Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Performance Improvement Report 2025-26

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Executive Summary

As a council we are committed to assessing ourselves against targets and standards set within our annual performance improvement plans and statutory indicators set by central government from statutory bodies. After assessing our performance within the year 2025/26 we have determined our achievements and areas we wish to continue to build on within the 2026/27 year.

A summary of our achievements in 2025/26 includes but are not limited to:

- ✓ Achieved strong overall performance, with 77% of Performance Improvement KPIs and 89% of Corporate Plan KPIs achieved by year end.
- ✓ Exceeded the statutory business start-up target, supporting an estimated 158 jobs through business start-up activity.
- ✓ Improved planning performance, reducing average local planning application processing times by 9.4 weeks (since previous year) and issuing more decisions than applications received.
- ✓ Maintained strong prompt payment performance, paying 83.41% of invoices within 10 working days and 95.70% within 30 days.
- ✓ Significantly reduced reliance on landfill, with household waste to landfill remaining consistently below 1% throughout the year.
- ✓ Strengthened citizen engagement, by developing the Citizen Consultation Framework and launching a dedicated consultation page on the Council website.
- ✓ Delivered strong employability outcomes, with 161 residents participating in Labour Market Partnership programmes, exceeding the annual target of 100.
- ✓ Provided specialist employability support for residents with disabilities, supporting 64 residents, significantly exceeding the target of 25.
- ✓ Delivered visible village plan improvements, including the Ballymacash Village Action Plan and key Glenavy actions such as the new playpark, upgraded bins, bus shelter and biodiversity work with local schools.
- ✓ Supported community wellbeing and participation, delivering a high number of health and wellbeing programmes, community events, village planning activities and inclusive engagement opportunities.

In 2026/27 our focus will continue to be on service improvement, we are committing to listening to people, understanding their needs, and designing services that are easy to access, timely and of high quality.

Thriving people are at the heart of strong communities. We want everyone to feel supported, connected and empowered to lead fulfilling lives. This means working collaboratively across sectors and with local people to build inclusive, safe and resilient places to live and work. By strengthening communities, we strengthen wellbeing, opportunity and local pride.

Alongside the above objectives we will also continue to monitor our progress against statutory targets, and our key performance indicators.

SECTION 1: Introduction

Context

This document presents the results of the council's self-assessment in discharging its general duty under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 in relation to performance improvement arrangements.

It sets out an assessment of our performance against the following requirements:

- performance improvement objectives set out in the 2025/2026 Performance Improvement Plan
- statutory performance improvement indicators and standards for the functions of Economic Development, Planning and Waste for 2025/2026, including comparison with the previous two years
- performance information on self-imposed indicators and standards collected during 2025-2026

The publication of this information fulfils in part the council's statutory requirement under Part 12, Section 92 of the Act.

Performance improvement objectives

Statutory guidance defines improvement as "more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement for councils should mean activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities." Essentially, improvement is about making things better and our focus is on how we can deliver better services for the benefit of our residents and service users.

We are committed to driving continuous improvement and performance across all service areas. In 2025/2026 we set two new areas for improvement as detailed in **Section 2** of this report. These Performance Improvement outcomes have been developed to reflect the outcomes in the Community Plan which will be in place for the next 6 years and the Corporate Plan 2024-28.

The Community Plan and related outcomes can be accessed using the following link: community_plan_2017-2032_email-pdf

The Corporate Plan and related outcomes can be accessed using the following link:

lccc-corporate-plan-2024-2028-web

The Community Plan sets a long-term ambition to improve life for people who live, work in or visit Lisburn and Castlereagh. While full statistical impact may take time to evidence, 2025/26 actions show early progress. Evidence will continue to be monitored, with case studies used to demonstrate achievements and contribution to Community Plan and Corporate Plan outcomes. The results of the self-assessment are included at **Section 2**.

Statutory Performance Indicators

A set of seven statutory indicators have been set for Local Government via the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015 as part of the performance improvement arrangements for Councils. These relate to three council functions: waste management, economic development and planning. The results of the self-assessment are included at **Section 3**.

From 2017 The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Section 92 requires councils to compare their performance, so far as reasonably practicable, against the performance during that and previous financial years.

We will continue to work in conjunction with the Department for Communities to develop a comprehensive benchmarking framework to provide clear and transparent information to allow comparison across several council areas. **Section 4** outlines the results of external benchmarking based on data available in the public domain. In addition to results of other internal benchmarking undertaken in relation to absence and prompt payment.

Self-Imposed Indicators

We have a performance management framework in place which includes a range of self-imposed KPIs (Corporate Plan KPIs) as well KPIs relating to the Performance Improvement Objectives. Details of the self-assessment are included at **Section 5.**

To clearly demonstrate a track record of improvement, previous year(s) data where available, has been included in the self-assessment in section 5 to demonstrate how we have achieved continuous improvement towards the overall objective.

Discharging the general duty to secure continuous improvement in 2025-2026

The council has well-established governance arrangements in place to ensure delivery of all of its plans. These arrangements are used to ensure that the activity underpinning our improvement objectives is monitored on an ongoing basis.

They include:

- quarterly reports of our programme of activity to CMT (Corporate Management Team)
- reporting on the performance improvement process to the Governance & Audit Committee, on a quarterly basis as a standing item
- reporting on our Customer Care activity to the Governance & Audit Committee, on a quarterly basis as a standing item
- consideration of the full costs included in our estimates process
- appropriate risk management in relation to main programmes of work
- appropriate monitoring, reporting and performance management arrangements underpinning all the above

We measure how we are doing in lots of ways across the organisation.

How the council has got better in relation to its General Duty to improve

During 2025/26 the Governance & Audit Committee received quarterly reports detailing performance management information on the self-imposed and service KPIs.

The Performance Improvement KPIs demonstrate improvement against the Performance Improvement Objectives and are measured on a quarterly or annual basis (depending on the target), these were also reported to the Governance & Audit Committee.

We monitor complaints identifying underlying root causes and actions to enhance service provision. This is reported to the Corporate Management Team for internal scrutiny and the Governance & Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.

In addition to formal reporting of the self-imposed KPI's, we are always striving to identify new ways of working and opportunities to improve. Within 2025/2026 the council continued with several arrangements all of which fall within the general duty to improve including but not limited to:

- the Innovation Team continued to promote the digital and transformation agenda
- DMT (Directorate Management Team) meetings were attended quarterly by the Performance Improvement Officer to review Directorate performance
- monthly reporting of a Corporate Health Dashboard during 2025/2026 to help the Corporate Management Team assess performance against critical areas across the council
- regular monitoring of complaints identifying underlying root causes and actions to enhance service provision. **Appendix III** details the annual complaints information for 2025/26.
- annual review of the KPIs:
    - reviewed in the following categories: Performance improvement KPIs, Self-imposed (Corporate Plan KPIs) and Management Information KPIs
    - The Self-imposed (Corporate Plan KPIs) were reviewed in detail during 2025/26 to significantly reduce them in number and make them specific to the Corporate Plan 2024-28. The majority of the 9 Self-imposed (Corporate Plan KPIs) for 2025/26 were new.

SECTION 2: Performance Improvement Objectives - Self Assessment

Improvement Objective 2025/2026	Council Self-Evaluation
We will deliver better services that continue to meet people's needs.	Target Achieved
We will support our people to thrive in vibrant communities.	Target Achieved

Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will deliver better services that continue to meet people's needs.

Outcomes contributing to our Community Plan / Corporate Plan include:

- public services are enhanced through co design and co-production

Performance Improvement Objective 1	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)
We will deliver better services that continue to meet people's needs	We will continue to improve the processing times of planning applications by monitoring the implementation of the agreed Planning Service Improvement Programme by the end of the	**Planning Applications – What Happened This Year** ✅ **What we did well** • We worked hard to reduce the number of old applications. • Many older applications were cleared from the system. • In several quarters, we did better than our target for dealing with older cases. 📈 **What this meant** • We focused on older applications first. • However, this meant we did not meet the target for newer local applications. 📊 **Improvements made** • Processing times improved a lot over the year. • Times reduced from 47.8 weeks to 22.8 weeks by the end of the year. • In most quarters, we made more decisions than the number of applications received, helping reduce the backlog.

Performance Improvement Objective 1	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)

	financial year 25/26	🎯 **End of year position**
		• We did not meet all targets, but:
		  ○ The backlog is much smaller
		  ○ Decision times are improving
		  ○ Performance is moving in the right direction
		👉 **What happens next**
		• We expect to continue improving next year.
		• With fewer older cases, we should be able to:
		  ○ Meet targets & process applications more quickly

	We will improve our prompt payment indicators by reducing the number of days taken to pay suppliers.	**Invoices – What Happened This Year**
		✅ **What we did well**
		• Achieved 83.41% of invoices paid within 10 working days
		• Achieved 95.70% of invoices paid within 30 days
		• Consistently exceeded quarterly targets throughout the year
		📈 **What this meant**
		• Maintained strong and reliable payment performance
		• Stayed close to Statutory KPI thresholds, although not fully meeting them
		📊 **Improvements made**
		• Continued organisation-wide focus on improving payment times
		• Sustained stable performance across all quarters
		🎯 **End of year position**
		• Statutory KPI thresholds (90% and 100%) were not met, however:
		  • Performance remained consistently high
		  • Delivery was close to target levels
		  • Payment performance is stable and reliable
		👉 **What happens next**
		• Maintain focus on improving payment times
		• Aim to:

Performance Improvement Objective 1	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)
		• Fully meet Statutory KPI thresholds • Further strengthen performance consistency

	We will increase our staff attendance levels.	**Staff Attendance & Wellbeing – What Happened This Year**
		✅ **What we did well**
		• Introduced a new Managing Attendance Policy in April 2025 after full consultation
		• Trained 25 Mental Health First Aiders to support staff
		• Delivered a wide range of health and wellbeing initiatives throughout the year
		• Achieved the sickness absence target in Quarter 2
		• Exceeded the target again in Quarter 3
		📈 **What this meant**
		• Staff had better support for their health and wellbeing
		• Managers had clearer guidance on managing attendance
		• Overall sickness levels improved in some parts of the year
		📊 **Improvements made**
		• Strong programme of wellbeing activities across all quarters:
		• HR worked closely with services to manage and reduce absence
		• Increased focus on supporting staff and improving attendance
		🎯 **End of year position**
		• Performance was mixed across the year:
		    • Targets were met in some quarters
		    • Quarter 4 target was not met (15.72 days lost)
		        • Long-term absence increased towards the end of the year
		        • Ongoing work is in place to address this
		👉 **What happens next**
		• Continue to support staff health and wellbeing
		• Focus on reducing long-term absence
		• Work with services to improve attendance further
		• Aim to meet targets consistently across all quarters

Performance Improvement Objective 1	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)
	We will reduce the percentage of household waste being disposed of in landfill sites.	**Waste to Landfill Performance – What Happened This Year** ✅ **What we did well** • A new waste management contract began on 1 February 2025 • Achieved 0% waste to landfill in the first quarter • Maintained very low landfill rates across all quarters 📈 **What this meant** • The new contract significantly reduced reliance on landfill • Landfill levels remained consistently below 1% throughout the year 📊 **Performance across the year** • Q1: 0% waste to landfill • Q2: 0.24% waste to landfill (July–September 2025) • Q3: 0.31% of household waste landfilled • Q4: 0.28% of household waste landfilled 🎯 **End of year position** • Landfill use remains very low overall • Performance has been stable, with only slight fluctuations • The contract is delivering strong environmental outcomes

Performance Improvement Objective 2

We will support our people to thrive in vibrant communities.

Outcomes contributing to our Community Plan / Corporate Plan:

- We live healthy, fulfilling and long lives
- We live and work in attractive, resilient and environmentally-friendly places.
- We live in empowered, harmonious, safe and welcoming communities.

