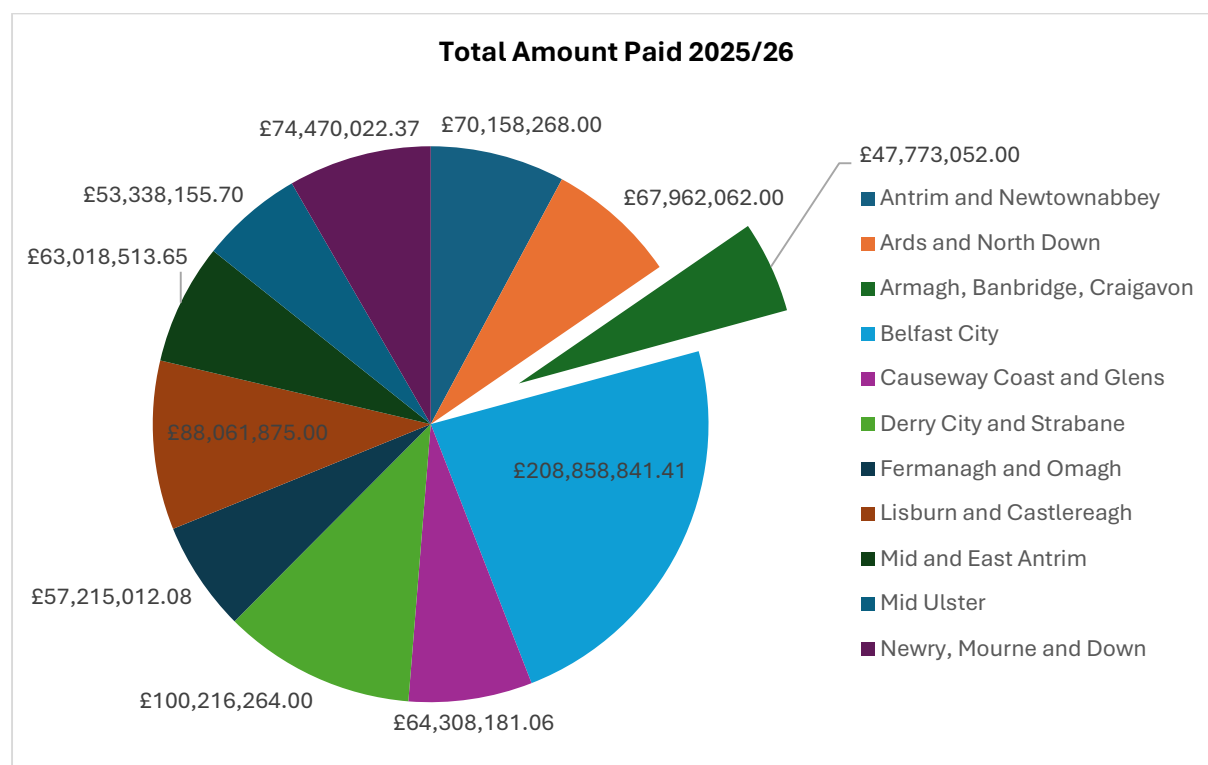
Average number of days taken to pay suppliers 2025/26



During 2025/26, the average number of days taken to pay suppliers ranged from 8.50 days in Fermanagh and Omagh to 17.50 days in Ards and North Down. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon took an average of 9.71 days.

Total amount paid 2025/26

The total amount paid per council area in 2025/26 is presented in the pie chart below. Belfast City council made payments to the value of £208.8m compared to Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon who paid out the least amount at approximately £47.7m during 2025/26.



