



Looking Back
Self-Assessment
Report **2023/2024**

CONTENTS

1. Introduction and context	2
2. Discharging the general duty to secure continuous improvement in 2023/24	4
3. The cost of our services	9
4. How we measure and analyse our performance	10
5. How did we do? Our Performance Results for 2023/24	11
6. Northern Ireland Audit Office proposals for improvement – arising from S.95 Audit and Assessment Report 2023/24.....	45
7. Your Opinion Matters	46
8. Alternative formats	46

1. Introduction and context

Introduction

Ards and North Down Borough Council is committed to being a high performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a positive difference for our Borough. At the heart of everything is our drive to continuously improve and deliver excellent quality services, whilst ensuring value for money.

This Self-Assessment Report provides a vehicle for the Council to determine its capacity and ability to deliver 'continuous improvement' by identifying areas where it is performing well and areas that will require particular attention in future years. By assessing where progress has been slower than expected or has not resulted in the levels of desired performance, it can review and adjust the way it uses its resources to ensure maximum benefit for the people living in, working in and visiting Ards and North Down.

This report sets out how the Council performed against its Corporate and Statutory Indicators in the 2023/24 year.

The Council would like to recognise the commitment and professionalism of all its employees during this period.

Context

The Council's Corporate Plan – Towards 2024 was aligned to the outcomes of the Big Plan (Community Plan) for Ards and North Down 2017-2032. It steered our strategic direction up until 2024, shaping our services and setting the performance indicators against which we measured our success.

The Corporate Plan - Towards 2024 set out our Vision for the Borough as "Ards and North Down is a vibrant, connected, healthy, safe and prosperous place to be."

To support achievement of the ambitions of the Corporate Plan, Council set six PEOPLE priorities, that guided our annual business planning process, ensuring that everything we did was aimed at contributing to our desired outcomes as set out in the Big Plan and ultimately delivering our vision for the Borough.

Our PEOPLE priorities were:

- Prosperity: Growing our local economy
- Environment: Growing a cleaner, greener local and global environment
- Opportunity: Growing the lifelong potential of our community
- Pride: Growing empowerment, respect and safety in our community
- Life: Growing the health and wellbeing of our residents
- Excellence: Growing a high-performing Council

The Corporate Plan was informed through a range of sources including public consultation with our residents that told us the top three priorities we should focus on were Life, Prosperity and Environment. During the early stages of the pandemic the Council carried out a Big Conversation Panel Survey around recovery from COVID-19. Residents told us that our focus should be on health and wellbeing, economic recovery and the environment,

further affirming the prioritisation in the Corporate Plan. In subsequent consultations and during consultation on our Performance Improvement Plan residents re-affirmed the top priorities as Prosperity (growing the economy and creating jobs) and Life (supporting businesses and residents to protect and improve their health) in 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

This year, 2024, has seen the Council launch its new and third Corporate Plan 2024-2028, which also aligns with the long-term aspirations of the Borough's Community Plan 2017-2032. The Corporate Plan serves as the Council's strategic framework for 2024-28, setting out our vision to be **A Sustainable Borough**.

The plan is driven by three corporate priorities:

1. **Economic** - Increasing economic growth by attracting more jobs and businesses.
2. **Environmental** - Reducing carbon emissions as we transition to net zero.
3. **Social** – Improving wellbeing through social inclusion and reduced inequalities.

The Plan outlines seven outcomes that support the three priorities. Each outcome is supported by strategic actions detailing the commitments the Council is making for the next four years.

Measures of success, to monitor progress and demonstrate if we have achieved what we set out to, have also been identified within our new Corporate Plan.

The Council is committed to improving our services and resident feedback is critical to this. We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of the year and have a continuous 'Your Opinion Matters' campaign. Suggestions for improvement initiatives can be sent to us by emailing yom@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk or contacting us at:

Transformation Team
Ards and North Down Borough Council
City Hall
The Castle
BANGOR
BT20 4BT

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Telephone: 0300 013 3333

2. Discharging the general duty to secure continuous improvement in 2023/24

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 places a duty upon Councils to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement and to account for it. At the beginning of each financial year, the Council is required to publish a Performance Improvement Plan, which sets out how it will discharge its duties in the financial year ahead, and by 30 September to publish a Self-Assessment Report to account for its improvement activity and review performance against the Improvement Objectives set in the preceding year.

We seek to discharge our duty to improve through Council's Performance Governance Framework, **PERFORM**, which ensures that the Council's strategic objectives are cascaded throughout the organisation.

At the highest level, **The Big Plan (Community Plan)**, published in April 2017, sets out strategic priorities for the Borough and includes details of the joint activity that will be undertaken by the strategic partners (including Council) to support the delivery of those priorities. The **Corporate Plan** outlines the Council's vision, priorities and objectives and describes its ambition for how local services will be delivered more efficiently and effectively for everyone. The Corporate Plan is underpinned by a number of secondary strategic plans and thematic strategies and supported by detailed operational service plans and individual development plans.

What is Improvement?

Improvement means more than just gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of the Council. It is about activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for the residents and businesses in Ards and North Down.

To demonstrate our commitment to improving the areas that matter most to our residents, our annual improvement plan and objectives are aligned to the outcomes set out in [The Big Plan](#) 2017-2032 (the Council's Community Plan) and supports the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Council is committed to ensuring that our improvement objectives are relevant, that the best arrangement for delivering them is in place and that the Council can understand and demonstrate the impact on the outcomes for its citizens. In its 2023/24 Performance Improvement Plan the Council set 5 Improvement Objectives:

PEOPLE priority	Improvement Objective
PROSPERITY	1. We will grow the economy and create jobs.
ENVIRONMENT	2. We will improve the cleanliness of the streets in our borough. 3. We will improve recycling rates.
LIFE	4. We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing.
EXCELLENCE	5. We will use technology to drive change.

and identified a number of local improvement indicators along with the seven statutory performance indicators for Waste, Planning and Economic Development.

Arrangements to secure continuous improvement

Section 90 of the Act requires a Council, during each financial year, to collect information which will allow it to assess its performance in achieving its improvement objectives and to measure its performance against performance indicators or standards set by the Department or any other indicators or standards which the Council chooses to use.

The Council has governance arrangements in place to assure accountability for improvement and to ensure the delivery of its plans takes place in an open, effective, honest and accountable manner.

These arrangements include:

- Alignment of the service planning and budget process to ensure all costs are included in the estimates
- An electronic performance management system, Ideagen, which can:
 - analyse data on a range of frequencies for trends and comparison
 - track the progress of indicators and actions
 - provide and communicate regular and robust performance information to Managers, Elected Members and the public
- Half yearly reporting on Service Plans to relevant standing committees; in December and June
- Half yearly reporting on progress against the Performance Improvement Plan to Audit Committee; in December and June¹ (only reported in June for 2023/24 performance)
- Regular reporting on Capital Projects to Corporate Projects Portfolio Board (CPPB)
- Regular reporting on Transformation Projects to the Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme (STEP) Board
- Regular reporting on Estates Projects to the Estates Development Programme Board (EDPB)
- Reporting to Strategic Policy and Finance Group (SPFG) as and when required
- Appropriate risk management in relation to main programmes of work

These arrangements follow a Strategic Planning Timetable (see Figure 1 below) and are underpinned by the Council's Performance Governance Framework, **PERFORM**:

¹ From 2025/26 the Performance Improvement Plan will be reported to the Corporate Services Committee instead of Audit Committee

Plan

Stating what we will do and why - the Performance Planning and Management process will be used at the following levels:



Community Planning and Reporting, where a plan will be developed every 10-15 years, setting out shared objectives for the local area and its people, to be fulfilled by a range of organisations working in partnership. A review of the plan will be carried out every four years in advance of its fourth-year anniversary.

Corporate Planning and Reporting, where a plan will be developed every 4 years to set out objectives for the Council.

Performance Improvement Plans which set out the Council's plan for a single year.

Service Planning and Reporting, where a plan will be developed every year by each Council service.

Individual (and/or collective Team level) Planning and Reporting, where a plan will be delivered every year.

This approach is designed to facilitate alignment between Community, Corporate, Service and Individual plans, activities and the needs of our stakeholders. It will also focus on assessment of key risks, alignment of the Council's resources, processes and systems to consistently achieve strategic objectives.

Engage

Working together to achieve it - to inspire and motivate staff and stakeholders to be engaged with what the organisation seeks to deliver. It is likely to include focus on developing leadership, culture and values and will typically involve effective inductions, team building, cross-council team working and staff forums.

Resource

Putting our people and budgets where they are needed - to improve organisation and structural design, budget setting and management. It will involve recruitment, learning and development and system investment. It should also ensure a coordinated approach to the development of resources including staff.

Focus

Doing the right thing right – to ensure system and process alignment with organisational objectives. It is likely to involve carrying out service reviews, ongoing coaching, identifying process improvements, reviewing potential suitable systems and ensuring optimum use of systems, technology and equipment.

Operate

Getting on with the job - to ensure continuous improvement. It is designed to promote performance improvement, encourage innovation and share good practice. This will typically include ongoing benchmarking exercises to ensure we continually improve our practices and any other identified activities that would encourage continuous improvement.

Relate

Communicating with our stakeholders - to have successful communications. The aim is to encourage engagement and transparency; this stage will include decisions on communication and delivery, including internal/external communication methods, carrying out stakeholder surveys and receiving feedback including complaints. Stakeholder analysis and Partnership working are also likely to be included.

Manage

Reviewing how we are doing and managing improvements - to monitor and reward good performance and address under performance. This will involve reviewing scorecards, feedback etc. for each of the parties involved and determining actual measurement achieved against original objectives/targets.

Timeline	Activity
October – March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Planning process • Identification of areas for improvement • Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)/Head of Service Team (HoST) consultation on Service Plans and key areas for improvement • Residents Survey (every 2 years) • Budget Planning Process • Strike the Rate • Employee Appraisals begin • Service Plans approved by Standing Committees • Report on Performance to December Standing Committees (Quarter 1 and 2) • Report on Performance to December Audit Committee (Quarter 1 and 2) – <i>Reported in June for 2023/24</i>
April – May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with stakeholders • Consultation with employees • Consultation with Elected Members • Employee Appraisals complete
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Improvement Plan to CLT, Corporate Services Committee and ratification by Council • Publish on Council website by 30 June • Begin Self-Assessment review of prior year's performance • Submit Benchmarking statistics • Report on Performance to June Standing Committees (Quarter 3 and 4) • Report on Performance to June Audit Committee (Quarter 3 and 4)
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) Fieldwork • Draft Self-Assessment Report to CLT and HoST
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Assessment Report to Corporate Services Committee and ratification by Council • Publish Self-Assessment Report by 30 September • Budget Setting and Service Plan preparation

Figure 1 - Strategic Planning Timetable 2023/24

(From 2025/26 the Performance Improvement Plan will be reported to the Corporate Services Committee instead of Audit Committee)

We continually assess how we are performing against targets to ensure we are making a difference to our stakeholders. This process, along with delivery planning, is aligned to our corporate priorities, moves through monitoring and reporting performance and considers resident and service user feedback to ensure we identify improvement activity that will deliver positive outcomes.

Additionally, we continuously review the effectiveness of our performance arrangements in support of our General Duty to improve ensuring there are clear linkages between outcomes, priorities, and actions.

Further information on our performance can be found at [Performance Improvement - Ards and North Down Borough Council](#).

3. The cost of our services

A summary of our financial performance for 2023/24 is outlined below.

The Council continues to manage inflationary pressures when delivering services although it benefitted from the fall in energy prices during the year, helping offset another year of salary pressures.

