

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE **SELF-ASSESSMENT** REPORT

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council

2021-2022

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1 | FOREWORD

Welcome to the 2021/22 Annual Self-Assessment Report looking back at how, during the year, we continued to pursue our vision for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council to have a happy, healthy and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning.

This report marks the penultimate year of Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023. It presents a balanced picture, both looking at the achievements and progress made, whilst acknowledging the challenges we faced. We cannot ignore the implications on our performance of the global coronavirus pandemic which continues to run through our delivery of services and activities in 2021-22 and beyond.

There is no doubt these past few years have seen a major change for us as an organisation, and for all our staff across every department. It has forced us to change our operational practices, rethink our service delivery, and flex to adapt to many unforeseen circumstances. However, in many ways this challenging journey has strengthened our organisation's resilience and placed a greater emphasis on the 'One Council approach' for the future. With this in mind, it was important that council remained focused on continuing to deliver efficiencies and savings whilst investing in new technologies and resources to further enhance frontline services, and at the same time creating capacity for further investment in the borough. In July 2021, Council implemented recommendations from an organisational leadership structure review, establishing new directorates, creating better integration and realignment of services, helping to achieve a better understanding of our external environment and helping to plan for strategic, future focused change and a road to recovery.

At the start of the financial year, 2021-22, as lockdown measures begin to relax, Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council played an important part

in assisting businesses and traders by: agreeing to allow additional opening times for Sunday trading, e.g. by launching various campaigns such as 'We've Missed You' - which encouraged everyone to spend locally; the Covid Aware Scheme - which provided an opportunity for businesses to give a guarantee that they had met all Covid-19 regulations and; providing continued support and advice by key Council departments to help and assist traders after a long period of closure.

Despite the backdrop of a pandemic, Council advanced a number of significant showcase projects, important to the borough.

In June, Council announced it would submit an expression of interest for the UK City of Culture 2025. Organised by the UK Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport every four years, the process invites places from across the UK to bid for the title by setting out their vision for culture-led regeneration. Against significant competition the Borough's application was long-listed for the title. Unfortunately the ABC25 bid for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, was not ultimately successful; however, the bid was successful in bringing the unique qualities of the borough on a national stage. It has also created a uniting force for local communities and organisations, who now have an established platform to continue working together to create new and innovative partnerships that will become part of the lasting legacy of ABC25 and the foundation for culture-led regeneration into the future.

At the heart of so many businesses, the Agriculture Industry is hugely important to the borough, and as such Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council was the first council in Northern Ireland to develop and launch an innovative Agriculture Strategy.

Council understands the vital importance and contribution local agribusinesses make to our borough's community life and economic fortunes. Leading in

horticulture, cattle, sheep and cereal farming enterprises, our borough is home to over 3,400 registered farms that brings around £376 million into the local economy and employs 7,495 local people. In recognition of these invaluable assets, this strategy sets out an ambitious plan for council to sharpen its focus in order to support and drive further growth in this significant local industry.

The strategy aims to help set the direction for all associated businesses, including agri-food, agri-business and agri-tech in the borough.

2021 marked the centenary of Northern Ireland; Council's campaign 'Our People, Our Place, Our Story', recognised and highlighted some of the remarkable people that make the borough such a special place, including our own local residents who turned 100 in 2021!. Businesses from across the borough also participated in the programme exploring their history, sharing their experiences, relationships they have fostered, and how they survived over the past 100 years. They took part in a range of creative written and digital resources to document achievements and bring to life achievements while operating over the past 100 years.

At the start of 2022, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council, responded to the unfolding situation in Ukraine by stepping up to offer services and vital supplies. Councillors took a unanimous decision to respond to the escalating crisis and provide life-saving support for the Ukrainian people. A central-hub was activated to provide assistance and council helped co-ordinate the efforts of community groups, businesses and the statutory sector to get support to those directly in need.

Closer to home, as we entered a new financial year, Council felt the impact of external inflationary pressures arising from the war in Ukraine and other global influences. There is no doubt that all Councils across Northern Ireland have significant financial challenges to face which require a continued focus on

improvement and efficiency if they are not to pose a significant risk to the council's priorities and ambitions.

The environment is likely to be challenging for some time to come, both for the council and the people, communities and businesses we serve. Our longstanding commitment to our priorities of creating inclusive growth, connecting people and connecting people to opportunity in a sustainable way are more important than ever.

In these rapidly changing and uncertain times, it is important that we look to the future as well as working hard to manage the challenges of the present. Therefore, we will be developing a new Corporate Plan 2024 and beyond, engaging with people across the borough and will partners to ensure that our plans and priorities reflect what is important to local people. I am extremely proud of the progress made to date against our vision, ambitions and priorities, which would not be achievable without our dedicated staff, Elected Members, our supportive partners and the wider public who continue to work with us during these difficult times to make the borough a place of choice in which to live, work and visit.



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

2 | PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

In reviewing Council's performance for 2021-22, we mark the penultimate year of Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023. We reviewed and assessed delivery of services and activities that contribute to the 30 commitments contained within our Corporate Plan, focusing on the 4 on themes: **Committed Council, Economy, Community and Place**. A copy of the Corporate Plan can be found at armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/corporate-publications

Collectively the fifteen departments had committed to undertaking 202 strategic actions to ensure effective and efficient delivery of a total of 363 performance measures (indicators and standards/targets) were set against these actions.

In June 2022, Annual Progress Reports on all 15 departments were reported to relevant service Committees and full Council. A summary report illustrating progress and business plan delivery at a corporate level was also presented to Performance & Audit Committee.

More detail can be found at **Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council - Meetings**

This report provides a high level corporate performance summary on service delivery for the last year. As highlighted below also 113 of these were linked to Medium Term Recovery.

Where relevant outstanding actions or those in progress will have been carried forward into the recently approved business plans for 2022-23.

At an overall corporate level:

- Council met or exceeded **75.5%** of standards/targets in terms of its business plan delivery
- **17.5%** of standards/targets fell slightly short/ behind schedule at Year end
- Only **7%** of standards/targets were not achieved/missed.



- RED** [Standards/targets not achieved/missed]
- AMBER** [Standards/targets fallen slightly short/behind schedule]
- GREEN** [Standards/targets on track/being met/exceeded]

This past year we also continued to deal with the pandemic and its financial and wider impacts, but we worked to create momentum around the recovery phase. The Council's approach to recovery was set out within the Medium-Term recovery plan and included support for communities and businesses as well as setting out the council's ambition for inclusive growth within the Borough and advancing the Council's green agenda.

113 actions within the Departmental Business Plans were linked to the Medium Term Recovery Plan. Concentrating on those measures linked to the Medium Term Recovery Plan:

- Council met or exceeded **80%** of standards/targets linked to Medium Term Recovery within its business plan delivery,
- **16%** of standards/targets linked to Medium Term Recovery fell slightly short/ behind schedule at year end
- Only **4%** of standards/targets linked to Medium Term Recovery were not achieved/missed.



RED [Standards/targets not achieved/missed]
AMBER [Standards/targets fallen slightly short/behind schedule]
GREEN [Standards/targets on track/being met/exceeded]

It should be noted, during 2021-22 Council was still dealing with and remained in recovery mode from the impacts of the pandemic. For those areas for which targets were not achieved/missed - a number of influencing factors impacted upon performance, including staff absences (Covid and other), an increasing demand for services throughout the recovery phase, and unfilled vacancies / unsuccessful recruitment campaigns within a number of departments which undeniably accounted for a level of underperformance in achieving targets set.

Despite these, Council continue to remain committed and where relevant outstanding actions or those in progress have been carried forward into approved business plans for 2022-23.

To deliver and provide services to our citizens, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council rely on finances from a number of funding sources (i.e. government grants, domestic and business rates). The next section outlines the financial overview and how expenditure was allocated for 2021-2022.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

At the end of each financial year Council publish their Statement of Accounts. The accounts show how we have used public money in 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 2021-22 financial year.

They demonstrate to ratepayers how the funding available to the 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. They also show how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's directorates.

During a designated period, any member of the public, upon application in advance in writing to the Deputy Chief Executive, may inspect the accounts of Council for the year ended 31 March 2022 and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them [Notice of Audit of Accounts 2021-22.pdf](#)

The annual Estimates Process each year the Council must ensure that it has adequate resources to deliver the services expected by the local community, both business and non-business alike.

In 2021/22 the Council projected a requirement of net funding in the amount of **£77.2m** of which **£69.2m** was to be raised by way of Rates Income along with total projected Central Government grant funding of approximately **£7.1m** (i.e. Rates Support Grant, Transferred Functions Grants and De-Rating Grant) and a balance applied of £0.9m.

In February 2021 the Council approved budgets for 2021/22 for the four Directorates in place at the time as follows:



However, after the budget setting process in February 2021, the Council underwent an internal restructuring process. Therefore, effective from July 2021, budgets were realigned and allocated to four new directorates as follows:



Details of the new directorates, Council’s revised operational model and their key operational services and activities are set out later in this report. The Council also budgeted for various capital projects across Council and set aside approximately £12.7m for capital financing.

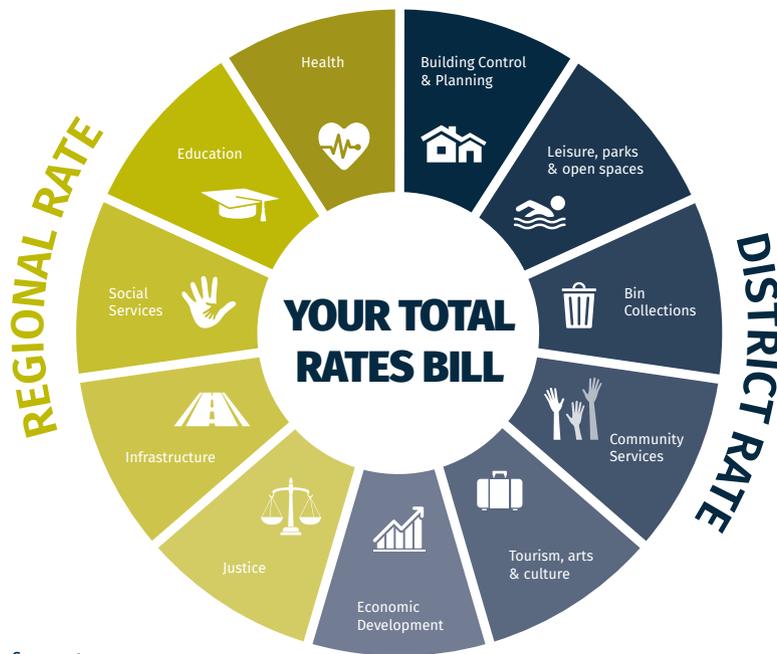


figure 1

Based on these figures, the Council set the District Rate and combined with the Central Government Regional rate, are used to calculate the Borough Rates bills. Details of the range of services provided from the rate setting process are detailed in figure 1.

More detailed information on Council’s Income and Expenditure is presented in the Annual Statement of Accounts: armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/finance-information

REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURAL

Back in October 2020, Council initiated a review of its organisational structure. The purpose of the review was to create a more efficient and effective operating model for delivery of key outcomes against the following principles:

- Business and outcome focus
- Flexibility
- Building capacity
- Leadership
- Innovation
- Collaboration

For a period covered in this report, i.e. 1st April - 30th June 2021, Council operated on a structure of 4 separate Directorates: namely Performance, People; Place, Position.

As a result of the structural review implemented 1st July 2021, new directorates were formed and these together with their key operational services and activities are set out in figure 2.



figure 2

3 | ACHIEVEMENTS

In this next section of this report, we **highlight some key achievements** contributing towards our **Corporate Plan 2018 - 2023**, and some of the **key improvements** we made throughout 2021/22.

Council's Self-Assessment Report 2021/22 (Appendix A), provides more detail on key areas where we have assessed our performance.

ECONOMY

Our Long term commitments to our Economy are to ensure our Borough is a centre of excellence for entrepreneurship, innovation and investment. People will be better equipped to take advantage of the opportunities provided by our economy, and our borough will be the destination of choice for international visitors.