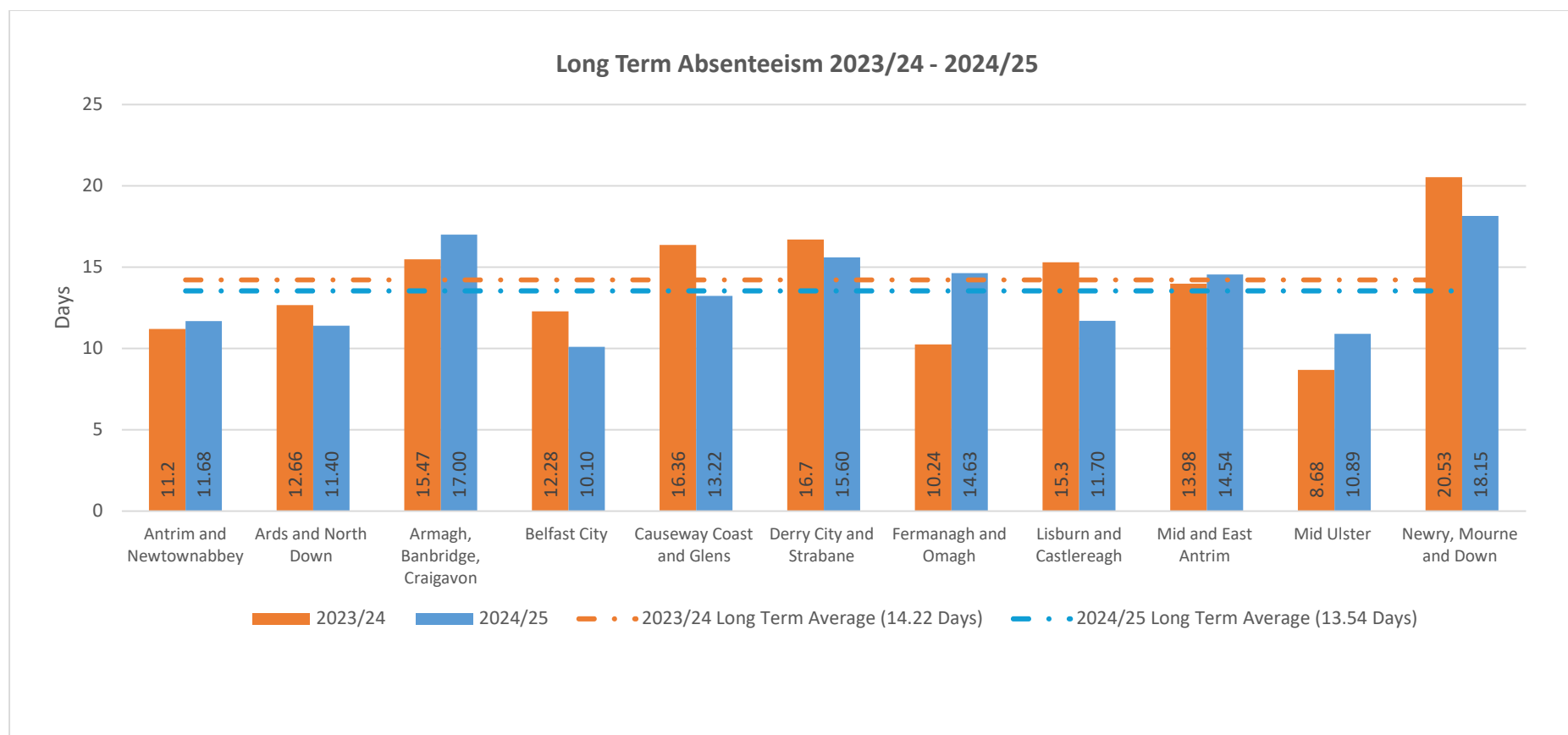
Appendix 7

STAFF ABSENCE

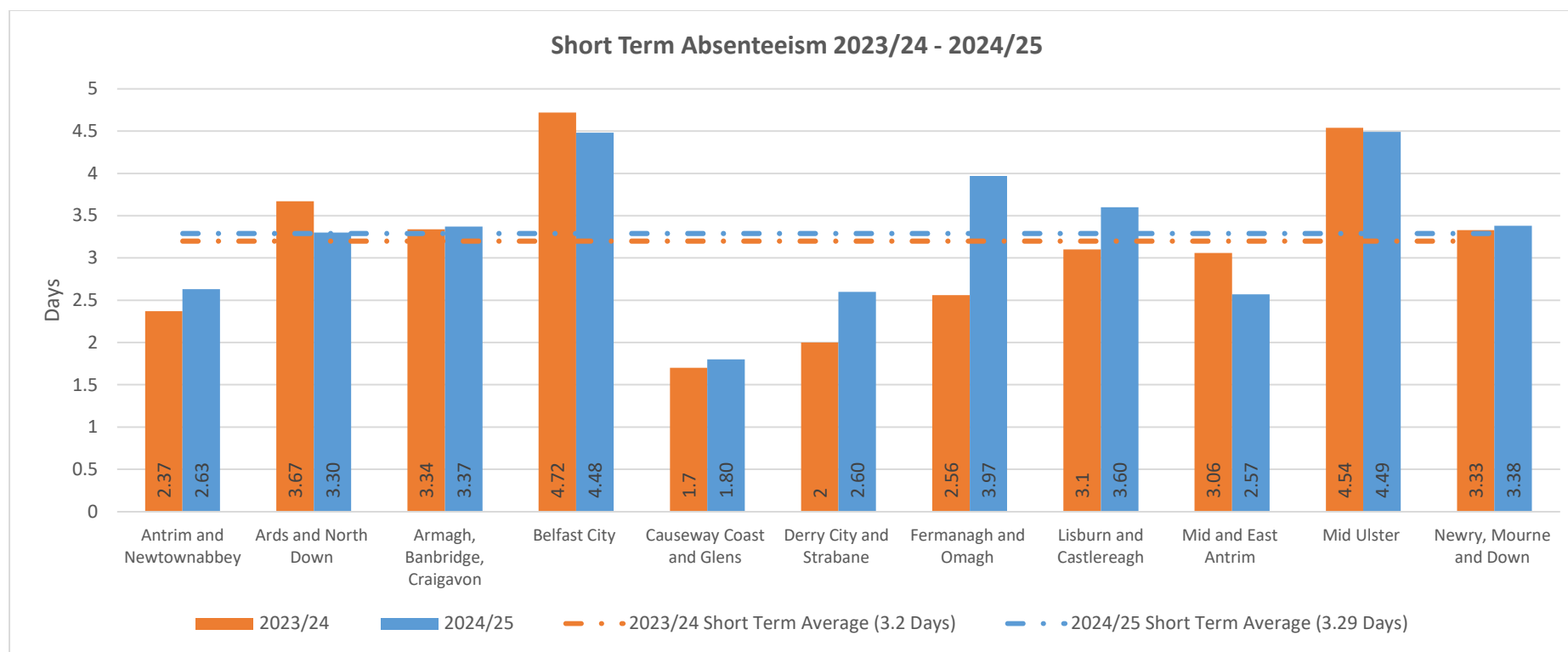
Data for all councils in 2024/25. Figures for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council up to 2025/26 are illustrated on page 45.

	2024/25			2023/24			2022/23			2021/22			2020/21			2019/20			2018-19		
Council	Long-term	Short-term	Total	Long-term	Short-term	Total	Long-term	Short-term	Total	Long-term	Short-term	Total	Long-term	Short-term	Total	Long-term	Short-term	Total	Long-term	Short-term	Total
Antrim and Newtownabbey	11.68	2.63	14.31	11.2	2.37	13.59	13.33	2.18	15.51	12.85	1.85	14.7	7.15	0.72	7.87	9.56	2.85	12.41	11	2.73	13.73
Ards and North Down	11.40	3.30	14.70	12.66	3.67	16.33	11.28	4.42	15.7	10.94	3.23	14.17	8.87	1.71	10.59	10.48	3.71	14.19	10.53	3.7	14.23
Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon	17.00	3.37	20.37	15.47	3.34	18.81	15.59	4.32	19.91	15.32	5.19	20.51	13.11	2.56	15.67	14.72	3.56	18.28	13.11	3.62	16.73
Belfast City	10.10	4.48	14.58	12.28	4.72	17	11.7	5.39	17.09	11.19	5.14	16.33	8.28	2.58	10.86	8.95	4.63	13.58	9.25	4.46	13.71
