

# OUR PEOPLE OUR PLACE OUR FUTURE

**CORPORATE PLAN**  
2023-2027



[armaghibanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](http://armaghibanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)



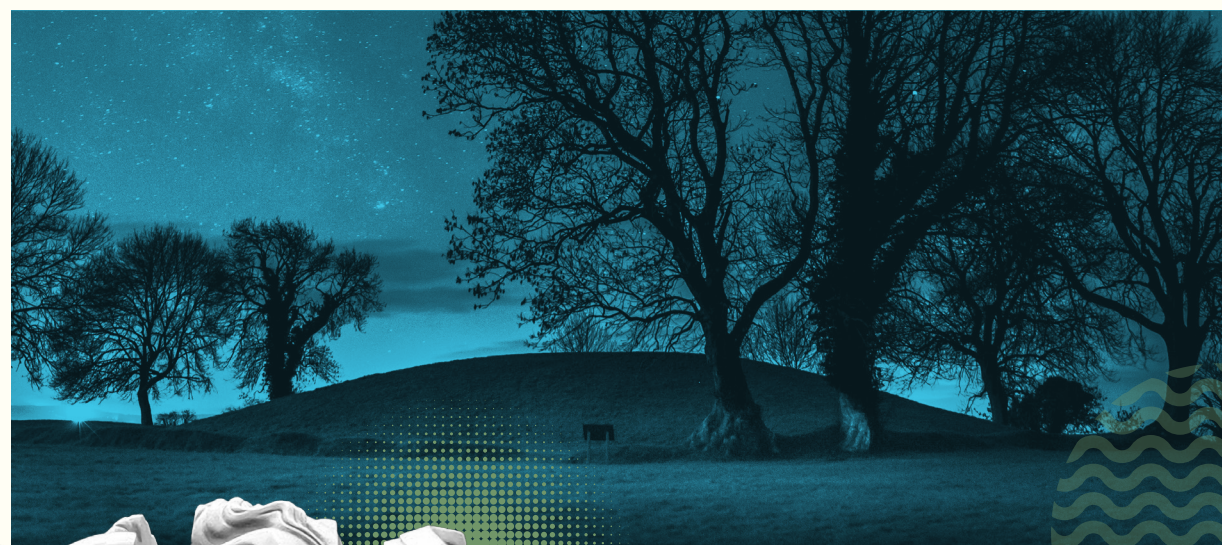
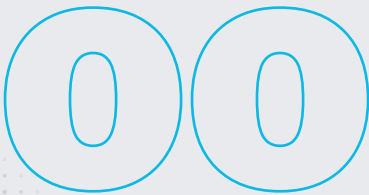
**Armagh City  
Banbridge  
& Craigavon**  
Borough Council

# CONTENTS

01	<b>Foreword</b>	5
02	<b>Achievements and Investments</b>	7
03	<b>Our Elected Members</b>	16
04	<b>Structure of the Council</b>	18
05	<b>Our Borough</b>	19
	Borough Map	20
06	<b>Our Vision</b>	21
07	<b>Our Values</b>	22
08	<b>How the Corporate Plan Fits In</b>	23
09	<b>Our Priorities</b>	25
	Environment and Place	26
	Community Wellbeing	30
	Economic Growth	34
	Service Delivery	38
	Staff, Leadership and Resources	42
10	<b>Strategic Alignment</b>	46









01

Our Corporate Plan captures  
the essence of who we are and  
how we will achieve a positive  
impact within the Borough.

# FOREWORD

Within this Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027 you will find our vision, values and priorities over the next four years. It captures the essence of who we are and how we will achieve a positive impact within the Borough. It sets out our commitment to uphold the highest standards of service delivery, facilities, projects and programmes for the benefit of our people, our place and our future.

It is our vision to create “a happy, healthy and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning.”

The Corporate Plan represents our aspirations and our dedication to continuous improvement. We will work with purpose, making decisions that align with our core values and priorities. While much has been achieved, we are ambitious to improve and achieve more. This plan details how we will do this through our priorities:

- Environment and Place
- Community Wellbeing
- Economic Growth
- Service Delivery
- Staff, Leadership and Resources

Much has happened over the last four years. There were challenges as we dealt with the effects of the global coronavirus pandemic. During this unprecedented time, we had to adapt our services and manage the financial and wider impact on our organisation and on the wider communities we serve. This also provided the opportunity to review and assess how we delivered our services and priorities in a more efficient, innovative way to support our staff, residents, customers, and businesses.

As we witness the impact of climate change on the planet, we as a Council are committed to taking effective action and focusing on sustainable strategies to secure a better future for generations to come. A Net-Zero Carbon Roadmap Analysis is being developed as it is our ambition to transition towards a greener, cleaner and more resilient Borough so that, we can achieve regional and national targets.

Our staff play a vital role in the continued development and success of our Council. With the introduction of the Personal Development Conversation Framework, our aim is to support a workplace culture where all employees feel supported, led, managed, developed, engaged and included.

In an ever-changing landscape, we will move forward with confidence, determination and with a spirit of collaboration to deliver our services effectively and efficiently and obtain value for money for all communities in our Borough. We appreciate the impact that the rising cost of living is having on everyone. Delivering services with budget pressures will present significant challenges for us as an organisation. It does however promote careful planning and resource management to find innovative and creative solutions as well as opportunities to optimise procedures and processes. We will continue to embrace a culture of efficiency and continuous improvement by seeking funding partners and opportunities to meet our goals.



Council recognise the importance of inclusive growth and is committed to making a difference to the lives of people, working alongside partner agencies to increase life opportunities and support everyone to reach their full potential. Our priority is to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being through place shaping in order to attract visitors, investors, and to encourage people to be active, with a focus on promoting health and wellbeing. We will work to improve participation in arts and culture and strengthen the Borough as a visitor destination. In addition, we will support the growth of the local economy by securing investment in infrastructure and connectivity, and providing opportunities in skills development. All of this will help to ensure people feel valued, welcomed and included.

As we look forward to this new Council term, together Elected Members and Council staff will work with our stakeholders and partners to make this a better Borough for our people, our place and our future.

In conclusion, we would like to thank all who engaged in the process and contributed to developing this Corporate Plan.