160+

Businesses Supported
in Tourism, Arts & Hospitality
sectors

8 jobs

created within rural
businesses



233 Jobs

promoted through
Business Start Up



13 Letters
of Offer Empty to Occupied

**Recovery
manifesto
launched**



430k

secured for Mid South West
New Business Innovation
Programme





PLACE

Our Long term commitments to our Place are to ensure our urban and rural areas are at the heart of community and economic life, to ensure our built heritage, natural assets are protected, enhanced and we can provide an creative place offering inclusive arts and cultural experiences.

90%

of capital projects
completed within budget



£5.5m

Public Realm Enhancements for Banbridge



54.4%

household waste collected
sent for recycling



£6.3m

investment to revive Armagh City's
historic built heritage and beauty



ARMAGH CITY | BANBRIDGE | CRAIGAVON

Long listed for
**UK City of
Culture 2025**

Food Heartland producers:

35 Gold Star
Awards
for 26 products



COMMITTED COUNCIL

As a Committed Council we will have a one council approach with clear, robust and accountable processes, our staff and elected members lead as ambassadors, promoting values and ambitions of the organisation. We are committed to increased customer satisfaction with Council services.



Council maintain
**ISO 14001 Environmental
Management Standard**



Council signs up to
**Mental Health
Charter**

'Council of the Year'
Social Enterprise Awards 2021



**Member
Development
Charter Maintained**



Best Service Team
APSE Award for Parks,
Grounds and Horticulture
for Outdoor Leisure

South Lake Leisure Centre
**Supports Booster
Vaccination Roll-out**







COMMUNITY

Our Long term commitments to our Community are to ensure everyone has opportunities to engage in community life, they make positive lifestyle choices and are able to live, work and visit a safe, respectful and peaceful Borough.

7,236 clients
supported by Advice Centres



3009 participants
in Good Relations programmes

£890,232
awarded in grant funding



77.2%
Financial Assistance
applicants successful



3,415,621
users of all Health &
Recreation facilities

**Age Friendly
Strategy commenced**



PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2021-22



Market Place Theatre
& Navan Centre secure
Autism NI Impact Awards

Health & Recreation:
4.4/5
Customer Satisfaction



Exceed target
in **Improved**
processing times
to pay suppliers

11

Engagement & Well being
initiatives delivered to staff



New ABC
Service Standards
agreed



Continued roll out of
Service Improvements
within Building Control
and Planning

4 | CONTACT US

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

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has 41 democratically elected members, representing 7 District Electoral Areas. Further contact details on each elected members can be found at: armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/councillors

Please use one of the following ways to contact us with your feedback/views:

Website: armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/contact-us

Email: performance@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 0300 900 Ext 61688 / 61691

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

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



SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides details for the statutory self-assessment of the performance of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (the Council) in discharging the general duty under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act) in relation to our performance improvement arrangements.

It sets out the self-assessment against the following three requirements:

- **statutory performance improvement indicators and standards** for the functions of Economic Development, Planning and Waste for 2021-22, including comparison with the previous years ¹
- **performance improvement objectives** set out in the 2021-22 Performance Improvement Plan
- **self-imposed indicators and standards** 2021-22

By publishing this information, the Council fulfils our statutory requirement under Part 12, Section 92 of the Act.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) will undertake an audit of how Council has implemented the statutory performance improvement duties and will produce an independent audit report, which will be available on the Council website when received usually before 30 November 2022. Previous reports can be seen at the following link [🌐 armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/performance-improvement](https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/performance-improvement)

Throughout the Performance Self-Assessment Report, we have referenced statistical evidence and supporting narratives to demonstrate how we performed in 2021/22 against a number of set targets/standards, as well as bench marking with previous years and other councils where appropriate. This provides evidence of how as a Council we are implementing our performance

¹ contained within The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015

framework and have put in place performance improvement arrangements.

Each Departmental Business Plan contain their specific self-Imposed Indicators relevant to their business delivery. As part of Council's Performance Management Framework, review and monitoring of all business plans and associated performance measures are reported on a quarterly and 6-monthly and annual basis.

In November and December 2021, relevant service committees and the Performance & Audit Committee received a 2021-22 Mid-Year report on business progress. June 2022 service committees received detailed annual progress reports for each of the relevant departments.

A summary of progress in relation to 15 departmental business plans for the period 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022 was also presented to the Performance & Audited Committee in June 2022.

Please refer to Minutes section of Council's website for further information:
[🌐 Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council - Meetings](#)

In 2020-21 initial developmental work commenced exploring a number of Corporate Health indicators for the organisation, for example Corporate Complaints, Staff absences levels, prompt payments, FOIs, Building control applications, planning processes etc., and how data/information could be collected and reported on. The impact of the global pandemic refocused work priorities, however during 2021-22 this was developed. Still in a pilot phase, on a monthly basis the Council's Executive Management Team receive 'real time' data on a number of agreed corporate indicators via a Smart Sheet platform. It is intended a review of this work, including the robustness of data, effectiveness and added value it provides in terms of decision-making will take place as time progresses.

In our 2021-22 Performance Improvement Plan, we highlighted specific function

/areas we wanted to improve. We have reviewed, monitored and assessed how we have performed on these. This Self-Assessment Report 2021-22 (in compliance with Local Government Performance Improvement Guidance), gives detail on issues identified, as well as reference to any planned/implemented improvements. In line with new Guidance and as part of good governance, more emphasis and due consideration continues to be given to this area in our future Corporate/Performance Improvement Planning for 2022-23.

Since 2015, Council has continued to show progress in several areas including achievement towards our statutory Indicators and an upward trend in delivery of actions contributing to performance improvement objectives. For those actions that fell behind target, this report includes an accompanying narrative.

The Self-Assessment Report is sub-divided into three keys areas where we have assessed our performance. It presents our results against the standards/ targets set and the resulting trends over a 6-year period (2016/17-2021/22). It is noted for this year, Council acknowledged the improvements required in relation to sickness absence and prompt payments and as such commentary has been included with Performance Improvement Objectives. Trends are also illustrated in accompanying appendices.

STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND STANDARDS

Under the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, a number of 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 the functions of

- **Economic Development,**
- **Planning and**
- **Waste Management.**

The aim of the performance measures is to promote the improvement of service delivery in these three service areas.



- RED** [Standards/targets not achieved/missed]
- AMBER** [Standards/targets fallen slightly short/behind schedule]
- GREEN** [Standards/targets on track/being met/exceeded]

A further detailed summary table of the Council's performance in these three areas can be referred to in Appendix B

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, which has transferred to local councils. Information on the 11 Councils performance for 2021/22 is set out in Appendix C.

Planning

The Department of Infrastructure set the Planning indicators and standards as part of the governance and performance management arrangements for the Planning functions transferred to local councils. 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 2021 - March 2022 | Department for Infrastructure](#)

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

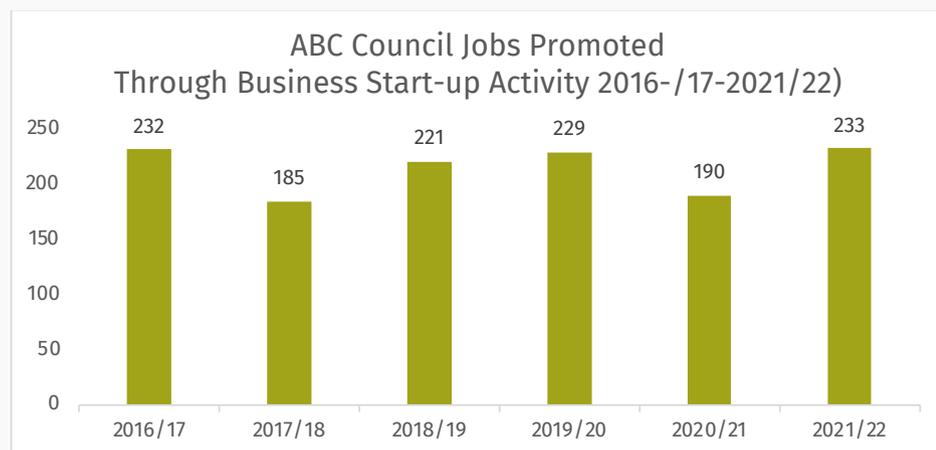
🌐 **Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs**

🌐 **Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics**

This section of the report details how Council has performed over a 6 year period (2016/17 - 2021/22) in relation to the statutory performance indicators for Economic Development, Planning and Waste Management. The accompanying narrative provides a rationale and an analysis of the activity within each area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This indicator relates to the number of jobs promoted by Council through business start-up activity².



There were 233 jobs promoted through business start-up activity in 2021-22. This is the highest of the years presented above and an increase of 43 jobs on 2020-21.

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council continues to perform well in terms of job creation figures in the NI Business Start Up Programme. Our job creation figures are increasing year on year, notwithstanding Covid -19 impacts.

² Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client-led business plans under the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment's Regional Start Initiative or its successor programmes

We continue to remain second on the league table in NI and our continued high start-up rate reinforces the Borough's reputation as one of the most entrepreneurial regions in NI. As one of the 11 local Councils in NI we work collaboratively on a regional basis to continuously improve the service offered through the programme, to improve the early stage entrepreneurial activity (TEA) across NI.

Locally we continue to work with a range of enterprise support partners including our local enterprise agencies, local colleges, schools, social economy networks and stakeholders to ensure that the programme is promoted widely and made accessible to the whole community.

Fostering an entrepreneurial culture leading to business start-up and growth continues to be a key corporate objective of our Council.

As a Council we continue to work with the Department for the Economy and Department for Communities to continually set new performance targets that are continuously reviewed.

The Go For It programme continues to fit in with ambitions articulated in the Department for Economy's "10x Economy Vision" that highlight the importance of fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and supporting new business development in driving place based growth in NI decade of innovation. Draft legislation is in place to increase the target number of jobs created in each Council area.

PLANNING

It should be noted that Planning activity and processing performance from 2020-21 onwards was impacted by the restrictions put in place due to the coronavirus pandemic. This should be borne in mind and caution should be taken when interpreting the data below and when making comparisons with other time periods.

During 2021-2022:

- 1,310 applications were received (4th highest across Northern Ireland).
- 1,374 applications were decided (4th highest across Northern Ireland) - an increase of 48% on the previous year.
- 1,361 decisions on local development applications (4th highest across

Northern Ireland) were made.

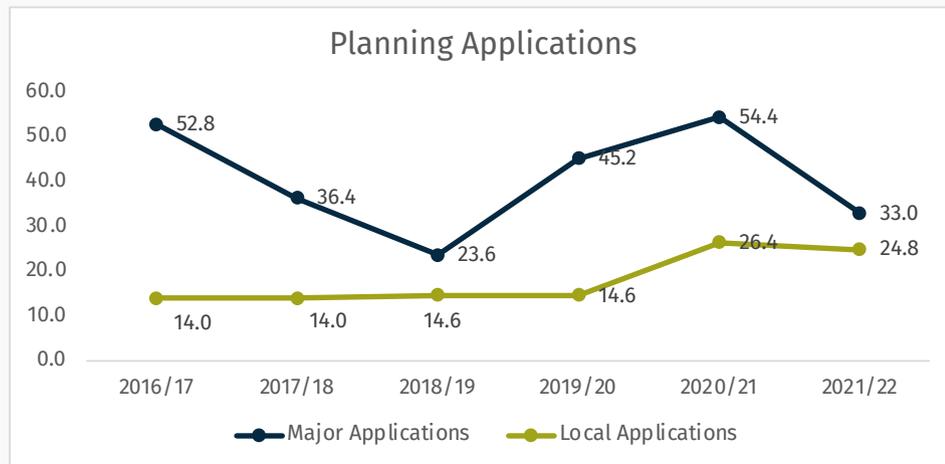
- 17 major applications were received (3rd highest across Northern Ireland).
- 313 enforcement cases were concluded - a decrease of just over 55 cases on the previous financial year. However, this Council opened 364 enforcement cases (4th highest across Northern Ireland).

It is noted that the Council’s Planning Department has been successful in meeting 1 out of 3 of the performance standards/targets during the financial year. Average processing times fell behind for major and local planning applications due to a number of factors including operational challenges, such as staff shortages and as a result of the ongoing pandemic.