Causeway Coast and Glens	13.22	1.80	15.02	16.36	1.7	18.06	15.4	1.59	16.99	15.38	1.65	17.03	10.17	1.17	11.34	15.11	2.55	17.66	14.91	2.22	17.13
Derry City and Strabane	15.60	2.60	18.20	16.7	2	18.7	14.2	2.3	16.5	14	2.8	16.8	8.10	2.27	10.37	9.40	5.1	14.5	9.1	3.2	12.3
Fermanagh and Omagh	14.63	3.97	18.60	10.24	2.56	12.8	9.6	2.34	11.94	9.6	3.55	13.15	7.84	1.85	9.69	10.47	3.3	13.77	7.41	3.03	10.44
Lisburn and Castlereagh	11.70	3.60	15.30	15.3	3.1	18.4	12	3.8	15.8	10.1	3.5	13.6	10.30	1.2	11.50	11.60	2.2	13.8	11.2	2.1	13.3
Mid and East Antrim	14.54	2.57	17.11	13.98	3.06	17.04	14.85	3.09	17.95	12.83	2.38	15.21	1.19	3.49	4.68	8.11	2.53	10.64	10.87	3.18	14.05
Mid Ulster	10.89	4.49	15.38	8.68	4.54	13.22	8.41	4.71	13.12	7.85	4.24	12.09	7.15	2.57	9.72	7.84	3.86	11.7	8.73	4.17	12.9
Newry, Mourne and Down	18.15	3.38	21.53	20.53	3.33	23.86	18.24	5.02	23.26	15.62	5.04	20.66	11.20	2.40	13.60	11.70	4.1	15.8	10.97	3.73	14.7
Average sickness absence	13.54	3.29	16.83	13.95	3.13	17.07	13.15	3.56	16.71	12.33	3.51	15.84	10.99	2.14	13.13	12.60	3.67	13.87	10.22	3.29	13.93