Margaret Tinsley

**Alderman Margaret Tinsley**  
Lord Mayor  
Armagh City, Banbridge  
& Craigavon Borough



R. Wilson

**Roger Wilson**  
Chief Executive  
Armagh City, Banbridge  
& Craigavon Borough Council

# 02 ACHIEVEMENTS & INVESTMENTS

We have gained a prestigious reputation both locally and regionally for being a highly ambitious, dynamic and progressive local authority with a strong focus on delivering outstanding public services, achieving operational excellence and unlocking the potential of our Borough for the benefit of everyone who lives, works or visits here.

The following pages provide an overview of key highlights we have achieved for

“

**Our People, Our  
Place, Our Future.**

”

# OUR PEOPLE

## **Council of the Year at IPB Pride of Place Awards 2022**

At the prestigious IPB Pride of Place Awards we were crowned ‘Council of the Year’ for submitting a significant number of well-prepared, high-quality entries throughout the 20-year history of these awards.

## **ABC Age Friendly Strategy**

We launched an Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan on International Day for Older Persons in 2023 to prioritise older people’s right to live a full, active and healthy life.

## **Inclusive ABC**

We strive to provide access to facilities, services, activities, and events for everyone through our Inclusive ABC initiative. We also work in partnership with Disability Sport NI and other organisations to provide inclusive programmes for children and adults with disabilities and long-term health conditions, offering a range of recreational and competitive physical activities and sports.

## **Ukraine Assistance Centre**

Brownlow Community Hub was one of four regional centres offering assistance to Ukrainian refugees arriving in Northern Ireland. The centre provided access to advice and information on key services including legal, health, education, jobs, benefits, housing, and immigration.

## **Healthcare POD**

In partnership with the Southern Health and Social Care Trust, we opened a new healthcare POD in the Tommy Makem Arts and Community Centre, Keady. This POD is helping local residents access a safe and private space to attend virtual medical appointments, healthcare related groups and courses.











# OUR PLACE

## City of Culture 2025 Bid

Armagh City and the surrounding Borough made the longlist in the bid to become UK City of Culture 2025. The bid made it through to the last eight in the competition, raising the profile of the Borough across the UK.

## South Lake Leisure Centre

Built at a cost of £40 million, South Lake Leisure Centre opened its doors in November 2020 during the pandemic. Since then, it has attracted over 1.8 million visitors and acted as a hub for people of all ages, abilities and fitness levels wanting to improve their health and wellbeing.

## Let's Celebrate Towns Awards

Banbridge and Lurgan claimed top prizes at the UK-wide Let's Celebrate Towns Awards 2023, ranking them in the top eight towns in the UK. Banbridge was crowned the winner of the Champion category, with Lurgan picking up first place in the Rising Star category.

## Place Plans

Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Community Planning Partnership launched the first place shaping plan in Northern Ireland for Armagh in 2022, followed by the Banbridge Place Plan in March 2024. The council was the lead partner for both these projects. These plans create a shared vision for future growth and development that reflects the needs, aspirations and ambitions of local people.

## Armagh City and Lurgan Townscape Heritage Schemes

Significant progress has been made to restore built heritage through the Armagh City and Lurgan Townscape Heritage schemes, funded in partnership with The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Council and property owners. This work is transforming and preserving many unique heritage buildings for future generations.



# OUR FUTURE

## **£252m Growth Deal**

As part of the Growth Deal, £252 million has been allocated to the Mid-South West (MSW) region. The Council is working in collaboration with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council to develop major investment plans that will secure funding to help the region reach the ambitions set out in the Regional Economic Strategy.

## **£6.45m Upgrade for Banbridge Public Realm**

Banbridge will benefit from a £6.45 million upgrade centred on the town's main commercial core. The scheme, which is part funded by the Department for Communities (DfC), will enhance the existing character of the town and create a high quality, better connected streetscape with a strong focus on improved safety and accessibility for all users.

## **£3.75m Levelling Up Funds for F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Studio**

The council has received £3.75 million of funding from the UK's Levelling Up Fund to extend the F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Studio. The aim of the funding is to further enhance the facility as an internationally renowned cultural space.

## **National Lottery Heritage Fund**

The Borough is one of the first nine places in the UK set to benefit from a share of £200 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to unlock the potential of our heritage. This is the start of a 10-year journey that will transform our local heritage through the new Heritage Places initiative.

## **Capital Play Development Programme**

Over the last five years, we have invested £5.5 million in delivering a Borough wide Capital Play Development Programme. This has included upgrades and new development work to 40 play parks to improve recreational facilities for children and young people in parks and open spaces across the Borough. Further investment and development is planned as part of the council Play Strategy over the coming years.













# SHOWCASING THE VERY BEST OF OUR BOROUGH

## **Georgian Festival**

A celebration of Armagh City's rich Georgian heritage including Christmas celebrations.

## **Banbridge Buskfest**

Our unique festival of music showcasing the talents of musicians from across Northern Ireland, and further afield.

## **Fireworks at Craigavon Lakes**

A key highlight of our family friendly celebrations at Halloween.

# 03 OUR ELECTED MEMBERS

## ARMAGH\*

Blackwatertown, Cathedral,  
 Demesne, Keady, Navan, The  
 Mall

## BANBRIDGE\*

Banbridge East, Banbridge  
 North, Banbridge South,  
 Banbridge West, Gilford,  
 Loughbrickland, Rathfriland