Performance Improvement Objective 2	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)
We will support our people to thrive in vibrant communities	We will continue to enable our citizens to influence decision making through community conversations in Lisburn South and Downshire West.	**Village Planning Performance – What Happened This Year** **What we did well** • Delivered and secured community endorsement of the Ballymacash Village Action Plan • Strong community engagement, including consultation events and ongoing involvement with local groups • Established an effective partnership approach through the Ballymacash Interagency Forum • Began early delivery actions quickly following plan agreement • Maintained regular monitoring and coordination with statutory and community partners **What this meant** • Community priorities were clearly translated into a structured and agreed Action Plan • Strong alignment between community feedback and partner-led delivery • Early actions demonstrated responsiveness and built momentum • The approach strengthened collaborative working and shared ownership across partners **Performance across the year** • Q1: Preparatory engagement and planning for community consultation; Ballymacash identified as priority area

Performance Improvement Objective 2	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)
		• Q2: Community consultation delivered; draft Action Plan developed and refined with partners • Q3: Action Plan formally endorsed; delivery actions commenced across priority themes • Q4: Progress monitored through Interagency Forum; model embedded to support ongoing delivery 🎯 **End of year position** • Ballymacash Village Action Plan successfully developed and in early delivery phase • Clear, community-led framework now guiding ongoing improvements • Strong partnership structure in place to oversee implementation and monitor progress • Next Village Plan location (including Downshire West) not confirmed within the year • Proposals developed for a structured Village Planning programme rollout in 2026–27
	We will improve our engagement methods by developing and implementing a Citizen Consultation Framework	**Citizen Consultation Framework – What Happened This Year** ✅ **What we did well** • Developed the Citizen Consultation Framework to support consistent, good-quality engagement • Made the Framework available on the intranet for officers • Launched a dedicated consultation page on the LCCC website • Provided one central place for residents to access live consultations 📈 **What this meant** • Citizens have a clearer and more accessible way to find and respond to consultations • Officers have a shared approach to planning and delivering engagement • The Council has strengthened how residents can influence decision making 📊 **Performance across the year** • Q1–Q3: Framework developed and prepared for sharing with Corporate Management Team and officers • Q4: Dedicated consultation webpage went live on the LCCC website

Performance Improvement Objective 2	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)
		• Four consultations were live to date: Performance Improvement Plan; Carryduff Household Recycling Centre Redevelopment; proposed development at Barbour Park; and Planning Application Validation Checklist **End of year position** • Performance Improvement target achieved • Framework and web-based consultation page are now in place • Testimonials and feedback will be added when the Framework is fully live on the website
	We will continue to deliver a range of employability programmes that will help our residents to achieve relevant qualifications that will enable them to gain new or better employment. This will also include the delivery of specialist support and	**Employability Programmes – What Happened This Year** **What we did well** • Delivered a wide range of employability programmes, academies and events for residents facing barriers to work • Supported residents to gain qualifications, build confidence and move closer to employment • Provided targeted support for female returners, people with disabilities, older residents, young people and local jobseekers • Worked with employers, training providers and support organisations to provide practical routes into work **What this meant** • Residents accessed training, mentoring, qualifications and direct employment support • Employers were able to connect with local talent and strengthen inclusive recruitment practices • Participants gained confidence, skills and clearer pathways into employment, further learning or volunteering • The Council strengthened support for those furthest from the labour market **Progress across the year** • Q1: Delivered female returner and disability-focused employability events, and celebrated 40 THRIVE graduates • Q2: Delivered two upskilling academies for 16 participants and launched two further academies, recruiting 27 participants • Q3: Target exceeded, with 75 participants recruited, seven additional programmes launched and two job fairs delivered, supporting 452 participants

Performance Improvement Objective 2	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)
	advice for those with a disability.	• Q4: Target exceeded again, with 161 participants recruited, five additional Skills Academies launched and 77 participants enrolled on upskilling programmes • Secured additional funding, including support for individuals leaving looked after care and expansion of the Gamified Learning Programme **End of year position** • Performance Improvement target exceeded • 161 residents participated in Labour Market Partnership programmes, exceeding the annual target of 100 • Specialist employability support was delivered to 64 residents with a disability, exceeding the target of 25 • Programmes created strong outcomes, including new qualifications, employment opportunities, inclusive employer engagement and early STEM career awareness for local pupils
	We will support the progression of actions in the Glenavy Village Plan in partnership with new and established groups.	**Glenavy Village Plan – What Happened This Year** **What we did well** • Delivered visible improvements in Glenavy, including a new playpark, upgraded bins and a new bus shelter at Lyngrove Hill/Crumlin Road • Worked in partnership with statutory partners, schools and local community groups • Supported community capacity building through networking, training and engagement sessions • Continued biodiversity and environmental work with Ballymacrickett Primary School and local partners **What this meant** • Residents saw practical improvements that responded to priorities raised through the Village Plan • Families, pupils, commuters and older residents benefited from improved local facilities and public transport infrastructure • Community groups were better connected and supported to contribute to local delivery • Pupils gained hands-on environmental learning and helped build pride in place **Progress across the year** • Q1: New playpark completed at Killultagh; bin upgrades delivered; community training and school biodiversity activity progressed

Performance Improvement Objective 2	Enabling Improvement Projects	How did we do? (See Appendix 1 to see how we tracked progress in year)
		• Q2: Playpark, bins and school engagement confirmed as complete; bus shelter and pedestrian crossing remained in progress • Q3: Community networking and update session held at St Clare's Community Hall, strengthening collaboration and confirming local priorities • Q4: Bus shelter installed at Lyngrove Hill/Crumlin Road, with connection and reinstatement works progressing; DfI confirmed the pedestrian crossing will remain under future consideration **End of year position** • Target on track, with several key Village Plan actions completed • Completed actions include the playpark, bin upgrades, biodiversity/school engagement, community networking and bus shelter installation • Ongoing actions include community capacity building and continued monitoring of the pedestrian crossing request • The Glenavy Village Plan has strengthened local partnership working and created a clear framework for continued delivery

What difference did we make? Case Studies

Some highlights from our improvement projects delivered during 2025/26 include the following:

The Ballymacash Village Action Plan was formally presented to the community and partners on 9 October 2025, where it was accepted and endorsed by attendees. This session confirmed priority actions, validated the proposed delivery approach, and provided clarity on next steps for progression, coordination and monitoring. The agreed plan now provides a clear framework for partner-led delivery, supported and overseen through Community Planning arrangements. Through this process, Ballymacash continues to demonstrate how Village Planning can act as a practical platform for connecting community insight with partner delivery, strengthening shared ownership of local priorities and supporting collaborative, place-based improvement. Together, these plans ensure that local voices shape local change, reinforcing how Council-led Village Planning continues to deliver responsive, people-centred outcomes aligned to wider Community Planning and Performance Improvement objectives.

Ballymacash Interagency Forum & Village Planning in Action Overview

The Ballymacash Interagency Forum is a locally based partnership bringing together key statutory, community, and voluntary organisations to collaboratively address issues and opportunities within the Ballymacash area of Lisburn South. Acting as a practical, place-based delivery mechanism, the Forum plays a central role in both informing and supporting the implementation of the Ballymacash Village Action Plan.

BALLYMACASH COMMUNITY CENTRE

A Strong Local Partnership Model: The Forum is anchored by Ballymacash Regeneration Network and housed in the Ballymacash Community Centre, a key community organisation with deep local knowledge and strong connections to residents. It works alongside a range of statutory and support agencies including:

- Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (Community Planning & Community Development/Services)
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Housing Associations
- Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)
- Supporting Communities
- Department for Infrastructure (engaged through Forum connections)

The Interagency Forum has been integral to the development of the Ballymacash Village Action Plan. Through its established networks and regular engagement, it has helped to identify and validate local priorities through ongoing dialogue with community representatives. Statutory partners have brought data, insight and service-level understanding, while community voices have been channelled through a trusted local anchor organisation. This has ensured that the Village Plan was not developed in isolation, but was instead grounded in clear, evidenced local need and shaped by those delivering services on the ground.

A key strength of the Ballymacash model is the continuity between planning and delivery. Rather than ending once the plan was developed, the Interagency Forum has provided an ongoing structure to monitor progress against Village Plan actions, coordinate delivery across partners, and ensure that actions are led by the most appropriate organisation. It has also created a mechanism to address barriers in real time, including resource constraints and operational challenges, while helping to align additional opportunities such as funding streams, training and community initiatives.

Forum discussions have linked Village Planning activity with wider Community Services support, funding opportunities and environmental improvement work, creating a coordinated and responsive approach. Recent over 50's fitness work linked to Age Friendly strategy and desire in the Village for more opportunities for local health and well-being activities – that can also aid with social connection – is a good exemplar of LCCC working with a local anchor organisation to deliver on Village Plan priorities.

Central to the success of the Forum is the role of local anchor organisations, particularly Ballymacash Regeneration Network. Their contribution has included acting as a trusted intermediary between residents and statutory agencies, hosting meetings and sustaining consistent local engagement, leading or supporting the delivery of community-based actions and programmes, and ensuring that the resident voice remains central throughout implementation. This anchor-led approach strengthens community ownership of the Village Plan and supports more sustainable, locally driven outcomes.

Overall, the Ballymacash Interagency Forum demonstrates how Village Planning can and should be a living, locally owned process. By embedding ongoing monitoring and delivery within an existing interagency structure, partnerships remain active and accountable, actions are continuously reviewed and adapted, and Community Planning is translated into visible, place-based impact.

The Council strives to target those furthest from the labour market who face additional barriers to employment. As part of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's Labour Market Partnership programme, the Council has developed a diverse range of employability programmes and events that will support our residents to achieve qualifications and gain employment. During the year the Labour Market Partnership Team delivered a number of programmes. Details of some of our success stories can be found below.

Women Into Employment – Female Empowerment

Inspired by the Open University's *Mumentum* campaign, the Lisburn and Castlereagh LMP's focus was on supporting local women who have been out of work for extended periods due to maternity leave, caregiving responsibilities, illness, or career breaks.

On 19th June 2025, the Labour Market Partnership brought together a range of organisations to showcase programmes, training, and support available to our residents and local networks. Speakers included the Lisburn Chamber of Commerce, Jobs and Benefits Office, Atlas Women's Group, Studyseed CIC, Women's Tec, and Women's Support Network shared resources and insights.

The employability event for female returners to the labour market was highly successful, attracting enthusiastic participation and positive feedback. Attendees gained valuable insights, boosted confidence, and made key professional connections. Workshops, CV support, and networking opportunities empowered women to re-enter the workforce with renewed motivation. Many expressed appreciation for the tailored support, marking the event as impactful and inspiring.

DisAbility Employability Event - Promoting Inclusive Employment

On 26th June 2025, Lagan Valley Island became the hub for a powerful employability event, bringing together local residents with a range of disabilities, support organisations, and employers. The aim was to dismantle employment barriers and promote inclusive, sustainable career opportunities across the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area.

The event was hosted by the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership and welcomed a wide range of expert speakers and partners, including USEL, SES Workable, The

NOW Project, Stepping Stones NI, Advice NI, Universal Credit, and Lisburn Jobs & Benefits Centre, reinforcing the Council's commitment to inclusive employment.

Workshops, talks, and stalls created an engaging space for attendees to gain knowledge about upskilling, reskilling, mentoring, and support available across the local council area. Real-life challenges were discussed, alongside actionable pathways to help residents move closer to employment. Attendees appreciated the welcoming, empowering atmosphere, where shared experiences led to valuable peer support and motivation.

Residents received tailored advice, registered for training programmes, and explored the wraparound support available to them. The event not only raised awareness but also sparked action—providing a real sense of progress for inclusive employment in the community.

Pathways to Employment for Individuals with a DisabilityCelebration Event

On 27th June, we were delighted to celebrate the achievements of forty local people who graduated from the Thrive programme – a life-changing initiative that supports individuals with a disability or health condition on their journey towards employment.

Delivered by Stepping Stones NI on behalf of the Lisburn & Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership, the programme gave participants the opportunity to build confidence, learn new skills and take positive steps towards meaningful work.

The graduation event took place at Lagan Valley Island and was filled with proud moments, personal stories, and plenty of celebration. It kicked off with breakfast networking, followed by speeches from special guests including Alderman Amanda Grehan, Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, and Paddy Rooney, Deputy Secretary for the Work & Health Group at the Department for Communities.

We are so proud of every single person who took part in Thrive. Each participant's hard work, determination and resilience have inspired us all and enables Lisburn & Castlereagh to fulfil their commitment to harnessing inclusivity across the council area.

Transport Academy - The Transport Academy launched in August 2025 offering 15 residents of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council to undertake their category C (Class 2) HGV licence or a category D Bus Licence.

Case Study: Ela Fratczak

Ela has fulfilled the dream she always had – to drive a bus. After coming across the Lisburn & Castlereagh Transport Academy on social media page, she immediately applied to participate in the programme.

Following an interview exercise, Ela was accepted onto the Academy. Shortly after completing her training, Ela was offered a position as a bus driver with Translink and her new adventure has begun!

'*I would recommend this programme to anyone who has always wanted to obtain their HGV / Bus Licence, the programme has provided me with the skills and training to embark on a new career and I can't thank the Lisburn & Castlereagh LMP enough for this amazing opportunity*!"

Click [here]() to discover Ela's story and how the academy made a difference to her career.

Diversity Workshop: For LCCC Employers

On the 26th September, Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership, in collaboration with Stepping Stones NI, hosted Unlock Growth Through Diversity & Inclusion — a free workshop for local employers at the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum.

The session explored how inclusive practices can drive innovation, improve recruitment and retention, and strengthen workplace culture. Attendees learned practical strategies for building inclusive environments and received an Inclusive Employer recognition badge to display in their workplace. The event was well attended by business owners, managers, and HR professionals from across the Lisburn and Castlereagh area.