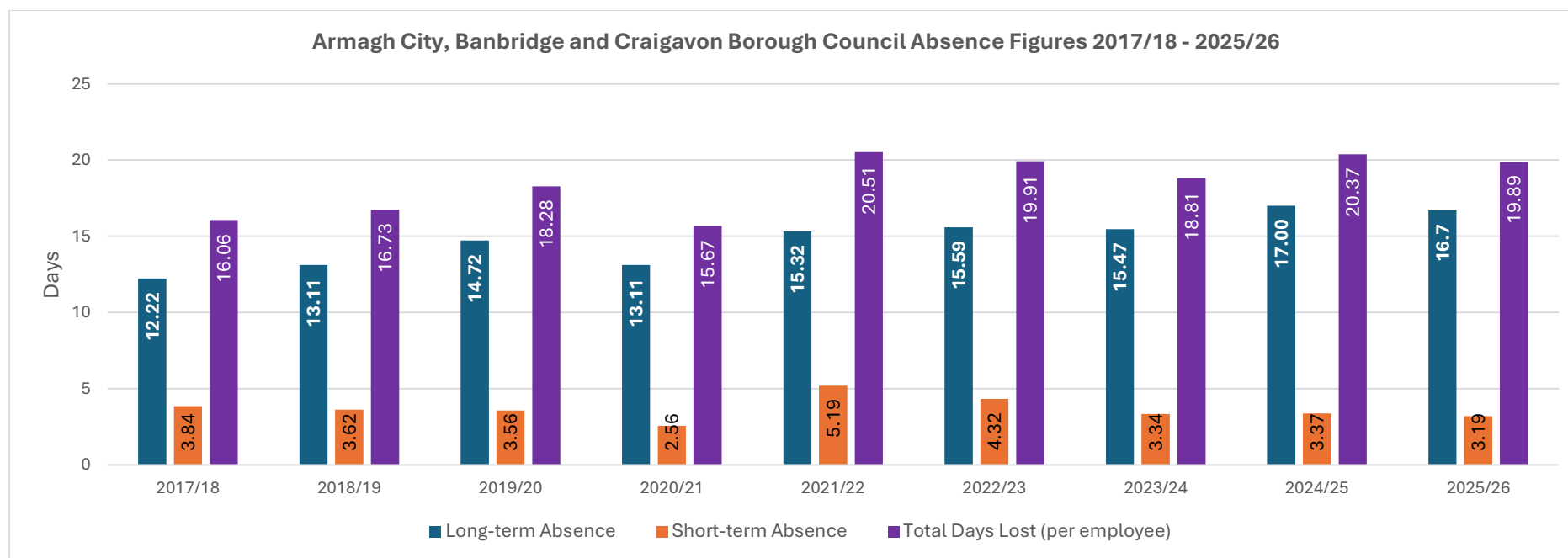
Source: Individual Council Northern Ireland Audit Office Annual Audit letters



Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, long-term absenteeism has increased for 5 out of 11 councils. Whilst long-term absenteeism remains a significant issue for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council there has seen an increase from 15.47 days in 2023/24 to 17.00 days in 2024/25. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council is the second highest for long term absenteeism and is 3.46 days per employee above the Northern Ireland average of 13.54 for 2024/25. Newry, Mourne and Down has the highest rate of long-term absenteeism at 18.15 days per employee and Belfast City Council has the lowest at 10.10 days per employee in 2024/25.