## CRAIGAVON\*

Bleary, Brownlow, Craigavon  
 Centre, Derrytrasna, Kernan

## CUSHER\*

Hamiltonsbawn, Markethill,  
 Richhill, Seagahan, Tandragee



**Scott  
Armstrong**  
 DUP  
 07711 596 086



**Fergal  
Donnelly**  
 SF  
 07787 206 809



**Sarah  
Duffy**  
 SF  
 07825 147 351



**Ashley  
Mallon**  
 SF  
 07771 371 605



**Thomas  
O'Hanlon**  
 SDLP  
 07743 930 427



**John Óg  
O'Kane**  
 SF  
 07711 596 068



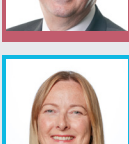
Alderman

**Glenn  
Barr**  
 UUP  
 07713 391 927

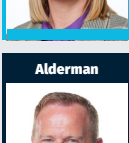


Alderman

**Ian  
Burns**  
 UUP  
 07733 303 712

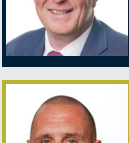


**Joy  
Ferguson**  
 APNI  
 07500 963 255

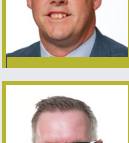


Alderman

**Paul  
Greenfield**  
 DUP  
 07841 595 633



**Chris  
McCartan**  
 SF  
 07747 043 414



**Kevin  
Savage**  
 SF  
 07919 214 628



**Ian  
Wilson**  
 DUP  
 07746 092 104



**Robbie  
Alexander**  
 APNI  
 07711 596 076



**Kate Evans**  
 UUP  
 07711 596 077



**Jude Mallon**  
 SF  
 07733 618 634



**Catherine  
Nelson**  
 SF  
 07762 749 777



**Margaret  
Tinsley**  
 DUP  
 07990 501 568



Alderman

**Paul  
Berry**  
 IND  
 07719 105 588

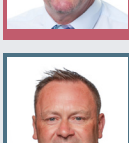


**Bróna  
Haughey**  
 SF  
 07902 103 740

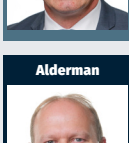


Alderman

**Gordon  
Kennedy**  
 UUP  
 07833 527 821



**Keith  
Ratcliffe**  
 TUV  
 07970 383 323

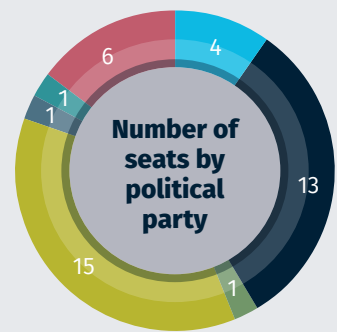


Alderman

**Gareth  
Wilson**  
 DUP  
 07788 156 519

\* DEA

- Alliance Party of Northern Ireland [APNI]
- Democratic Unionist Party [DUP]
- Independent [IND]
- Sinn Féin [SF]
- Social Democratic and Labour Party [SDLP]
- Traditional Unionist Voice [TUV]
- Ulster Unionist Party [UUP]



LAGAN RIVER\*

Donaghcloney, Dromore,  
Gransha, Quilly, Waringstown

**Alderman**

**Mark Baxter**  
DUP  
07833 196 996

**Jessica Johnston**  
APNI  
07972 818 915

**Tim McClelland**  
DUP  
07702 472 046

**Alderman**

**Paul Rankin**  
DUP  
07714 835 878

**Kyle Savage**  
UUP  
07742 401 132

LURGAN\*

Aghagallon, Knocknashane,  
Lough Road, Magheralin,  
Mourneview, Parklake, Shankill

**Peter Haire**  
DUP  
07711 596 073

**Keith Haughian**  
SF  
07590 264 227

**Peter Lavery**  
APNI  
07887 249 393

**Liam Mackle**  
SF  
07720 211 273

**Deputy Lord Mayor**

**Sorchá McGeown**  
SF  
07928 848 261

**Alderman**

**Stephen Moutray**  
DUP  
07711 011 151

**Mary O'Dowd**  
SF  
07711 596 092

PORTADOWN\*

Ballybay, Corcrair, Killycomain,  
Loughgall, Mahon, The Birches

**Paul Duffy**  
SF  
07593 382 367

**Julie Flaherty**  
UUP  
07712 881 292

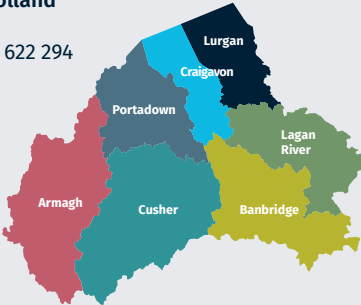
**Clare McConville-Walker**  
SF  
07704 034 527

**Lavelle McIlwrath**  
DUP  
07827 284 787

**Kyle Moutray**  
DUP  
07733 853 122

**Alan Mulholland**  
DUP  
07799 622 294

These 41  
councillors are  
responsible for  
shaping local  
services and  
making important  
decisions that  
make a real  
difference to the  
community.



# 04 STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has **41** democratically Elected Members, representing seven District Electoral Areas.

Our Elected Members represent the interests of their constituents and ensure the views of their electoral areas and the entire population of the Borough are reflected in the decisions that the Council take.

The **seven principles of public life** (also known as the “Nolan Principles”) guide everything that our Elected Members and staff do. These are **Honesty, Accountability, Objectivity, Leadership, Openness, Selflessness** and **Integrity**.

The Council is a decision-making body that meets once a month to discuss, oversee and ratify decisions taken by Committees. It has five Committees that meet monthly and a Performance and Audit Committee that meets quarterly. An Annual Meeting of Council is held each year when a Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor are elected. Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees are also elected at the Annual General Meeting.

Details of Committee meetings and relevant papers can be found at [armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](https://armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)

For further information, please contact [democraticservices@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)



# 05 OUR BOROUGH



The Borough has a population of approximately 218,656 and is the second largest Local Government District (LGD) in NI after Belfast

**218,656**

11.5% of total NI population \*1



**238,066**

Expected growth in population of Borough to 2033 \*2

Age distribution of population \*1



**62%** AGE 16 - 64



**22%**  
AGE 0 - 15



**16%**  
AGE 65+



AREA

**554**  
square miles

**84,642**



Households in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough \*1



**51%**  
Urban



**49%**  
Rural

Live in urban areas while just under half live in rural areas. \*3

Rivers, roads and railways: strategic location on the North-South and East-West economic corridors



30 minutes to Belfast // 1 hour to Dublin  
45 minutes to NI's two main airports



**110,346**

Hectares farmed \*4

\*1 (Census 2021)

\*2 2018 based population projections, NISRA

\*3 2011 Census

\*4 Agriculture Census 2022



# BOROUGH MAP



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# 06 OUR VISION

The Corporate Plan aligns to the aspirations and outcomes detailed in the Community Plan.  
It is our vision that we will create

“

**A happy, healthy  
and connected  
community,  
a vibrant and  
sustainable  
economy and  
appealing places  
for living, working  
and learning.**

”



# OUR 07 VALUES

Our values have been developed through engagement and consultation with staff and Elected Members. Taking into account the Nolan Principles, three values have been agreed to shape the culture, behaviour, decision making and overall identity of the organisation.