Classroom Assistant (Upskilling) Academy

In August 2025, the Classroom Assistant (Upskilling) Academy was launched to support workforce development in the education sector. Ten residents from Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council began training to achieve a Level 3 NCFE Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools. The academy works in partnership with local schools to help address staffing shortages, offering practical experience alongside formal qualifications. It's a targeted initiative aimed at strengthening classroom support and creating new career pathways for local people.

🎥 To see how the programme is making a difference, watch video highlighting its impact on one local school.

World Host Academy

In September 2025, ten local businesses took part in the WorldHost Supervising Customer Service Academy — a fully funded two-day workshop designed to build a culture of excellence and drive service transformation.

The workshop focused on equipping supervisors with the tools and confidence to lead high-performing customer service teams. Participants explored practical strategies for maintaining service standards, motivating staff, and ensuring consistent customer experiences.

This follows the success of the March 2025 cohort, where eight participants completed the same training. Together, these sessions have supported nearly 20 local professionals in raising the bar for customer service across the region.

Welding Academy

The engineering sector across Lisburn & Castlereagh plays a vital role in the local economy, with a high demand for skilled welders. Recognising both the needs of local employers and the opportunity to support residents into sustainable employment, the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership developed and delivered an innovative Welding Academy.

The programme supported eight local residents to access industry-standard training; equipping them with the practical skills and qualifications required to enter this key sector. Participants worked towards achieving the British Standard 4872 welding certification, a recognised UK standard that enhances employability and meets employer expectations.

Training was delivered by South Eastern Regional College (SERC) at its dedicated welding training facility in Dundrod, providing learners with access to professional equipment and an authentic workshop environment. This ensured participants gained hands-on experience aligned with real-world engineering roles. This academy will be repeated in February 2026.

Job Fair: 50+

The Over 50s Job Fair took place on Thursday 16 October 2025 and was delivered to support residents aged 50+ who were seeking new opportunities, including returning to employment, accessing further education and training, or engaging in rewarding volunteer roles. The event recognised the skills, experience, and value that older residents bring to the local workforce and community.

The event engaged 200 participants, providing a welcoming and inclusive space where attendees could access information, advice, and guidance tailored to their needs. Participants were able to connect directly with employers, training providers, and support organisations, increasing awareness of local opportunities and potential next steps.

Overall, the Over 50s Job Fair demonstrated the impact of targeted, age-inclusive support in building confidence and opening pathways for older residents. By bringing key organisations together in one accessible setting, the event supported participants to take positive steps towards employment, learning, or volunteering.

Job Fair: Dundonald Ice Bowl

The Dundonald Job Fair was held on Thursday 27 November 2025 at Dundonald International Ice Bowl. The in-person event welcomed 252 jobseekers and featured 17 local employers from a wide range of sectors, including Royal Mail, South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust, Baloo Hire etc. Employers were provided with the opportunity to showcase current vacancies, promote their organisations, and engage directly with potential recruits in a single, accessible setting. The event supported efficient recruitment by enabling face-to-face conversations and immediate follow-up with interested candidates.

Overall, the job fair proved highly effective in creating meaningful engagement between employers and jobseekers. Employers reported strong interest in available roles, with many conducting informal interviews on the day and progressing candidates directly to next stages of recruitment. The event provided a practical and efficient platform for real-time recruitment while giving jobseekers direct access to live opportunities, reinforcing the council’s commitment to delivering outcomes-focused employment initiatives that support both business growth and local people into work.

THRIVE Programme

Pathways to Employment for Individuals with a Disability

The THRIVE Programme was launched by the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership (LMP) to support 35 individuals who are economically inactive due to disability by addressing key barriers to employment. The programme delivers specialist mentoring to build confidence and develop essential employability skills, including CV writing and interview preparation, alongside access to accredited qualifications to support progression into employment or suitable work placements.

Ethan successfully completed the programme last year and went on to secure employment with Foot Anstey McKees after achieving a range of accredited qualifications. Reflecting on his experience, Ethan said: “I've been settling in well at Foot Anstey McKees. My work is varied and interesting, and I enjoy it greatly. I'm also working with a brilliant team. I’m very excited to continue my work going into the future.”

To see Ethan’s story in full, showcasing the impact of the THRIVE Programme, please click here.

Gamified Learning Programme: Essential Skills

In response to concerning statistics showing a significant rise in the number of young people leaving school without qualifications, the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership developed an innovative learning programme. This programme enables participants to gain essential skills qualifications in English and Maths through digital gaming platforms.

This approach helps reduce the anxiety often linked to traditional classroom-based learning, allowing participants to work towards qualifications in a more relaxed and engaging way, without the pressure of formal exams. Initially we had the capacity to support 40 participants, however, the programme received unprecedented demand, with a total of 80 applications. As a result, additional funding was successfully secured, enabling all 80 participants to engage in the programme.

The Big Bridge

A total of 397 pupils from primary schools across Lisburn and Castlereagh participated in 15 interactive engineering sessions delivered at Lagan Valley Island in February 2026. As part of the *Big Bridge* STEM initiative, pupils worked alongside professional engineers to design, build and test a 13-metrelong, 3-metre-high bridge.

The programme, delivered by the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership and funded by the Department for Communities, was targeted at P5 to P7 pupils. Each one-hour session combined hands-on, collaborative learning with curriculum-aligned content and provided early exposure to careers in engineering and the wider STEM sector. All participants received a certificate of achievement in recognition of their involvement.

The initiative has received highly positive feedback from both schools and parents, with many noting the lasting impact of the experience, as pupils continued to discuss and reflect on the workshops after participation. Teachers also highlighted the strong alignment with the Northern Ireland curriculum and the value of direct engagement with industry professionals in enhancing pupils' understanding of real-world STEM applications.

GLENAVY VILLAGE PLAN - **New Playpark Installed (Killultagh Housing Development) – Action Complete**

The Parks Department completed the installation of the new playpark. It was funded through the Small Settlements Fund and is now fully operational. This action is now closed.

Bin Replacement and Capacity Increase – Action Complete

Waste Management has completed this action. New bins have been installed in key locations across the Glenavy area, with enhanced capacity now in operation.

Pedestrian Crossing in Glenavy Village – In Progress

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has responded to the request for a pedestrian crossing on Glenavy Road, confirming that while a survey was conducted in November 2023, the location did not rank highly against other sites based on assessed need. DfI uses a consistent, criteria-based process that considers pedestrian and vehicle volumes, traffic speed, road width, proximity to amenities, vulnerability of users, and collision history. Although the Glenavy Road site does not meet current thresholds for funding, it will remain on the list for future consideration should priorities or conditions change.

Biodiversity & School Engagement – Action Complete

Ballymacrickett Primary School has actively participated in this work. This action is complete.

In December 2025, a community engagement and networking session was held at St Clare’s Community Hall, Glenavy, led by the Head of Communities and jointly facilitated by Community Services and Community Planning. The session was attended by a wide range of local community organisation representatives, reflecting the diversity of groups active within Glenavy.

The primary focus of the session was to explore how best to utilise and connect Glenavy’s dispersed community groups to support delivery of the Glenavy Village Plan. Discussion centred on identifying practical ways existing groups could contribute to actioning priorities - such as environmental improvements, community wellbeing activities and local maintenance initiatives - while also considering whether new or more formalised structures could strengthen coordination, accountability and access to funding.

The session highlighted strong community assets, including local knowledge, volunteering capacity and established relationships, alongside shared challenges around coordination, sustainability and communication between groups. Importantly, the discussion supported a shift from isolated activity towards more collaborative, place-based working, with Council acting as an enabler and connector rather than a sole delivery body.

This engagement has helped clarify how community capacity can be better leveraged to support implementation of the Village Plan, informing next steps around networking, skills development and governance options. It also reinforces the role of Village Planning as a practical mechanism for translating community insight into coordinated action, aligned with Council and partner or community/voluntary sector priorities.

Case Study: Bus Shelter Installation – Crumlin Road, Glenavy

Overview

A new bus shelter has been successfully installed on Crumlin Road, Glenavy, funded through the Small Settlements Regeneration Programme. The project responds directly to identified local need for improved public transport infrastructure, particularly supporting school pupils and residents who rely on daily bus services.

Identifying the Need

Local feedback highlighted the lack of adequate shelter for individuals waiting on public transport along this route. This was of particular concern for:

- School children travelling to and from local schools
- Older residents and vulnerable users
- Commuters exposed to adverse weather conditions

The absence of suitable infrastructure impacted both safety and accessibility, reinforcing the need for intervention.

Project Delivery

The installation was delivered through partnership working, with funding secured via the Small Settlements Regeneration Programme.

- Bus shelter installed on-site (Crumlin Road, Glenavy)
- NIE connection scheduled to enable lighting
- Final reinstatement works to follow installation

This coordinated approach ensured efficient delivery and minimal disruption.

Impact and Benefits

The new bus shelter provides immediate and tangible benefits to the local community:

- Improved safety and comfort for school pupils and daily commuters
- Enhanced accessibility for all users, particularly during poor weather
- Support for sustainable travel, encouraging use of public transport
- Visible local investment, contributing to community confidence and wellbeing

SECTION 3: Statutory Indicators – Self Assessment

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council is committed to meeting and, where possible, exceeding the standards set by central government departments through the following seven statutory performance indicators. Below are the results for 2025/26, the council's data for 2024/25 and 2023/24 has also been included to show comparisons.

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Standard to be met (annually)	Result 2023/24	Result 2024/25	Year End 2025/26	Explanation of 2025/2026 result
ED1	The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity (Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client led business plans under the Department of Economy's Regional Start Initiative or its successor programmes.)	85 (DfE) 116 (GfI)	73	119	158	This business start-up activity is the delivery of the statutory jobs promotion target as set by Department for the Economy (DfE) via the Business Support Programme "Go Succeed". The LCCC statutory target was historically for 85 jobs annually. However, DfE introduced a new annual target of 116 jobs in June 2023. The 2025/26 figure is an internal estimate by LCCC and is due to be finalised by the lead Council for the Programme, Belfast City Council. This is expected to be finalised during the summer 2026.
P1	The average processing time of major planning applications [An application in the category of major development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015(a)]	Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 30 weeks.	56.4	59.2	62.4	LCCC demonstrates consistent performance over a three-year period in terms of the processing of this type of application. Some obstacles remain in achieving performance of a 30-week turnaround for major applications in terms of the need to secure section 76 planning agreements. This adds significantly to the overall processing time for applications and is not taken into account by the Department when this key performance indicator was designed.

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Standard to be met (annually)	Result 2023/24	2024/25	Year End 2025/26	Explanation of 2025/2026 result
P2	The average processing time of local planning applications [Local applications mean an application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and any other applications for approval or consent under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (or any orders or regulations made under that Act)]	Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 15 weeks.	42.4 weeks	38.8 weeks	29.4 weeks	There was a decrease in average processing times of 9.4 weeks. The ability to achieve good performance was constrained by a number of factors including a backlog of older applications. The Council has demonstrated continuous improvement over a three-year period by decreasing the average processing time for this category of application. It should be noted that the council processed approximately 50 more applications than it received. There remains a continued focus on reducing the backlog of older applications and the improvement project is continued with the aim of significantly reducing the median time taken to process local applications in the incoming financial year.
P3	The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks [Enforcement cases are investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under Part 5 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (or under any orders or regulations made under that Act). (b).]	70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.	83.3%	69.6%	68.3%	The council did not meet this target for the second year by 1.7%. The enforcement team remain impacted by changes in personnel and an increase in the number of cased received this year. A programme of capacity building is implemented to provide additional resilience in the team. There is a continued focus on ensuring that the performance returns to the levels of previous years. This is exemplified by the performance figure remaining broadly consistent with the previous year despite an increase in the number of cases received.
W1	The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)	50%	50.9%	50.4%	TBC (*unverified until the NI Local Authority Collected*	LCCC has achieved a household waste preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting rate, KPI of over 50%. Performance improvement is required to increase municipal waste recycling rates, in line with the Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Standard to be met (annually)	Result 2023/24	2024/25	Year End 2025/26	Explanation of 2025/2026 result
	[Household waste is as defined in Article 2 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997(a) and the Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013(b)]				*Municipal Waste Statistics annual report is published later this year.*)	Work on the harmonisation of kerbside dry recycling collections has recommenced with a decision made by Council in May 2026 to introduce a harmonised 3 bin service to all households to include the collection of glass at the kerbside. The service will be introduced in a phased manner with all households in receipt of the same service in 2027. *The validated 2025/2026 figure will be included in the NIEA NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Statistics annual report when published later this year. (Approx. November 2026)*
W2	The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste (BLACMW) that is landfilled [Local authority collected municipal waste is as defined in section 21 of the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003(c)]	16,444 tonnes	14,098 tonnes	12,544 tonnes	TBC (*unverified until the NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Statistics annual report is published later this year.*)	NILAS targets were set until 2019/20 so while there was no target for 2024/25 it is the expectation that levels of BLACMW should remain within the final year allowance. *The validated 2025/2026 figure will be included in the NIEA NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Statistics annual report when published later this year. (Approx. November 2026)*
W3	The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings [Local authority collected municipal waste arisings is the total amount of local authority collected municipal	N/A	77,617 tonnes	78,738 tonnes	TBC (*unverified until the NI Local Authority Collected Municipal*	*The validated 2025/2026 figure will be included in the NIEA NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Statistics annual report when published later this year. (Approx. November 2026)*

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Standard to be met (annually)	Result 2023/24	2024/25	Year End 2025/26	Explanation of 2025/2026 result
	waste which has been collected by a district council]				*Waste Statistics annual report is published later this year.*)	

SECTION 4: Comparing LCCC performance with other NI councils

Since 2017, The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Section 92 requires councils to compare their performance, so far as reasonably practicable, against the performance during that and previous financial years of other councils.