The number of major applications received increased in 2021-2022 by 7 to a total of 17 applications. These included:

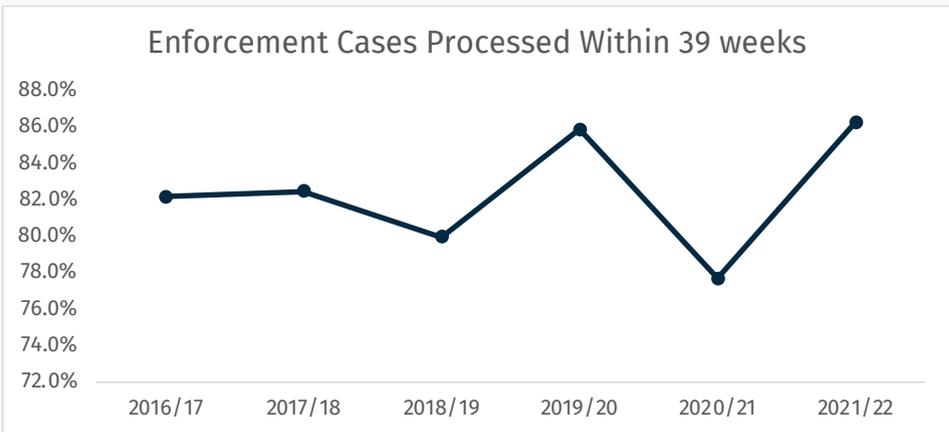
- 2 major agricultural developments
- 6 major industrial developments
- 3 major retail developments
- 3 large scale housing developments
- 2 mixed use developments
- 1 major recreational development

The applications above represent not only major investment into the regeneration of the Borough, but extensive work from our Planning Department.



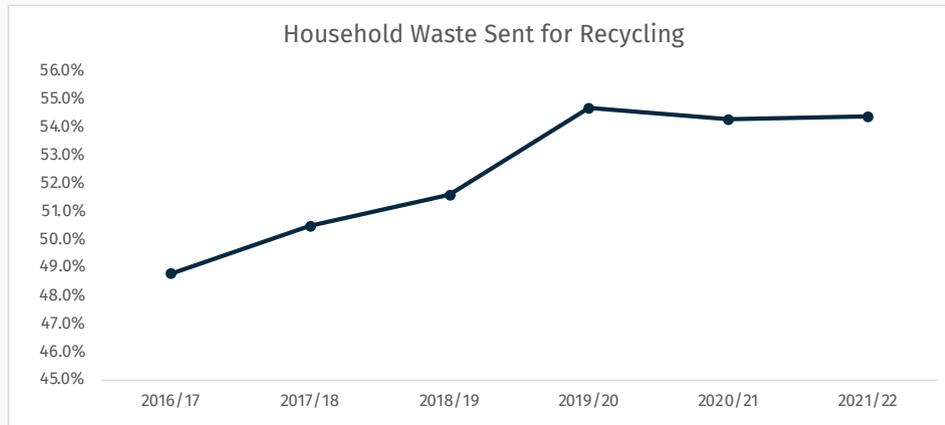
During 2021-2022, the average processing time for Council to decide major planning applications was 31.6 weeks, which is just outside the 30 week statutory target, but significantly better than the NI average of 49.8 weeks. This represents a decrease of 22.8 weeks on 2020-2021 (54.4 weeks). During 2021-2022, just 1 of the 11 Councils met the statutory target of 30 weeks.

The average processing time for the Council to decide local applications during 2021-2022 was 24.8 weeks, which is outside the 15 week statutory target and higher than the NI average of 17.2 weeks. However, just 2 of the 11 Councils achieved the statutory target of 15 weeks.



The percentage of enforcement cases processed to a conclusion across Northern Ireland within 39 weeks was 70.4%. The percentage processed to a conclusion by this Council within 39 weeks was 86.3% (2nd highest across Northern Ireland). This is 8.5 percentage points higher than in 2020-2021 (77.7%) and significantly above the 70% target and the Northern Ireland average of 70.4%.

WASTE MANAGEMENT



Council is continuing to meet the statutory target of '50% by 2020'. The current unverified figures for 2021-22 show the percentage of household waste sent for recycling at 53.9% during the year which is a slight reduction of 0.4% on 2020-21 figures. Council is still well placed to achieve 55% recycling by 2025 which is a working draft figure in the absence of a new statutory target being set.



Art time of publication waste management figures remain unverified by DEARA.*

The total amount/tonnage of waste collected has been increasing since 2016-17 with a significant increase recorded between 2019-20 and 2020-21. In 2021-22, the total waste collected reached a high of 115,324 tonnes and is due to a number of factors including population growth.

The amount of biodegradable waste being landfilled had been decreasing year on year since 2016/17, reaching a low of 4,340 in 2020-21. However, 2021-22 recorded an increase of 56.7% in the amount of biodegradable waste being landfilled with the amount now sitting at 6,800 tonnes. No new targets have been set for the landfilling of municipal waste, (NILAS Scheme ended in 2020).

The Environmental Services Department continues to offer Innovate, effective waste management and recycling systems in order to achieve all statutory targets and be an exemplar for sustainable waste management. The expansion of the Brown bin scheme into parts of Armagh has proven to be a great success with initial figures showing a 23% increase in kerbside collected organic waste tonnages, with 1,090t of organic waste collected during January - March 2022 compared to 888t during the same period in 2021.

The roll out of wheeled bins for the collection of mixed dry recyclables in the Armagh area has also proven successful, demonstrating a 32% uplift in collected tonnages with 728t collected at the kerbside during January - March 21 (using the Box Scheme) compared to 962t during January - March 22 (using co-mingled kerbside collection).

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2021-2022

In September 2021, the Council published its Performance Improvement Plan for 2021-2022. The Plan contained six performance improvement objectives as set out below.

PI01	We will improve the availability of more inclusive services for those with Autism and their carers.
PI02	We will increase the number of people participating in leisure activities and work with partners to enable everyone to Get Moving more.
PI03	We will reduce the time it takes to pay suppliers.
PI04	We will reduce the average number of days' sickness absence lost per employee.
PI05	We will increase the number of Council service areas with service standards as an evidence base to inform future Performance Improvement Objectives.
PI06	We will implement recommendations from our Building Control and Planning Service Reviews and improve processing times for building control and planning applications

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

This section of the self-assessment report therefore provides information on how the performance objectives have been achieved or progressed, using a range of statutory and non-statutory performance indicators and standards/targets. It should be noted that during the period 2021 - 2022, activity and performance continued to be impacted by number of factors including staff absences (Covid related and other), an increasing demand for services throughout the recovery phase, and unfilled vacancies /unsuccessful recruitment campaigns within a number of departments accounted for a level of underperformance in achieving targets set. That said, Council maximised the shift in service delivery and in addressing customer needs to concentrate on a set of newly selected Performance Improvement Objectives, the majority of which albeit internally focussed, illustrates maximum benefits to residential and business communities in the Borough.



RED [Standards/targets not achieved/missed]
AMBER [Standards/targets fallen slightly short/behind schedule]
GREEN [Standards/targets on track/being met/exceeded]

Gathering data from across all departments, Council has carried out an analysis of the Performance Improvement Objectives agreed for 2021-22. The section below contains 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. The chart shows that we were successful in achieving 3 (PI01, PI02 and PI05) of the 6 improvement objectives whilst falling slightly short/behind schedule in the achievement of 3 improvement objectives (PI03, PI04 and PI06).

Improvement Objective 1:

We will improve the availability of more inclusive services for those with autism and their carers.

 WHY	 WHAT ACTION WILL WE TAKE	 HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS	 PROGRESS STATUS GREEN	 BENEFITS TO YOU	 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To adapt Council's environment to support customers and reduce barriers to participation for people with autism and their carers; • Statutory Duty to promote Equality of Opportunity • Response to Council Notice of Motion • To equip staff to better understand customer needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Autism Friendly Action Plan • Deliver Autism Awareness training to staff • Develop dedicated inclusive section for Council's website and intranet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports to Autism Friendly Working Group • Training delivered to Community Development/Health & Recreation/Tourism Arts & Culture, Estates & Asset Management* • Maintain Autism Impact Award for Market Place Theatre and Navan Fort • Inclusive section on website and intranet launched <p><i>*priority frontline Departments</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Autism Friendly working group established and monitoring implementation of Action Plan • The Navan Centre and Market Place Theatre were successful in renewing/achieving Autism Impact Awards. • An Autism Awareness e-learning module was launched in November 2021 with staff in key departments of community development, health and recreation, tourism, arts and culture and facilities management advised to complete this module. 67 trained to date across the organisation. • Further pre-visit guides were developed for the Council's key facilities. Details of all guides are available on the inclusive section of the Council's website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to Council services • More inclusive service delivery • Improved customer satisfaction 	<p>The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this Objective is the Strategic Director of Community & Growth</p>

This was a newly identified Performance Improvement Objective for Council in 2021-22, therefore previous data to demonstrate trends is not available.

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

Throughout 2021-22, the Market Place Theatre retained their Autism Impact Award and staff from the Navan Centre & Fort remained fully committed to securing and maintaining their Autism NI Impact Champion Award. With all frontline staff trained in autism awareness, as well as dedicated sensory play areas, the Navan Centre for example offers a welcoming environment to those with autism, with a full range of adaptable services. The Centre adjustments includes VIP Passes available on Request, all staff clearly identifiable (lanyards), Welcome board available, Personal guided Walks, Pop-up Tent and Sensory Bags. For additional education/school services the Centre provides: Visual folders for Teachers (including countdown timers, photo options and symbol cards (sit, quiet, listen, wait and stop) and Relaxed Educational Visits on Request. Through attaining an Impact Award, the Navan Centre is more accessible to over 30,000 autistic individuals and their families in Northern Ireland that previously may have been excluded. For further information or to plan a visit, please see the ASD section of our website, www.visitarmagh.com/navan

An Autism Awareness e-learning module launched in November 2021 targeted at staff in key departments of community development, health and recreation, tourism, arts and culture and facilities management.

Further pre-visit guides were also developed for the Council's key facilities. Details of all guides are available on the inclusive section of the Council's website.  **Inclusive Information - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council**

The Council also continued to deliver a range of sport and physical activity programmes with its partners suitable to those with Autism including an Autism in Sport Programme which was delivered in Dromore and Richhill Community Centres and the All-Stars Summer Scheme delivered in Gilford Community Centre. The Inclusive Sport and Leisure Programme, working with children and adults with a disability, delivers the Wheelie Active Club, South Lake Disability Sports Club, Inclusive Gym Programme and the Inclusive Cycling Programme. There were also inclusive summer schemes available

for children of all abilities in 2021-22. A sensory room has also been made available in the new South Lake Leisure Centre, Craigavon.

Council, however, recognises there is still more work to be undertaken in this area and in June 2022 Performance Improvement Plan. Delivery will be continually monitored by the members of the Autism Working Group with a revised Action Plan.

Improvement Objective 2:

We will increase the number of people participating in leisure activities and work with partners to enable everyone to Get Moving more.

 <p>WHY</p>	 <p>WHAT ACTION WILL WE TAKE</p>	 <p>HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS</p>	 <p>PROGRESS STATUS AMBER</p>	 <p>BENEFITS TO YOU</p>	 <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It directly links to our ABC Get Moving Framework (2020-2030) which is a collective plan to positively impact the health of people in the Borough • Combining working practices in a partnership approach • To reduce inactivity of people within the Borough • Develop positive attitudes towards health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop structures across the Health & Recreation Department • Implement the short term actions of Get Moving ABC Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have structures in place within the Health & Recreation Department by March 2022 • Increase customer satisfaction to 4.5 or greater (Google Review) by March 2022 • ABC Council to be represented on 2 working groups • Establish a baseline of current physical activity interventions offered by Council by March 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Health & Recreation structures has commenced • Customer satisfaction from google reviews has an average rating of 4.4/5 • ABC Council was represented on 2 working groups • Baseline of current physical activity interventions offered by Council established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved leisure facilities • Improved customer experiences • Positive impact on health and well-being • Clear consistent messaging on benefits of Get Moving • Opportunity to attend a range of physical activities 	<p>The Senior Responsible (SRO) for this objective is the Strategic Director of Neighbourhood Services</p>

This was a newly identified Performance Improvement Objective for Council in 2021-22, therefore previous data to demonstrate trends is not available.