In practical terms maintaining these values will build trust and help sustain relationships and a positive reputation with our customers, residents, businesses, partners and stakeholders.

These will be core to our organisation, and we are committed to embedding, communicating and monitoring these.



## PEOPLE CENTRED

Inclusive and welcoming, a place where people and staff are valued. Engage positively in partnership working, empowering others to achieve success.

## LEADERS

Be positive, inspiring and serve passionately to achieve our aspirations. Demonstrate resilience, respect and adaptability.

## RESPONSIBLE

Respect, protect and enhance our place. Accountable in how we manage our resources and decisions. Open and transparent in our processes, consistently deliver our services effectively and obtain value for money.

# HOW THE CORPORATE PLAN FITS IN

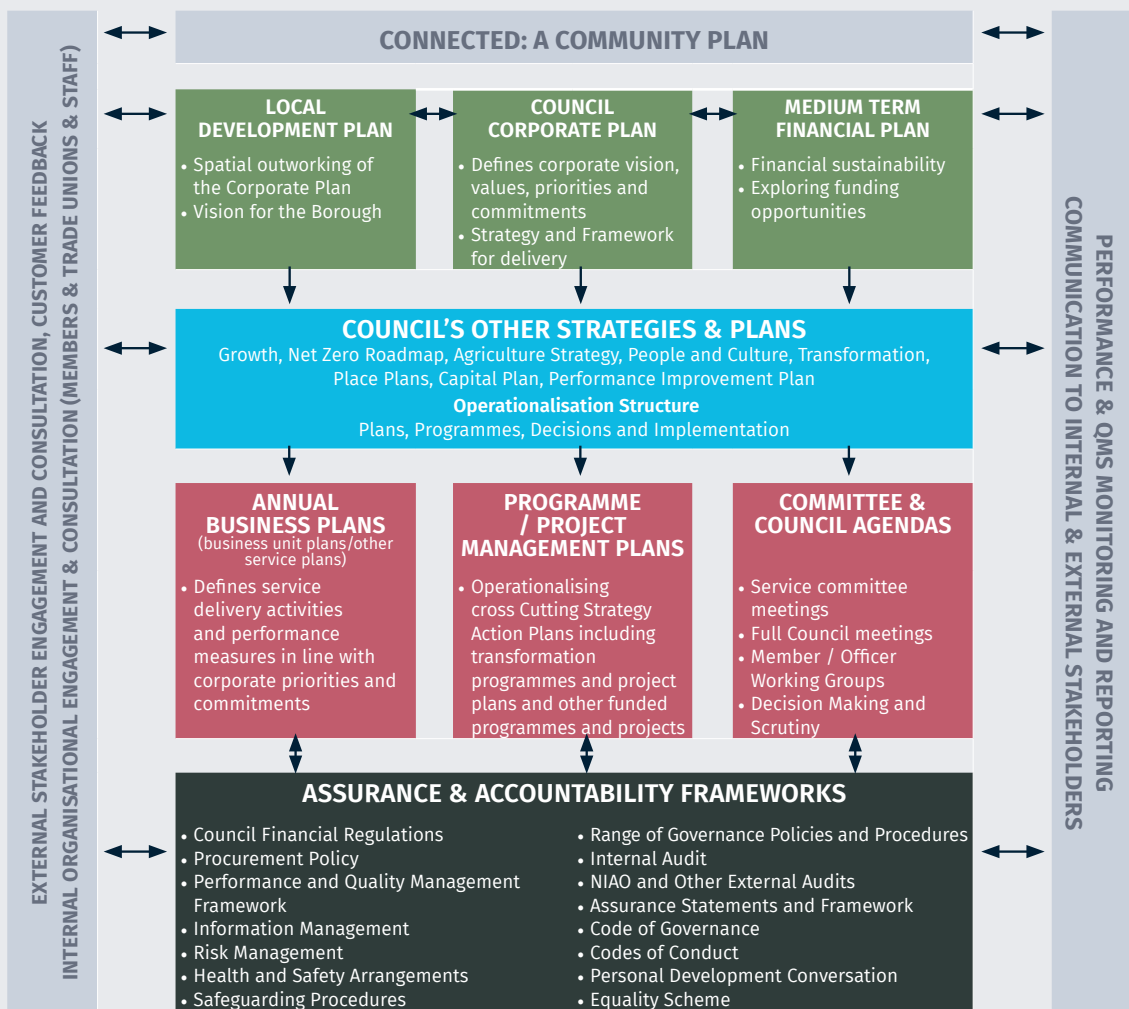
Our Corporate Plan is one of a suite of strategic documents which the Council uses to manage its business effectively. These plans are linked and help identify how services, departments, teams and individual members of staff will work to deliver our shared priorities for the benefit of customers, residents, businesses, and communities.

## ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE & CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT APPROACH

## OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

## Regional, National Strategies and Partnerships

Immediate Influencers - Political Stability and Direction | Health of the Economy | Labour Market - skills, capacity and availability



The diagram above illustrates the need for connections between all levels. This golden thread is supported by engagement and improvement processes. The plans listed above are illustrative of the key plans, rather than an exhaustive list.





Delivering the priorities of our Corporate Plan will contribute to the Borough's 'Connected' Community Plan. The Community Plan is the overarching plan for the Borough which all the community planning partners are committed to. Within the priorities, we reference how our work will contribute to the nine outcomes of the Community Plan over the next four years.



**COMMUNITY**

- Confident Community
- Healthy Community
- Welcoming Community



**ECONOMY**

- Enterprising Economy
- Skilled Economy
- Tourism Economy



**PLACE**

- Creative Place
- Enhanced Place
- Revitalised Place

# 09 OUR PRIORITIES

The Council will focus on and deliver services across the following five priorities for ‘**Our People, Our Place, Our Future**’.



The five priorities are explained in further detail in this section. Within each priority, we have identified key statistics and outline why each priority is important to us.

Within each priority we have stated our three commitments of what we are going to do and provided examples of actions to help us achieve the commitments.