Comparative data remains limited while councils continue to work with the Department for Communities to develop a consistent benchmarking framework. This sector-wide work is ongoing and aims to provide clearer, more transparent comparisons that support improvement and benefit ratepayers.

The following section provides a comparison of LCCC with the other 10 NI council's performance under the statutory KPIs. In addition to this, comparisons have been made in two other areas namely Absence and Prompt Payments.

It should be noted that only data available in the public domain has been used for these comparisons. In some cases, 2023/24 is the most up to date annual, validated data available.

Planning Key Performance Indicators

In the 2025/26 business year, 629 local applications were received, and 681 local decisions issued (figure does not include 93 withdrawn applications). The Annual Statistical Bulletin 2025/26 confirms that LCCC presented an average processing time of 29.4 weeks. Based on the Annual Statistical Bulletin 2025/26 LCCC was one of four Councils who reduced processing time for local applications and at 9.4 weeks had the largest reduction in processing times for all Council Areas.

The Council continued its focus on managing older applications out of the system to allow for a return to good performance. This is exemplified by the improvement in processing times described above and a reduction in the number of live applications over one year in the system from 344 at 31 March 2025 to 225 at 31 March 2026.

With regard to major applications, 8 were received and 9 were decided. The Annual Statistical Bulletin 2025/26 confirms that LCCC presented an average processing time of 62.4 weeks. When compared with the Northern Ireland average the Annual Statistical Bulletin 2025/26 reports a performance of 41.4 weeks. LCCC continue to maintain consistent performance in the processing of this type of application.

Some obstacles remain in achieving performance of a 30-week turnaround for major applications in terms of the need to secure section 76 planning agreements. This adds significantly to the overall processing time for applications and is not taken into account by the Department when this key performance indicator was designed. It should be further noted the numbers of applications falling into this category are small. One old application can skew the figures and mask what is otherwise good performance.

A copy of the Annual Statistical Bulletin 2025/26 can be accessed using this link:
Northern Ireland planning statistics April 2025 - March 2026 | Department for Infrastructure

Economic Development KPI comparisons

During 2023/24 the ‘Go For It’ programme was replaced by ‘Go-Succeed’ (also known as NI Enterprise Support Service – NIESS) as a new service with Belfast City Council (BCC) taking over the reigns as the lead council from LCCC.

LCCC are unable to provide a comparative performance table with other councils, as this data is now managed centrally by the Programme Management Office (PMO) within Belfast City Council, the lead council for the Go Succeed programme. The release of benchmarking or comparative performance information is expected to follow internal validation and external audit and best placed to come directly from Belfast City Council. BCC has confirmed that internal Council verification for the period from November 2023 (start of Go-Succeed) to February 2025 (inclusive) has been completed. To date this information has not been published.

In terms of LCCC’s individual Business Start performance, recent statutory target outputs are outlined below:

LCCC Statutory Target Outputs		
Year	**Jobs Created**	**Comment**
2025/26	158 (Internally Verified Only)	Awaiting BCC External Audit - Awaiting BCC External Vouch
2024/25	119 (Internally Verified Only)	Awaiting BCC External Audit - Awaiting BCC External Vouch
2023/24	73 (Internally Verified Only)	Delayed start and challenging rollout of Go Succeed - Awaiting BCC External Vouch
2022/23	113 (Verified)	Verified by LCCC and Externally Vouched
2021/22	129 (Verified)	Verified by LCCC and Externally Vouched
2020/21	106 (Verified)	Verified by LCCC and Externally Vouched – Impacted by COVID-19
2019/20	112 (Verified)	Verified by LCCC and Externally Vouched

Summary:

With the exception of 2020/21, which was impacted by COVID-19, and 2023/24, the challenging Go Succeed launch year, LCCC’s Business Start performance has remained consistent and strong. LCCC have surpassed this year’s target of 116 jobs and created 158 actual jobs.

Waste data KPI comparisons

Waste data for performance comparison purposes is based on the Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics Annual Report 2024/2025, published in November 2025. This is the most up to date annual, validated data available.

This report provides both summary and detailed figures on the amount of local authority collected municipal waste in Northern Ireland in the latest reporting year.

Some key points relating to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council are summarised below:

- its Local Authority Collected municipal waste arisings increased from 77,617 tonnes in 2023/24 to 78,739 tonnes in 2024/25
- its household waste preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting rate was 50.4% down from 50.9% the previous year
- overall, there was considerable variation between household waste dry recycling rates. Derry City & Strabane recorded the highest dry recycling rate at 29.3%, whilst Lisburn & Castlereagh recorded one of the lowest rates at 18.6% below the NI average of 23.5%
- the Lisburn & Castlereagh household waste composting rate was 31.5%, a decrease from the 33% recorded for 2023/24, but above the NI average of 27.2%
- its household waste landfill rate of 32.6% reported for 2024/25 was above the NI average of 13.8%
- the Landfill Allowance Scheme (NI) Regulations 2004 (as amended) placed a statutory responsibility on councils, in each scheme year, to landfill no more than the quantity of biodegradable waste for which they had allowances. The scheme concluded at the end of the 2019/20 financial year. However, the continued monitoring of biodegradable waste is required for existing target commitments which specify it must be reduced to 35 per cent of the total amount (by weight) of biodegradable municipal waste produced in 1995. The L&CCC allocation for 2019/20 was 16,444 tonnes with the council landfilling 12,544 tonnes of Biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste in 2024/25

Targets in the Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) for municipal waste as follows:

- 55% recycling by 2025
- 60% recycling by 2030
- 65% recycling by 2035
- the amount of municipal waste landfilled to be reduced to 10% or less of the total amount of municipal waste generated by 2035

In 2024/25, LCCC recycled 50.8% of municipal waste (down from 51.3% in 2023/24) and landfilled 32.6% of municipal waste (compared to 37.8% the previous year).

Comparison of absence figures

Northern Ireland Audit Office – Local Government Audit Report December 2025
Although no absence figures have yet been published for 2025/2026, the Northern Ireland Audit Office advised the following in its Local Government Audit Report dated 11 December 2025:

"Staff sickness absence rates across the public sector were significantly impacted by the global pandemic. In all eleven councils, absence levels reduced during the early stages of the pandemic in 2020-21 to their lowest over the previous five years. However, as the pandemic ended and restrictions eased, this trend has reversed. In overall terms, the average 17.1 days absence per council staff member in 2023-24 is higher than the 16.9 days in 2022-23. This upward trend is also apparent across the vast majority of the eleven councils."

Number of days lost to sickness absence per year

COUNCIL	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Antrim and Newtownabbey	11.9	13.7	13.2	11.4	19.7	17.7	13.6
Ards and North Down	16.2	14.2	14.2	10.6	14.2	15.7	16.3
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	16.1	16.7	18.3	15.7	20.5	19.9	18.8
Belfast	13.7	13.7	13.6	10.9	16.3	17.1	17.0
Causeway Coast and Glens	15.8	17.1	17.7	12.4	19.2	17.0	18.1
Derry City and Strabane	14.0	12.3	14.5	10.4	16.8	16.5	18.7
Fermanagh and Omagh	12.9	10.4	13.8	9.7	13.1	11.9	12.8
Lisburn City and Castlereagh	16.7	13.3	13.8	11.5	13.6	15.8	18.4
Mid and East Antrim	17.1	14.1	10.6	4.7	15.2	17.9	17.0
Mid Ulster	12.4	12.9	11.7	9.7	12.1	13.1	13.2
Newry, Mourne and Down	17.1	14.7	15.8	13.6	20.7	23.3	23.9

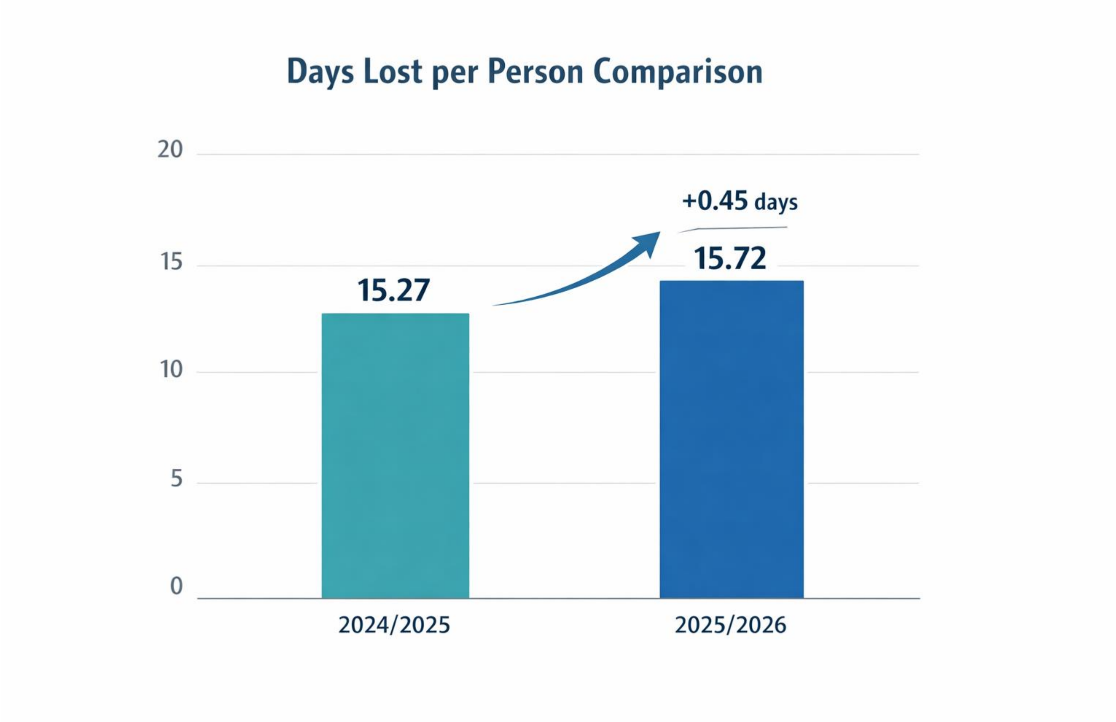
In the NIAO report for 2023/2024, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council recorded the fourth highest number of sickness absence days per employee at 18.4.

No further absence information has been published by the Department for Communities or the Northern Ireland Audit Office for the 2024/2025 or 2025/2026 periods.

Council's Absence Trend
This report compares the Council's sickness absence position in the 2024/2025 financial year with that of 2025/2026.

In 2024/2025, the Council reported 15.27 days lost per person.

For 2025/2026, the Council reported 15.72 days lost per person, representing an increase of 0.45 days compared with 2024/2025.
A year-on-year comparison of the Council's sickness absence levels is set out below.



The Council maintains a strategic approach to absence management through proactive and preventative interventions. Regular meetings continue to take place with Directors, Heads of Service, individual units and line managers to review absence trends within their respective teams. These meetings are prioritised in service areas with the highest levels of sickness absence. As part of this process, detailed absence reports for each service area are considered at management meetings in order to identify areas requiring improvement.

HR & OD continues to provide Directors and Heads of Service with monthly sickness absence reports. These reports support management in monitoring and analysing attendance trends, enabling informed decision-making and early intervention. They also assist in identifying patterns of absence, supporting employee wellbeing, and ensuring the consistent application of attendance management policies.

HR clinics continue to be delivered in areas with the highest sickness absence rates, providing managers with targeted support and practical guidance to assist them in addressing attendance issues effectively.

A comprehensive training programme was developed and delivered to support implementation of the new Managing Attendance Policy and Procedure. This training has continued to ensure that new line managers understand their responsibilities under the revised policy and are equipped with the skills and resources required to manage sickness absence effectively within their teams.

