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| **Improvement Objective 1:** | **We will grow the economy and create jobs** |
| **Associated Programme for Government Outcome(s)** | **Outcome 1 | We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy****Outcome 6 | We have more people working in better jobs****Outcome 10 | We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest.** |
| **Associated Community Plan Objective | Outcome 4** | **All people in Ards and North Down benefit from a prosperous economy** |
| **Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority PROSPERITY**  | **We will create the conditions for businesses to start, grow, thrive, provide opportunities for employment and be sustainable**. |
| Why are we focussing on this priority? | * Residents identified this as a priority (evidence from research)
* AND saw an increase of 162 jobs in 2021\* but had the lowest number of employee jobs across 11 councils
* AND has the lowest GVA per head of population in NI
* 1 in 4 of AND working population is economically inactive
* There has been an increase of 2.1% in the unemployment claimant count between July 2022 and July 2023
 |
| What we hope to achieve | * 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 are we going to do it and how will we measure progress? | * **Manage and deliver programmes to enhance physical and digital infrastructure (BD)**
	+ Agree a Technical design for Marine Gardens as part of the QP project with Bangor Marine by January 2024
	+ To progress the Bangor Waterfront Scheme to agree a Development Agreement with BYC by March 2024
* **Develop regeneration improvements in conjunction with Town Advisory Groups (TAGs)**
	+ To continue to work with the City/Town Advisory Groups to develop regeneration improvements for the urban areas and act as a conjugate for other Council services (by March 2024)
* **Commence Capital Schemes using funding from Covid Recovery Small Settlements Programme**
	+ Commence delivery of the Portaferry Public Realm by October 2023 using funding secured from the Small Settlements Grant
	+ 6 projects developed and delivered using the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme (6 Capital schemes commenced?)
* **Work to optimise funding and collaborate with key partners to create and deliver innovative transformation support**
	+ 12 businesses supported through the DTFF programme
* **Deliver NIESS which replaces previous “Go For It” and other general business support programmes**
	+ 85 new jobs created through “Go for it” successor Programme
	+ 123 new jobs created through Enterprise Support Service
	+ 4 one to one mentoring sessions for Creative Industries Development
	+ Deliver and implement Digital Strategy Action Plan
* **Meet** **the Schedule 3 Planning Indicators of the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015**
	+ Major Planning applications processed within an average of 30 weeks (Statutory Indicator)
	+ Local Planning applications processed within an average of 15 weeks (Statutory Indicator)
	+ 70% of planning enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks (Statutory Indicator)
 |
| Senior Responsible Owner(s) | Director of Place Director of Prosperity |
| 7 aspects of Improvement | Service Effectivenessü | Service Qualityü | Service Availabilityü | Fairness | Sustainabilityü | Efficiency | Innovationü |

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| Improvement Objective 2:  | **We will improve the cleanliness of the streets**  |
| **Associated Programme for Government Outcome(s)** | Outcome 2 | We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment |
| Associated Community Plan Objective | Outcome 5 | All people in Ards and North Down feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment. |
| Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority ENVIRONMENT  | We will grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our towns, villages, countryside, and coast. |
| Why are we focussing on this priority? | * 81% of households in the Borough are concerned for the environment (71% across NI, NISRA CHS, 2019)
* The most common suggestions for Council improvement included: dog fouling and improved street cleansing in our Resident Survey conducted June 2021
* The Live Here Love Here Cleanliness Index Score for AND has been static since 2019/20 at 73
 |
| What we hope to achieve | * 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, incl. our towns, villages, countryside and coast
 |
| How are we going to do it and how will be measure progress? | * **Target identified problem areas for enhanced enforcement and street cleansing activities**
	+ Increase LEAMS Cleanliness Index Score to 80
	+ Regain top 3 position for Fixed Penalty Enforcement in NI
	+ Increase new maximum fine levels for fouling and litter in 2023
* **Deliver "Live Here Love Here (LHLH)" grants through Recycling Investment Fund (RCIF)**
	+ Deliver £25k grant funding by March 2024
 |
| Senior Responsible Owner(s) | Director of Environment |
| 7 aspects of Improvement | Service Effectivenessü | Service Qualityü | Service Availabilityü | Fairness | Sustainabilityü | Efficiency | Innovationü |