# PRIORITY: ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE

We currently send

**58.3%** 

of all municipal waste for reuse,  
recycling or composting <sup>\*1</sup>

## Built Heritage Designations and Assets <sup>\*2</sup>

**1**   
Area of  
Significant  
Archaeological  
Interest

 **185**  
Scheduled  
Monuments <sup>\*3</sup>

 **1,112**  
Listed Buildings <sup>\*3</sup>

**5**   
Conservation  
Areas

**35**   
Historic Parks,  
Gardens and Demesnes <sup>\*3</sup>

## Nature Conservation Designations

 **4** Sites of  
International  
Importance  
  
(1 Ramsar Wetland,  
2 Special Areas of  
Conservation (SAC) and  
1 Special Protection Area  
(SPA))

**26** Sites of  
National  
Importance  
  
(1 National Nature Reserve  
(NNR), 21 Areas of Special  
Scientific Interest (ASSI)  
and 4 Nature Reserves (NR))

**80** Sites of  
Local  
Importance  
  
(3 Local Nature Reserves  
and 77 Sites of Local Nature  
Conservation Importance  
(SLNCI))

<sup>\*1</sup> DAERA Municipal Waste Quarter 2 (July - September 2023)  
report (subject to final year end verification)

<sup>\*2</sup> Local Development Plan, Preferred Options Paper, March 2018

<sup>\*3</sup> DfC Historic Environment Division (HED) February 2024





# Why Environment and Place is a priority for us

The environment plays a critical role in sustainably planning for the future it underpins the wellbeing of societies, economies and ecosystems. As a Council we have a corporate responsibility both as a large employer and a community leader to take action to review our own and the Borough's performance to advance sustainable development and actions on climate change. To that end, we are currently developing a Net-Zero Carbon Roadmap Analysis. Through projects such as Fast Followers in the Mid-South West region we will all lead by example to achieve targets, use resources wisely and reduce our carbon footprint. We are also committed to supporting efforts in the Borough as a whole to reduce carbon emissions, generate and use energy more cleanly so the area remains a progressive and vibrant place to live, work and visit. The recent blue green algae blooms on Lough Neagh have highlighted the impact of water quality. Our Biodiversity team through continuous research explore new ways to sustainably manage and conserve waterways, grasslands and wildlife across our natural assets.

The unique tapestry and diversity of our city, towns, villages, nature reserve, waterways, rural hinterlands, parks and open spaces is not just important to our local flora and fauna. It is equally important to our local people and visitors. During the pandemic, we came to appreciate just how vital these spaces are to our health and wellbeing. Eight parks and open spaces across the Borough secured the coveted Green Flag Award status in 2023 and Armagh Palace Demesne received the Green Heritage Award.

We have unrivalled heritage buildings and Navan Fort is an area of archaeological significance. Funding is in place to deliver projects such as Armagh City and Lurgan Townscape Heritage schemes, which support preserving the unique value and character of our heritage buildings, monuments and spaces that contribute to cultural wealth, pride and interest in our places and communities.

We recognise that place shaping improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the place, ensuring aspirations of the community are being realised and included in the process. The Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Community Planning Partnership launched the Armagh Place Plan, the first Place Shaping Plan in Northern Ireland, in May 2022 and Banbridge Place Plan in March 2024. The Council is committed to developing further place plans which will be used as a catalyst for future improvements including public realm work to enhance, spaces and places for all users.



# Our Commitments:

- 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



## Actions:

*These examples have been highlighted to illustrate actions we will undertake. Further details and actions can be found in the associated strategies and plans referenced on pages 46-47.*

- Develop a Council Climate Action Plan with KPIs
- Create a community and business climate toolkit and develop associated green initiatives
- 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
- Secure investment for development of our city and town centres including opportunity to support the heritage led regeneration agenda
- Develop place plans for six urban centres by 2027
- Develop a Blueway and Greenway (Blue/Green) Plan and Active Travel Master Plan <sup>1</sup>

### How this aligns to the Community Plan



#### COMMUNITY

- Confident Community
- Healthy Community ✓
- Welcoming Community ✓



#### ECONOMY

- Enterprising Economy
- Skilled Economy
- Tourism Economy ✓



#### PLACE

- Creative Place ✓
- Enhanced Place ✓
- Revitalised Place ✓

<sup>1</sup>Blue Green Infrastructure as a defined by the European Commission as a 'strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem service'.



# PRIORITY: COMMUNITY WELLBEING

## Belonging & Influence (2020-2022) Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon



**83.7%** Feel a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood  
**19.3%** Feel they have an influence on local decisions made in their neighbourhood <sup>\*1</sup>

**21%** adults undertook voluntary work in past year in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon <sup>\*2</sup>



**56%** of adults participate in sport or physical activity on at least one day a week <sup>\*3</sup>



## Life Expectancy



**MALE 79.1 years** <sup>\*4</sup>



**FEMALE 83.0 years** <sup>\*4</sup>

Male Life Expectancy (ABC Deprived Areas) 75.9 years  
Female Life Expectancy (ABC Deprived Areas) 81.7 years



**80%** People good or very good general health <sup>\*5</sup>



Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon  
**8.6%** born outside the UK or RoI <sup>\*5</sup>



**13,947** No. of residents aged 3+ whose main language is not English or Irish <sup>\*5</sup>

## Top 3 other languages <sup>\*5</sup>



<sup>\*1</sup> Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2020, 2021 & 2022 combined years.  
<sup>\*2</sup> Continuous Household Survey 2022/2023  
<sup>\*3</sup> Continuous Household Survey 2019/2020  
<sup>\*4</sup> 2019-21 (Health Inequalities Annual Report 2023)  
<sup>\*5</sup> Census 2021





# Why Community Wellbeing is a priority for us

The Council has a wide range of services to support health and wellbeing in the Borough, including indoor and outdoor leisure facilities; such as our new flagship South Lake Leisure Centre green spaces, parks and play parks, various community centres and the associated programmes delivered in each. Our 'Get Moving ABC Framework' provides opportunities for everyone to improve their wellbeing and be physically active. Through our 'Age Friendly Strategy' we are working to ensure our Borough is a place to 'age well'.

Local events are held across the Borough on an annual basis such as the award-winning Georgian Festival as well as celebrating local talent through the Banbridge Buskfest. We are home to an active thriving arts scene with many professional artists and creative industries. The Market Place Theatre and Arts Centre and the F.E McWilliam Gallery and Studio attract many visitors to support local arts and culture. These combine to create an environment which enhances quality of life, health and wellbeing and enriches our lives by promoting creativity.