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

During 2020-21 work commenced on the development of new structures for the Health and Recreation Department with an anticipated completion date of December 2022. This target has been adjusted due to a number of operational matters and competing priorities for service delivery and delay in recruitment of an essential management position to oversee the restructure.

Customer satisfaction from google reviews has an average rating of 4.4/5. (Google Review). To establish continuous improvement and consistency, work streams have been set up to as part of a Health & Recreation review to ensure we provide the right services in the right way to meet the needs of our customers and to improve customer experience and satisfaction.

Our Health & Recreation Department continue to improve and provide excellent customer services, this is demonstrated by example of some comments below:

“We had had to postpone snow tubing from Christmas to now due to Covid. And in a way I’m glad. It was a lovely morning. The three boys had a super time, their laughter was heart-warming. The young guy who told them the rules and watched them was friendly and helpful enough the boys enjoyed treats in the cafe afterwards. A lovely Sunday morning. Thank you!” (Craigavon Golf & Ski Centre)

“Great place for a nature walk / cycle / dog walk or bring the family for a picnic! Different trails to follow, something for everyone. Toilets and refreshments also now available in the main car park. I’ve included some photos of an activity park with a difference for children...not your typical park!” (Gosford Park, Armagh)

The Health & Recreation Department also acknowledge and respond directly with customers on the less positive feedback received for some services. The feedback is valuable information that allows the service to continue to improve and helps in decision making.

At the end of 2021-22, four short term actions of the Get Moving ABC Action Plan have been successfully delivered, these included:

- Get Moving ABC have been represented on two working groups to champion and advocate for physical activity, namely: Armagh Place Plan

and Lagan Valley Blueway Development Group

- A baseline has been established of current physical activity interventions that support active recreation and new activities have been piloted across our key settings for example: Park Power has been set up in Lurgan Park, 65 Community Sports Leaders have been trained, 40 participants took part in a Family Couch 2 3K, 2 Trail Orienteering Events have been organised, along with a virtual Sofa to Saddle and a Couch 2 Canoe programme
- A baseline has also been established of current quality opportunities for people to become more active. Programme examples include: in person and virtual Couch to 5K, virtual 5K - 10K, Walk ABC, Walking Football, Girls Soccer, Strength and Balance, Mum & Me, GOGA Fit, Tai Chi for health, Nordic Walking, All Stars, Wheelie Active and much more. Some customer comments are as follows:
 - Virtual C25K, Virtual 5-10k and Virtual ABC 10k participant: *“Thank you for all your advice and encouragement. I was running on my own and found it difficult at times to stay motivated but with your tips and advice I managed to complete my 10k and I’m really pleased with myself. I will continue running as I find it invigorating”.*
 - Walk ABC Participant: *“My husband and I finished the challenge, each of us having done 152.36 miles. We have now got into the habit of walking nearly every day so that’s a successful outcome”.*
- To support and engage families a survey was carried to establish what types of physical activities would encourage them to Get Moving. Of the 136 responses, approximately 30% of respondents were active on 5 days of the previous week, for at least 30 minutes, almost 20% of children weren’t active on any day of the previous week, for at least 30 minutes.

A departmental working group has now been established to support families to Get Moving by providing quality sport and physical activities experiences.

Improvement Objective 3:

We will reduce the time it takes to pay suppliers

 WHY	 WHAT ACTION WILL WE TAKE	 HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS	 PROGRESS STATUS GREEN	 BENEFITS TO YOU	 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt payment figures alongside other Councils identifies need for improvement • Fluctuation in number of processing days • Increase in anti-fraud measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review internal processes for processing payments • Deliver training on Finance System to all Departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average number of calendar days to pay suppliers = 15 days or fewer • 15 Departments have received training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quoting of purchase orders on Supplier invoices results in improvement of 8.5 Payment days. • The average time taken to pay a supplier was 10.76 days, set against a target of 15 days or less. • All departments are trained in the Purchase to pay process • Access to finance support helpdesk if further support is required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expedient turnaround times on invoice payments • Improved customer service 	<p>The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this Objective is the Deputy Chief Executive</p>

From 2015, Prompt Payment figures for all 11 of the councils have been reported on to the NIAO and central Government. Figures for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council alongside figures for other Councils across Northern Ireland, identified a need for improvement. For this reason this area was included as a specific Performance Improvement Objective in the 2021-22 Performance Improvement Plan.

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

Council has made significant progress in reducing the time we take to pay suppliers and were successful in achieving this improvement objective in 2021-2022.

During the year, Council concentrated on ensuring departments were aware of the payment process and that each Department has designated resources to maintain purchase orders and an up-to-date status; allowing Supplier invoices to be paid promptly when received. The Purchase order process ensures that all goods and services ordered are approved by the appropriate officer level before the order is placed, therefore reducing the time taken for approval upon receipt of invoice.

The introduction of several internal methods were used to improve processing times, including:

- An annual review of the department resources and officers
- Monthly reminders issued to departments to requesting updates of changes in personnel
- Monthly reminders are forwarded to departments to review any outstanding Purchase orders within their section and clear down any obsolete orders
- All departments are trained in the purchase to pay process
- Access to finance support helpdesk if further support is required

Externally, since the introduction of the quoting of purchase orders on Supplier invoices in 2019-20 the payment days have improved by 8.5 days.

Moving forward the internal processes will be continually reviewed for any improvements that can be made in conjunction with any potential fraud risk checks and processes and the importance of segregation of duties.

All departments will have access to finance support helpdesk if further support is required. This helpdesk function will also provide training for new officers when required.

The yearly review of the office's authorisation structure will be carried out again in 2022/23 with an emphasis on the departments nominating dedicated officers to progress payments to suppliers. This emphasis is to ensure that

there are appropriate numbers of officers with a dedicated skill, focusing on continuous improvements and ensuring suppliers are paid promptly. In turn this will result in more accurate management information presented to budget holders, with the inclusion of committed expenditure from approved purchase order spend.

It is recognised during 2021-22, the Finance Team invested concerted effort to achieve reduction in the payment time. However there is now renewed emphasis as an organisation to be responsible for and accountable to continue to ensure efficient customer service in terms of time taken to pay our suppliers.

The concerted effect and improvement is clearly evident, as by the end of 2021-22, the average time taken to pay a supplier was 10.76 days, set against a target of 15 days or less. This represents a reduction of 1.48 days from the 2020-21 average. For this reason, we can conclude with regards to this PIO, it has been achieved and has not been carried forward in to the 2022-23 Performance Improvement Plan.

Council, however, is committed to continuous improvement and this does remain as one of Council's recently approved service standards.

Improvement Objective 4:

We will reduce the average number of days' sickness absence lost per employee

 WHY	 WHAT ACTION WILL WE TAKE	 HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS	 PROGRESS STATUS AMBER	 BENEFITS TO YOU	 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council staff absenteeism figures show an increase in number of days lost in the years previous to 2020. • Short term/long term absences are a challenge • High priority for management to ensure business continuity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage absence closely • Deliver employee engagement and well-being initiatives • Implement and deliver training on absence management policy to all managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average number of days' sickness absence lost per employee = 16 days or lower • The average rate of short-term absences = 1.4% or lower • The average rate of long-term absences = 5% or lower • Deliver 4 employee engagement and well-being initiatives • At least 90% of all managers to have attended training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20.51 average days lost per employee • 1.70% short term lost time rate • 5.02% long term lost time rate • 33 employee sessions delivered on 11 engagement and wellbeing initiatives • 100% managers trained in the Managing Attendance policy and procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 81% of employees live in the Borough • Contribute to overall health and well-being of our staff and Borough • Better continuity of service delivery 	<p>The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this Objective is the Deputy Chief Executive</p>

This was a newly identified Performance Improvement Objective for Council in 2021/22.

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

The main contributory factor to the rise in absence figures has been the Covid pandemic. This is consistent across the local government sector.

Classified as a Chest & Respiratory absence and we have seen the number of incidents in this regard increase by 257%. This has now overtaken stress and musculo-skeletal which have always been historically our 2 main reasons for absence. The change in 2021-22 has been as follows:

Absence Reason	Number of incidents in 2020-21	Number of incidents in 2021-22
Chest & Respiratory	129	461
Stress, Depression/Mental Health	139	180
Musculo-skeletal	145	161

During 2021-22, led by the Human Resources & Organisational Development Department, Council delivered a number of bespoke actions to address the increasing trend of sickness in our staff.

This included all managers trained on the managing attendance policy and procedure, providing targeted guidance and support to line managers, closely monitoring attendance and return to work interviews conducted with employees to encourage them to attend work regularly. We stepped up our proactive and wellbeing measures with the launch of well-being staff survey to help tailor our well-being activities conducted in May 2021, with a 20% response rate received. A corresponding staff health and wellbeing action plan was developed, agreed and is currently being implemented. We continued to place an emphasis on the mental health and well-being of staff with the roll out of mental health first aid training.

33 sessions were delivered for staff in respect of the following health and wellbeing related topics: mental health; cancer awareness; diabetes awareness; care in the sun; hearing loss; emotional resilience; work-life balance; CPR awareness; parenting; and domestic abuse & safe employer awareness training.

A number of staff also participated in the 1 Billion Steps Challenge in May 2021 with colleagues from the other local Councils and Northern Ireland Housing Executive and a Stress Awareness module was developed as part of our E-learning System.

However, trends still remain on the higher trajectory and Council therefore recognise the need to continue to prioritise this objective. It therefore has been carried forward to 2022-23. The Lead Officer will remain in place and increase support to line managers and attend management meetings, particularly in front line areas to ensure absence continues to be a priority. This has been carried forward in the Performance Improvement Plan for 2022-23. In 2022-23 we will continue our efforts to address the small number of staff with absences in excess of 12 months, we intend to liaise with Performance Management Office to look at ways to report line manager compliance with the absence policy, we will set an improvement target for each department. A new health and well-being portal providing access to employees to health and well-being resources will be launched in 2022-23. We will continue to identify and provide sources of information and support to those with mental ill-health within Council.

Improvement Objective 5:

We will increase the number of Council service areas with service standards as an evidence base to inform future performance improvement objectives.

 <p>WHY</p>	 <p>WHAT ACTION WILL WE TAKE</p>	 <p>HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS</p>	 <p>PROGRESS STATUS GREEN</p>	 <p>BENEFITS TO YOU</p>	 <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Medium-Term Recovery Plan sets out actions to support the recovery of the organisation and Borough, including how we improve service delivery. • Setting Service Standards will set out the standard of service that customers can expect from a range of Council services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current service standards • Develop service standards where there are gaps • Establish performance baseline information relating to our service standards • Develop internal guidance for setting service standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the number of service areas with service standards by March 2022 • Baseline service standards performance available March 2022 • Internal guidance for setting service standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of current service standards was undertaken in 2021/22. • A set of new ABC service standards was agreed by Council in March 2022. • A baseline was not established at the end of March 2022 as the new standards were just approved in March, but that will be done as the first report becomes available in 2022-23. • Internal Guidance for setting service standards was developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better evidence base available • Continuous improvement in service delivery • Customers aware of Council's service standards 	<p>The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this Objective is the Strategic Director Strategy & Performance</p>

This was a newly identified Performance Improvement Objective for Council in 2021-22 previous data to demonstrate trends is available.

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

In Council's Medium Term Recovery Plan 2021-23, Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 and the Customer Care Action Plan 2021-22 Council commits to developing a set of service standards across a range of Council services. It was recognised that whilst a number of Departments continued to utilise and monitor some 'legacy' service standards, harmonisation to identify and agree a 'one council' approach to excellent customer service was necessary. Subsequently, this was an area identified as a performance objective for 2021-22.

During 2021-22 a scoping exercise was undertaken to review existing service standards, and in July 2021 Heads of Department approved a process to develop the service standards in line with new internal guidance for developing service standards. In March 2022 Council approved a set of service standards both generic that apply corporately and service specific.

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Service standards help to define what individuals or businesses, as customers or service users can expect from a Council service and how it is intended to be delivered in terms of timeliness, accuracy or suitability.