Health & Wellbeing

A focus group has been established with representatives from across the Council, including Leisure, Community and Wellbeing, and Environmental Services. The group has two main purposes: first, to help plan health and wellbeing initiatives; and second, to identify targeted initiatives for operational units with higher sickness absence rates and lower engagement with previous health and wellbeing activity.

A Health and Wellbeing Strategy has been developed and implemented to help foster a supportive workplace culture. The Council continues to benefit from its network of 21 trained Mental Health First Aiders. These employees provide initial support to colleagues experiencing mental health difficulties in the workplace and are trained to recognise early signs of poor mental health. Their contribution helps maintain a supportive working environment and ensures that employees can access timely guidance and signposting to appropriate support services.

A dedicated HR representative supports the management of long- and short-term sickness absence, working in partnership with managers and adopting a supportive, coaching-based approach to attendance issues. In addition, a temporary HR & OD Adviser was recruited to help embed the new Managing Attendance Policy and Procedure and to support line managers in conducting monthly absence review meetings with employees who are absent due to long-term sickness.

The Council offers a range of voluntary contribution healthcare schemes and has organised both in person, and virtual presentations for staff to help promote these services.

The HR & OD Unit is working to ensure that information and support relating to mental health concerns are available and accessible to both managers and employees through a range of channels, including StayWell, the Council's health and wellbeing hub, the confidential counselling service, and Health and Wellbeing bulletins providing advice on a variety of topics, including national wellbeing days.

A range of health and wellbeing activities took place during 2025/2026, which align with the four health and wellbeing pillars set out in the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

USEL

The Council continues to work in partnership with USEL, a government-based organisation that supports employers in managing absence related to physical impairment or mental health issues. Services such as physiotherapy and counselling are available at no cost to the Council.

The Employment Services Officer remains in regular contact with employees, normally on a fortnightly basis.

At the end of 2025/2026 period, 10 employees were participating in the Workable (NI) Programme and the Condition Management Programme with USEL.

Employees must either be in work or preparing to return to the workplace in order to access the programme. Those referred to the relevant programmes are receiving support and assistance.

Absence Reporting

Absence management reports are provided monthly to the Corporate Management Team as part of the Corporate Health Dashboard. Reports are also provided quarterly to the Corporate Services Committee and the Governance & Audit Committee as part of the Council's KPIs.

Directors and Heads of Service receive monthly sickness absence statistics to support effective monitoring and management of sickness absence levels within their service areas.

In addition, the Council reviews how non-compliance issues are captured and reported to ensure that sickness absence is managed as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Overall, the report shows a modest increase in days lost per person in 2025/2026 compared with 2024/2025. However, the Council continues to take a proactive and structured approach to attendance management through regular monitoring, targeted management intervention, wellbeing initiatives and partnership support. These measures are intended to support employees effectively while promoting improved attendance across the organisation.

Comparison of Prompt Payment Information

Data summarising DfC Quarterly Prompt Payment Reports

Council Name	21/22			22/23			23/24			24/25			25/26		
	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days	within 10 days	within 30 days	outside 30 days
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	13,855	17,101	4,232	12,999	17,938	4,625	18,300	22,083	4,315	17,912	20,239	1,801	17,309	19,547	1,783
Ards and North Down Borough Council	13,649	15,826	329	13,997	17,468	626	12,702	16,842	634	14,558	20,179	1,398	14,573	20,173	1,477
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	11,957	20,659	1,053	15,408	21,457	1,209	18,850	22,706	885	17,390	22,365	1,357	17,924	23,287	1,730
Belfast City Council	57,882	66,649	4,553	72,656	79,378	7,081	61,301	70,456	5,173	53,191	61,691	7,433	87,557	95,441	3,692
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	17,823	23,839	2,117	17,367	23,220	2,421	20,126	24,146	3,507	21,660	25,631	2,454	21,799	25,830	3,013
Derry City and Strabane District Council	5,375	13,311	7,273	7,881	16,838	6,066	8,390	18,074	3,897	8,733	18,476	3,870	8,828	19,310	3,645
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	14,553	16,077	1,095	15,431	16,957	751	14,615	15,548	901	14,369	15,101	581	14,605	15,366	535
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	**13,898**	**16,006**	**1,491**	**13,338**	**15,380**	**2,247**	**11,478**	**15,826**	**2,012**	**9,771**	**13,470**	**4,162**	**15,059**	**17,279**	**776**
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	27,210	38,164	2,120	29,230	34,130	5,171	17,093	21,250	4,843	18,147	22,454	1,356	21,216	27,684	3,108
Mid Ulster District Council	18,790	19,953	284	17668	18024	100	16673	16827	37	17144	17512	22	16,054	16,327	45
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	3,042	15,442	1,998	6,730	13,746	2,243	8,832	16,812	887	7,559	15,380	917	5,580	15,999	1,780
Total	198,034	263,027	26,545	222,705	274,536	32,540	208,360	260,570	27,091	200,434	252,498	25,351	240,504	296,243	21,584
			289,572			307,076			287,661			277,849			317,827

Source: Unaudited data from Department for Communities quarterly publications

21/22	68.39%	90.83%	9.17%
22/23	72.52%	89.40%	10.60%
23/24	72.43%	90.58%	9.42%
24/25	72.14%	90.88%	9.12%
25/26	75.67%	93.21%	6.79%

Comparison of LCCC 'prompt payment' performance with NI councils

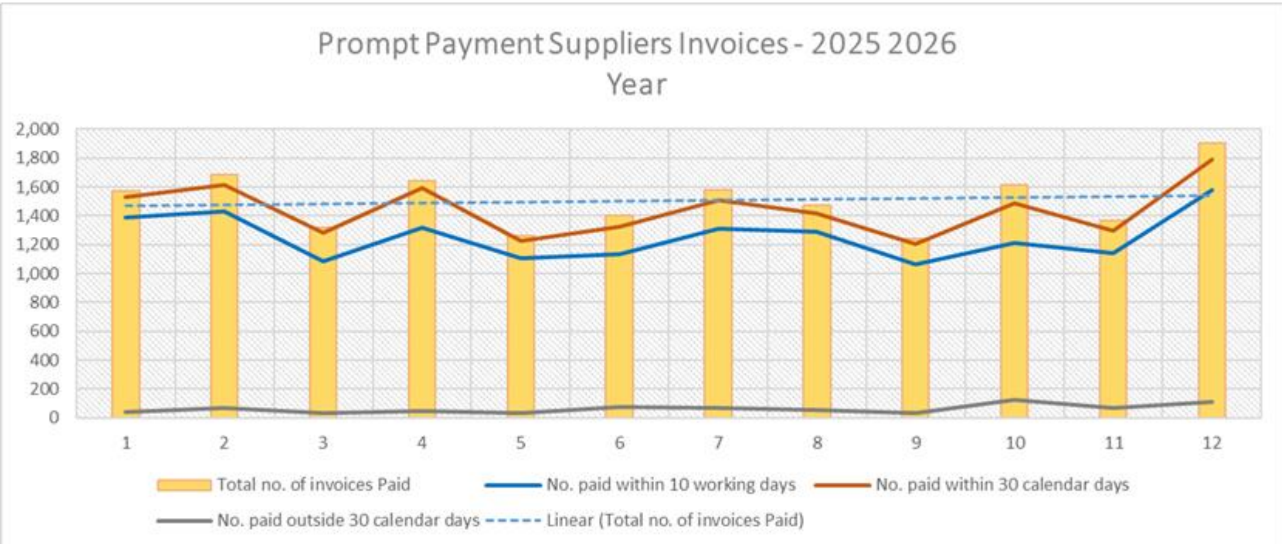
The table on previous page shows prompt payment performance statistics for all councils in Northern Ireland over the past 5 years.

Comparing Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council with the other councils, the following table details how LCCC ranks compared to the other 10 Northern Ireland Councils:

Payment Made	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
Within 10 Days	5th	5th	9th	9th	4th
Within 30 Days	8th	7th	7th	11th	4th
Outside 30 Days	8th	7th	7th	11th	4th
Invoices Paid	17,497	17,627	17,838	17,632	18,055
Total Invoices Paid by Councils	289,572	307,076	287,661	277,849	317,827
% Paid by LCCC	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%

A caveat of the information above is that there may be inconsistencies in the way data is collated within individual councils therefore direct comparison may not be meaningful.

LCCC has demonstrated measurable improvement in payment times compared to previous years and continues to undertake a structured review of its processes to support ongoing enhancement.



SECTION 5: Self-assessment of Self-Imposed Indicators

The council had 35 internal KPI's during 2025/2026 to monitor and track operational performance across all functional areas. These internal KPIs were categorised into 26 Performance Improvement and 9 Self-imposed (Corporate Plan) KPIs. (*Details of these can be found in appendix 1& 2*)

Performance Improvement KPI'S

Performance Improvement	Number of KPI's	KPI's Achieved	% Achieved
Ability to Measure KPI	26	20	77%

26 Performance Improvement KPIs were based on measurement in year.

20 were achieved by the end of March therefore 77% of our Performance Improvement KPIs scheduled for completion at the end of the financial year were achieved.

Below are some highlights of the KPIs which were achieved in 25/26:

1. A citizen consultation framework was developed and launched.
2. As a result of successful Community Conversations in Lisburn South, a village plan was developed for Ballymacash.
3. The Glenavy Village Plan Actions were delivered upon, these included; installation of a new playpark in Killultagh housing development, installation of a new bus shelter at Lyngrove, replacement of existing bins and increased capacity of bins in Glenavy, establishment of a pedestrian crossing in the village and capacity building with the local community groups as well as biodiversity projects delivered within schools.
4. Approx 0.28% of collected waste going to landfill through the residual waste treatment contract.
5. Approx 83% of supplier invoices paid within 10 days.
6. Approx. 96% of supplier invoices paid within 30 days.
7. 161 residents within our area have participated in the various Labour Market Partnership Programmes, giving them the opportunity to pursue new employment outcomes. This far exceeded the target set of 100 per annum.
8. We delivered specialist employability support and advice to 64 residents with a disability. This was an increase of 156% on our target of 25 residents.

The five KPIs which were not on target at the end of the financial year have specific reasons for not being achieved. These are set out below:

- KPI 148: The % of older applications that were more than 18 months old, did not meet the target of 90%. This was an ambitious target and very good progress was made in reducing our backlog of older applications in real terms. The total number of older applications was reduced by 214 (*based on 298 older applications as at 31st March 2025).
- KPI 219: The Village plan for Downshire West was not completed but will be carried forward into 26/27.

- KPI 235: The implementation of the Planning validation checklist was pending due to the formal public consultation process which is now complete. Draft validation checklist being amended to reflect comments received. Subject to Committee approval it is intended to bring forward a direction of adopt the checklist in Q2 of the 26/27 financial year.
- KPI 235: Proportion of invalid applications returned within 5 working days, this KPI cannot be measured because it is linked to above implementation of the validation checklist.
- KPI 258: Average rolling year absence was 15.72 days at the end of Q4 and the target was 14. This was because of the long term absence that had increased in January, February and March. Work is on-going with targeted units to identify ways forward on individual cases to reduce this.

The 1 KPI that was nearly achieved at the end of the financial year had the following reason:

- KPI 234: Average processing time for local planning applications. The target was 20 and the actual was 22.8. In Q4 the KPI was only missed by 2.8 weeks and it validates as previously stated that good progress is made in improving processing times.