The Council is committed to supporting local communities, as well as the participation and democracy of local people through active engagement and collaboration. On average each year the Financial Assistance Programme (FAP) awards 618 grants to local groups, equating to circa £1 million. Through the Community Planning Strategic Partnership TAKE500+ Participatory Budget Fund, local people are empowered to decide how public funds are used to address needs in their area with local residents deciding which projects receive funding.

With the impact of the cost of living crisis being felt everywhere, a number of initiatives have been developed to support individuals and families across the local community through these uncertain and challenging times. Council in partnership with community organisations developed a range of wrap around support including: direct donations, provision of volunteers, access to essential food and community lunches, and assisting individuals avail of crisis fuel support.

We acknowledge the vital role played by our community and voluntary sectors in providing direct service delivery and support to local people. They are working in a challenging environment with budget uncertainty and increasing expectations. We will continue to work closely with them to support local communities and individuals.

It is our focus that people feel respected, included, safe and supported and that our Borough is a welcoming place. While <sup>1</sup>83.7% feel a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood, further improvement is required for people to feel they have an influence on local decisions made in their area.

<sup>1</sup> Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey, 2020-2022.





# Our Commitments:

- 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



## Actions:

*These examples have been highlighted to illustrate actions we will undertake. Further details and actions can be found in the associated strategies and plans referenced on pages 46-47.*

- Extend F.E McWilliam Gallery and Studio by 2026
- 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
- Establish a measure of Quality of Life in our Borough and seek to improve this baseline
- Increase the range of programmes for people least likely to participate in sport and physical activity by 9% by 2027
- 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.
- Work with the community and voluntary sector to develop sustainable initiatives which support people to improve their quality of life

### How this aligns to the Community Plan



#### COMMUNITY

- Confident Community ✓
- Healthy Community ✓
- Welcoming Community ✓



#### ECONOMY

- Enterprising Economy
- Skilled Economy
- Tourism Economy



#### PLACE

- Creative Place ✓
- Enhanced Place
- Revitalised Place ✓



# PRIORITY: ECONOMIC GROWTH



**75.2%**

Employment rate  
(2022, aged 16-64 years) <sup>\*1</sup>



**2.7%**

Claiming unemployment related  
benefits, in ABC below the NI  
rate of 3%  
(Dec 23, aged 16-64 years) <sup>\*2</sup>

**Earnings (2022)**



**£29,236**

Earnings (FT who work in the Borough)  
Gross annual pay for FT employees  
who work in the Borough (2022) <sup>\*3</sup>



**£4.3bn**

In 2021, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon  
had a GVA of approximately £4.3bn, the second  
highest GVA after Belfast <sup>\*4</sup>

**No. of Registered Businesses**

**9,390**



11.9% of NI VAT and/or PAYE registered  
businesses, 2023 <sup>\*5</sup>

**Top 3 business sectors <sup>\*5</sup>**



**26%**

Agriculture,  
forestry &  
fishing



**14%**

Construction



**8%**

Retail

**Tourism <sup>\*6</sup>**



**181,477**

overnight trips



**£27m**

spent (2019)

Estimated overnight trips  
and expenditure by Local  
Government District, 2019

**Housing  
prices**



Annual  
Change  
**3.1%**

Standardised  
Price  
**£161,955**

Quarter 3, 2023 <sup>\*7</sup>

No. of visitors to  
**Navan Centre  
& Fort <sup>\*8</sup>**

**17,800**



No of visitors to  
**FE McWilliam  
Gallery & Studio**



**46,657**

(Visitor numbers to FE McWilliam  
Gallery & Studio 2023) <sup>\*9</sup>

<sup>\*1</sup> Labour Force Survey  
<sup>\*2</sup> December 2023:Labour Market Report, NISRA  
<sup>\*3</sup> Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)  
Office for National Statistics  
<sup>\*4</sup> Inter Departmental Business Register, 2023

<sup>\*6</sup> Tourism Statistics Branch, NISRA  
<sup>\*7</sup> Land and Property Services, NISRA  
<sup>\*8</sup> Tourism NI (2021) NI Visitor Attractions survey,  
Annual Visits 2020  
<sup>\*9</sup> FE McWilliam Gallery & Studio



# Why Economic Growth is a priority for us

The Covid-19 pandemic has undeniably shaken our economy both globally and locally. Yet in the face of this challenge, the business sector displayed remarkable resilience and adaptability. With the acceleration of digitalisation, hybrid working became the norm in the public and private sectors.

Our Borough is home to some of Northern Ireland's most successful companies and largest employers including <sup>2</sup> Moy Park, Almac Group, Tayto Group, Kingspan Water & Energy, Clearway Disposals, James E McCabe and Gordons Chemist (N&R Gordon). Our industries are vibrant and wide ranging with a strong drive for innovation, quality and service delivery. Our advanced manufacturing businesses have consistently shown that they are agile indigenous companies upskilling and innovating to exceed the sector's high expectations. Within the Borough, we have a great entrepreneurial spirit and a passion and drive for producing quality goods and services. Our growth sectors remain Agri-Food, Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing, and Health and Life Sciences. Our small to medium sized businesses continue to provide the backbone of the economy, supplying customers around the world along with the global giants already operating in the Borough.

The Council is a partner in the Mid-South West (MSW) project in collaboration with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council. The Regional Economic Strategy aims to transform the MSW region's economy and boost productivity. The strategy identifies four pillars to guide investment and grow the collective economy: future proofing the skills base; enabling infrastructure; boosting innovation and digital capacity; and building a high-performing tourism economy.

The Borough has a large rural population where agriculture is deeply embedded in its history. In 2022, we unveiled our 'Agriculture Strategy', the first of its kind in Northern Ireland to support our local farmers, agri-food and agri businesses of tomorrow. The Food Heartland now spans from field to fork, bringing together farmers, producers, suppliers and restaurateurs to showcase the strong local agri-food industry on a global platform. Providing a unique platform to work collectively to drive the local agri-food sector forward.