Council have agreed these will now be monitored and reported on in line with performance reporting arrangements. This information will provide baseline data which may be used to inform future improvement objectives. We can conclude this PIO has been achieved. However, Council acknowledge true performance and continuous improvement will only be achieved with follow through - we commit to reviewing service standards annually, to continue to identify new service standards, to review and revise target setting, as well as improving our communication of Council's performance to residents and service users. This commitment is illustrated in one of our new Performance Improvement Objective for 2022-23: we will increase the information available to the public on Councils agreed service standards and how well we are performing.

Improvement Objective 6:

We will implement recommendations from the Building Control and Planning Service reviews

 <p>WHY</p>	 <p>WHAT ACTION WILL WE TAKE</p>	 <p>HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS</p>	 <p>PROGRESS STATUS AMBER</p>	 <p>BENEFITS TO YOU</p>	 <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Reviews were carried out by Planning and Building Control Departments in 2018. • Action Plan identified short, medium, long term actions • This objective has been carried forward from 2019/20 to complete delivery of Action Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement recommendations from Building Control Service Review • Implement recommendations from Planning Service Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of recommendations for Building Control are implemented by March 2022 • 66% of Building Control Domestic Full Plan Applications assessed within 21 days • 58% of Building Control Non- Domestic Full Plan Applications assessed within 35 days • 76% of Building Control Domestic & Non-Domestic resubmissions assessed within 14 days • 85% of recommendations for Planning are implemented by March 2022 • Average processing time for major planning application processed within 30 weeks* • Average processing time for local planning application processed within 15 weeks* • 70% of planning enforcement cases progressed within 39 weeks* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67% of recommendations for Building Control implemented by March 2022 • 58.14% Full Plan applications assessed in 21 days • 50% Non-domestic Full plan applications assessed within 35 days • 89.87% Domestic & non-Domestic resubmissions assessed within 14 days • 70% of recommendations from Planning were implemented. • Average 24.8 weeks to process Local planning applications • Average of 33 weeks to process Major planning applications • 86.3% of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved processing times for building control and planning applications • Improved understanding of the processes • Improved customer satisfaction with building control and planning application processes 	<p>The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this Objective is the Strategic Director for Community & Growth</p>

Council have retained this performance improvement objective since 2019-20. It should be noted however there was not a requirement to publish a Performance Improvement Plan in 2020-21, however Council have progressed with implementing recommendations from both service reviews.

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

Following the Covid -19 related restrictions introduced by Government back in 2020, the Building Control Department has adapted to ensure continuance of service delivery during this emergency period. Through a combination of remote working arrangements and limited office attendance, the department has continued to provide technical and legislative advice on building control matters, progress live applications in the system, undertake plan assessments and issue Statutory Completion Certificates, where required. The service is operating with additional precautionary measures in place in response to COVID-19. Offices are open, with significant COVID19 Health and Safety measures in place to protect staff and customers. The department has also completed site inspections both by virtual means and, where safe to do so, has undertaken on-site inspections. The Building Control Department delivered and completed 67% of actions from the Building Control Service review which is marginally better than the set target of 60%. They continued to review software enhancements, digitalisation of customer information and ongoing discussions regarding service delivery options have been progressed. Building control have given consideration to realistic target setting for 2022-23, revised to reflect under/over achievements in previous year.

The Planning Department delivered and completed 70% of actions from the Planning service review. Whilst this falls short of the target of 85%, the need for redeployment of the designated support officer to assist with an increase in planning applications adversely impacted on delivery of the Service Improvement Plan.

Whilst some progress has been made in relation to implementation of these service reviews more work is required to fully achieve the improvement objective and therefore this performance improvement objective has been carried forward into the 2022-23 Performance Improvement Plan with revised standards/targets as appropriate regarding the Building Control function.

SELF-IMPOSED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & STANDARDS 2021-2022

As reflected in the first part of this annual report departmental business plans for 2021-22, contain both statutory and self-imposed performance indicators and standards/targets relative to each service delivery. The information therefore on Council performance in relation to self-imposed indicators and standards can therefore be found in Section 2.0 near the beginning of the document.

Each department reported annual progress on their departmental business plan to service committees in June 2022 for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 March 2022. These reports are available to view using the following link

 <https://abc.public-minutes.com/>

Council's commitment to self-assessment on self-imposed indicators and standards can be further demonstrated with the agreed new improvement objective for 2022-23 to ensure the service standards developed in 2021-22 will be reviewed annually with further service standards developed and approved as required. Council will increase information to residents and service users and customers on our agreed service standards and how we are performing. The first annual report on these will be included in the Annual Self-Assessment Report for 2022-23 which will be due to be published by 30 September 2023.

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.

In compliance with the Statutory Guidance on the General Duty, benchmarking/ comparison information forms part of our assessment report this year.

As such, we have included comparisons with other Councils relating to the

statutory indicators and standards, and comparisons on prompt payment and staff absenteeism data. These are attached in accompanying appendices.

It is noted that both Prompt Payments and Staff Absenteeism were also identified as Performance Improvements Objectives (PIO3 and PIO4) along with supporting narratives.

Appendix D and E provides information on Prompt Payment and Staff Absenteeism figures for our Council alongside figures for other Councils across Northern Ireland..

RURAL NEEDS MONITORING 2021-2022

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 .It also requires Council to include the return in our annual reports.

In order to fulfill its obligations under section 1 of the Act, policymakers within the Council completed 18 Rural Needs Impact Assessments for the year 2021-22. This information is attached in Appendix F.

During this period, the Council provided further training on the rural needs duty to Heads of Department and Senior Managers. This training includes some the updated training materials that were provided by DAERA. Guidance for developing Council policy which includes advice for Officers on the Rural Needs Act and the duty to rural needs impact assess policies together with relevant rural statistics are made available on the Council's Intranet. Rural Needs Impact Assessments are placed on the policy section of the website alongside the equality screening exercises.

During this period 5 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.

The Council's Data Analyst has assisted policy makers in collating relevant rural statistics in order to complete the Rural Needs Impact Assessments.

COMMITTED TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND GENERAL DUTY TO IMPROVE

The Council wants to assure all residents, businesses and all other stakeholders that it is fully committed to using its best endeavours to deliver 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.

As the second largest Council in Northern Ireland, we are now expected by Elected Members, local residents, businesses and other stakeholders to provide services which are better, more efficient and effective than they were before Local Government Reform in 2015, as we continue on our transformation journey.

Our Corporate Plan 2018-2023 outlines our ongoing commitments to provide high quality, efficient and effective public services, facilities, projects and programmes.

Council's Corporate Plan focuses on how the Council will deliver its contribution to the Community Plan and deliver the Council's priorities. The Departmental Business Plans show how services will deliver the Corporate Plan and service priorities. Departmental Business Plans are reported to each Strategic Director and also on a 6-monthly basis to relevant Service Committees internally. A Mid-Year report and Annual 'Self-Assessment' Report on progress made towards our Performance Improvement Plan is presented to Council's Performance and Audit Committee.

As we continue with our transformation and reform journey, we continue to ensure that all of our services continually improve their performance in relation to what they do, how they do it and the cost involved. Even more so, as we emerge from the pandemic, 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. Service reviews are an important part of that journey, and a number of service reviews are ongoing with implementation of recommendations and other reviews commencing. This work is further being facilitated by the new Programme Management Office (PMO) which had developed a Programme & Project Management Toolkit which bring discipline and rigour to service review programmes and projects.

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.

The performance software system is now in use by all departments and includes management reporting of progress against business plans.

A copy of the Council's Corporate Plan is available to view using the following link: armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/download/45/corporate-publications/29788/corporate-plan-2018-2023-2.pdf

Council performance related documents are also available to view on our website using the following link: armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/performance-improvement

APPENDIX B

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

REF.	STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	STANDARDS/ TARGETS 2018/19	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	PERFORMANCE KEY (RAG)
ED1	Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity. (Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client-led business plans under Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment's Regional Start Initiative or its successor programmes) *ABC Go for It programme target for 2022/23 is 165	165	232	185	221	229	190	211	●
P1	Average processing time of major planning applications. (An application in the category of major development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015 (a))	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	●
P2	Average processing time of local planning applications (An application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015, and other applications for approval or consent under the Planning Act (NI) 2011 or any Regulations made under the Act)	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	●
P3	Percentage of planning enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks. (Enforcement cases are investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under Part 5 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 or any Regulations made under the Act)	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%	●
W1	Percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse).	NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (50% by 2020)	48.8%	50.5%	51.6%	54.7%	54.3 %	*53.9%	●
W2	Amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled. (Targets set via NILAS)	NI Landfill Allowance Scheme 2015/16: (30,759 tonnes) 2016/17: (29,173 tonnes) 2017/18: (27,588 tonnes) 2018/19: (26,002 tonnes) 2019/20: (24,417 tonnes) 2020/21: (End of NILAS, no more additional targets)	11,107 tonnes	9,401 tonnes	8,771 tonnes	6,104 tonnes	4,340 tonnes	6,800 tonnes	●
W3	Amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arising (the total amount of waste collected).	No statutory standard has been set	104,342 tonnes	105,778 tonnes	105,828 tonnes	106,742 tonnes	113,712 tonnes	115,324 tonnes	●

*unverified by DEARA

Economic Development: Statutory Indicators and Standards Performance: 11 Councils April 2021-March 2022

BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA

COUNCIL AREA	APR-21	MAY-21	JUN-21	JUL-21	AUG-21	SEP-21	OCT-21	NOV-21	DEC-21	JAN-22	FEB-22	MAR-22	TOTAL
Antrim & Newtownabbey	11	12	15	14	13	14	14	16	9	14	13	17	162
Ards & North Down	9	28	23	23	21	16	14	21	8	19	16	16	214
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	25	30	33	26	33	52	30	30	28	30	34	37	388
Belfast	36	41	46	38	39	40	44	38	38	46	50	62	518
Causeway Coast & Glens	10	34	23	23	30	15	20	27	9	20	19	26	256
Derry & Strabane	14	20	18	17	18	19	21	14	20	26	26	26	239
Fermanagh & Omagh	23	27	28	21	23	28	25	23	17	29	29	37	310
Lisburn & Castlereagh	13	18	17	17	15	17	28	17	13	22	17	21	215
Mid & East Antrim	12	18	17	18	15	15	11	21	11	17	18	9	182
Mid Ulster	16	26	23	18	24	26	24	26	20	23	18	28	272
Newry Mourne & Down	30	34	32	29	32	33	32	29	19	25	28	35	358
TOTAL	199	288	275	244	263	275	263	262	192	271	268	314	3,114

STATUTORY INDICATORS AND STANDARDS PERFORMANCE: 11 COUNCILS APRIL 2021-MARCH 2022

	BPA to Year End	Jobs Created Year to Date	Statutory Jobs Target	Balance of Jobs to be created	Overdelivery Vs Statutory	% Jobs Created Vs Statutory Target
Antrim & Newtownabbey	162	97	80	17	17	122%
Ards & North Down	214	128	85	43	43	151%
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	388	233	165	68	68	141%
Belfast	518	311	325	-14	-14	96%
Causeway Coast & Glens	256	154	125	29	29	123%
Derry & Strabane	239	143	140	3	3	102%
Fermanagh & Omagh	310	186	170	16	16	109%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	215	129	85	44	44	152%
Mid & East Antrim	182	109	85	24	24	128%
Mid Ulster	272	163	158	5	5	103%
Newry Mourne & Down	358	215	155	60	60	139%
Total 2021 -22 (Financial Year)	3,114	1,868	1,573	295	119%	88%