Appendix 1 *provides a detailed breakdown of how we performed against each performance improvement KPI. They were analysed either on a quarterly basis or at the end of the financial year.*

Corporate Plan - Self-imposed KPI'S

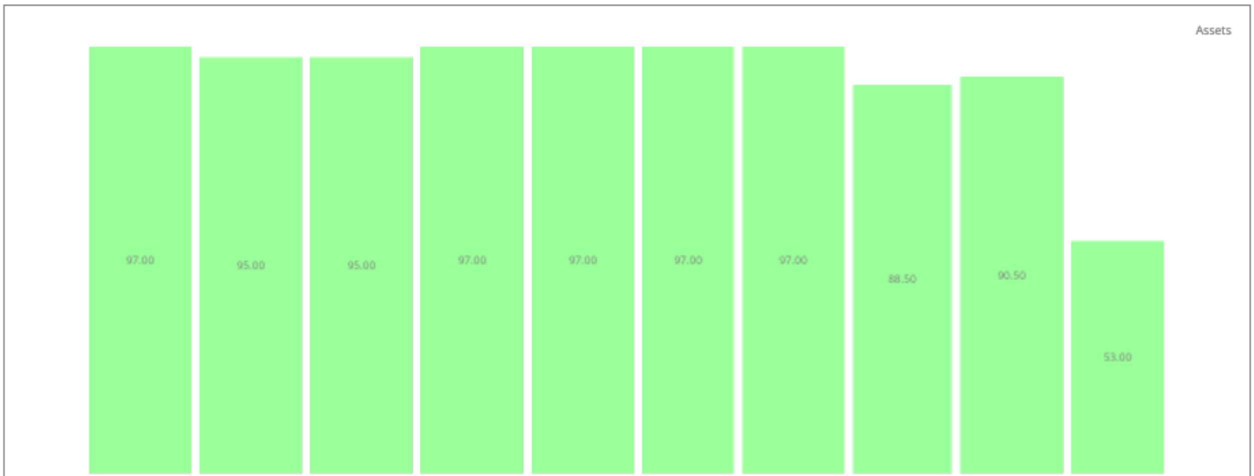
Corporate Plan	Number of KPI's	KPI's Achieved	% Achieved
Ability to Measure KPI	9	8	89%

Corporate Plan 2024-2028 Theme	KPI	Target 2025/26	Actual 2025/26	Result
Civic Leadership	Assets Rental from the Council's leased assets - % Lettable areas within the Council's available leased assets	80%	90.5%	⬆
Prosperity	Number of new jobs per annum	160	175	⬆
	Further projects with BRCD: Destination Royal Hillsborough Programme including planning permission	Yes	Yes	➡
	Capital Programme % Expenditure measured against Budget	95%	82.93%	⬇
People	Number of Health & Wellbeing Programmes	80	115	⬆
	Number of participants on the Health & Wellbeing Programmes	1800	9237	⬆
	Number of Community Events	100	219	⬆
Planet	Progress the Dundonald International Ice Bowl redevelopment. (DIIB project proceeding to Construction Phase and building complete)	60%	60%	➡
	Enhance burial provision - Number of new grave plots in operation (cumulative)	400	438	⬆

During 2025/26 a review of all KPIs was undertaken, with the organisation's suite of indicators categorised into; Performance improvement KPIs, Self-imposed (Corporate Plan KPIs) and Management Information KPIs. The Self-imposed (Corporate Plan KPIs) were reviewed in detail during 2025/26 to make them specific to the Corporate Plan 2024-28. The number of Self-imposed (Corporate Plan KPIs) for 2025/26 was reduced to 9 from 51 in 2024/25.

During 2025/26 there were 9 corporate plan / self-imposed KPIs. 8 were achieved by the end of March therefore 89% of our self-imposed KPIs scheduled for completion at the end of the financial year were achieved. 1 was not met and this KPI related to the Capital Programme Expenditure measured against Budget, this KPI is being carried forward into 26/27 for further measurement. Overall, performance against the Corporate Plan self-imposed KPIs was strong, with 8 out of 9 KPIs achieved (89%). The table on the on the previous page shows that most themes of the Corporate Plan were either met or exceeded target, with the main area of underperformance relating to one measure under Prosperity.

Performance under the theme of Civic Leadership was strong. The KPI measuring the percentage of lettable areas within the council's available leased assets exceeded target, achieving 90.5% against a target of 80%. The graph below shows strong performance in the management of the Council's leased assets during 2025/26.



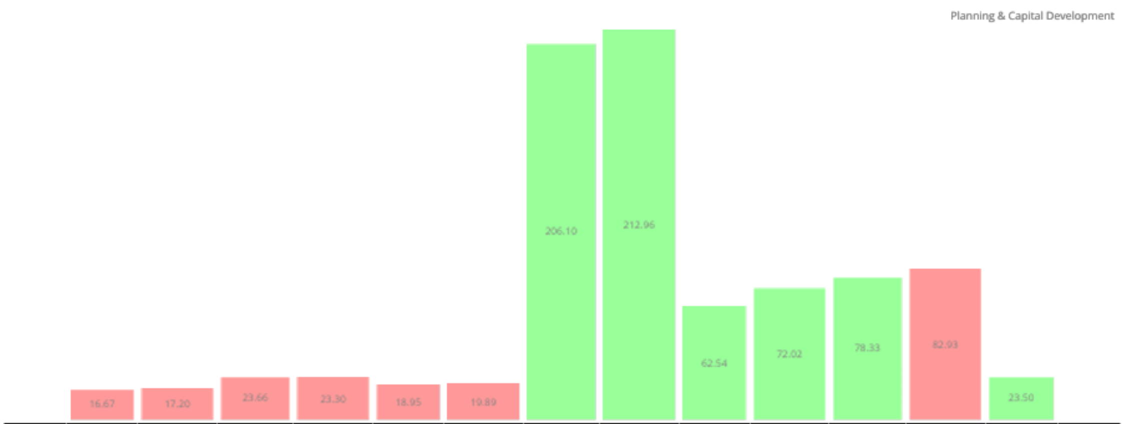
Date	Apr 2023	Oct 2023	Apr 2024	Oct 2024	Apr 2025	Jul 2025	Oct 2025	Jan 2026	Apr 2026	Jul 2026
Target	90	90	90	90	90	80	80	80	80	48
Actual	97.00	95.00	95.00	97.00	97.00	97.00	97.00	88.50	90.50	53.00

212 : Assets
% Lettable areas within the Council's available leased assets

This indicates that the Council made effective use of its available leased estate, with a high proportion of space available for rental or occupation. The result demonstrates positive asset utilisation and supports the Council's wider aim of managing its resources efficiently and maximising value from its property portfolio.

Performance under the Prosperity theme was mixed, with two KPIs achieved and one not achieved. Number of new jobs per annum exceeded target, with 175 jobs achieved against a target of 160. Destination Royal Hillsborough / BRCD planning milestone was achieved.

The graph below shows that capital programme expenditure increased across the year but did not reach the year-end target. By the end of 2025/26, the Council had achieved 82.93% expenditure against budget, compared with the target of 95%.



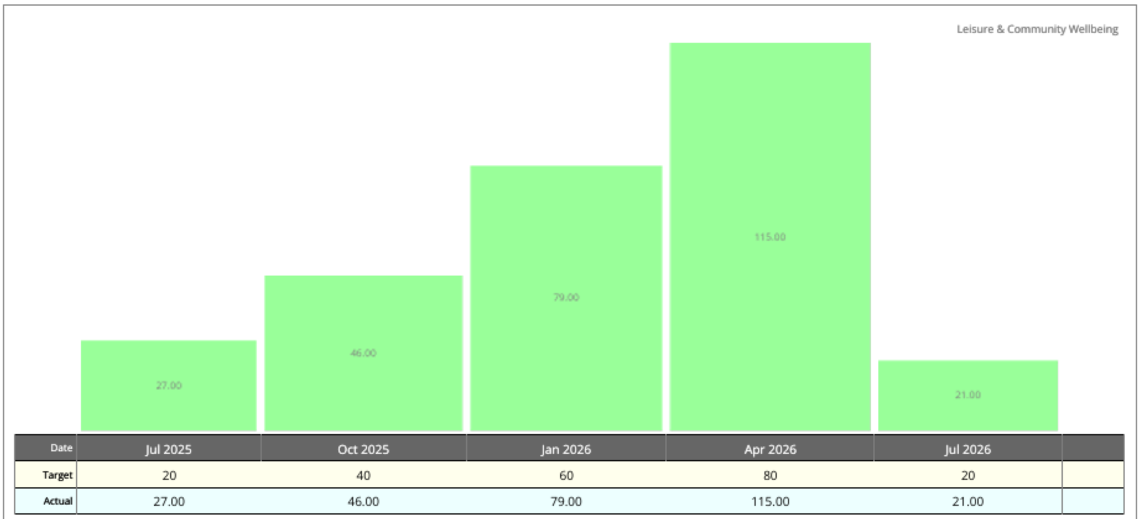
Date	Jul 2023	Oct 2023	Jan 2024	Apr 2024	Jul 2024	Oct 2024	Jan 2025	Apr 2025	Jul 2025	Oct 2025	Jan 2026	Apr 2026	Jul 2026
Target	20	40	60	80	20	40	60	80	20	40	70	95	20
Actual	16.67	17.20	23.66	23.30	18.95	19.89	206.10	212.96	62.54	72.02	78.33	82.93	23.50

228 : Capital Programme
Cumulative % Expenditure against budget

This indicates that while a significant proportion of planned capital investment was delivered, some expenditure was delayed or reprofiled beyond the financial year. The underperformance reflects slippage in the timing of capital project delivery rather than a lack of focus on the programme. This KPI will be carried forward into 2026/27 to support continued monitoring of capital delivery and budget performance.

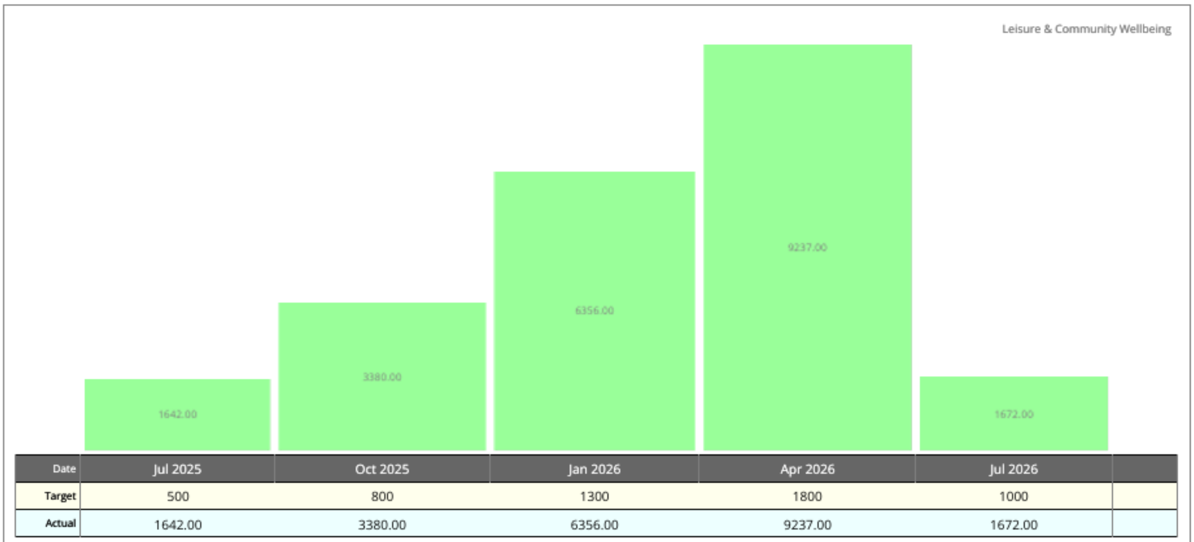
This means the Prosperity theme delivered strongly in relation to jobs and strategic project progression, but capital spend fell below expectation, likely reflecting delays or slippage in project delivery rather than lack of activity.

Performance under People was particularly strong, with all three KPIs significantly exceeding target: The graph below shows very strong performance in the delivery of health and wellbeing activity during 2025/26. The Council delivered 115 health and wellbeing programmes against a target of 80, exceeding the target by 35 programmes. Participation



262 : Health & Wellbeing
Number of Health & Wellbeing Programmes (cumulative)

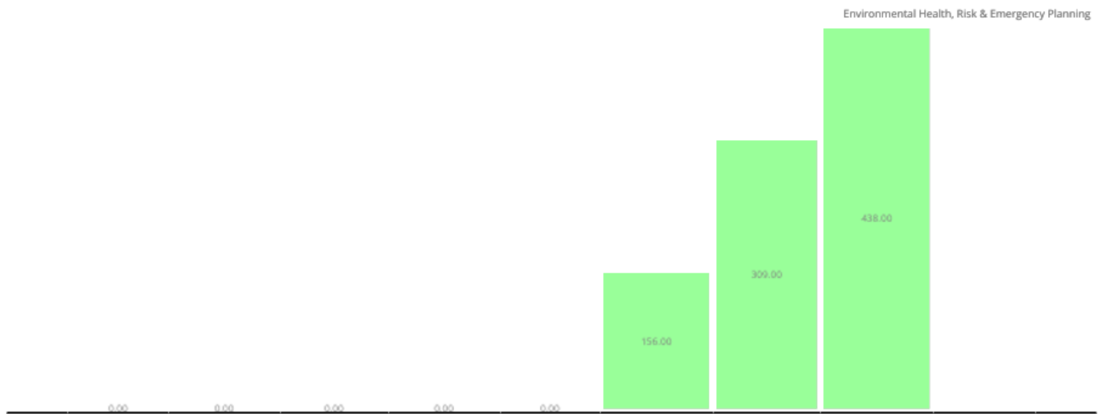
was also significantly higher than expected, with 9,237 participants taking part against a target of 1,800 (see graph below).



262 : Health & Wellbeing
Number of participants on the Health & Wellbeing programmes (cumulative)

In addition, 219 community events were delivered against a target of 100. This suggests exceptionally high delivery and engagement under the People theme and demonstrates strong demand for health, wellbeing and community-based activities. It also shows that the Council exceeded its planned contribution to supporting people to live healthier, more connected and fulfilling lives.