Growth in our Borough should be inclusive and benefit everyone. With people being the most important asset for any business, we will support residents in our Borough to gain the skills, information, support, and opportunities to succeed in the labour market so they can make informed choices, access effective pathways, and reach their full potential. We will also support local employers to develop a resilient, agile, and flexible workforce through funded programmes and working in collaboration with our partners. This work is supported by our vibrant Social Enterprise sector.

Tourism is another key component of our local economy, and we are committed to providing memorable and unique arts, culture and heritage visitor experiences to both domestic and international visitors.

As we move forward, sustainability, productivity and connectivity must be the cornerstone of economic growth. Our Building Control, Planning, Environmental Health, Economic Development and Tourism departments will engage directly with potential and local businesses to support their growth and development. Additionally, we are invested in tackling climate change through green innovation enhancing business productivity and resilience, with an overall ambition of being a more prosperous and connected region.

<sup>2</sup> Ulster Business Top 100 August 2023 by Ulster Business - Issuu



# Our Commitments:

- Maximise the potential of our 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



## Actions:

*These examples have been highlighted to illustrate actions we will undertake. Further details and actions can be found in the associated strategies and plans referenced on pages 46-47.*

- 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
- Develop an Inclusive Growth Strategy and Plan by 2025. Deliver opportunities in growth and investment
- Increase the value of the Borough's tourism economy by 10% annually
- Deliver the Agriculture Strategy by 2027
- Develop an Infrastructure Strategy to evidence the need, priority and deliverability of critical infrastructure across the Borough
- 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

### How this aligns to the Community Plan



#### COMMUNITY

Confident Community  
Healthy Community  
Welcoming Community



#### ECONOMY

Enterprising Economy  
Skilled Economy  
Tourism Economy



#### PLACE

Creative Place ✓  
Enhanced Place ✓  
Revitalised Place ✓

# PRIORITY: SERVICE DELIVERY

**6,000,000**

Bins collected a year



**11,505**

No. of indoor Leisure centre memberships



**1,266**

Planning decisions issued during 2022/2023

**918**

Building Control completion certificates issued for dwellings/apartments from 1 April 2022-31 March 2023



**400**

Home safety visits annually



**7,535**

Environmental Health Service Requests responded to in 3 days (2022/2023)



**19,238**

Dog licences issued from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023



**9**  
centres

for recycling and disposing of household waste

**30+ 'Bring banks'**

(i.e. bottle banks, textiles and dry recycling).



Above data collected internally.





# Why Service Delivery is a priority for us

Our journey towards excellence has always been guided by a commitment to meet and exceed the expectations of our residents, customers, businesses, and visitors. It is where our values are put into action. We recognise that exceptional service is about building relationships, earning trust and creating a lasting impact.

In recent times, we have had to adapt and be innovative in how our programmes, processes and services were delivered and going forward this will remain our focus to retain the highest standard within a challenging financial context.

All our departments whether it be Planning, Building Control, Environmental Services, Environmental Health, Health and Recreation are optimising their processes to ensure we deliver efficient and fit for purpose services. Monitoring and continuous improvement is at the forefront of all we do to ensure we are up to date and relevant.

All departments are accredited to the ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standard, as we aim to improve our overall environmental performance and legal compliance. Environmental Health is accredited to the ISO 9001 for Quality Management System to ensure consistency in service delivery. Eight indoor leisure facilities across the Borough achieved QUEST accreditation, recognising the consistently high-quality services delivered by staff and the top-class facilities and inclusive activities on offer.

We want everyone who lives in, works in, and visits our beautiful Borough to know that we are committed to preserving a clean and safe environment for all to enjoy. We will support this through the services we deliver, our regulatory responsibilities, by working in partnership with other agencies and through supporting local communities and people.

Our commitment to customer care is in our Customer Charter. We have pledged to serve passionately, engage positively and deliver consistently. We will continue to communicate through various methods to our customers and staff, ensuring everyone is kept up to date with relevant information on our services. We want our customers, businesses, and residents to be able to engage with us in a way that suits them and to receive a response in a timely manner.

Despite the high standards we set ourselves, there may be times when our customers or users feel that our service has fallen below the standard they expect. If this is the case, we want to know about it so that we can resolve the matter as quickly as possible and take steps to make improvements were necessary.



# Our Commitments:

- Continuously review to improve our services
- Monitor and communicate our performance
- Seek and use regular customer engagement and feedback



## Actions:

*These examples have been highlighted to illustrate actions we will undertake. Further details and actions can be found in the associated strategies and plans referenced on pages 46-47.*

- Progress service improvements as identified by a review of Environmental Services
- Fully embed our Quality Management System (QMS) across council to improve our services by usage of data and evidence
- Publish our annual Performance Self-Assessment Report
- Publish the Community Planning Biennial Statement of Progress
- Ensure all new or updated strategies and policies adhere to our standards for public consultation
- Provide training for staff on communication, consultation and engagement

### How this aligns to the Community Plan



#### COMMUNITY

- Confident Community ✓
- Healthy Community ✓
- Welcoming Community ✓



#### ECONOMY

- Enterprising Economy ✓
- Skilled Economy ✓
- Tourism Economy ✓



#### PLACE

- Creative Place ✓
- Enhanced Place ✓
- Revitalised Place



# PRIORITY: STAFF, LEADERSHIP AND RESOURCES

Armagh City, Banbridge and  
 Craigavon Borough Council has

1,214

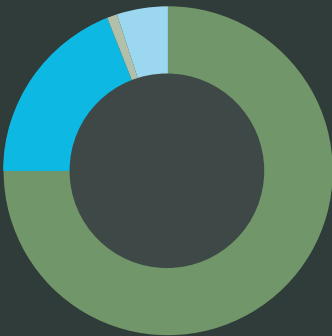
employees

(Full-Time Equivalent) As at February 2024



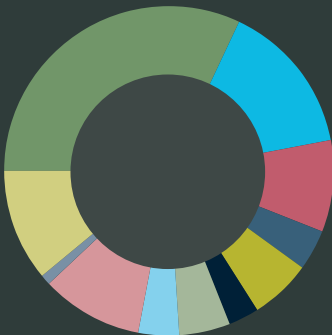
## Where we get our money from

Rates	75%
Services & Grants	19%
Rates Support Grant	1%
De-Rating Grant & Transferred Functions Grant	5%



## Where we plan to spend our money

Environmental Services	32%
Leisure Services	15%
Estates & Asset Management	9%
Environmental Health	4%
Community Services	6%
Economic Development	2%
Tourism, Arts & Culture	5%
Planning & Building Control	4%
Corporate Services	11%
Members & Members Support	1%
Capital Financing	11%





# Why Staff, Leadership and Resources is a priority for us

As an employer of 1,214 staff, we recognise how valuable our employees are to the organisation and overall success of the Council and Borough. Our staff are the people who will bring our vision to life and live out our values in the delivery of our commitments. To foster open and honest communication, we have introduced a Personal Development Conversation Framework. To further build on this initiative, a People and Culture Strategy will be developed. Through this process, we will listen to and work with our colleagues to ensure our organisation is one of which we are all proud.