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| Improvement Objective 3:  | **We will improve the Borough’s recycling rates**  |
| **Associated Programme for Government Outcome(s)** | Outcome 2 | We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment |
| Associated Community Plan Objective | Outcome 5 | All people in Ards and North Down feel pride from having access to a well-managed sustainable environment. |
| Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority ENVIRONMENT  | We will grow a clean, attractive, environmentally responsible place, including our towns, villages, countryside, and coast. |
| Why are we focussing on this priority? | * 81% of households in the Borough are concerned for the environment (71% across NI, NISRA CHS, 2019)
* £4.3 million paid in landfill costs 2021/22 an increase of 1% on the previous year.
 |
| What we hope to achieve | * 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, incl. our towns, villages, countryside and coast
 |
| How are we going to do it and how will be measure progress? | Encourage householders to recycle more to reduce the tonnage of household waste being sent to landfill through:* **Conduct a full review of Council’s Waste Management Services**
	+ Reduce the tonnage of municipal solid waste sent to landfill to 35,000
* **Improve the Council’s overall re-use, recycling and recovery rates**
	+ Increase % of household waste recycled, reused and composted to 60%
	+ Reduce biodegradable waste that is diverted from landfill (2022/23 17,124[[1]](#footnote-1))
* **Add kerbside textiles collection to glass collection service**
	+ By October 2023 introduce kerbside collection of textiles
* **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.**
	+ Launch the Environmental, Learning, Lifestyle, Action (ELLA) Project by June 2023
	+ Rollout ELLA Project to schools September 2023
 |
| Senior Responsible Owner(s) | Director of Environment |
| 7 aspects of Improvement | Service Effectivenessü | Service Qualityü | Service Availabilityü | Fairness | Sustainabilityü | Efficiencyü | Innovationü |

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| **Improvement Objective 4:** | **We will support our businesses and residents to protect and improve their health and wellbeing.** |
| **Associated Programme for Government Outcome(s)** | Outcome 4 | We enjoy long, healthy, active lives. |
| Associated Community Plan Objective | Outcome 2 | All people in Ards and North Down enjoy good health and wellbeing |
| Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority LIFE | We will support the physical and emotional wellbeing of our residents through our services, facilities, and partnerships. |
| Why are we focussing on this priority? | * Residents have identified improving health and wellbeing as a top priority (research evidence)
 |
| What we hope to achieve | * 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 are we going to do it and how will we measure progress? | * **Provide additional resources for community health and wellbeing and support utilising existing budgets**
	+ Increase the number of business employees registering for Health and Wellbeing initiatives to 24
	+ Host an allergen awareness seminar for all catering businesses within the Borough by March 2024
	+ Work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Council and Borough with Officer and Elected Member champions (By March 2024)
	+ 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)
	+ Increase the % of people who complete the GP referral programme across all leisure sites to 30%
	+ Increase the number of Fitness Classes per Week delivered by Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco to 250
	+ Increase Active Aging Memberships across Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco sites to 400
	+ Increase numbers enrolled in Swim programmes delivered by Leisure Ards and NCLT/Serco to 3500
	+ Support a more sustainable solution to food poverty by supporting 2 Social Supermarkets within the Borough (by March 2024)
	+ Increase the numbers engaging with Museum/Heritage Education Services by March 2024
	+ Increase number of creative class programme sessions delivered to 70 sessions
* **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.**
	+ Plant 15,000 trees across the Borough
	+ Retain the Borough’s 5 Green Flag awards
	+ Increase the m2 of rewilded Council maintained ground to 90,000
	+ 30 Community Gardening projects organised
	+ 100% condition surveys carried out according to schedule
 |
| Senior Responsible Owner(s) | Director of Community, Health and WellbeingDirector of Environment |
| 7 aspects of Improvement | Service Effectivenessü | Service Qualityü | Service Availabilityü | Fairnessü | Sustainabilityü | Efficiency | Innovationü |

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| **Improvement Objective 5:** | **We will use technology to drive change.**  |
| Corporate Plan PEOPLE Priority **EXCELLENCE** | We will work to be a high-performing organisation, innovating and partnering to make a sustainable, positive difference for our Borough |
| Why are we focussing on this priority? | * Council recognises that to be a high-performing organisation it needs to change how it operates.  Council has developed a Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme which will help deliver improved services and achieve efficiencies.  These efficiencies don’t just mean reducing spend but are about delivering better outcomes for residents and using the funds it has at its disposal in the best way possible.
 |
| What we hope to achieve | * 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 are we going to do it and how will we measure progress? | * **Update and Publish Customer Service Excellence Strategy and Action Plan for 2020-2024**
	+ Achieve a 75% rate of resolution of issues or enquiries at first point of contact in Customer Service
* **Develop proposals for more innovative and effective methods of consultation and engagement with residents**
	+ Launch digital customer engagement platform to improve stakeholder and resident engagement by December 2023
* **Develop a Digital Transformation Strategy**
	+ Strategy developed by September 2023
 |
| Senior Responsible Owner(s) | Chief ExecutiveDirector of Corporate Services |
| 7 aspects of Improvement | Service Effectivenessü | Service Qualityü | Service Availabilityü | Fairnessü | Sustainability | Efficiencyü | Innovationü |

1. Unverified figure – 2022/23 annual reports will be published late November/early December 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)