Performance under the Planet theme was positive, with both measurable KPIs achieved: Dundonald International Ice Bowl redevelopment reached its target milestone of 60%. The graph below, shows positive performance in relation to enhanced burial provision during 2025/26. The Council exceeded its target of 400 new grave plots in operation, achieving 438 by year end. This represents strong progress in increasing burial capacity and demonstrates



Date	Jul 2024	Oct 2024	Jan 2025	Apr 2025	Jul 2025	Oct 2025	Jan 2026	Apr 2026	Jul 2026
Target	0	0	0	1	50	150	300	400	50
Actual	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	156.00	309.00	438.00	

246 : Enhance burial provision
Number of new grave plots in operation (cumulative)

effective delivery against the Corporate Plan measure. The result supports the Council's wider commitment to ensuring appropriate, sustainable and well-managed local infrastructure for residents.

Appendix 2 *provides a detailed breakdown of how the council performed against each self-imposed KPI, including explanatory notes where necessary. The KPIs were analysed on a quarterly basis (where possible).*

Appendix 1 – Performance Improvement KPIs

Planning & Capital Development

148 : Older Applications Reduce the % of older applications that are more 18 months old

Reduce the % of older applications that are more 18 months old (*based on 298 older applications as at 31st March 2025)

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	20%	40%	70%	90%
Actual	28%	50%	61%	71.81%
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 During this quarter 84 older applications were processed and the target was exceeded. This however means that the statutory target for local applications could not be met as our focus remained on processing older applications.

2 Q2 - target met.

3 There was limited opportunity to perform against this measure in December which impacted adversely on our ability to meet the target for quarter 3.

4 The total number of older applications has been reduced by 214. While the target of 90% was not reached this was due to a number of operational constraints. This was an ambitious target and very good progress was made in reducing our backlog of older applications in real terms.

Communities

219 : Community Conversations In Lisburn South and Downshire West

Village plan developed for Lisburn South (Ballymacash) by end of September 25

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	No	Yes	Yes
Actual	No	No	Yes	Yes
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 Community consultation will be held in Ballymacash on the evening of 4 September and an Action Plan produced by end September

2 Community consultation was held in Ballymacash on the evening of 3rd September and a draft Action Plan has been produced. A refined version of the Ballymacash Village Action Plan will be presented back to community representatives and partners on 9 October 2025 for review, agreement, and forward progression.

3 The Ballymacash Village Action Plan was presented back to community representatives and partners on 9 October 2025. The plan was endorsed by attendees and is now being progressed, with delivery actions led by partners and supported through ongoing Community Planning engagement and monitoring.

4 Community Planning updated and discussed with the Ballymacash Interagency Forum in March 2026 on Village Plan progress.

Village plan developed for Downshire West by end March 26

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	No	No	Yes
Actual	No	No	No	No
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 Waiting for confirmation that Moira will be the location for the new Village Plan.

2 Discussions are still on-going in regards to specific location of the next Village Plan

3 The location of the next Village Plan has not yet been confirmed. Further internal scoping discussions are underway to inform a decision.

4 Progress has been made in advancing the Village Planning Programme, with a proposed structured delivery model of five village plans for 2026-27 under consideration and a proposed schedule of DEA sequencing under consideration to support a coordinated rollout across this time period.

Innovation

225 : Engagement Methods Implementation of framework

Development of citizen consultation framework

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Actual	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 In development and brought to CMT in Q2.

2 Citizen Engagement Framework presented to CMT and agreed as an internal document.

3 The Framework has been agreed and is being presented to CMT week beginning 12th January, this will then be taken to committee in February. Once approved at Committee and ratified it will immediately be available and promoted for use across council.

4 The Framework has been approved through February CSC. Framework being demonstrated to all DMTs.

Launch of citizen consultation framework

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Actual	No	No	No	Yes
		* 1	* 2	* 3

Notes:

1 Citizen Engagement Framework has been presented to CMT and approved in principle, to be shared with Departments and launched on website at end of Q3.

2 Framework has been agreed and is being presented to CMT week beginning 12th January, this will then be taken to committee in February. Once approved at Committee and ratified it will immediately be available and promoted for use across council and will be launched on website in Quarter 4.

3 The Framework has been approved through February CSC. Framework being demonstrated to all DMTs. Framework available on Intranet and Website has a live consultation page

Measure the number of consultations by Directorate

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	No	Yes	Yes
Actual	No	No	No	Yes
			* 1	* 2

Notes:

1 The framework is a guidance document being developed for all officers. The measurement of the number of consultations will be developed when the framework is launched in Q4.

2 1. Performance Improvement Plan 2. Carryduff Household Recycling Centre Redevelopment 3. Proposed Development at Barbour Park 4. Planning Application Validation Checklist

Create a consultation page on website

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	No	No	Yes
Actual	No	No	No	Yes
				* 1

Notes:

1 Created and live on website including previous consultations that have closed.

Economic Development

226 : Labour Market Partnership programme Participants

Number of participants in the Labour Market Partnership programme (cumulative)

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	0	20	60	100
Actual	0	55	75	161
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:	**1** During Quarter 1 the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership launched their first programme to be delivered as part of the 25/26 Action Plan. 12 participants completed the Classroom Assistant Academy. During this period, time has been spent on developing programmes and associated tender documentation with the aim to launch in September 2025. **2** During Quarter 2 the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership launched a range of programmes as part of the 25/26 Action Plan. The remainder of the programmes outlined in the 25/26 Action Plan will be launched during Quarter 3. **3** During Quarter 3 the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership launched a range of programmes as part of the 25/26 Action Plan. The remainder of the programmes outlined in the 25/26 Action Plan will be launched during Quarter 4. **4** During Quarter 4, the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership launched and delivered an extensive portfolio of Skills Academies across areas such as Digital, Welding, Renewable Technologies, and Classroom Assistant support. Alongside this, an Employee Upskilling Programme was introduced, offering a variety of management qualifications to help develop staff skills. Additional funding was also secured, allowing a further 40 participants to take part in an engaging Gamified Learning programme.

Planning & Capital Development

234 : Local Applications (Internal KPI) Average processing time for local planning applications. (Processed from date valid to decision issued or withdrawn within an average of 22.5 weeks)

Reduce the average processing times to 22.5 weeks by year end. (assuming a starting point of 42.5 weeks)

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	39	30	25	20
Actual	47.8 * 1	25.6 * 2	22.4	22.8 * 3

Notes:

1 There has been a continued focus on the processing of older applications which is still reflected in the processing times reported in this quarter. It should be noted however that 78 more applications were decided in this period than were received, given that significant numbers of older applications are being processed it is expected to achieve better performance closer to the statutory target for this indicator by the end of the year.

2 It is expected to achieve better performance closer to the statutory target for this indicator by the end of the year but it is unlikely to meet the average processing times of 22.5 weeks for the year.

3 In Q4 the KPI was only missed by 2.8 weeks and it validates as previously stated that good progress is made in improving processing times. It should be noted however that these comments are confined solely to performance in Q4. This should be distinguished from our end of year performance which is measured as an average of our performance over 12 months. It is anticipated that the average processing time for the end of year will be 29.4 weeks which means that we did not meet our performance target of 22.5 weeks for year end, by approximately 7 weeks.

235 : Planning Service Improvement Programme Monitoring the implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Programme during 25/26

Implementation of the validation checklist

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Actual	No	No * 1	No * 2	No * 3

Notes:

1 Stakeholder engagement has been concluded. Formal Public consultation process is now taking place for 12 weeks and we cannot proceed until the outcome of that process is known.

2 Stakeholder engagement has been concluded. Formal Public consultation process is ongoing and due to close on 23 February 2026. Cannot proceed until the outcome of that process is known.

3 Public consultation completed. Draft validation checklist being amended to reflect comments received. Subject to Committee approval it is intended to bring forward a direction of adopt the checklist in Q2 of the 26/27 financial year.

Proportion of invalid applications returned within 5 working days Q3 75% Q4 90%

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	0%	0%	75%	90%
Actual	0%	0%	Cannot be measured% * 1	Cannot be measured% * 2

Notes:

1 Cannot be measured - linked to above implementation of the validation checklist.

2 Cannot be measured - linked to above implementation of the validation checklist.

254 : Inclusivity Delivery of specialist employability support and advice for those with a disability.

Number of people supported (cumulative)

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	0	5	15	25
Actual	0	23	23	64
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 The Lisburn Castlereagh LMP delivered an employability event specifically targeting individuals with a disability or long-term health condition. The event focused on the provision of specialist advice and support regarding services available across the Council area. In addition to the DisAbility Employability event delivered by the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership on 26th June 2025, we will also deliver a specialist employment programme for those with a disability that will provide qualifications, mentoring and employment support for 25 residents. This programme will go to tender in July with a planned launch to commence in September 2025.

2 The Lisburn Castlereagh LMP delivered an employability event specifically targeting employers of individuals with a disability or long-term health condition. The event focused on the provision of specialist advice and support for those considering providing employment opportunities for individuals with a disability. In addition to the Be Inclusive event delivered by the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership, we will also deliver two specialist employment programme for those with a disability that will provide qualifications, mentoring and employment support for 45 residents. These programmes will be launched in Quarter 3.

3 In Q2 we supported 23 in total, therefore, this overachievement covers the Q3 target. This figure also doesn't include the 2 disability focused programmes (Thrive and Graduate) which aim to support an additional 45 participants. The recruitment hasn't been completed for these programmes so while it shows as a 0 in Q3 by Q4 we will have recruited in full. Overall it is anticipated that our annual return will have supported 78 in total which exceeds the annual KPI target of 25.

4 In Q4, we supported 10 participants through our Graduate Programme and a further 35 through our THRIVE programme. Both programmes help local residents build their skills, gain relevant qualifications, and access mentoring, while also connecting them with employers to support them into suitable local employment. In addition, we delivered another training session on our Be Inclusive toolkit, which provides employers with practical advice and support on recruiting and supporting staff who may face additional barriers or have a disability.

Recruitment onto specialist programme of support

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Actual	No	No	No	Yes
		* 1	* 2	* 3

Notes:

1 In addition to the Be Inclusive event delivered by the Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership, we will also deliver two specialist employment programme for those with a disability that will provide qualifications, mentoring and employment support for 45 residents. These programmes will be launched in Quarter 3.

2 Recruitment onto the programme has commenced but will not be officially verified until Q4

3 In Q4, we supported 10 participants through our Graduate Programme and a further 35 through our THRIVE programme. Both programmes were fully recruited.

Delivery of accredited training

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	No	Yes	Yes
Actual	No	No	No	Yes
			* 1	* 2

Notes:

1 Training will commence once recruitment onto the programme has been completed.

2 Yes – through two of our specialist support programmes, participants were provided with a range of qualifications designed to enhance their career paths. These qualifications were tailored to individual needs, rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach.

Receive bespoke mentoring tailored to each individual action plan

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	No	No	Yes
Actual	No	No	No	Yes
				* 1

Notes:

1 Through two of our specialist support programmes, participants were provided with a bespoke action plan and individual mentoring support.

Supporting participants on their journey Employment / Further Education

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	No	No	Yes
Actual	No	No	No	Yes *1

Notes:

1 Through two of our specialist support programmes, participants were connected with local employers committed to creating inclusive workplaces. Support included interview preparation, employer engagement, and ongoing guidance to help participants move into employment / education.

HR&OD

258 : Staff Absenteeism

Average Rolling year absence

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	15.5	15.0	14.5	14
Actual	14.23	14.76	14.28	15.72 *1

Notes:

1 Long term absence has increased in January, February and March. Work is on-going with targeted units to identify ways forward on individual cases to reduce this.

Communities

259 : Glenavy Village Plan Actions

Installation of new playpark in Killultagh housing development by end of Q1

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Actual	Yes *1	Yes *2	Yes *3	Yes *4

Notes:

1 Completed by Parks Dept in April and funded through the Small Settlements Fund.

2 The Parks Department completed the installation of the new playpark. It was funded through the Small Settlements Fund and is now fully operational.

3 The Parks Department completed the installation of the new playpark. It was funded through the Small Settlements Fund and is now fully operational.

4 Project was completed in qtr 2.

Installation of new bus shelter at Lyngrove by end of Q2

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Actual	No *1	No *2	No *3	Yes *4

Notes:

1 Regeneration & Growth Committee approved this in June and written consent has been given to DfI, on behalf of Translink to adopt the four square metres of land, who are applying for planning permission.

2 A planning application has been submitted to LCCC Planning for the shelter. Awaiting planning decision.

3 This was installed in January. A further update will be provided in the Q4 report.

4 This has been progressed with the installation of the bus shelter at Lyngrove Hill/Crumlin Road, Glenavy (funded through the Small Settlements Regeneration Programme).