The E-learning Portal provides opportunity to complete online courses which we believe are an investment in each employee's professional growth. We recognise the importance of maintaining a happy and resilient workforce, and we will continue to deliver a range of initiatives and services that support staff's health and wellness.

We have 41 Councillors elected in 2023 to serve during this Council term. As local representatives, they have responsibility to act, make decisions and represent the views and needs of local people. In September 2022, the Council was successful in being recredited to the Elected Member Development Charter Plus status. As custodians of this Borough, Elected Members and Officers will use their influence to lobby for local and regional priorities which are important to local people.

As a Council, we have and continue to invest substantially in our estate and services through the Capital Programme to benefit communities, businesses and visitors across the Borough. We are also currently undertaking a review to ensure the effective and efficient management of these important assets.

As we work to deliver our priorities, we do so with budget pressures but we are committed to obtaining value for money in the delivery of our services and programmes. Together with our stakeholders and partners, we will endeavour to identify available funding in order to invest in our communities and places for the benefit of local people. We will use our resources and assets in a sustainable and responsible way and strive to deliver value for money.

We have structures and processes in place to ensure we comply with legal and regulatory requirements. We will continue to review and strengthen our governance arrangements; be transparent in how we conduct our business and make decisions to achieve our commitments.





# Our Commitments:

- 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



## Actions:

*These examples have been highlighted to illustrate actions we will undertake. Further details and actions can be found in the associated strategies and plans referenced on pages 46-47.*

- Develop a People and Culture Strategy by 2027
- Retain Elected Member Development Charter Plus status
- Ensure all staff receive at least two Personal Development Conversations a year
- Issue a regular E-Zine to staff containing corporate information updates, news and acknowledgements
- Harmonise terms and conditions and HR policies
- Conduct an asset review by 2027

### How this aligns to the Community Plan



#### COMMUNITY

Confident Community ✓  
Healthy Community ✓  
Welcoming Community



#### ECONOMY

Enterprising Economy  
Skilled Economy ✓  
Tourism Economy



#### PLACE

Creative Place  
Enhanced Place ✓  
Revitalised Place



# STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The key strategies that will help us achieve our priorities and where you can find more details on the actions we are taking are summarised in the table below and can be viewed on [armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](https://armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)

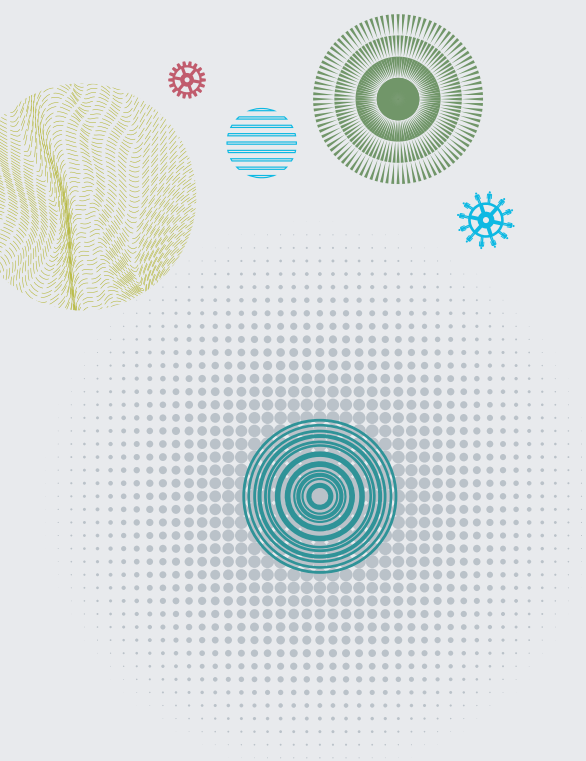
Name of Document	Environment and Place	Community Wellbeing	Economic Growth	Service Delivery	Staff, Leadership and Resources
Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan 2022	✓	✓			
Agriculture Strategy 2022	✓		✓		
Armagh Place Plan 2022	✓	✓	✓		✓
Arts, Culture and Heritage: A Framework for the Future	✓	✓	✓		
Asset Strategy	✓				
Banbridge Place Plan 2024	✓	✓	✓		✓
Connected: A Community Plan 2017-2030	✓	✓	✓		✓
Customer Charter				✓	✓
Disability Action Plan 2024-2027 (in development)		✓		✓	✓
Draft Plan Strategy (in development)	✓	✓	✓		
Equality Action Plan 2024-2027 (in development)		✓		✓	✓
Financial Assistance Policy		✓			
Get Moving ABC Framework 2020 - 2030	✓	✓		✓	
Good Relations Action Plan		✓			
MSW Regional Economic Strategy			✓		
Net Zero Carbon Roadmap Analysis (in development)	✓		✓		
Play Strategy 2018-2026	✓	✓		✓	

Name of Document	Environment and Place	Community Wellbeing	Economic Growth	Service Delivery	Staff, Leadership and Resources
Poverty and Social Inclusion (in development)		✓	✓		
Procurement Policy May 2023					✓
Recovery and Growth Framework 2021		✓	✓		

**Internal Documents**

Name of Document	Environment and Place	Community Wellbeing	Economic Growth	Service Delivery	Staff, Leadership and Resources
Business Plans	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Capital Development Plan	✓				✓
Efficiencies Plan				✓	
Financial Regulations					✓
Learning and Development Policy 2023					✓
Mid-Term Financial Plan				✓	✓
People and Culture (in development)					✓





**For further information please contact**

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council

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