Quarterly Prompt Payment Reports

	2016/17			2017/18			2018/19			2019/20			2020/21		
Council Name	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	13,433	22,573	4,546	18,320	22,505	3,772	17083	21799	4924	18390	22760	3810	12,792	15,284	1,817
Ards and North Down	10657	18347	4134	9575	17478	4047	6931	13731	8194	14560	20174	1414	10,576	12,706	549
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	6,611	21,555	8,057	5,200	18,352	12,282	6,504	25,201	5,547	5,713	20,105	10,120	9,272	17,204	1,766
Belfast City	43898	53600	7492	39355	51403	6916	44240	5223	9592	50885	63385	4425	39,959	48,218	3,375
Causeway Coast and Gelns	11314	21624	3923	11964	23430	5056	10219	18403	4022	12066	23786	6216	14,614	18,361	2,705
Derry City and Strabane	8234	18024	6070	12584	18163	4005	9049	19585	6078	12078	21643	4979	6,305	13,894	3,755
Fermanagh and Omagh	9914	16487	2395	10692	15935	2367	8836	13900	2679	15332	17715	1111	14,888	16,183	1,048
Lisburn and Castlereagh	10742	20383	4869	11864	20685	6440	10204	18651	3405	13957	19570	1888	9,842	12,045	1,768
Mid and East Antrim	12227	22563	3050	8597	21194	4015	12491	21517	3690	13082	22550	3609	16,368	23,808	4,660
Mid Ulster	15979	18554	271	16676	19275	469	10714	15785	221	15148	17141	1025	10,931	12,873	635
Newry, Mourne and Down	2081	19086	3214	1979	21554	3653	1967	14443	7527	8320	21647	2447	1,676	13,098	2,125
Total	145,090	252,796	48,021	146,806	249,974	53,022	161668	268,777	40,875	179531	270476	41044	147,223	203,674	24,203
			300,817			302,996			309,652			311,520			227,877

	2016/17			2017/18			2018/19			2019/20			2020/21		
Council Name	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 & Craigavon	6,611	21,555	8,057	5,200	18,352	12,282	6,504	25,201	5,547	5,713	20,105	10,120	9,272	17,204	1,766
			36,223			35,834			37,252			35,938			28,242
	18.3%	59.5%	22.2%	14.5%	51.2%	34.3%	17.5%	67.7%	14.9%	15.9%	55.9%	28.2%	32.8%	61.0%	6.3%

Prompt Payments continued

Northern Ireland Local Council Prompt Payments Figures Quarters 1-4 2021-2022

Compliance with Prompt Payment		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD
Antrim & Newtownabbey	Total invoices paid	3,352	5,867	6,575	5,539	21,333
	Number of disputed invoices	0	0	0	0	0
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	1,272	3,348	5,042	4,193	13,855
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	37.95%	57.06%	76.68%	75.70%	64.95%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	2,301	4,214	5,770	4,816	17,101
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	68.65%	71.83%	87.76%	86.95%	80.16%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	1,051	1,653	805	723	4,232
% paid outside 30 days	31.35%	28.17%	12.24%	13.05%	19.84%	
Ards & North Down	Total invoices paid	3,655	3,730	4,230	4,540	16,155
	Number of disputed invoices	0	0	0	0	0
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	3,281	3,010	3,595	3,763	13,649
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	89.77%	80.70%	84.99%	82.89%	84.49%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	3,603	3,628	4,165	4,430	15,826
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	98.58%	97.27%	98.46%	97.58%	97.96%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	52	102	65	110	329
% paid outside 30 days	1.42%	2.73%	1.54%	2.42%	2.04%	
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	Total invoices paid	4,783	4,924	6,176	5,829	21,712
	Number of disputed invoices	15	35	47	49	146
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	2,542	2,427	3,695	3,293	11,957
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	53.15%	49.29%	59.83%	56.49%	55.07%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	4,532	4,638	5,901	5,588	20,659
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	94.75%	94.19%	95.55%	95.87%	95.15%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	251	286	275	241	1,053
% paid outside 30 days	5.25%	5.81%	4.45%	4.13%	4.85%	
Belfast City Council	Total invoices paid	20,143	16,118	18,743	16,198	71,202
	Number of disputed invoices	0	0	0	0	0
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	16,758	13,254	15,250	12,620	57,882
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	83.20%	82.23%	81.36%	77.91%	81.29%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	19,234	15,220	17,548	14,647	66,649
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	95.49%	94.43%	93.62%	90.42%	93.61%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	909	898	1,195	1,551	4,553
% paid outside 30 days	4.51%	5.57%	6.38%	9.58%	6.39%	

Causeway Coast & Glens	Total invoices paid	5,830	6,442	7,117	6,567	25,956
	Number of disputed invoices	32	26	48	28	134
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	4,139	4,113	5,240	4,331	17,823
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	70.99%	63.85%	73.63%	65.95%	68.67%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	5,447	5,886	6,613	5,893	23,839
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	93.43%	91.37%	92.92%	89.74%	91.84%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	383	556	504	674	2,117
	% paid outside 30 days	6.57%	8.63%	7.08%	10.26%	8.16%
Derry & Strabane	Total invoices paid	3,114	4,987	5,299	7,184	20,584
	Number of disputed invoices	0	0	0	0	0
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	1,282	1,884	1,090	1,119	5,375
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	41.17%	37.78%	20.57%	15.58%	26.11%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	2,567	3,802	3,225	3,717	13,311
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	82.43%	76.24%	60.86%	51.74%	64.67%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	547	1,185	2,074	3,467	7,273
	% paid outside 30 days	17.57%	23.76%	39.14%	48.26%	35.33%
Fermanagh & Omagh	Total invoices paid	3,890	3,742	4,380	5,160	17,172
	Number of disputed invoices	192	92	72	40	396
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	3,326	3,186	3,711	4,330	14,553
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	85.50%	85.14%	84.73%	83.91%	84.75%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	3,666	3,504	4,057	4,850	16,077
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	94.24%	93.64%	92.63%	93.99%	93.62%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	224	238	323	310	1,095
	% paid outside 30 days	5.76%	6.36%	7.37%	6.01%	6.38%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	Total invoices paid	4,560	3,912	4,389	4,636	17,497
	Number of disputed invoices	0	0	0	0	0
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	3,934	2,978	3,436	3,550	13,898
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	86.27%	76.12%	78.29%	76.57%	79.43%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	4,384	3,585	3,940	4,097	16,006
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	96.14%	91.64%	89.77%	88.37%	91.48%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	176	327	449	539	1,491
	% paid outside 30 days	3.86%	8.36%	10.23%	11.63%	8.52%

Mid & East Antrim	Total invoices paid	6,919	7,268	10,418	15,679	40,284
	Number of disputed invoices	0	0	0	0	0
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	4,047	3,062	7,905	12,196	27,210
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	58.49%	42.13%	75.88%	77.79%	67.55%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	6,657	6,489	9,715	15,303	38,164
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	96.21%	89.28%	93.25%	97.60%	94.74%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	262	779	703	376	2,120
	% paid outside 30 days	3.79%	10.72%	6.75%	2.40%	5.26%
Mid Ulster	Total invoices paid	2,942	3,483	4,548	9,264	20,237
	Number of disputed invoices	57	0	0	0	57
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	2,654	2,578	4,448	9,110	18,790
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	90.21%	74.02%	97.80%	98.34%	92.85%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	2,869	3,364	4,506	9,214	19,953
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	97.52%	96.58%	99.08%	99.46%	98.60%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	73	119	42	50	284
	% paid outside 30 days	2.48%	3.42%	0.92%	0.54%	1.40%
Newry, Mourne & Down	Total invoices paid	5,085	4,050	4,169	4,136	17,440
	Number of disputed invoices	20	32	31	30	113
	Total invoices paid within 10 working days	1,116	699	674	553	3,042
	% of invoices paid within 10 working days	21.95%	17.26%	16.17%	13.37%	17.44%
	Total invoices paid within 30 calendar days	4,670	3,565	3,906	3,301	15,442
	% of invoices paid within 30 calendar days	91.84%	88.02%	93.69%	79.81%	88.54%
	Total invoices paid outside 30 days	415	485	263	835	1,998
	% paid outside 30 days	8.16%	11.98%	6.31%	20.19%	11.46%

Average number of days taken to pay suppliers 2021/2022

Council Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD
Antrim & Newtownabbey	33.00	30.74	18.43	18.35	25.13
Ards & North Down	12.00	14.00	12.00	13.00	12.75
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	11.05	11.73	10.29	9.97	10.76
Belfast	16.00	16.00	16.00	17.00	16.25
Causeway Coast & Glens	15.80	17.00	15.27	16.81	16.22
Derry & Strabane	19.23	21.61	39.44	42.00	30.57
Fermanagh & Omagh	11.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	12.50
Lisburn & Castlereagh	16.49	14.35	16.00	9.08	13.98
Mid & East Antrim	13.00	14.00	12.98	9.29	12.32
Mid Ulster	13.00	10.00	6.00	6.00	8.75
Newry, Mourne & Down	20.00	23.00	19.00	29.00	22.75

Percentage of payment made for 2021/2022

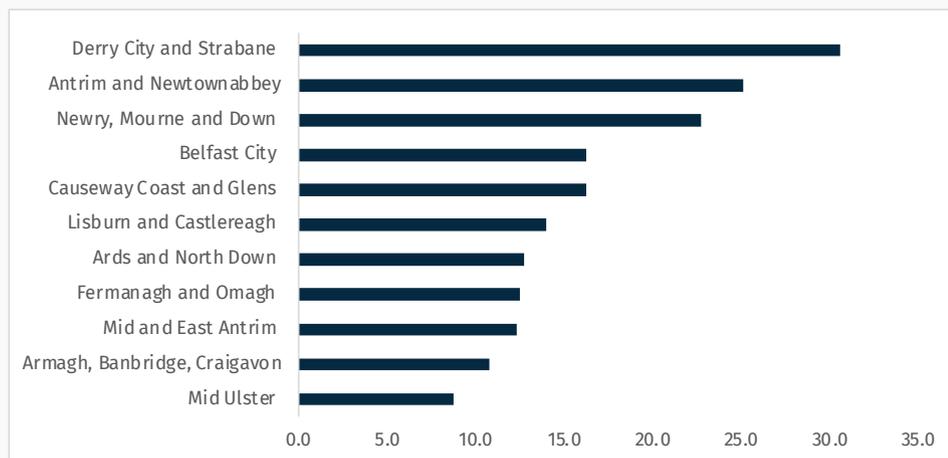
Council Area	within 10 days	between 11 and 30 days	outside 30 days
Antrim & Newtownabbey	64.95%	15.22%	19.84%
Ards & North Down	84.49%	13.48%	2.04%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	55.07%	40.08%	4.85%
Belfast	81.29%	12.31%	6.39%
Causeway Coast & Glens	68.67%	23.18%	8.16%
Derry & Strabane	26.11%	38.55%	35.33%
Fermanagh & Omagh	84.75%	8.87%	6.38%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	79.43%	12.05%	8.52%
Mid & East Antrim	67.55%	27.19%	5.26%
Mid Ulster	92.85%	5.75%	1.40%
Newry, Mourne & Down	17.44%	71.10%	11.46%

Total amount paid 2021/2022

Council Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD
Antrim & Newtownabbey	£9,350,509.00	£14,113,156.00	£11,407,846.00	£14,685,510.00	£49,557,021.00
Ards & North Down	£9,651,532.00	£13,957,919.00	£7,125,825.00	£15,441,203.00	£46,176,479.00
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	£14,297,231.00	£14,146,557.00	£19,575,129.00	£11,095,259.00	£59,114,176.00
Belfast	£45,955,279.02	£46,961,022.27	£57,138,778.13	£37,235,582.52	£187,290,661.94
Causeway Coast & Glens	£12,255,753.00	£14,938,664.01	£11,824,362.00	£16,652,683.00	£55,671,462.01
Derry & Strabane	£14,939,885.00	£18,957,927.00	£17,730,148.00	£25,884,219.00	£77,512,179.00
Fermanagh & Omagh	£10,297,531.17	£8,847,339.47	£8,964,098.01	£12,343,305.35	£40,452,274.00
Lisburn & Castlereagh	£12,179,377.52	£10,761,160.44	£10,742,895.77	£12,361,146.57	£46,044,580.30
Mid & East Antrim	£14,011,753.68	£11,625,593.00	£15,523,918.00	£25,384,181.36	£66,545,446.04
Mid Ulster	£7,543,509.93	£13,111,209.86	£9,735,044.97	£24,397,336.00	£54,787,100.76
Newry, Mourne & Down	£29,162,845.89	£9,229,617.21	£22,976,745.71	£15,195,500.72	£76,564,709.53

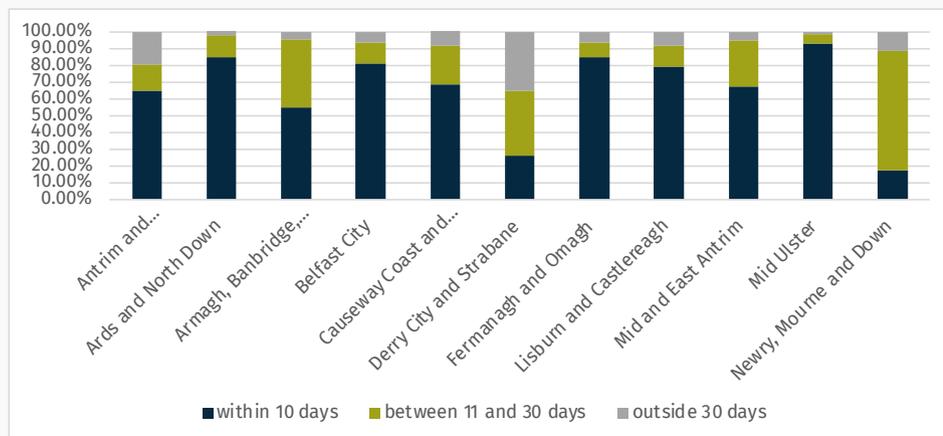
Prompt Payments continued

Average number of days taken to pay suppliers 2021/22



During 2021/22, the average number of days taken to pay suppliers ranged from 8.75 days in Mid Ulster to 30.57 days in Derry City and Strabane. Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon took approximately 10.76 days to pay suppliers during 2021/22.