In terms of short-term absenteeism, the number of days lost has fallen in 4 of the 11 councils between 2023/24 and 2024/25. In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, the number of days lost due to short-term absenteeism has increased slightly from 3.34 days in 2023/24 to an average of 3.37 days in 2024/25 leaving the Borough with the sixth highest rate of short-term absenteeism of all councils in 2024/25. Nonetheless, short-term absenteeism in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough remains above the Northern Ireland average of 3.29 days per employee in 2024/25. Mid Ulster now has the highest rate of short-term absenteeism at 4.49 days per employee while Causeway Coast and Glens have the lowest at 1.8 days per employee.



Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council showed a fluctuating trend in days lost for long-term absenteeism and short-term absenteeism from 2021/22 to 2025/26 resulting in an overall decrease in the total days lost per employee from 20.51 in 2021/22 to 19.89 days per employee in 2025/26. In 2025/26 council has seen a decrease of 0.48 days from 20.37 to 19.89. However, it is important to note that at the time of reporting, 2025/26 figures had not yet been verified by NIAO.

Rural Needs Summary Report 2025/26

Summaries Report

Public Authority:	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council		
Submission Year:	2025-2026 Submission		
Report Generated:	16 July 2026 16:08	Selected Summaries:	32

001 - Implementation of Armagh Murals

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Implementation of Armagh Murals

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Implementing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

002 - Revision of the Civic Recognition Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Civic Recognition Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

003 - Development of a Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of a Conflict of Interest Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan

-Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

004 - Developing a Procedure for the disposal of a Council Asset via a Community Asset Transfer

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Developing a procedure for the disposal of a Council Asset via a Community Asset Transfer

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

005 - Development of a Contract Management Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of a Contract Management Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

006 - Revision of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
Revision of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy.
4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to
Revising a policy, strategy, or plan
-Policy
5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified
No rural needs were identified
6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas
No rural needs were considered
7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

007 - Request to hold Culture in the Park, Solitude Park

1. Reporting Period
1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026
2. Name of public authority
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
Request to hold Culture in the Park, Solitude Park
4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to
Developing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy
5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified
No rural needs were identified
6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas
No rural needs were considered
7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

008 - Revision of Connected A Community Plan for ABC 2017-2030 (updated 2025)

1. Reporting Period
1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026
2. Name of public authority
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of Connected A Community Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough 2017-2030 (updated 2025)

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan

-Plan

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

Following the pre-consultation and the public consultation, issues arose that affect people in both rural and urban areas. These include- Social isolation and the need for more integrated public transport provision, access to services, access to jobs and opportunities and affordable and accessible housing.

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

Following the pre-consultation and the public consultation, issues arose that affect people in both rural and urban areas. Consideration was given to the impact of social isolation, the need for more integrated public transport provision, access to services, access to jobs and opportunities and affordable and accessible housing.

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs?

Yes

-The Council has taken into account the needs of rural communities in the review of the Community Plan. The following actions are specifically targeted at rural areas: • An action that may have a specific focus on rural dwellers is that of- Continue to roll out Place Plans. These plans for urban areas take into consideration how people in surrounding rural areas use their towns. In addition, the roll out of place plans for rural settlements will be commenced. The development of place plans for rural settlements will include research and consultation to identify needs in these rural settlements. • Another action under Revitalised Place is that of - Research infrastructure needs in the borough and identify priorities and advocate for resources to deliver them. The action lead and partners will develop a collaborative infrastructure strategy for the borough bringing together research, engagement and priorities for waste water and connections for development, blueways and greenways, public transport, roads and rail connectivity, broadband and rural transport. This will have a positive impact on people living in rural areas. • The Shaping Sustainable Places Programme action will work with partners to identify needs and be project ready when funding becomes available to deliver projects in rural areas. The action also includes a priority to respond to developments in regional rural policy and to implement in partnership.

009 - Development of a Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of a Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

010 - Revision of the Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

011 - Development of Dromore Place Plan

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of Dromore Place Plan

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan

-Plan

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified. The following economic and social needs were identified: • Access to services • Car parking • Better transport connectivity • Improving linkages including 'busy bus' action

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

Consideration was given to • Improved car parking to assist all day commuters who avail of the transport links to Belfast/Newry • Employment and access to jobs and opportunities in the town • Access to services in the town while not competing with rural settlements that provide essential services

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs?