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
	Gross Expenditure Outturn	Gross Expenditure Outturn	Gross Expenditure Outturn	Gross Expenditure Outturn
Environmental Health	2,707,000	2,710,100	3,310,512	2,535,062
Community and Culture	3,659,800	3,382,300	3,105,256	3,045,945
Leisure and Amenities (from 2022-23 split into 2 services)	-	-	3,827,436	3,476,156
Leisure	5,825,700	6,129,000	4,655,405	4,647,116
Parks and Cemeteries	4,897,200	4,794,400	-	-
Waste and Cleansing Services	18,583,900	17,768,300	16,347,141	16,175,333
Assets and Property Services	9,390,400	9,359,800	7,210,907	5,770,199
Regulatory Services (formerly Building Control, Licensing etc)	2,666,600	2,701,500	2,389,906	2,298,547
Regeneration	1,152,100	1,219,400	1,243,938	1,176,923
Economic Development	2,079,800	2,107,300	1,499,106	1,330,568
Planning	2,560,400	2,432,600	2,285,275	2,168,954
Tourism	1,653,500	1,833,000	1,409,763	862,231
Finance and Internal Audit	1,221,400	1,147,600	1,187,570	1,266,826
Performance and Projects (from 2019/2020 splits into 2 Services)	-	-	1,783,780	1,629,628
Strategic Transformation and Performance	2,185,700	1,973,500	-	-
Strategic Capital Development	490,900	394,500	339,731	315,250
HR and OD	1,115,900	1,159,200	1,140,210	1,102,945
Administration and Customer Services	4,755,500	4,663,200	3,625,543	3,419,563
Chief Executive's Office	1,896,500	1,547,000	1,239,110	1,136,873
Capital Financing	7,899,100	8,164,600	8,000,223	8,138,739
Total	74,741,400	73,487,300	64,600,812	60,496,858

Our financial statements will be available on the Council's [website](#) from October 2024.

4. How we measure and analyse our performance

Throughout the year, we use key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor how we are delivering services. The KPIs shown in this report are only some of the indicators we use and for the purposes of the report have been aggregated to give an overall assessment of our performance. The indicators we monitor are comprised of:

- **Statutory Indicators**
 - Waste Management - the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEARA) sets the Waste Management indicators and standards and publishes performance by council area on a quarterly basis through the NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics report - information may be accessed using the following link [Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/indicators/collected-municipal-waste-management-statistics)
 - Planning - the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) sets the Planning indicators and standards, which are published by council area on a quarterly basis. Information may be accessed using the following link: [Planning activity statistics | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/indicators/planning-activity-statistics)
 - Economic Development - set by the Department for the Economy (DfE)
- **Self-Imposed Indicators:**
 - Those set by services against the objectives and actions in their Service Plans
 - A suite of suggested indicators from the Department for Communities (DfC) to allow performance comparison across the sector

5. How did we do? Our Performance Results for 2023/24

A SUMMARY

.....OF THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

As a council we employ nearly 900 people to help deliver leisure and recreation, environmental health, waste collection, planning and many other services. In 2023/24 we worked hard to ensure that council services operated effectively and those who live in, work in and visit the Borough received high-quality services that provided value for money. This section illustrates some of our achievements over the past year.

In 2023/24:



Delivered **207 Business interventions**

to assist local businesses through business advice sessions and business research service

77 jobs created through the Go For It / Go Succeed Programmes

Achieved **83%**

residence satisfaction 😊



Increased Household Recycling to **55%**

Performing above NI Average



90,000m²

of Council Maintained

Out of the **25 businesses** a total of **1093 employees**



benefited from various Health and Wellbeing Initiatives on offer through the Small Grant Scheme.

Carried out **9239** Building Control (BC) inspections



3365 BC applications received, and **2440** Building Notice and

Regularisation Applications received with **2898** Property Certificate Applications being received



Issued **107 littering fines** and **16 Fixed Penalty Notices** for dog fouling



Planted **18,269** trees in the Borough



395 home safety visits completed, **2,338** pieces of equipment given out and **171 onward referrals** made



Delivered **£5.9 capital investment**

across the Borough



Reached over **700 Children** through participation in **7** Council and **3** Community Partner Summer Schemes

Delivered **126** diversionary/patrols/sessions to **2958** participants

Reduction in Anti-Social behaviour of **28%** at Bangor Aurora and Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex

Performance against our Corporate Plan Towards 2024

Council monitors performance against its Corporate Plan through biannual reports on Service Plans to Standing Committees. The following tables set out the aggregated values of the projects that support each of the Corporate Indicators.

Taking into account the ongoing financial and resource challenges the Council faces, it is confident that it is demonstrating good overall performance and will continue to develop, monitor and manage its activities to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.

PROSPERITY			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
£m investment delivered	935,467	1,248,667	1,954,754
Number of businesses supported	207	286	326
Number of jobs created from the “Start a Business” programme	77	133	189
Higher business occupancy rates	No data available		
£ increase in visitor economy	£52million tourism spend reported in Ards and North Down in 2023 (NISRA Local Government District figures). No data was available in 22/23 or 21/22.		

ENVIRONMENT			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Amount (tonnes) biodegradable waste sent to landfill	14,413	17,124	20,258
Tonnage of municipal solid waste sent to landfill	32,246	35,876	40,124
Amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Arisings	83,895	85,976	91,424
Cleanliness Index Score	73	76	74
£’s Investment <i>RCIF Projects</i>	25,000	80,092	18,494
Environmental Accreditations <i>2023/24: 1 ISO 14001 Environmental Management Accreditation, 5 Green Flags, 4 Seaside Awards, 4 In Bloom / Best Kept Awards, 1 Business in the Community – Environmental Survey Award, 5 Loo of the Year Awards</i>	20	16	13

OPPORTUNITY			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Number of Council work placement schemes	14	10	0
£’s invested through Sports Forum awards	£48,772	33,421	11,173
% increase in participation in Active Aging programmes <i>(Change to measure in year – Now calculated on the basis of all members over the age of 50)</i>	3,014	+20% (394)	+65% (329)
Number of skills programmes delivered <i>2023/24: 75 creative classes and 3 Arts based programmes delivered</i>	78	71	72

PRIDE			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Number of people volunteering on Council programmes	11	10	2
Number of interventions through the Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) team <i>2023/24: 126 diversionary/patrols/sessions to 2958 participants</i>	2958	985	439 ²
Number of Environmental Improvements			
Trees Planted	18,269	15,108	12,315
Projects supported	58	45	35
Hectares of Council maintained / ground rewilded	90,000	49,195	22,812

LIFE			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Number of active leisure members	32,862	28,953	25,511
Numbers attending wellbeing programmes funded by Council and delivered by Environmental Health and Economic Development	1093 (Across 25 Businesses)	491 Programme Change	364 (Across 45 businesses)
£'s invested in maintaining public spaces	4,086,408	3,745,893	3,124,863

EXCELLENCE			
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Investors in People accreditation status	Assessed every 3 years	Silver ³	Assessed every 3 years
Number of complaints	434	220	12
% transactions made through self-service channels			
Regulatory Services applications: <i>(Building Notice and Regularisation Applications)</i>	72%/81%	73%	58%
<i>(Online Property Certificates)</i>	72%		
Leisure Class bookings (Leisure Ards)	81%		
Leisure Class bookings (Leisure Ards)	92%	72%	80%
Leisure parties (ABMWLC)	99%	98%	90%
Leisure Splash and Minor Pool Session (Leisure Ards)	99%	97%	90%
Leisure Memberships ⁴ (Leisure Ards)	67%	99%	0%
Number of Planning Portal applications	785	163 ⁵	N/A
Income sourced per head of population	£81.87	£76.50	£62.63
% payments to suppliers within 10 working days	73%	77%	84%
Cost per head of population	£373.31	£356	£341
% Resident Satisfaction	83%	Measured every 2 years	82%
% Staff reporting ANDBC is a great place to work	In line with Investors in People	71%	70%

² Data for 2021-22 only recorded between 1 December 2021 and 31 March 2022

³ Maintained Silver status from 2019/20

⁴ Leisure facilities closed due to Covid 19. This figure takes account of child add on, Pars and Gold members who cannot apply online. Council staff applications also must be done in centre. Drop in online applications in 2023/24 due to the implementation of a new Leisure Management system, so more applications may have been done manually in the early stages.

⁵ No figures are available for the period 17 October 2022 – 31 March 2023






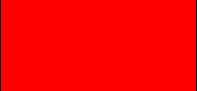
The following Improvement Objectives are based on an analysis of performance measures reported as part of the normal Service Planning process which underpinned the Corporate Plan Towards 2024 and the Big Plan for Ards and North Down 2017-2032. Further information on our performance can be found at

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

Big Plan Outcome All people in Ards and North Down	Corporate Plan Towards 2024 PEOPLE priority
benefit from a prosperous economy	Prosperity We will create the conditions for businesses to start, grow, thrive, provide opportunities for employment and be sustainable
feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment	Environment We will grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our towns, villages, countryside and coast
fulfil their lifelong potential	Opportunity We will work with partners to develop the potential of our residents, young and old
live in communities where they are respected, are safe and feel secure	Pride We will partner with our community to develop positive relationships, community pride, respect and safety
enjoy good health and wellbeing	Life We will support the physical and emotional wellbeing of our residents through our services, facilities and partnerships
	Excellence We will work to be a high-performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a sustainable, positive difference for our Borough

Performance Key

The key outlined below provides definitions for the three Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status levels that have been chosen to measure progress, and the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status levels which have been chosen to determine our overall assessment of progress.

RAG Status	Definition	RAG Overall assessment of progress	Definition
	Target/standard, actions and measures are of concern and are mostly falling short of plan		The majority of measures are on target
	Target/standard, actions and measures are ongoing, but some are falling short of plan		At least 25% of the measures in this outcome are slightly below target
	Target/standard, actions and measures are on track		At least 50% of the measures in this outcome are significantly below target

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST PIP 2023/24

The undernoted table gives an aggregated assessment of the Council's performance against the Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24. The tables following give details of the outcomes of each of the activities against each objective.

PEOPLE priority	Improvement Objective	Aggregated RAG
PROSPERITY	1. We will grow the economy and create jobs	Red
ENVIRONMENT	2. We will improve the cleanliness of the streets	Yellow
	3. We will improve the Borough's recycling rates	Green
LIFE	4. We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing	Green
EXCELLENCE	5. We will use technology to drive change	Green

Each of the areas are described in detail in the following section of this report.

PROSPERITY

Improvement Objective 1: We will grow the economy and create jobs

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support more local businesses to start-up, develop and grow Attract more investment and visitors to the Borough Greater prosperity through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy More people working in better jobs Create a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest Create conditions for businesses to start, grow and thrive, provide job opportunities and be sustainable
How we said we were going to do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and deliver programmes to enhance physical and digital infrastructure Develop regeneration improvements in conjunction with Town Advisory Groups (TAGs) Commence Capital Schemes using funding from Covid Recovery Small Settlements Programme Work to optimise funding and collaborate with key partners to create and deliver innovative support initiatives Deliver Northern Ireland Enterprise Support Service (NIESS) which replaces previous “Go For It” and other general business support programmes Meet the Schedule 3 Planning Indicators of the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

How well did we perform?					
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Agree a technical design for Marine Gardens as part of the Queen’s Parade project with Bangor Marine by September 2023	Yes	No		-	-
Progress the Bangor Waterfront Scheme to agree a Development Agreement with Ballyholme Yacht Club by March 2024	Yes	Yes		-	-
Continue to work with the City/Town Advisory Groups to develop regeneration improvements for the urban areas and act as a conduit for other Council services (by March 2024) – No. of meetings held	10	10		20	
Commence delivery of the Portaferry Public Realm by September 2023 using funding secured from the Small Settlements Grant	Yes	Yes		-	-
Develop and deliver 6 projects using the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme	6	6		6	
Support 12 businesses through the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) programme	12	2		13	
Create 85 new jobs through “Go for it” Programme (Statutory Indicator – Target reset in-year)	117	77		101	
Create 123 new jobs through Enterprise Support Service (Statutory Indicator – Target reset in-year)	117	77		101	
Deliver 4 one-to-one mentoring sessions for Creative Industries Development	4	14		-	-
Deliver and implement the Digital Strategy Action Plan	Yes	Yes		-	-
Major Planning applications processed within an average of 30 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	30 weeks	84.7 weeks		104.5 weeks	
Local Planning applications processed within an average of 15 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	15 weeks	16 weeks		19.9 weeks	
70% of planning enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	70%	55.7%		62.9%	

ENVIRONMENT

Improvement Objective 2: We will improve the cleanliness of the streets

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the standard of cleanliness on our streets • Support residents to live and work sustainably by protecting the environment • AND residents feeling pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment • Grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our city, towns, villages, countryside and coast
How we said we were going to do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target identified problem areas for enhanced enforcement and street cleansing activities • Deliver "Live Here Love Here (LHLH)" grants through Recycling Investment Fund




How well did we perform?

Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Increase LEAMS Cleanliness Index Score to 80	80	73		75	
Regain top 3 position for Fixed Penalty Enforcement in NI	Yes	No		No	
Increase new maximum fine levels for fouling and litter in 2023	Yes	Yes		-	-
Deliver £25k grant funding by March 2024	£25,000	£25,000		-	-

ENVIRONMENT

Improvement Objective 3: We will improve the Borough's recycling rates

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Council's recycling rates • Support residents to live and work sustainably by protecting the environment • AND residents feeling pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment • Grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our city, towns, villages, countryside and coast
How we said we were going to do it	<p>Encourage householders to recycle more to reduce the tonnage of household waste being sent to landfill through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a full review of Council's Waste Management Services • Improve the Council's overall reuse, recycling and recovery rates • Add kerbside textiles collection to glass collection service • Deliver a schools'-based programme to encourage younger residents to understand the importance of our landscape, and the need to ensure that more sustainable lifestyle decisions become a part of daily life.

How well did we perform?					
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Reduce the tonnage of municipal solid waste sent to landfill to 35,000	35,000	32,246		35,876	
Increase % of household waste recycled, reused and composted to 60% (Statutory Target:55%)	60%	55.48%		52%	
Reduce biodegradable waste that is diverted from landfill	19,017	14,413		17,124	
Introduce kerbside collection of textiles by October 2023	Yes	No		-	-
Launch the Environmental, Learning, Lifestyle, Action (ELLA) Project by June 2023	Yes	Yes		-	-
Rollout ELLA Project to schools September 2023	20	69		-	-

LIFE

Improvement Objective 4: We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater awareness of health in the business community • Improved use of outdoor spaces • Provide safe and accessible public spaces • Enjoying long, healthy, active lives • All residents to enjoy good health and wellbeing • Enhanced physical and emotional wellbeing of residents through services, facilities and partnerships
How we said we were going to do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional resources for health and wellbeing and support utilising existing budgets • Provide open spaces and parks that are well maintained, managed in an environmentally sustainable manner, accessible to all and to improve biodiversity in the Borough.

How well did we perform?

Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Increase the number of business employees registering for Health and Wellbeing initiatives to 24	24	25	✓	27	↓
Host an allergen awareness seminar for all catering businesses within the Borough by March 2024	1	2	✓	-	-
Work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Council and Borough with Officer and Elected Member champions (By March 2024)	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Become the first Council in NI to adopt a Whole Systems Approach to Obesity and to plan the delivery of a suitable project utilising this approach (by March 2024)	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Increase the % of people who complete the GP referral programme across all leisure sites to 30%	30%	22%	●	-	-
Increase the number of Fitness Classes per Week delivered by Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco to 250	250	250	✓	200	↑
Increase Active Aging Memberships across Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco sites to 400 <i>(Change to measure in year – Now calculated on the basis of all members over the age of 50)</i>	400	3014	✓	Change to measure	-
Increase numbers enrolled in Swim programmes delivered by Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco to 3500 <i>(Change to measure in year – Now calculated on a cumulative basis)</i>	3,500	6,595	✓	Change to measure	-
Support a more sustainable solution to food poverty by supporting 2 Social Supermarkets within the Borough (by March 2024)	2	2	✓	-	-
Increase the numbers engaging with Museum/Heritage Education Services by March 2024	Yes	Yes	✓	-	-
Deliver 70 creative class programme sessions	70	75	✓	71	↑
Plant 15,000 trees across the Borough	15,000	18,269	✓	15,108	↑
Retain the Borough's 5 Green Flag awards	5	5	✓	5	=
Increase the m2 of rewilded Council maintained ground to 90,000	90,000m2	90,000m2	✓	49,195m2	↑
30 Community Gardening projects organised	30	58	✓	-	-
100% condition surveys carried out according to schedule	100%	100%	✓	100%	=










EXCELLENCE





Improvement Objective 5: We will use technology to drive change

What we hoped to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of our customer service including online/mobile services • Improved resident engagement • Digital transformation • Become a high performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a sustainable, positive difference to the Borough
How we said we were going to do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and Publish Customer Service Excellence Strategy and Action Plan for 2020-2024 • Develop proposals for more innovative and effective methods of consultation and engagement with residents • Develop a Digital Transformation Strategy





How well did we perform?

Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period
Achieve a 75% rate of resolution of issues or enquiries at first point of contact in Customer Service	75%	99%	✓	93%	↑
Launch digital customer engagement platform to improve stakeholder and resident engagement by December 2023	100%	100%	✓	-	-
Digital Strategy developed by March 2024	Yes	Yes	✓	No	↑




IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 1 MEASURES: RAG Status (RED)						
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period	Explanation for 2023/24 'Red' RAG Status
Agree a technical design for Marine Gardens as part of the Queen's Parade project with Bangor Marine by September 2023	Yes	No		-	-	There has been continued dialogue between the developer and the Authority regarding the proposed detailed design for the Marine Gardens element of the Queen's Parade redevelopment scheme. Changes to the scheme have been proposed which will necessitate a separate planning application being submitted and approved and therefore the timeline has been extended. It is anticipated that the technical design will be agreed by mid-2024/25, with the design resulting in a more usable and enhanced provision for the waterfront.
Support 12 businesses through the DTFF Programme	12	2		13		DTFF Funding programme delayed in starting. Total businesses supported throughout the total programme have been reprofiled into the next 2 years. Total number of businesses being funding does not change.
Create 85 new jobs through "Go for it" Programme (Statutory Indicator)	85 New Target set: 117	77		101		The Go-for-It programme was funded by ERDF and an extension to provide the service was granted until the end of September 2023. The new GO Succeed Service did not start until 1 st November 2023 and its implementation was delayed for technical reasons such as the CRM system and the contractors not being able to mobilise their resources on time to deliver the service. The Department for the Economy has stated that they would be flexible on the statutory target this year and that it was largely expected that it would not be met. This is the case for all councils.
Create 123 new jobs through Enterprise Support Service (Statutory Indicator)	123 New Target set: 117	77		101		Same as above. 123 was the new statutory target on which we had to report on (we had to report on both the old one - 85 - and the new one) . However, this target has now been further revised to 117 by DfE. The reason for not meeting this target is highlighted above.
Major Planning applications processed within an average of 30 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	30 weeks	84.7 weeks		104.5 weeks		While there has been a reduction in weeks taken to process, major applications continue to be affected by a delay in response by statutory consultees and ongoing capacity issues in the NIW

						network. Several major applications are subject to Section 76 legal agreements requiring negotiation between legal reps.
Local Planning applications processed within an average of 15 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	15 weeks	16 weeks		19.9 weeks		Although there has been an improvement in processing times for local applications there remain ongoing issues in resourcing of statutory consultees, impacting on response times. Lack of front loading of applications also leads to delays in processing. The local category of development set in legislation ranges from a domestic extension to housing developments of 49 units which involve a wider range of consultees and studies required by legislation. Many applications require amendments to address material planning objections which add to time taken to resolve where possible by the developer and process.
70% of planning enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks (Statutory Indicator)	70%	55.7%		62.9%		Enforcement processing, with the exception of Priority 1 cases and cases approaching immunity, were paused during COVID and the enforcement team continues to work through a backlog of cases, some of which are dependent upon outcome of appeals or retrospective applications.


IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 2 Measures: RAG Status (RED)

Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period	Service	Explanation for 2023/24 'Red' RAG Status
Increase LEAMS Cleanliness Index Score to 80	80	73		75		Waste and Cleansing	There were problems with the Keep NI Beautiful (KNIB) independent surveys during 2022/23 leading to spurious results which in turn resulted in the target being raised to 80 for 2023/24 (5 points above the NI average). The survey issue has since been rectified but results were only available for Q3 and Q4 of 2023/24.
Regain top 3 position for Fixed Penalty Enforcement in NI	Yes	No		No		Regulatory Services	ANDBC staffing has reduced and other councils have used external contractors to deliver this measure in past years. The use of contractors is unlikely to be repeated and this will change the balance in relation to this measure.

IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 3 Measures: RAG Status (RED and AMBER)

Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period	Service	Explanation for 2023/24 'Red' and 'Amber' RAG Status
Increase % of household waste recycled, reused and composted to 60% (Statutory Target:55%)	60%	55.48%		52%		Waste and Cleansing	The 60% target was almost met, with the statutory target of 55% being met. It should be noted that performance against this measure has shown an improvement from 2022/23.
Introduce kerbside collection of textiles by October 2023	Yes	No		-	-	Waste and Cleansing	The new vehicles were not delivered until January 2024 and in view of the current difficulties being faced by the textile recycling industry, the proposed scheme is on hold until market conditions stabilise.

IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 4 Measures: RAG Status (RED)

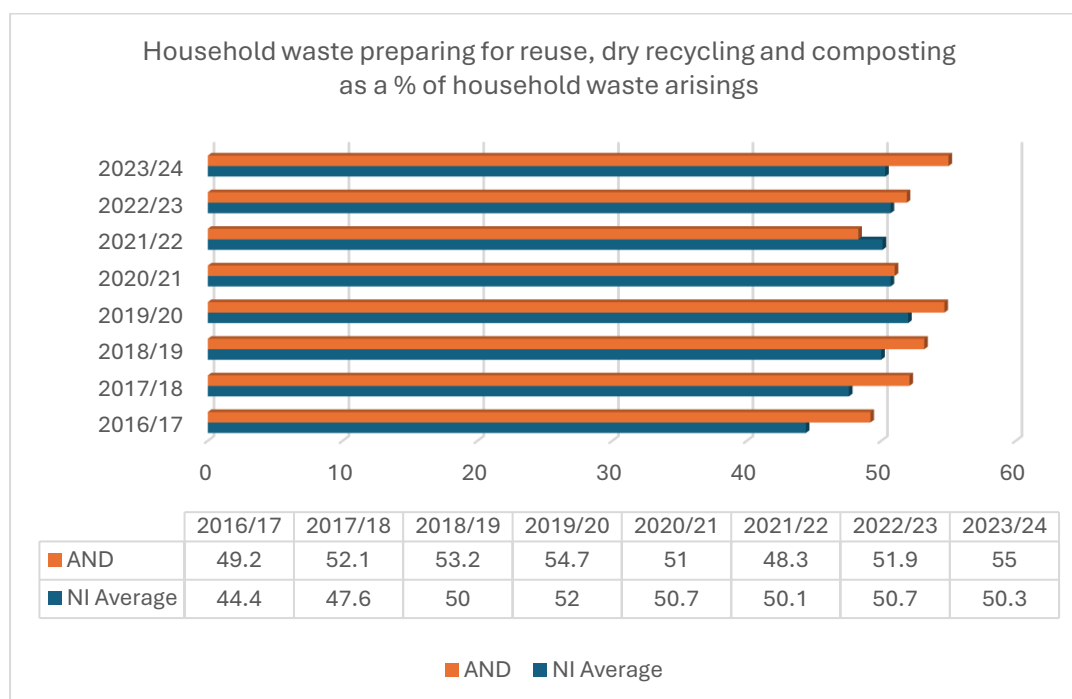
Measure	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual	RAG Status	2022/23 Actual	Trend from previous period	Service	Explanation for 2023/24 'Red' RAG Status
Increase the % of people who complete the GP referral programme across all leisure sites to 30%	30%	22%		-	-	Leisure	The customers who were enrolled on the scheme decided not to complete it. We have limited ability to "encourage" completion.