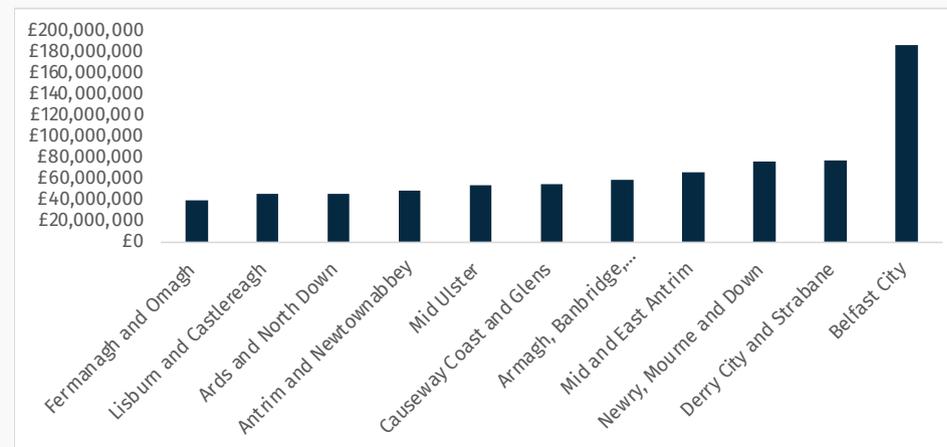
Percentage of payment made for 2021/22



Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon process and pay over 55% of their payments within 10 days with just 4.85% of the payments being made outside of 30 days. When compared to the other councils, Armagh is ranked in 9th place for prompt payments.

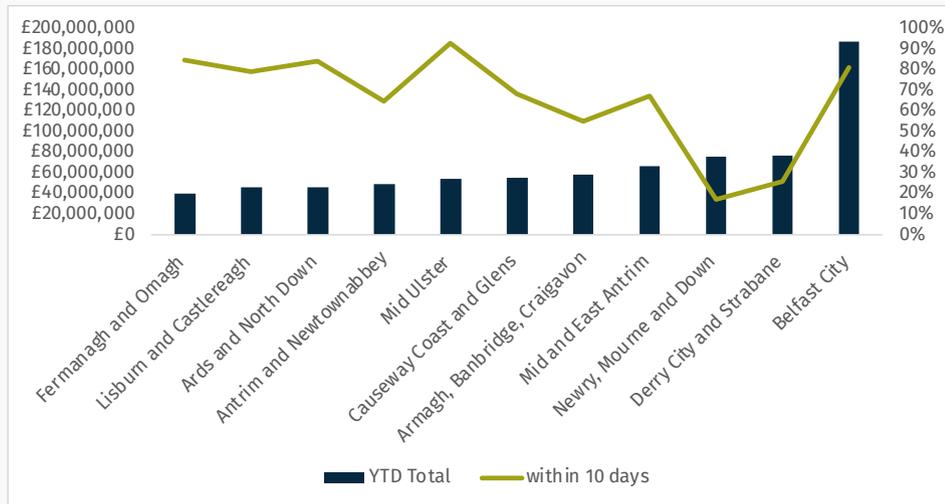
Council area	Payments made within 10 days
Mid Ulster	92.85%
Fermanagh and Omagh	84.75%
Ards and North Down	84.49%
Belfast City	81.29%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	79.43%
Causeway Coast and Glens	68.67%
Mid and East Antrim	67.55%
Antrim and Newtownabbey	64.95%
Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon	55.07%
Derry City and Strabane	26.11%
Newry, Mourne and Down	17.44%

Total amount paid 2021/22



The total amount paid per council area in 2021/22 is presented in the table above. Belfast City council made payments to the value of £187.3m during 2021/22 compared to Fermanagh and Omagh who paid out approximately £40.5m. Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon had the seventh highest amount paid out at £59.1m during 2021/22.

The chart below shows the total amount paid out during 2021/22 and the percentage of payments made within 10 days. Those councils with lower annual payments typically had a higher percentage of their payments made within 10 days and as the total annual amount paid out increased, the percentage of payments made within 10 days decreased however this was not the case for all council areas.



Staff Absences Report

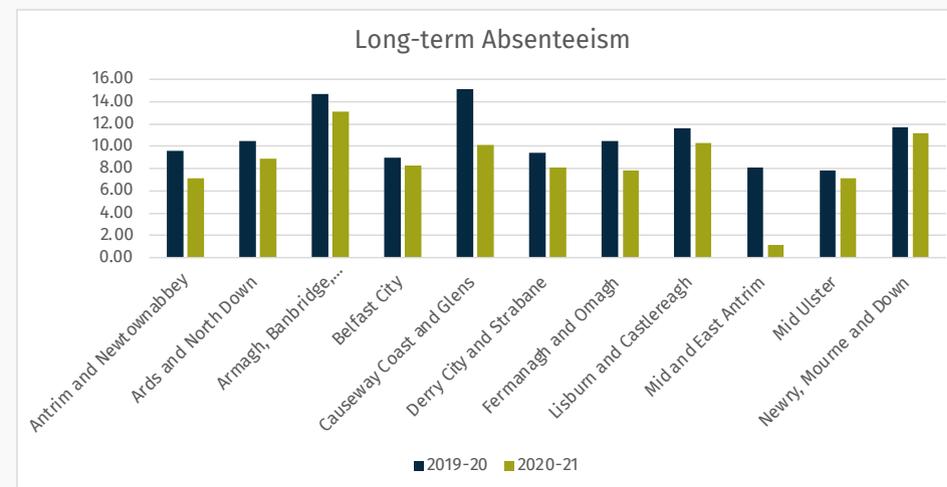
	2020-21			2019-20			2018-19			2017-18		
COUNCIL ABSENTEEISM	LONG-TERM	SHORT-TERM	TOTAL	LONG-TERM	SHORT-TERM	TOTAL	LONG-TERM	SHORT-TERM	TOTAL	LONG-TERM	SHORT-TERM	TOTAL
Antrim and Newtownabbey	7.15	0.72	7.87	9.56	2.85	12.41	11.0	2.73	13.73	8.89	2.99	11.88
Ards and North Down	8.87	1.72	10.59	10.48	3.71	14.19	10.53	3.7	14.23	12.16	4	16.16
Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon	13.11	2.56	15.67	14.72	3.56	18.28	13.11	3.62	16.73	12.22	3.84	16.06
Belfast City	8.28	2.58	10.86	8.95	4.63	13.58	9.25	4.46	13.71	8.81	4.91	13.72
Causeway Coast and Glens	10.17	1.17	11.34	15.11	2.55	17.66	14.91	2.22	17.13	12.92	2.87	15.79
Derry City and Strabane	8.10	2.27	10.37	9.40	5.10	14.50	9.10	3.20	12.30	11.3	2.7	14.00
Fermanagh and Omagh	7.84	1.85	9.69	10.47	3.30	13.77	7.41	3.03	10.44	8.88	3.99	12.87
Lisburn and Castlereagh	10.30	1.2	11.50	11.60	2.20	13.80	11.20	2.10	13.30	14.2	2.5	16.70
Mid and East Antrim	1.19	3.49	4.68	8.11	2.53	10.64	10.87	3.18	14.05	13.96	3.12	17.08
Mid Ulster	7.15	2.57	9.72	7.84	3.86	11.70	8.73	4.17	12.90	8.1	4.27	12.37
Newry, Mourne and Down	11.20	2.40	13.60	11.70	4.10	15.80	10.97	3.73	14.70	12.58	4.58	17.16
AVERAGE SICKNESS ABSENCE			10.54	9.56	2.85	12.41	11.0	2.73	13.73	8.89	2.99	11.88

Source: Unaudited data from Annual Audit Letters

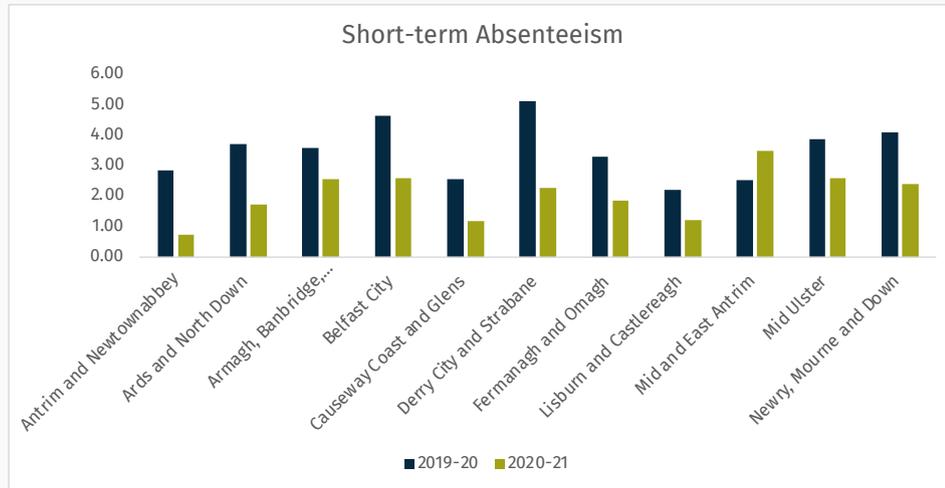
	2021/22		
COUNCIL ABSENTEEISM	LONG-TERM	SHORT-TERM	TOTAL
Antrim and Newtownabbey			
Ards and North Down			
Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon	15.32	5.19	20.51
Belfast City			
Causeway Coast and Glens			
Derry City and Strabane			
Fermanagh and Omagh			
Lisburn and Castlereagh			
Mid and East Antrim			
Mid Ulster			
Newry, Mourne and Down			
AVERAGE SICKNESS ABSENCE			10.54

Data for other ten councils in 2021/22 unavailable as not yet verified.

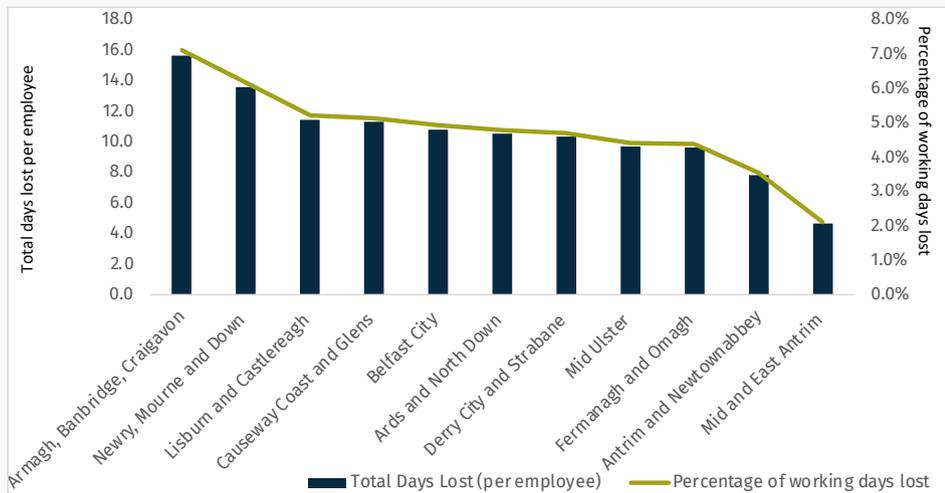
At time of reporting ABC data remains unverified by NIAO.