Replacement of existing bins and increased capacity of bins in Glenavy area.

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Actual	Yes *1	Yes *2	Yes	Yes

Notes:

1 Completed by Waste Management

2 Waste Management has completed this action. New bins have been installed in key locations across the Glenavy area, with enhanced capacity now in operation.

Establishment of a pedestrian crossing in the village of Glenavy.

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	No	No	No	Yes
Actual	No *1	No *2	No *3	Yes *4

Notes:

1 Economic Development taking forward , and will follow up with DfI in terms of the process. Further update to follow.

2 The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has responded to the request for a pedestrian crossing on Glenavy Road, confirming that while a survey was conducted in November 2023, the location did not rank highly against other sites based on assessed need. DfI uses a consistent, criteria-based process that considers pedestrian and vehicle volumes, traffic speed, road width, proximity to amenities, vulnerability of users, and collision history. Although the Glenavy Road site does not meet current thresholds for funding, it will remain on the DfI list for future consideration should priorities or conditions change.

3 The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has responded to the request for a pedestrian crossing on Glenavy Road, confirming that while a survey was conducted in November 2023, the location did not rank highly against other sites based on assessed need. DfI uses a consistent, criteria-based process that considers pedestrian and vehicle volumes, traffic speed, road width, proximity to amenities, vulnerability of users, and collision history. Although the Glenavy Road site does not meet current thresholds for funding, it will remain on the DfI list for future consideration should priorities or conditions change.

4 No further action as per previous quarterly update.

Capacity building with local community groups (cumulative)

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	1	2	3	4
Actual	1	2	3	4
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 A networking event was held at St Clare's Community Hall in Glenavy with local community organisations to identify needs on 29 Jan 2025. Following this, accredited food hygiene and CPR training has been delivered. Further engagement through a subsequent networking event is planned for Sep 2025.

2 A second networking session is scheduled for November 2025. Community Planning will also attend the November 2025 Community Services Connection event to share updates on completed or unfeasible actions in the Glenavy Village Plan.

3 A community networking and update event was held at St Clare's Community Hall, Glenavy, in December 2025, bringing together local community organisations to identify needs, share progress and support delivery of the Glenavy Village Plan. This session built on earlier engagement and strengthened coordination between local groups, Community Services and Community Planning. The December 2025 session provided an opportunity to present the latest position on the Glenavy Village Plan, confirm completed and in-progress actions, gather further community feedback, and reinforce shared priorities across physical, community and environmental themes. Community Planning will continue to engage with local networks and attend relevant Community Services connection events to share updates on progress, including actions that are completed, ongoing or no longer feasible, ensuring transparency and continued community involvement in delivery.

4 The next Community Network event is planned for summer 2026. This event will also present the opportunity to continue working closely with the local organisational network to enhance the aspiration for further capacity building.

Biodiversity projects with schools / woodland & horticulture events in Glenavy throughout year (cumulative)

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	1	2	3	4
Actual	1	2	3	4
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 Ballymacrickett Primary School has a lovely woodland area and the Community Engagement Officer in Parks Dept worked with a group of pupils in autumn 2024 doing tree identification and seed collection. She returned to the school in Dec bringing a range of bulbs and worked with the eco counsellors and children from the afterschool club to plant the bulbs in flower beds surrounding the school. The primary school has great outdoor facilities with a mini forest, raised beds for vegetables and they are in the process of building an outdoor classroom.

2 Ballymacrickett Primary School has actively participated in this work. This action is complete.

3 A bulb planting session with completed with Ballymacrickett PS on Wednesday 10th December. Approximately 60 children participated in the planting and really enjoyed the activity.

4 Ballymacricket Primary School Eco Team continues to play a key role in promoting environmental awareness, leading activities such as recycling, planting, litter reduction and peer education, while maintaining their Green Eco Schools flag status. Pupils participated in practical workshops including the construction of bird and bat boxes, pond exploration and wildlife observation, supporting hands-on learning in biodiversity. In addition, recently pupils engaged in a trout rearing project, observing development from eggs to fry prior to release, supported by Glenavy Conservation and Angling Club.

Operational Services					
263 : Waste collection % of collected waste going to landfill through the residual waste treatment contract					
		Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Less than 10% of our collected waste will go to landfill	Target	10%	10%	10%	10%
	Actual	0%	0.24%	0.31%	0.28%

Finance					
268 : Finance Prompt payments					
		Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
% of supplier invoices paid within 10 days	Target	65%	70%	75%	80%
	Actual	85.2%	82.62%	85.55%	80.54% * 1
Notes:	1 Overall average for the year 83.41%				
		Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
% of supplier invoices paid within 30 days	Target	88%	90%	92%	95%
	Actual	96.81%	96.44%	96.11%	93.66% * 1
Notes:	1 Slight reduction in quarter 4. Overall average for the year 95.7%				

Appendix 2 – Self Imposed Key Performance Indicators (Corporate Plan KPIs)

Economic Development

38 : New Jobs Number per annum

Number of new jobs linked to economic development programmes (cumulative)

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	15	40	70	160
Actual	34	72	113	175
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 Belfast City Council – Go-Succeed PMO have not verified Qtr.1 numbers

2 This is a cumulative figure, 38 jobs in Q2. LCCC still awaiting Belfast City Council – Go-Succeed PMO to verify Qtr.2 numbers

3 Actual Total is a cumulative figure. New jobs for Q3 - 41. Belfast City Council, PMO still to verify Go Succeed numbers

4 During Q4 delivery of the 25/26 LMP Action Plan a total of 42 jobs were created. PMO Suggested - 20 (Jan-Feb Only) LCCC has raised concern with Belfast City Council PMO regarding potential discrepancies in statutory job calculations. Additionally, March figures yet to be finalised by BCC PMO.

Assets

212 : Assets Rental from the Council's leased assets

% Lettable areas within the Council's available leased assets

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	80%	80%	80%	80%
Actual	97%	97%	88.5%%	90.5%%
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:

1 The majority of the remaining lettable space within Bradford Court has been agreed for lease to a Government Agency. The two vacant units at Ballyoran have been agreed by way of license and the agreements are in progress with solicitors.

2 There has been no change in the % Lettable areas within the Council's available leased assets since Q1. The tenancy of Bradford Court is due to increase going forward and will therefore impact on this KPI.

3 Lease agreements have now been signed with NIO, however there are a total of 6 properties that we are in the process of completing the leases on.

4 Five lease agreements are still being processed for completion by solicitors.

Planning & Capital Development

228 : Capital Programme Expenditure measured against Budget

Cumulative % Expenditure against budget

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	20%	40%	70%	95%
Actual	62.54%	72.02%	78.33%	82.93%
		* 1	* 2	* 3

Notes:

1 Committed spend within capital programme as at the end of period 6 (quarter 2) is 72.02%. This figures includes actual spend to date plus committed orders. This is mainly due to the profiled spend being committed by purchase order on the DIIB redevelopment project.

2 Committed spend within capital programme as at the end of period 9 (quarter 3) is 78.33%. This figures includes actual spend to date plus committed orders. This is mainly due to the profiled spend being committed by purchase order on the DIIB redevelopment project.

3 Commitments are excluded from Q4 report as they have rolled forward to the next financial year and no longer have an impact on 25/26 figures. Q4 report reflects only the actual spend to date. Previous quarters included committed.

Regeneration & Growth

245 : Progress the Dundonald International Ice Bowl redevelopment. DIIB project proceeding to Construction Phase and building complete

Building completion		Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
	Target	30%	40%	50%	60%
	Actual	30%	40%	50%	60%

Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning

246 : Enhance burial provision Increase number of plots in line with outline business case

Number of new grave plots in operation (cumulative)		Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
	Target	50	150	300	400
	Actual	0 *1	156 *2	309 *3	438 *4

Notes:

1 Contractor procured during Q1. Contractor commenced onsite in July 2025. A further update will be provided at the end of Q2.

2 156 graves developed, with 98 available for release.

3 309 graves available for sale

4 438 graves available for sale.

Innovation

247 : Further projects with BRCD: Destination Royal Hillsborough Programme including planning and award of contracts.

Planning permission by end Q2		Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
	Target	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Actual	No	No *1	No *2	Yes *3

Notes:

1 The key reasons for not achieving planning permission are as follows: - The complete set of design drawings were not provided to LCCC by the designers at the exact date they were requested, there was a delay with one drawing. - HED have not responded with their views on the revised drawings and given the Heritage aspect of this village it would be foolish to proceed without HED input. - DfI had a few minor issues with the new drawings and these needed to be amended by the design team

2 Planning application was approved at Planning Committee on Monday 12th January 2026. This will be reflected in the Q4 KPI.

3 Planning application was approved at Planning Committee on Monday 12th January 2026

Leisure & Community Wellbeing

262 : Health & Wellbeing Programmes & events

Number of Health & Wellbeing Programmes (cumulative)		Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
	Target	20	40	60	80
	Actual	27	46 *1	79 *2	115 *3

Notes:

1 In quarter 2 there were an additional 19 health and wellbeing programmes delivered with10 programmes delivered through Outreach and Inclusion and nine through the Health and wellbeing officer .

2 In quarter 3 there were an additional 33 programmes; 14 were delivered by the health and wellbeing officer and 19 programmes were delivered by the outreach and inclusion officer.

3 In quarter 4 there were an additional 36 programmes; 21 were delivered by the health and wellbeing officer and 15 programmes were delivered by the outreach and inclusion officer.

Number of participants on the Health & Wellbeing programmes (cumulative)		Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
	Target	500	800	1300	1800
	Actual	1642 *1	3380 *2	6356 *3	9237 *4

Notes:	**1** Subsequent to the KPI being set a number of new programmes such as Pilates in the park were introduced by the Wellbeing team and they have proven to be very popular. Given that a number of these activities are seasonal the numbers will reduce after Q2. **2** In quarter 2 there were an additional 19 health and wellbeing programmes delivered with 10 programmes delivered through Outreach and Inclusion and nine through the Health and wellbeing officer. The Outreach and Inclusion programmes had 209 participants during this period while the health & wellbeing programmes had 1529 participants during this period, bringing the total to 19 programmes with 1738 participants in Quarter 2. Subsequent to the KPI being set a number of new programmes such as Pilates in the park were introduced by the Wellbeing team and they have proven to be very popular. Given that a number of these activities are seasonal the numbers will reduce after Q2. Their popularity could not have been anticipated when the targets for these programmes and participants were set. Due to the quick inception of the newly established Health & Wellbeing structure, officers were able to increase the number of classes along with securing in year funding from the Trust. **3** In Q3 there were an additional 2,976 participants in all of the health & wellbeing programmes. 510 participated in the outreach and inclusion programmes and 2466 in the health & wellbeing programmes. Their popularity could not have been anticipated when the targets for these programmes and participants were set. Due to the quick inception of the newly established Health & Wellbeing structure, officers were able to increase the number of classes along with securing in year funding from the Trust. **4** In Q4 there were an additional 2,881 participants in all of the health & wellbeing programmes. 302 participated in the outreach and inclusion programmes and 2579 in the health & wellbeing programmes. Their popularity could not have been anticipated when the targets for these programmes and participants were set. Due to the quick inception of the newly established Health & Wellbeing structure, officers were able to increase the number of classes along with securing in year funding from the Trust.

Number of Community Events (Cumulative)

	Jul 25	Oct 25	Jan 26	Apr 26
Target	25	50	75	100
Actual	27	62	128	219
	* 1	* 2	* 3	* 4

Notes:	**1** 6 community events for Community Services, 10 Community Planning Events, 8 Age friendly events, 1 Mayors Parade, 2 Biodiversity **2** In Q2 35 Community events were held: PCSP = 12 events Community Services = 6 C Planning = 5 (Youth Councils and Ballymacash event) Age Friendly = 9 (Summer scheme) and Dementia Friendly Community Training + Ballybeen Walking Group + Dementia Info Day = 3 **3** In Q3 66 Community Events; Age Friendly – 4 Events Community Planning - 16 events PCSP - 46 events involving 2,565 persons **4** In Q4 91 Community Events; Age Friendly – 6 Events Community Planning / ILCLM & Arts - 15 events Community Services - 24 events PCSP - 46 events involving 1,185 persons

Appendix 3 – Annual Complaints Report 2025/26

Links below:-

https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/documents/d/guest/detailed-complaints-report-2025-26

https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/documents/d/guest/annual-dashboard-customer-care-complaints-and-compliments-2025-26

Contacts for Feedback and Review

If you would like further information or if you wish to get in touch, please do so by one of the following methods:

Website: https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/w/performance-improvement

Telephone: Performance Improvement Officer on 028 9244 7415

Email: performance@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk

Write to Us: Performance Improvement Officer, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Civic Headquarters, Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn, BT27 4RL

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, on request, will take all reasonable steps to provide this document in alternative formats and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English.

www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/**performance**

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council