Statutory Performance Indicators and Standards

The Council is required to report on how it has performed against the Statutory Indicators⁶ set out in The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. Section 91 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 requires the Council to use this information to assess its performance against the previous year's performance; and so far as is practicable, the performance of other councils in the exercise of the same or similar functions.

Municipal Waste

The 2023/24 year saw a further fall in the Council's municipal waste arisings (down to 83,895 tonnes) and an increase in the recycling rate (to 55%). The new online Household Recycling Centre (HRC) booking system was introduced mid-year and this helped to improve recycling at the HRCs while deterring the use of the HRCs by the commercial sector and non-residents of the Borough. A Task & Finish Working Group was established to undertake a comprehensive review of the Council's kerbside collection service with WRAP appointed to provide an overview and modelling of different collection models using the Kerbside Assessment Tool (KAT). It is intended to complete this study with recommendations by the end of 2024/25.



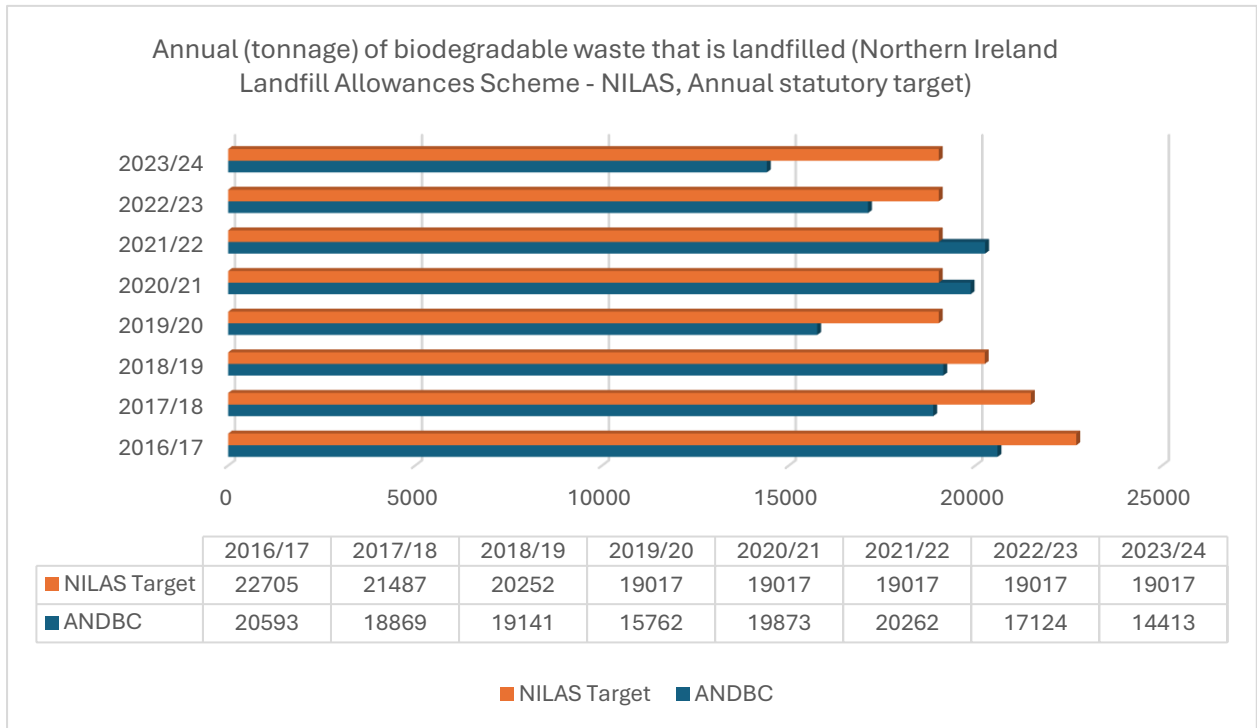
RAG Status	✓
Statutory Target of 55%	
Trend against prior year	↑

⁶ End of year statutory indicators and standards for waste, planning and jobs promoted can be found in Appendix 1

How do we compare?

Waste from households recycling rate as a % of waste from household arisings (Higher % is better)			
Authority	2023/24 (%)	2022/23 (%)	Trend from previous Year
Antrim & Newtownabbey	61.0	60.3	% Increase
Ards & North Down	55.0	51.9	% Increase
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	53.4	54.2	% Decrease
Belfast	40.9	40.8	% Increase
Causeway Coast & Glens	47.8	52.6	% Decrease
Derry City & Strabane	44.8	46.0	% Decrease
Fermanagh & Omagh	46.0	47.4	% Decrease
Lisburn & Castlereagh	51.2	50.5	% Increase
Mid & East Antrim	50.9	51.7	% Decrease
Mid Ulster	58.3	58.4	% Decrease
Newry, Mourne & Down	48.8	49.6	% Decrease
arc21	50.1	49.6	% Increase
NWRWVG	46.4	49.3	% Decrease
Northern Ireland	50.3	50.7	% Decrease

The Council’s long-term strategy for reducing reliance on landfill has been based on increasing recycling and the delivery of the arc21 Residual Waste Treatment Project. The Council through arc21 is currently out to tender for the treatment of residual waste arising as an alternative to the use of landfill. It is anticipated that the Contract will commence in the latter part of 2024/25. Landfill allowances are fixed and remain unchanged.

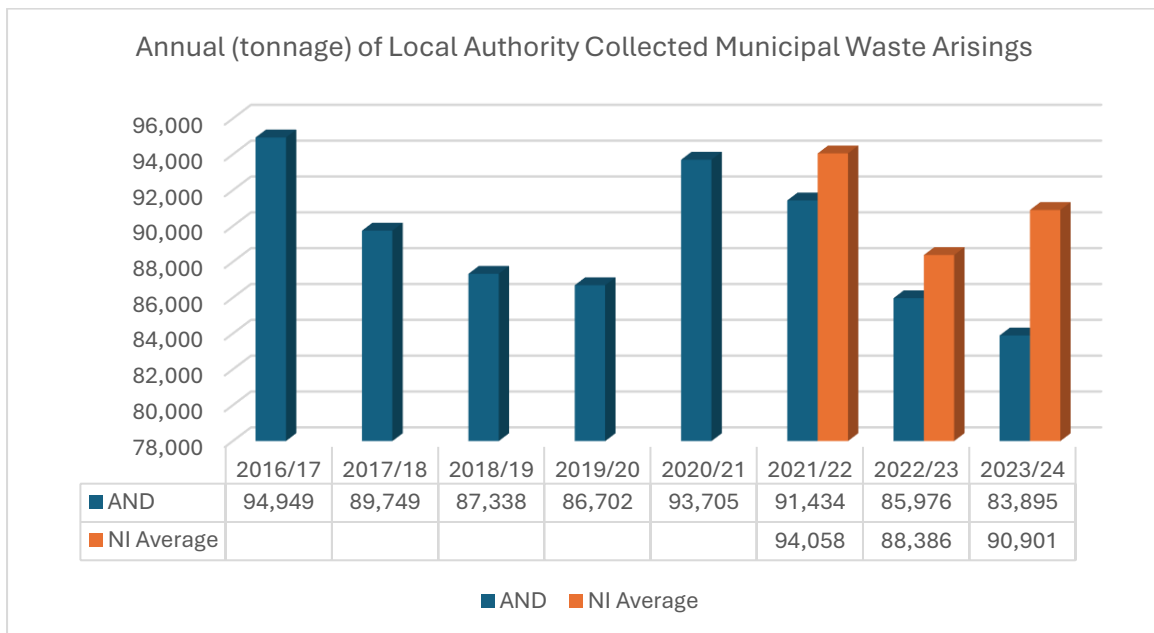


RAG Status	✓
Trend against prior year (lower is better)	↓

How do we compare? (Lower is better)

Authority	2023/24 reported biodegradable LAC municipal waste sent to landfill (tonnes)	Landfill Allowance Allocation
Antrim & Newtownabbey	11,458	16,788
Ards & North Down	14,413	19,017
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	2,580	24,417
Belfast	7,218	40,289
Causeway Coast & Glens	10,418	17,062
Derry City & Strabane	4,076	17,929
Fermanagh & Omagh	14,773	13,781
Lisburn & Castlereagh	14,023	16,444
Mid & East Antrim	15,239	16,387
Mid Ulster	369	16,982
Newry, Mourne & Down	937	20,954
arc21	63,288	
NWRWMG	14,494	
Northern Ireland	95,504	220,000

2023/24 saw a further drop in Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings (LACMW). This reflected both the financial pressures faced by consumers due to the cost-of-living crisis and the new tighter access controls at the Council HRCs



RAG Status	✓
Trend against prior year (lower is better)	↓

How do we compare? (lower is better)

Authority	LAC municipal waste arisings (tonnes) 2023/24	Household waste collected per capita (kilogrammes) 2023/24
Antrim & Newtownabbey	106,040	545
Ards & North Down	83,895	476
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	112,335	459
Belfast	160,282	403
Causeway Coast & Glens	80,596	502
Derry City & Strabane	81,027	472
Fermanagh & Omagh	56,521	422
Lisburn & Castlereagh	77,617	458
Mid & East Antrim	74,842	473
Mid Ulster	82,075	476
Newry, Mourne & Down	84,684	426
arc21	587,360	452
NWRWMG	161,623	486
Northern Ireland	999,913 (NI Average 90,901)	458

Planning

Major planning applications

While 2023/24 seen a reduction in weeks taken to process major applications, from 104.5 weeks in 2022/23 to 84.7 weeks in 2023/24, major applications continue to be affected by a delay in response by statutory consultees and ongoing capacity issues in the NIW network. Several major applications are subject to Section 76 legal agreements requiring negotiation between legal representation.

It should be noted that the NI planning system does not provide for 'clock-stopping' in respect of requests for further information required by either the Council or in response to statutory consultees, nor in respect of notifications to DFI, all which have significant implications on processing times.

The Planning Service continues to strive to improve on processing times and interact with DFI to contribute to the Planning Improvement Programme which has stemmed from the regional review of planning by both the NI Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee.

In respect of Major development applications, the Planning Service determined 6 proposals over the 2023/24 year (3 in 2022/23) as follows:

Majors - Quarter 1

LA06/2021/0917/F was decided for 58no. dwellings at Ardara in Comber. The application, on land zoned for housing within the Ards and Down Area Plan, was submitted 28 June 2021. All of the consultees required submission of additional information and amended designs, which required re-advertising and re- neighbour notification and the carrying out of further consultation and all subsequent further objections assessed. There were NI Water issues which required a separate legal agreement required to be drafted by the Council's Planning lawyers and then executed between the Council and the applicant and sealed by the Council. The last information submitted by the applicant was November 2022 and the application was presented to Planning Committee on 06 December 2022 with a recommendation of approval, subject to execution of the legal agreement referred to above. The legal agreement was given approval to be signed and sealed at the Council meeting on 26 April 2023. The agreement was then signed and sealed once the call-in period had expired, and the decision notice was issued dated 17 May 2023 (processing time 93.2 weeks).

Majors - Quarter 3

LA06/2021/0061/F for proposed residential development for 188 dwellings, open space (including NS 43), landscaping, children's play area, next phase of the distributor road, internal road network, SuDS Pond, and all associated site and access works and proposed amendment of the section 76 planning agreement for the Rivenwood housing development in Newtownards was approved at Planning Committee meeting in October and decision issued on 03 November. This application was for the development of phases 3a and 3b of the NS20 zoning.