Yes

-The actions identified in the plan have been informed by thorough research and extensive engagement with the community and key stakeholders such as (The Antrim, Down & Armagh Rural Support Network) with the goal of bringing tangible and effective changes to Dromore. • Deliver revitalisation and regeneration across the town centre • Attract new businesses • Improve linkages and connectivity across the Settlement Development Limit • Improve car parking to assist commuters and those travelling from the hinterland to avail of the shops and services • 'Busy bus' provision to better connect the hinterlands of Dromore with the town which could support employment opportunities

012 - Revision of the Efficiency Plan

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Efficiency Plan

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan

-Plan

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

013 - Revision of the Environmental Health Quality Management Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Environmental Health Quality Management Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

014 - Development of an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

015 - Development of an Event Policy - Lending of Equipment for Events via Third Party Suppliers

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of an Event Policy - Lending of Equipment for Community & Voluntary Events via Third Party Suppliers

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

016 - Revision of the Financial Regulations

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Financial Regulations

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

017 - Revision of the Fraud Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Fraud Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified.

018 - Revision of the Grievance Policy & Procedure

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Grievance Policy & Procedure

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

019 - Development of a Hybrid Working Procedure

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of a Hybrid Working Procedure

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

020 - Revision of the Managing Attendance Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Managing Attendance Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

021 - Development of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of the Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan

-Plan

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

022 - Implementation of a Pilot Brown Bin Collection (Winter Organic Collection)

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Implementation of a Pilot Brown Bin Collection (Winter Organic Collection)

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Designing a public service

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

023 - Closure of a Playscheme in three Urban areas

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Closure of a Playscheme in the three Urban areas of North Lurgan, Killicomaine and Brownlow Hub.

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Implementing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

The Playscheme operated in the three urban areas of North Lurgan, Killicomaine and Brownlow Hub. Rural areas did not benefit from this scheme.

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

Consideration was given to the reallocation of funding aimed at supporting a broader community wellbeing activity programme to be implemented across all community facilities which would include those serving rural areas.

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs?

Yes

-The Playscheme operated in the three urban areas of North Lurgan, Killicomaine and Brownlow Hub. There will be a reallocation of funding that will be aimed at supporting a broader community wellbeing activity programme that will be implemented across all community facilities. This will benefit both urban and rural areas.

024 - Relocation of Portrait of Queen Elizabeth II

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Relocation of Portrait of Queen Elizabeth II

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Implementing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

025 - Request to hold a Pride event in Lurgan Park

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Request to hold a Pride Event in Lurgan Park

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Implementing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

026 - Revision of the Procurement Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Procurement Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

027 - Revision of the Public Consultation Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Public Consultation Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

028 - Proposal to commission a bust of the late Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Proposal to commission a bust of the late Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to be located in the Armagh Palace Chapel.

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Designing a public service

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

029 - Implementation of the Tak£500+ Participatory Budgeting Project 2025/26

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Implementation of the Tak£500+ Participatory Budgeting Project 2025/26

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Implementing a policy, strategy, or plan

-Strategy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

The following needs were identified: • Access to Digital Infrastructure • Access to Public Transport • Mental Health and Wellbeing • Influence over local decision making

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

Acknowledging that access to the digital infrastructure and public transport can be more challenging for those living in rural areas, consideration was given to • Submitting Applications in a range of formats: by post, email or via Council website • Providing online Information events for those who may not be able to travel to the in person events • A voting event in a rural setting • Publishing the names of the Participatory Budgeting Working Group members in all promotional documents so that they can be contacted for support.

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs?

Yes

-• Applications can be posted, emailed or submitted on the council website • There is an online information event for those who may not be able to travel to the in person events • The names and phone numbers of the PB Working Group are published in all promotional documents for anyone to contact them and receive information about applying and support. • There is a voting event in a rural setting.

030 - Revision of the Records Management Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Records Management Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

031 - Revision of the Tree Management Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Revision of the Tree Management Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Revising a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs? No rural needs were identified

032 - Development of a Uniform & Dress Code Policy

1. Reporting Period

1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

2. Name of public authority

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

3. Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Development of a Uniform & Dress Code Policy

4. Please indicate which category the activity relates to

Developing a policy, strategy, or plan -Policy

5. Detail the economic and social needs of people in rural areas which have been identified

No rural needs were identified

6. Detail the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

No rural needs were considered

7. Has the policy, strategy, plan, or public service been influenced by rural needs?

No rural needs were identified