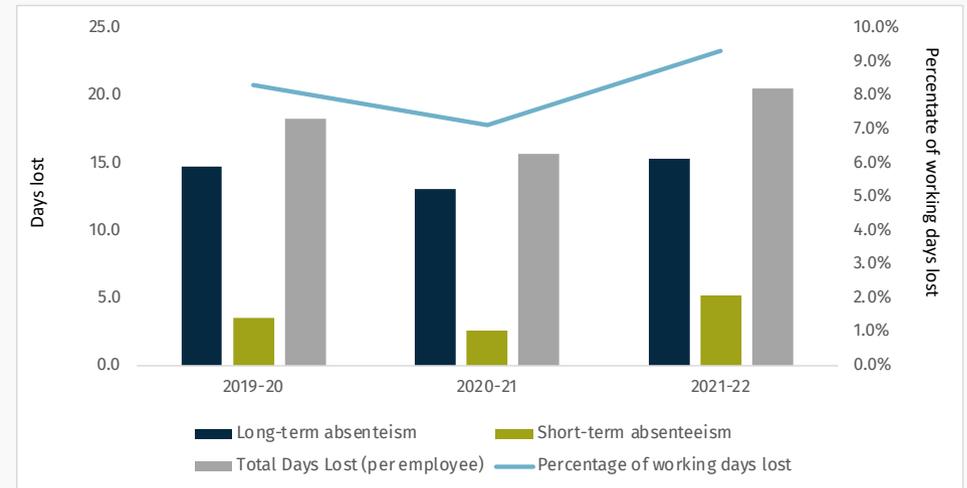
Long-term absenteeism has declined for all councils between 2019-20 and 2020-21. However, it remains a significant issue for Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council with the average days lost per employee on long-term absenteeism at 13.11 in 2020-21. This has fallen from 14.72 days in 2019-20. Mid and East Antrim has the lowest rates of long-term absenteeism at just 1.19 days per employee.



In terms of short-term absenteeism, again, the number of days lost due to short-term absenteeism has declined in all councils. In 2019-20 in Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon, the number of days lost due to short-term absenteeism was, on average, 3.56 days per employee. This has fallen to 2.56 days per employee in 2020-21 but Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon still has the fourth highest rate of short-term absenteeism of all LGD's. Mid and East Antrim has the highest rates of short-term absenteeism with an average of 3.49 days per employee.



In 2020-21, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council had the highest number of total days lost at 15.67 days per employee which equates to a rate of 7.12% of working days lost. This is 2.07 days more per employee than the next highest council, Newry, Mourne and Down at 13.6 days per employee and 10.99 days more than Mid and East Antrim council who have the least days lost per employee at 4.68 days which equates to just 2.13% of working days lost.



2021-22 figures for Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon show an increase in days lost for both long-term and short-term absenteeism resulting in an increase in the total days lost per employee from 15.67 in 2020-21 to 20.51 days per employee in 2021-22. The percentage of working days lost has increased from 7.12% in 2020-21 to 9.32% in 2021-22. However, it is important to note that at the time of reporting, 2021/22 figures had not yet been verified by NIAO.

Information to be compiled by Public Authorities under Section 3(1)(a) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

(To be completed and included in public authorities' own annual reports and submitted to DAERA for inclusion in the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report).

Name of Public Authority:	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	Reporting Period:	April 2021 to March 2022
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The following information should be compiled in respect of each policy, strategy and plan which has been developed, adopted, implemented or revised and each public service which has been designed or delivered by the public authority during the reporting period.

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	The rural policy area(s) which the activity relates to.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Acquisition and Disposal Policy for Land and Property	Internal Policy for disposing of and acquiring land and property	No rural needs were identified
Agriculture Strategy	Cross Cutting-Rural Businesses, Rural Tourism, Education or Training in Rural Areas, Rural Development, Agri-Environment	<p>There are nine recommendations in the strategy which have been developed to address challenges, opportunities and needs for the industry in our borough.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand and evolve Food Heartland 2. Develop a method of communicating regularly and clearly with every Agriculture and Agri Food business in the Borough 3. Develop a plan to facilitate skills development in the Agriculture and Agri business 4. Appoint Agriculture Champions for the Borough 5. Develop an Agriculture Centre for advice, training, demonstration and research. 6. Facilitate structural upgrading 7. ABC Rural Strategy 8. Further studies in agriculture sectors 9. Agri Food development <p>An additional Recommendation 10 Promote the health and wellbeing of farmers and rural dwellers, was introduced following feedback from the public consultation. Recommendations have been incorporated into the strategy to address feedback from stakeholders and the survey results. The recommendations will be council led and will be delivered on a collaborative basis with stakeholders, therefore the relationship with stakeholders is important. It was identified that the communication between Council, farmers and agribusinesses should be improved, and a communications plan put in place in order to engage effectively and make a difference to the rural businesses. Council in the past has had limited engagement with the farming community and the wider agriculture industry. This strategy will have a positive impact on all groups going forward as Council instil greater collaboration with agriculture stakeholders, representatives and as a result from the communication plan.</p> <p>The Farmers Survey in particular identifies a need to support the various age of farmers and gender inequality, general comments leaned towards the misrepresentation of women in the agriculture industry. In both surveys the farmers and agri businesses identified a need for business skills and learning for this industry. These skills will be addressed under recommendation 1 and 3.</p> <p>Two recommendations in the strategy will support these two groups. This Recommendation 2 (focusing on communication with the industry) Recommendation 4 (appointment of agriculture champions, including the consideration of a 'panel of women farmers') other recommendations which focus on skills training, learning and development will provide support.</p>

<p>Agriculture Strategy contd</p>		<p>In the delivery phase of the strategy there will be a focus on improved signposting of current service providers and support such as mental health and wellbeing, and health & safety, and raising awareness of support facilities available in our borough.</p> <p>The evolution of Food Heartland (recommendation 1) will have a positive impact on the agriculture industry and the broad range of activities/programmes and support Food Heartland will be able to deliver under its new roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and business training availability and provision for the farmers and agri businesses. • Labour shortages and automation for the industry • Working long hours • New technology and data analysing training and support • Health and wellbeing of farmers, farming families and people working in the wider agriculture industry • Farm Business ID not being recognized as a business and not accessible to general business support • Infrastructure in the rural areas, eg lack of broadband restricts business growth. • Improving business productivity • Effective communication required between council and farmers and agri businesses.
<p>Armagh Place Plan</p>	<p>Cross Cutting - Rural Businesses, Rural Tourism, Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas, Agri-Environment</p>	<p>Protecting rural communities and food production is vital for preserving biodiversity, improving health, ensuring food security, maintaining rural (and urban) livelihoods and protecting the environment. The Armagh Place Plan advocates a sustainable urban development approach that seeks to protect the rural landscape allowing the continuation of vital services and activities that need to take place there.</p> <p>The Armagh Place Plan offers many actions for an enhanced and improved city that caters for rural dwellers that use the city regularly to gain access to services.</p> <p>The Place Plan will reinforce and enhance rural and urban connections by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving more opportunities for rural businesses to showcase themselves in the city. • Develop a better and more integrated transport system in and out of the city. • Design green and blue infrastructure that connects the wider rural areas into the city <p>The following issues were considered in relation to the needs of people in rural areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social isolation and the need for more integrated public transport provision. • Access to services in the city and not competing with rural settlements providing essential more regular services than in Armagh City • Employment and access to jobs and opportunities in the city. <p>Transport through the rural areas of Armagh has been addressed by proposals being developed that will reduce congestion and improve the road infrastructure surrounding the city.</p> <p>More and better alternative transport options for getting into and out of the city have been incorporated into the plan to include exploring the feasibility of reopening the railway station in Armagh, implementing more greenways to connect cyclists into and out of the city and new roads to alleviate congestion on some smaller rural routes into the city.</p>
<p>Banbridge Painting Scheme</p>	<p>Urban based grant scheme which aims to encourage owners and tenants to invest in their buildings.</p>	<p>This scheme is an innovative grant scheme which aims to encourage owners and tenants to invest in their buildings, even though it is urban based it will have a positive effect on the surrounding rural hinterland.</p>

Banbridge Public Realm Scheme	Cross Cutting - Rural Businesses, Rural Tourism, Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas, Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	Access to and within Banbridge town centre is central to those from the rural hinterland who use the town on a regular basis. The improvements will make the town more 'user friendly' for those travelling from rural areas who wish to avail of services and shopping and as a result will enhance the social and economic wellbeing of those in rural areas.
Empty to Occupied Programme	The Scheme is a grant scheme which aims to encourage vacant commercial property owners to invest in their buildings, attract tenants and reduce long term vacancy.	This scheme is an innovative grant scheme which aims to encourage vacant commercial property owners within settlement boundaries to invest in their buildings, attract tenants and reduce long term vacancy, but it has positive effects on the surrounding rural hinterland.
Menopause Policy	Internal Policy	No rural issues were identified
Millennium Way Off Street Carparking	This is a request to utilise the Council-owned Off- Street Car Park at Millennium Way	No rural issues were identified
Naming Navan Coffee Shop	Internal Policy	No rural issues were identified
Northern Ireland Centenary Programme	Programme of Events	The Northern Ireland Centenary Programme was a Programme of Events to commemorate Northern Ireland's 100th birthday. Many of these events were virtual and others were located across the Borough so all residents could access them. No rural issues were identified.
Performance Improvement Plan 2021-2022 and 2022-2023	Internal Policy	The Performance Improvement Plan has been developed to support continuous improvement in the delivery of our services across the Borough
Play Strategy 2018-2026 - Play Park Closures	Cross Cutting - Rural Tourism, Deprivation in Rural Areas, Rural Development	<p>There are 20 Play Parks both rural and urban identified through the play strategy for possible closure.</p> <p>In the case of a potential removal of a play area, Council will engage with local communities (some will be in rural areas) in order to determine the true level of demand for fixed play within the area (through for example door to door survey). This helps to update the available demographic data which has been used in the strategy and will ensure an accurate reflection of local need.</p> <p>Should it be determined that there is no longer a need for a play area within a specific location Council will initiate a consultation process aimed at ensuring that communities have a say in the transformation of the site to maintain value for the community.</p>
Public Consultation Policy	Internal Policy	No rural issues were identified
Queens Platinum Jubilee Programme	Programme of Events	The Queens Platinum Jubilee Programme is a Programme of Events to mark the Queen's Jubilee. Events are located across the Borough so all residents can access them. Whilst the programme includes events in rural parts of the Borough, no rural issues were identified.
Raising Concerns Policy	Internal Policy	No rural issues were identified

Recovery and Growth Framework	Cross-cutting - Rural Businesses, Rural Tourism, Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas, Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas, Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas, Rural Development, Agri-Environment	The plan has been influenced by research and stakeholder engagement and as 49% of the borough's population live in rural areas, rural needs have helped influence the short-, medium- and long-term actions identified in the framework to aid COVID-19 recovery. One of the short-term actions is to identify challenges faced by rural businesses and opportunities for rural development and support programmes. One of the long-term actions outlined in the framework is to support rural development and the framework suggests that rural development should be focused on reducing broadband deprivation, improving road infrastructure and boosting investment and innovation in existing sectors. This will have a positive impact on all residents in the Borough but will particularly impact on those living in rural areas.
Tree Planting -Royal British Legion - Proposal to plant 3 trees with plaques within the grounds of the Palace Demesne, Armagh, Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre and the civic building, Banbridge to make the 100th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion.	Internal Policy	No rural issues were identified
Tree Planting - Royal British Legion - Application from 5 branches of the Royal British Legion to plant a commemorative tree on Council land to mark the 100th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion	Internal Policy	No rural issues were identified

Link to Council Policies

armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/policies

NOTES

1. This information should normally be contained in section 1B of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.
2. This information should normally be contained in section 2D of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.
3. The information contained in sections 3D, 4A & 5B of the RNIA Template should be considered when completing this section.

For further information please contact
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