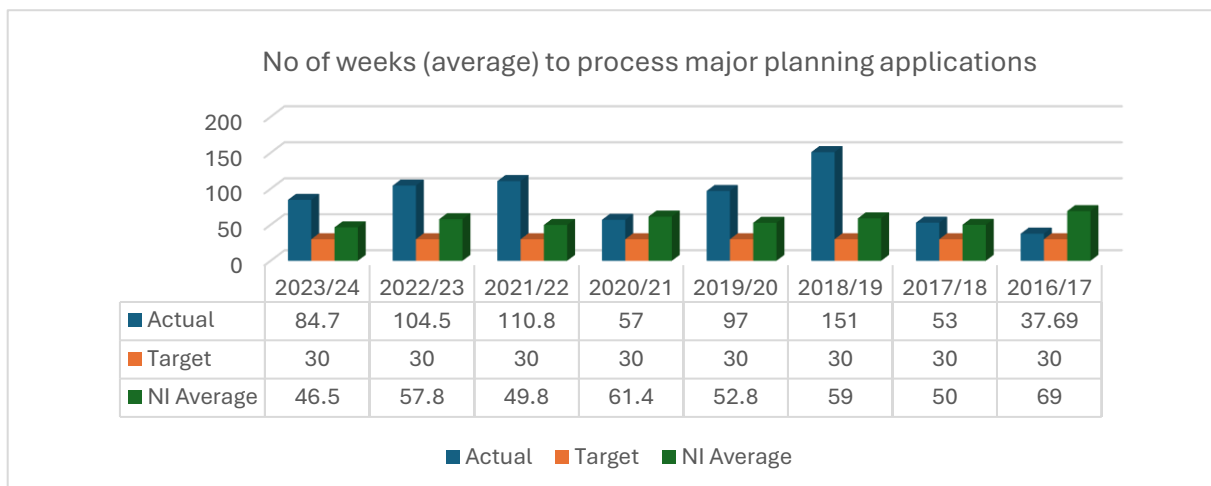
LA06/2023/1959/F was decided for the erection of new arrival and welcome building (Culture Hub), collection & exhibition building (Industry Zone), staff and volunteer hub and other extensive works at Cultra Folk Museum. The application was submitted on 23 June 2023 and was approved at Planning committee meeting on 05 December 2023 subject to NIEA responses (processing time 20 weeks).

Majors – Quarter 4

LA06/2021/0118/F was decided for a housing development of 98 units and detached garages and extension to footpath on Shore Road at St Andrews housing development in Ballyhalbert. The application was presented at planning committee meeting on 07 November 2023. The motion to grant permission, subject to conditions, was carried by members of the Committee following which negotiations were required for the inclusion of a playpark which the developer agreed to and required re-neighbour notification and re-advertising. The application was brought back to the Planning committee meeting in February 2024 and the decision notice issued on 13 February (processing time 144 weeks).

LA06/2022/0873/F was decided for the relocation and redevelopment of Bangor Central Integrated Primary School on vacant site North of Balloo Road, Bangor, to provide a new 22 class primary school building and recreational areas. The application also included a new vehicular access with right turn lane off Balloo Road, internal vehicular configuration and site layout to include car parking, car and bus pick up/drop off areas and pedestrian crossing points. This application was subject to a significant number of objections in relation to intensification of traffic in the area. There were also NI Water capacity issues on site which required an off-site solution to be found by the developer in liaison with NI Water which required a legal agreement to be drawn up (processing time of 62 weeks).

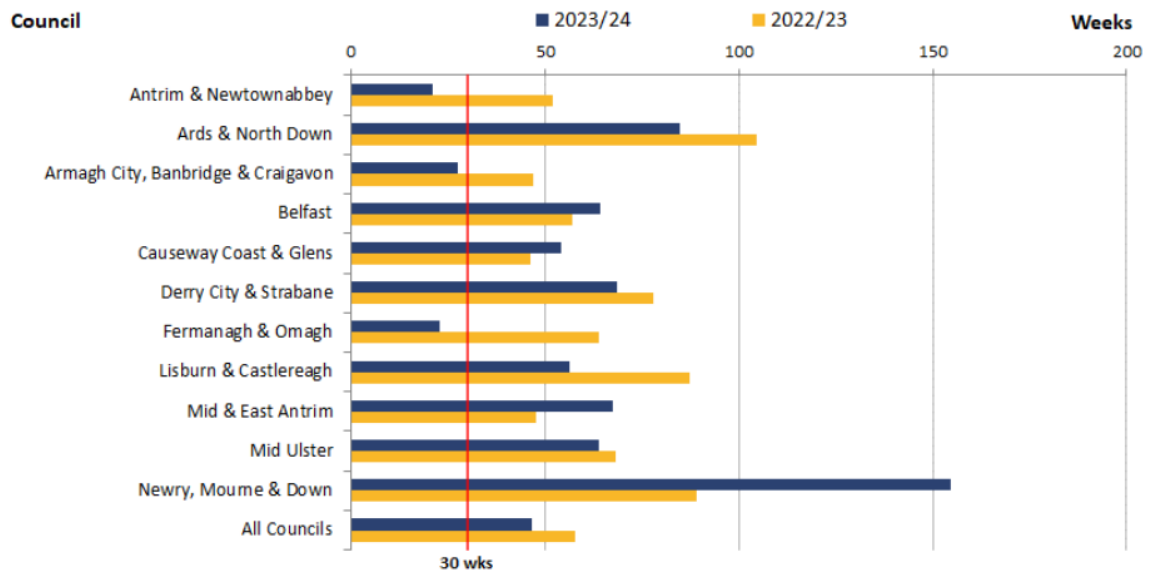
LA06/2023/2434/F - Proposed residential development of 95 dwellings (reduction in density from 108 dwellings approved under LA06/2019/0603/F) to include roads, parking, infrastructure, landscaping and retention of Bawn Wall. Vehicular access to site will be from Castlebawn Drive. The above application for social housing which was subject to funding deadlines was presented at Special Planning committee meeting on 21 March 2024 with a processing time of 16.3 weeks.



RAG Status	●
Trend against prior year	↓

How do we compare?

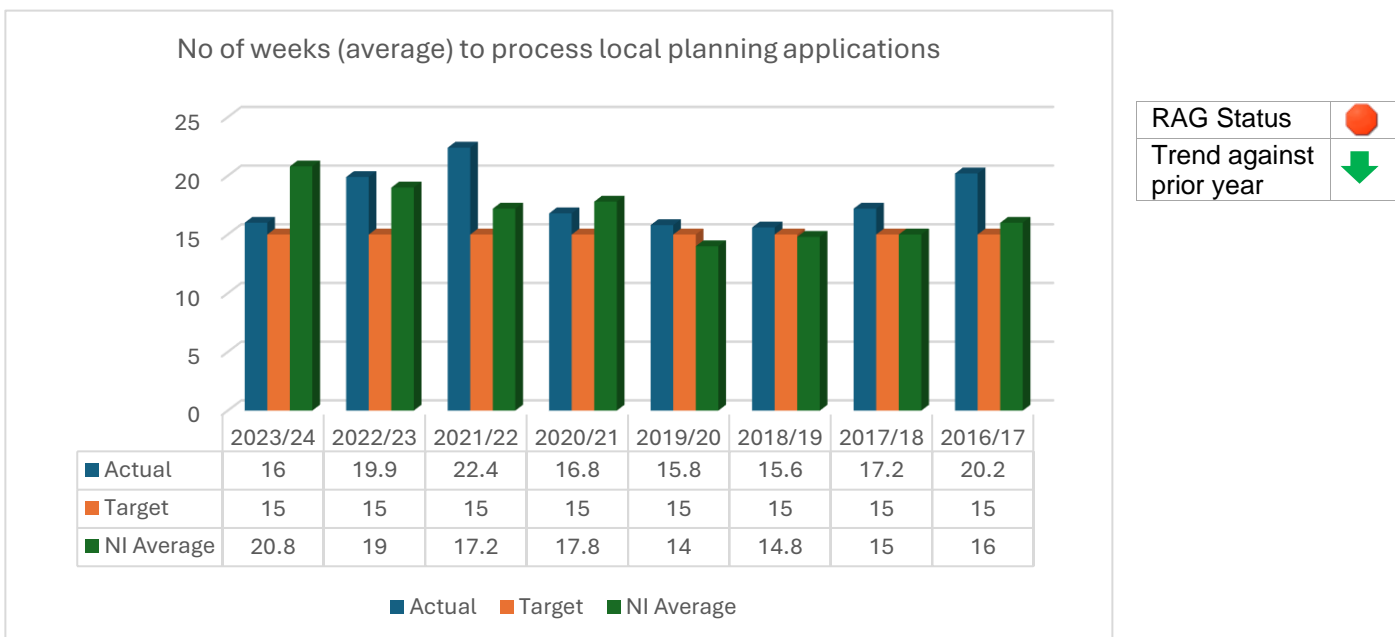
Fig 3.2 Major development average processing times by council, 2022/23 & 2023/24



Note: Whilst Figure 3.2 has been provided for completeness, across councils there may be an insufficient number of major applications processed during the period reported to allow any meaningful assessment of their individual performance.

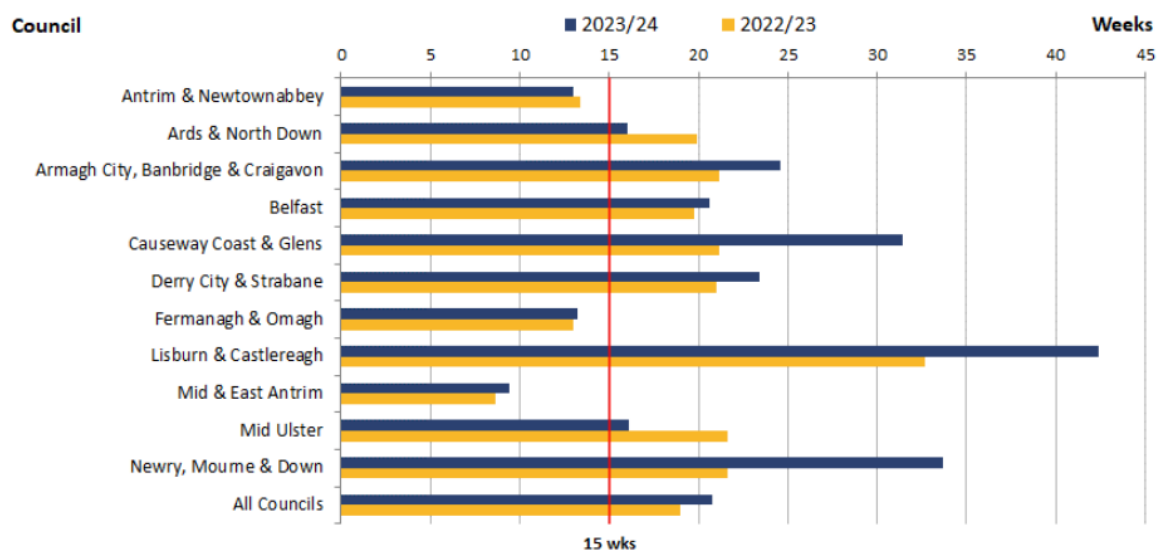
Local planning applications

Although there has been an improvement in processing times for local applications there remain ongoing issues in resourcing of statutory consultees, impacting on response times. Lack of front loading of applications also leads to delays in processing. The local category of development set in legislation ranges from a domestic extension to housing developments of 49 units which involve a wider range of consultees and studies required by legislation. Many applications require amendments to address material planning objections which add to time taken to resolve where possible by the developer and process.



How do we compare?

Fig 4.2 Local development average processing times by council, 2022/23 & 2023/24



Additional Activity

In addition to the above planning applications, it is important to draw attention to additional work carried out within the Development Management section, which is not reported upon, but which is required to be completed in parallel to work on planning applications.

Additional activity details the "non-application" workload of the Planning Service, and includes Discharge of conditions, Certificates of Lawfulness (Proposed & Existing), Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)/ Consents to Fell Trees in Conservation Area, Pre-Application Discussions (PADs), Proposals of Application Notice (PANs) and Non-Material Changes. Preparation of Statements of Case for appeals and attendance at hearings is not detailed.

Type	Received 01/04/23 – 31/03/2024	Determined - by 31/03/2024
Discharge of Condition	78	65
Certificate of Lawfulness	46	30
Non-Material Change	46	39
Pre-Application Discussion	37	
Proposal of Application Notice	5	
TPO	55	27

For PADs and PANS, only the received cases are included in the table as it is not considered appropriate to report on decided/withdrawn cases or processing times for these types of activity.

Enforcement

In 2023/24 this Service area received the third highest level of complaints alleging breaches of planning control across the 11 councils, which continues to be investigated accordingly.

Enforcement processing, with the exception of Priority 1 cases and cases approaching immunity, were paused during COVID and the enforcement team continues to work through a backlog of cases, some of which are dependent upon outcome of appeals or retrospective applications.



During 2023/24 the Planning Service opened 330 enforcement cases (down from 366 in the previous year). The following table details the closure reason for the 352 cases closed during the year.

Remedied/Resolved	103
Planning Permission Granted	49
Not Expedient	47
No Breach Identified	128
Immune from Enforcement Action	24
Appeal Allowed / Notice Quashed	1
Total	352

It should be noted that normally enforcement action is held in abeyance in respect of any identified breach of planning control, whilst any retrospective planning application is being assessed, which can impact on closure timeframes.

An enforcement case is concluded when one of the following occurs: a notice is issued; legal proceedings commence; a planning application is received; or the case is closed.

% progress of enforcement cases to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt			
Year	Actual (%)	Target (%)	NI Average (%)
2023/24	55.7	70	76.4
2022/23	62.9	70	74.2
2021/22	41	70	70.4
2020/21	62	70	69.9
2019/20	81.1	70	81.4
2018/19	76.9	70	81
2017/18	73.4	70	77
2016/17	77.7	70	81

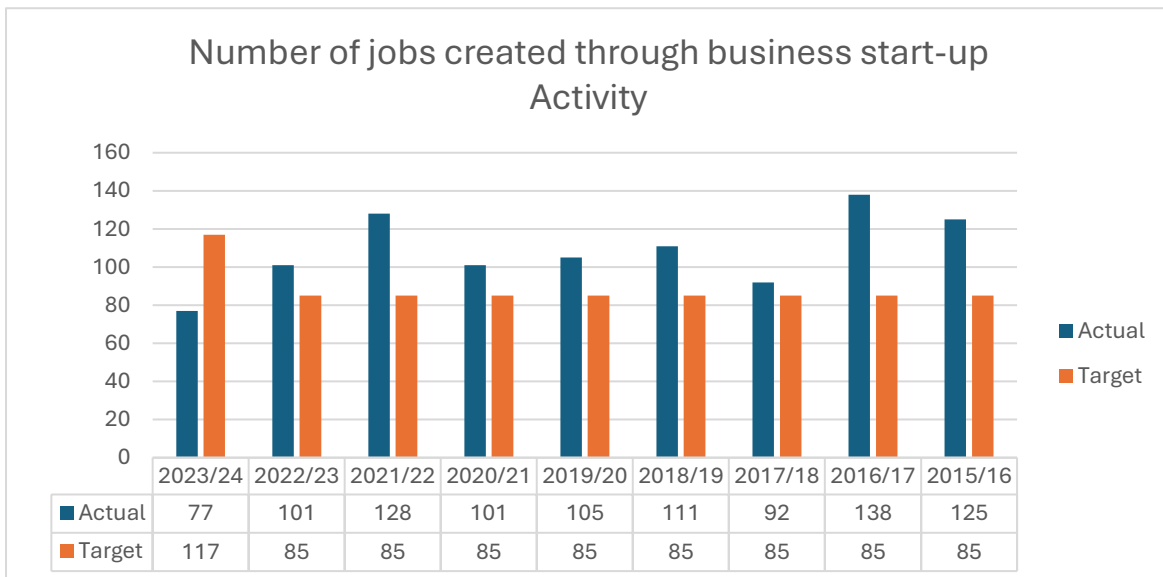
RAG Status	
Trend against prior year	

Economic Development

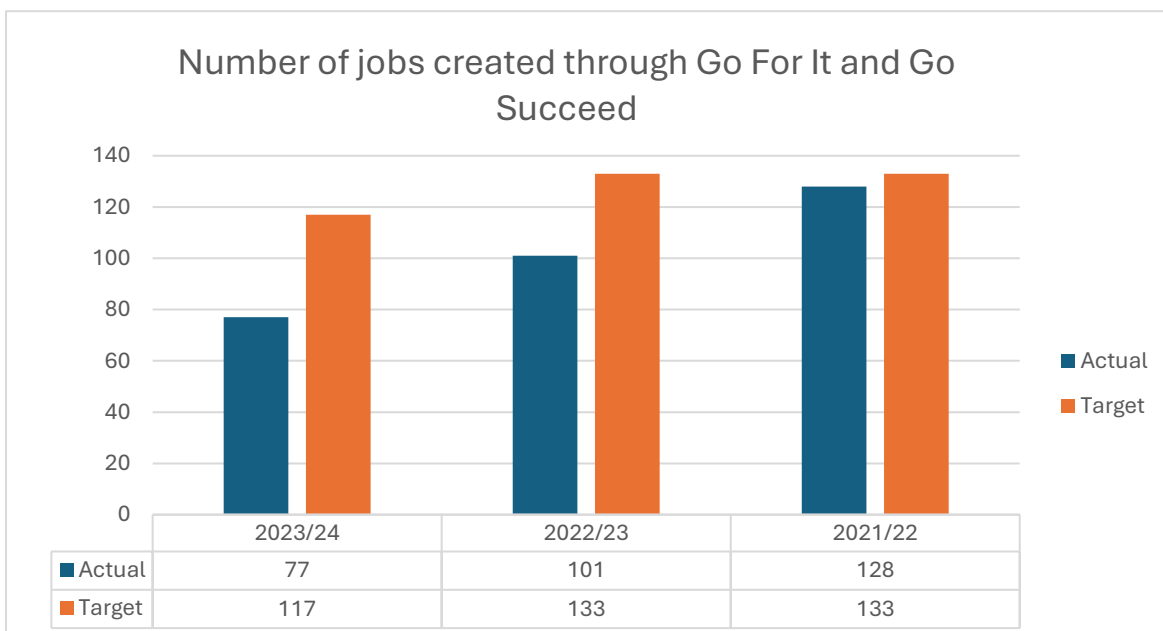
Go For It Programme completed in September 2023 and the councils have seen the introduction of the new Enterprise Support Service (ESS), led by Northern Ireland’s 11 local Councils, funded by the UK Government and the government’s Levelling Up Fund, known as Go Succeed.

Go Succeed was launched in November 2023. The number of jobs created has remained healthy until September and exceeded the half yearly statutory targets. However, we have seen a decline in the creation of new jobs with the introduction of Go Succeed which took longer to implement and deliver. The Service was introduced in November, but various technical and operational issues meant that the service underperformed in its first 6 months to March 2024.

The council is working closely with the Go Succeed delivery agents to monitor and manage performance and to raise awareness of the support.



RAG Status	🔴
Trend against prior year	⬇️






RAG Status	🔴
Trend against prior year	⬇️

How do we compare?

UPDATE REQUIRED FOLLOWING BP VERIFICATION																			
BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA APRIL 2023 - SEPTEMBER 2023 Go For It								BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA SEP - APRIL 24 NIESS											
COUNCIL AREA	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Total	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Total	Total BPs				
Antrim & Newtownabbey	8	14	20	11	18	20	91	0	0	0				26	26				
Ards & North Down	14	16	14	23	15	24	106	0	0	0				19	19				
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	28	29	28	23	26	39	173	0	0	0				21	21				
Belfast	40	46	47	31	51	48	263	0	0	0				34	34				
Causeway Coast & Glens	18	21	16	13	18	24	110	0	0	0				21	21				
Derry & Strabane	15	21	19	19	19	25	118	0	0	0				39	39				
Fermanagh & Omagh	25	30	33	18	18	23	147	0	0	0				49	49				
Lisburn & Castlereagh	16	20	19	19	17	12	103	4	3	0	5			20	32				
Mid & East Antrim	13	24	20	13	23	17	110	0	0	0				39	39				
Mid Ulster	28	21	20	19	21	25	134	0	0	0				14	14				
Newry Mourne & Down	19	31	26	21	26	5	128	0	0	0				23	23				
TOTAL	224	273	262	210	252	262	1,483	4	3	0	5	0	305	317	1,800				

	Actual BPA to Sept 23	Actual Jobs to Sept 23	6 Months Statutory	Jobs Delta versus 6 Month Statutory	6 month BPA delivery via NIESS	6 month Jobs delivery via NIESS	Total Jobs	Statutory Jobs Target (2015)	Variance	Statutory Jobs Target 23/24 (Mid point 2015/2023)	Variance
Antrim & Newtownabbey	91	56	40	16	26	15.9822	72	80	8	80	8
Ards & North Down	106	65	43	23	19	11.4	77	85	8	117	40
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	173	106	83	24	21	12.6	119	165	46	179	60
Belfast	263	162	163	-1	34	20.4	182	325	143	325	143
Causeway Coast & Glens	110	68	63	5	21	12.6	80	125	45	127	47
Derry & Strabane	118	73	70	3	39	23.4	96	140	44	140	44
Fermanagh & Omagh	147	90	85	5	49	29.4	120	170	50	170	50
Lisburn & Castlereagh	103	63	43	21	32	19.2	83	85	2	111	28
Mid & East Antrim	110	68	43	25	39	23.4	91	85	-6	107	16
Mid Ulster	134	82	79	3	14	8.4	91	210	119	163	72
Newry Mourne & Down	128	79	78	1	23	13.8	92	155	63	170	78
Totals	1,483	912	787	125	317	190.2	1102	1625	523	1689	587

Other Indicators

	2019/20 Actual	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Actual	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Actual	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Actual	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Actual	2023/24 Target	
Staff Absence	6.64%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	6.57%	5%	7.24%	5%	7.59%	7%	
Resident Satisfaction	Not measured this year	83%	Not measured this year	Not measured this year	82%	82%	Not measured this year	Not measured this year	83%	83%	
Net Cost of Services per head of population	314	318	328	331	341	336	356	350	373	398	

Staff Absence

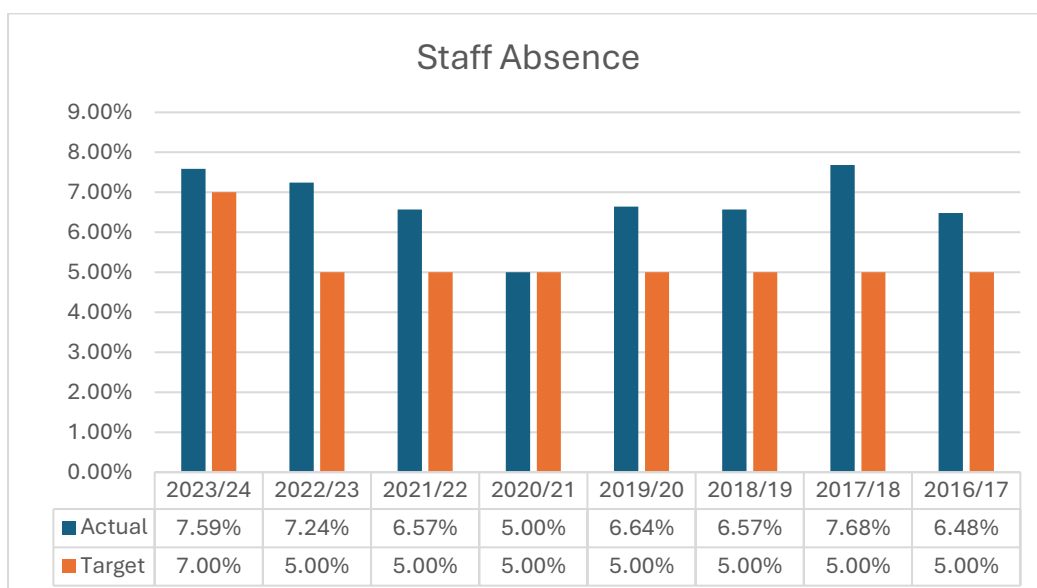
The % staff absenteeism figure for the year ended March 2024 is 7.59% which is 0.35% higher than the absence rate last year. Detailed figures show that short time absence is decreasing, due to effective absence management procedures, however, long term absence accounted for 80.3% of sickness absence in quarter 4 of last year.

Increasing long term absence is of great concern and remains high despite a detailed Absence Management Action plan put in place, following an APSE review. As part of this Action Plan, a number of initiatives have been put in place including ‘percentage time lost’ and ‘average days lost per employee figures’ due to sickness being presented to management and Elected Members on a quarterly basis.

The main reason for long term absence last year was because of illness related to mental health e.g. stress, depression and anxiety. Since Council signed the Mental Health Charter in March 2019, work has been ongoing to adhere to the standards contained within the framework set by the Equality Commission. There have been many successes, not least the training of Mental Health First Aiders and the Take 5 steps to wellbeing messages and opportunities afforded by the Employee Health and Wellbeing programme. A new initiative is currently being trialled with a local firm, Insula Wellbeing, who are providing 1-2-1 sessions with staff. It is hoped that this initiative will assist staff before they get to the point of having no other option but to go off sick.

A benchmark survey has also been sent out to other Councils and we have sought further legal advice on how we deal with long term absence, to find out if there is anything more the Council should consider within its current policies and practices to reduce absenteeism.

As the financial cost is substantial, Elected Members and management will continue to closely monitor absence levels and to seek innovative methods to reduce absence figures.



RAG Status	▲
Trend against prior year	▲

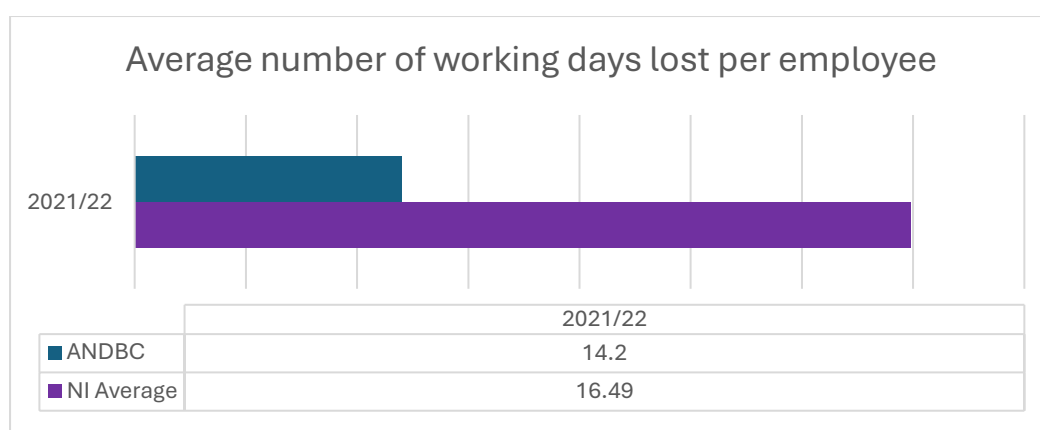
How do we compare?

AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS

(Note: Figures for 2022/23 were not available at the time of writing)

Source: Local Government Auditor Report 2023

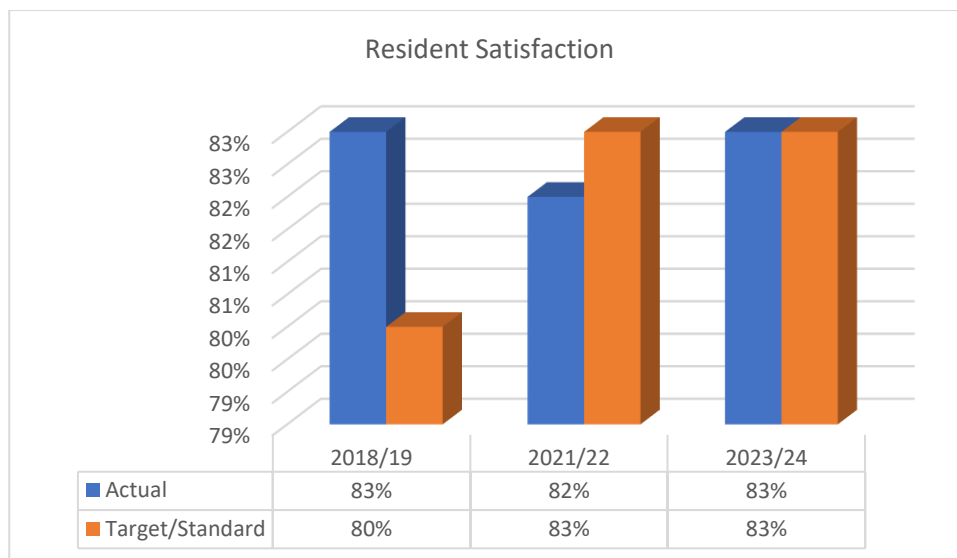
COUNCIL	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Antrim and Newtownabbey	11.9	13.7	13.2	11.1	19.7
Ards and North Down	16.2	14.2	14.2	10.6	14.2
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	16.1	16.7	18.3	15.7	20.5
Belfast	13.7	13.7	13.6	10.9	16.3
Causeway Coast and Glens	15.8	17.1	17.7	12.4	19.2
Derry City and Strabane	14.0	12.3	14.5	10.4	16.8
Fermanagh and Omagh	12.9	10.4	13.8	9.7	13.1
Lisburn City and Castlereagh	16.7	13.3	13.8	11.5	13.6
Mid and East Antrim	17.1	12.5	10.6	4.7	15.2
Mid Ulster	12.4	12.9	11.7	9.7	12.1
Newry, Mourne and Down	17.1	14.7	15.8	13.6	20.7



Resident Satisfaction

The Council undertakes a formal survey of residents every two years to gain an insight into satisfaction levels with the organisation and the services we deliver. The information gathered is shared across all service areas and used to inform a number of performance improvement measures including our annual service plans, performance improvement plan and financial statements.

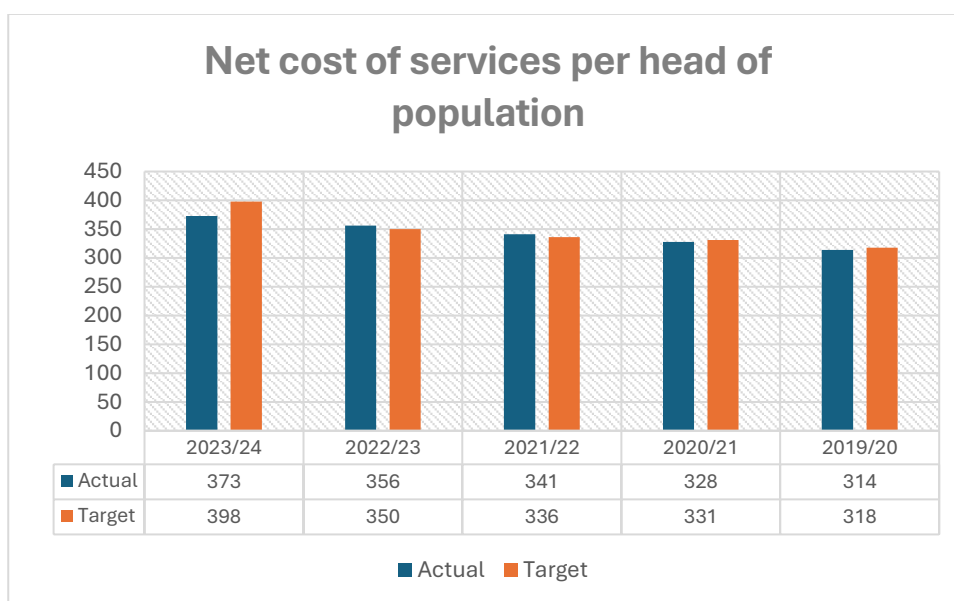
The overall findings from the Resident’s Survey completed in Autumn 2023 suggest a high level of satisfaction with the Council overall, with the Council scoring well on specific measures such as providing value for money, satisfaction with Council provided services and Council consultation and engagement activities. In terms of priorities for the Council, residents believe that the focus should be on prioritising attracting jobs and investment, ensuring annual rate increases are kept at or below inflation, and the health and wellbeing of residents and businesses.



RAG Status	✔
Trend against prior year	↑

Net Cost of Services per head of population

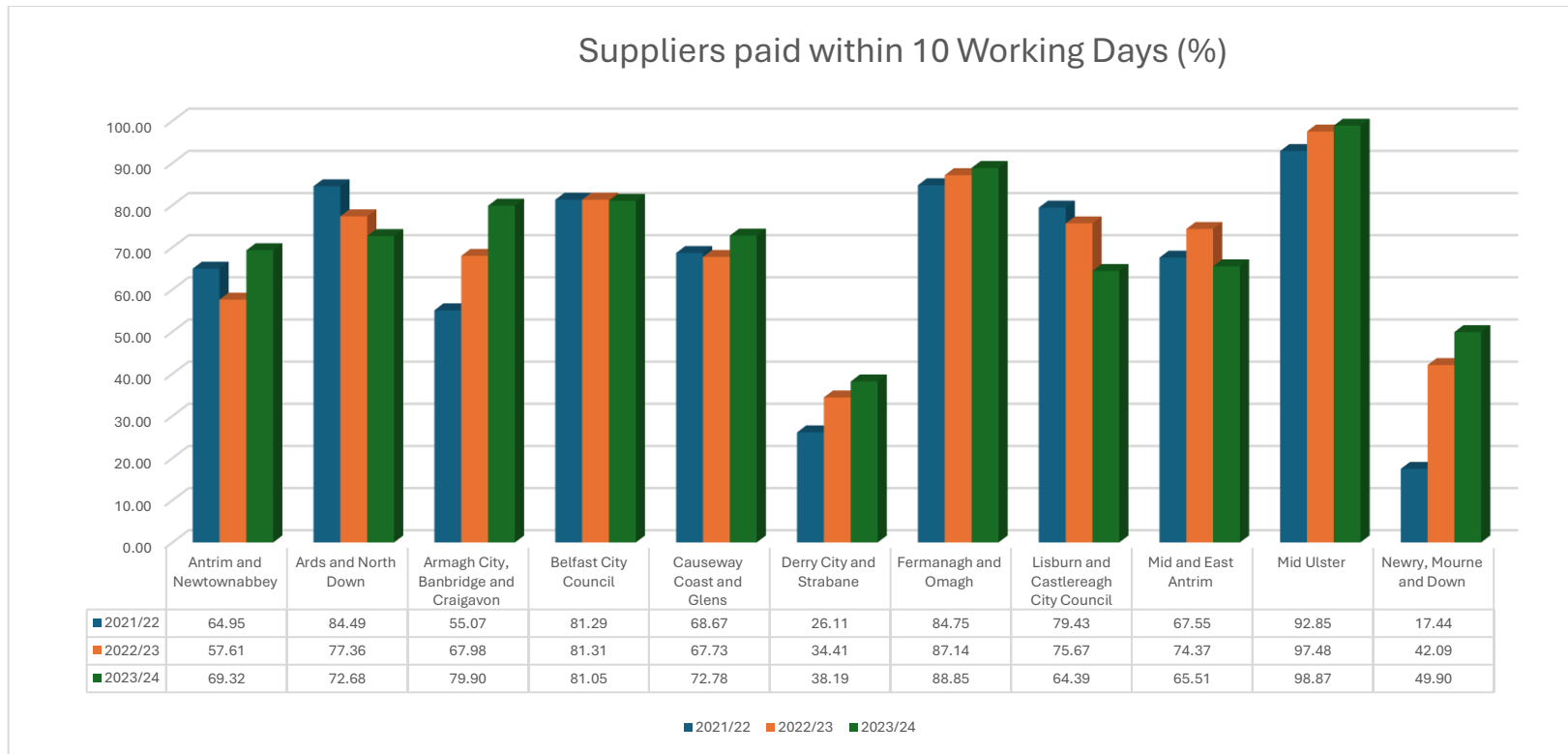
The Council's cost of service per head of population has increased over the past 5 years by around 19%, broadly in line with inflation over the same period (19%). This has enabled the Council to address low pay, in line with national agreements and the national living wage, enhance services offered to residents and visitors by investing substantially in leisure, community and tourism facilities and to work with key partners on regional projects such as the Belfast Region City Deal that will deliver sustainable growth and investment in the Borough.



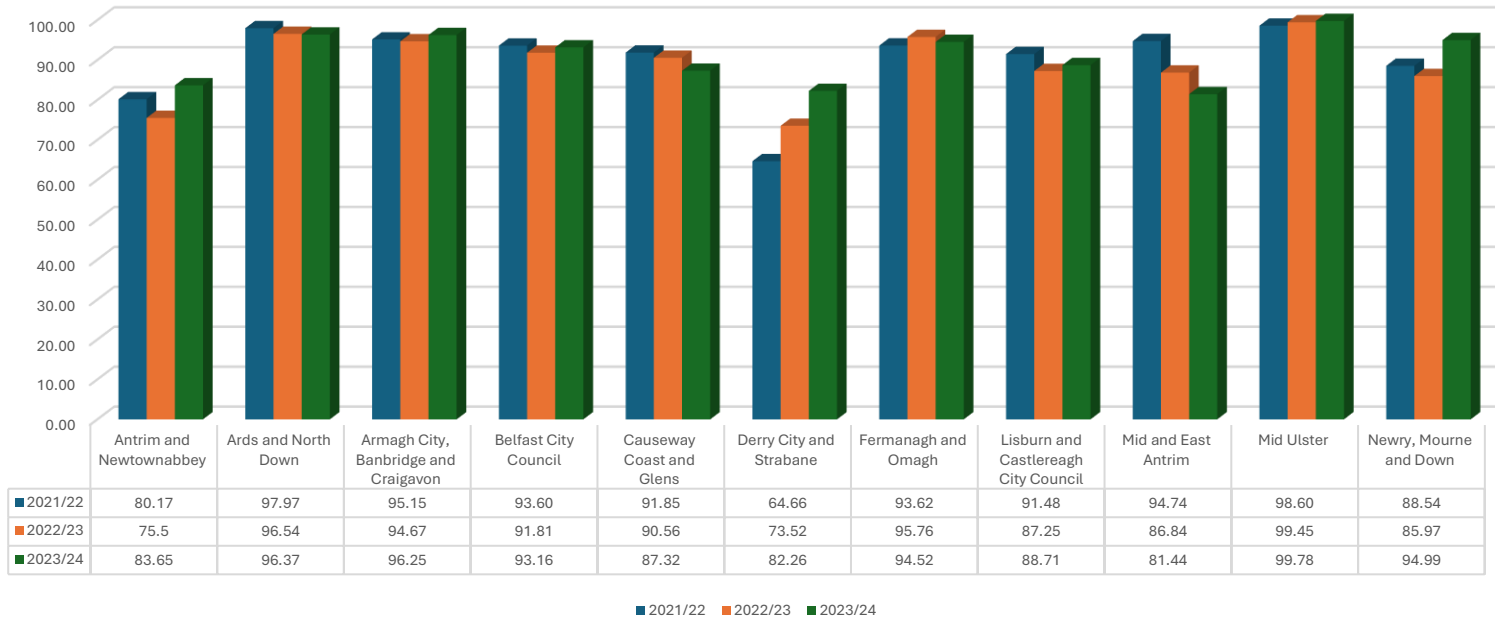
RAG Status	✔
Trend against prior year	↑

Prompt Payment

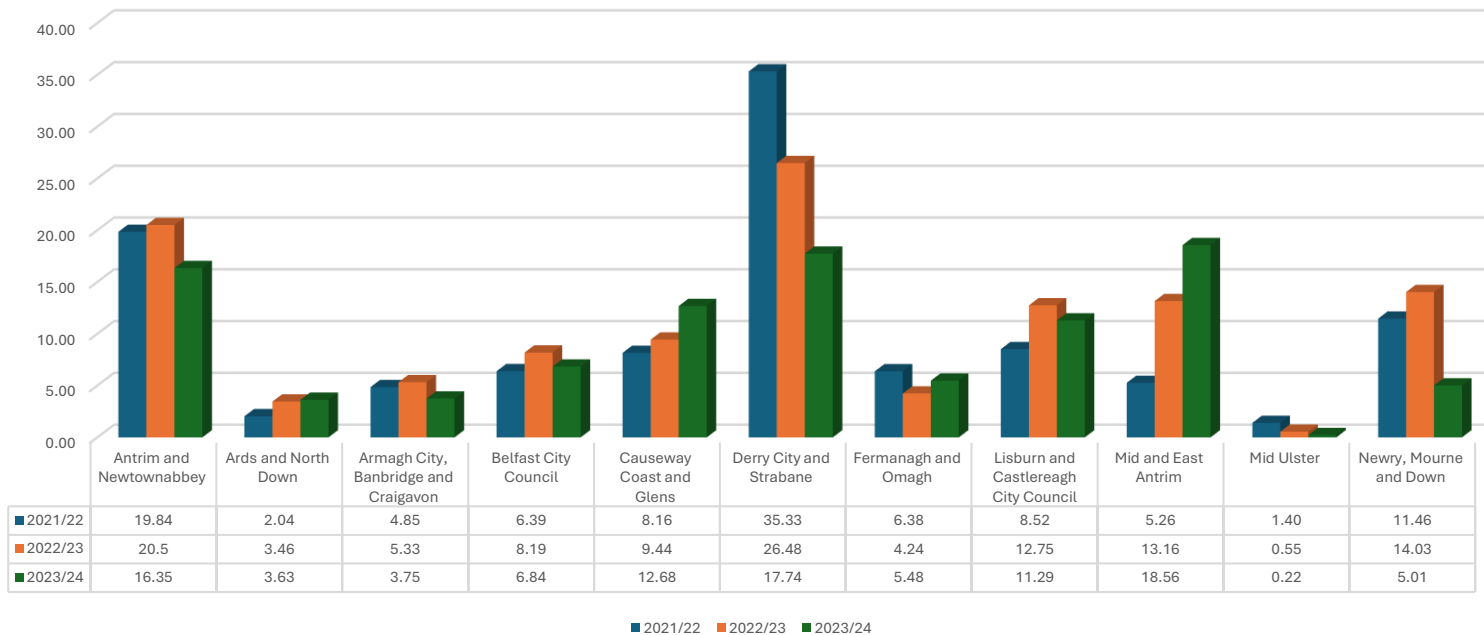
Council continues to be in the top 3 performing Councils for payment within 30 calendar days. When identified, Council will continue to implement process improvements to assist suppliers with prompt payment of invoices.



Suppliers paid within 30 Days (%)



Suppliers paid outside 30 Days (%)



Indicator	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
Annual Prompt Payment of invoices		
Within 10 days	≥80%	72.68%
Within 30 days	≥95%	96.37%
Outside 30 days	<5%	3.63%

Within 10 Days	
RAG Status	🔴
Trend against prior year	⬇️

Within 30 Days	
RAG Status	🟢
Trend against prior year	⬇️

Outside 30 Days	
RAG Status	🟢
Trend against prior year	⬆️

Source: [Prompt Payments for NI Councils 2023/24 \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://communities-ni.gov.uk)

6. Northern Ireland Audit Office proposals for improvement – arising from S.95 Audit and Assessment Report 2023/24

NIAO Proposal	ANDBC Progress to date
General Duty to Improve	
<p>Governance</p> <p>The Council should ensure that the Performance Improvement Policy is reviewed as part of the planned review of the Performance Management Handbook.</p> <p>The Council may want to consider the need for an audit review on performance improvement given the time that has passed since the previous review and the change in landscape impacting performance objectives in this time. While the service area audits provide focused time on a sample of areas on an annual basis, the Council may also want to consider how Internal Audit can assist with data validation to support the outturn in the quarterly reports.</p> <p>There is limited evidence that the Council's Audit Committee track progress on all proposals for improvement. The Council should consider this going forward.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Currently under review.</p> <p>Currently under review.</p>
<p>Consultation</p> <p>Going forward, it may be beneficial to consider commencing the consultation earlier in the year.</p> <p>The Council should consider whether there is a need to prepare a Consultation Strategy formally documenting the approach to be taken in all Council consultation exercises.</p>	<p>Currently under review.</p> <p>This proposal is being considered at corporate level.</p>

7. Your Opinion Matters

Ards and North Down Borough Council is committed to improving our services and resident feedback is critical to this. We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of the year and have a continuous 'Your Opinion Matters' campaign. Suggestions for improvement initiatives can be sent to us by emailing yom@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk or contacting us at:

Transformation Team
Ards and North Down Borough Council
City Hall
The Castle
BANGOR
BT20 4BT

Email: pim@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk
Telephone: 0300 013 3333

8. Alternative formats

This document can be provided in alternative formats if required in relation to language or disability by contacting the Transformation Team at the above address.

Appendix 1: Municipal Waste, Planning and Economic Development Statistics

MUNICIPAL WASTE

THE NORTHERN IRELAND MUNICIPAL WASTE STATISTICS APRIL 2023-MARCH 2024 can be found at [Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

PLANNING

THE NORTHERN IRELAND PLANNING STATISTICS APRIL 2023–MARCH 2024 can be found at [Northern Ireland planning statistics April 2023 - March 2024 | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Dashboard information provided by Department for the Economy NI)

UPDATE REQUIRED FOLLOWING BP VERIFICATION															
BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA APRIL 2023 - SEPTEMBER 2023 Go For It								BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY COUNCIL AREA SEP - APRIL 24 NIESS							
COUNCIL AREA	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Total	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Total	Total BPs
Antrim & Newtownabbey	8	14	20	11	18	20	91	0	0	0			26	26	117
Ards & North Down	14	16	14	23	15	24	106	0	0	0			19	19	125
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	28	29	28	23	26	39	173	0	0	0			21	21	194
Belfast	40	46	47	31	51	48	263	0	0	0			34	34	297
Causeway Coast & Glens	18	21	16	13	18	24	110	0	0	0			21	21	131
Derry & Strabane	15	21	19	19	19	25	118	0	0	0			39	39	157
Fermanagh & Omagh	25	30	33	18	18	23	147	0	0	0			49	49	196
Lisburn & Castlereagh	16	20	19	19	17	12	103	4	3	0	5		20	32	135
Mid & East Antrim	13	24	20	13	23	17	110	0	0	0			39	39	149
Mid Ulster	28	21	20	19	21	25	134	0	0	0			14	14	148
Newry Mourne & Down	19	31	26	21	26	5	128	0	0	0			23	23	151
TOTAL	224	273	262	210	252	262	1,483	4	3	0	5	0	305	317	1,800

	Actual BPA to Sept 23	Actual Jobs to Sept 23	6 Months Statutory	Jobs Delta versus 6 Month Statutory	6 month BPA delivery via NIESS	6 month Jobs delivery via NIESS	Total Jobs	Statutory Jobs Target (2015)	Variance	Statutory Jobs Target 23/24 (Mid point 2015/2023)	Variance
Antrim & Newtownabbey	91	56	40	16	26	15.9822	72	80	8	80	8
Ards & North Down	106	65	43	23	19	11.4	77	85	8	117	40
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	173	106	83	24	21	12.6	119	165	46	179	60
Belfast	263	162	163	-1	34	20.4	182	325	143	325	143
Causeway Coast & Glens	110	68	63	5	21	12.6	80	125	45	127	47
Derry & Strabane	118	73	70	3	39	23.4	96	140	44	140	44
Fermanagh & Omagh	147	90	85	5	49	29.4	120	170	50	170	50
Lisburn & Castlereagh	103	63	43	21	32	19.2	83	85	2	111	28
Mid & East Antrim	110	68	43	25	39	23.4	91	85	-6	107	16
Mid Ulster	134	82	79	3	14	8.4	91	210	119	163	72
Newry Mourne & Down	128	79	78	1	23	13.8	92	155	63	170	78
Totals	1,483	912	787	125	317	190.2	1102	1625	523	1689	587