



**SUMMARY**

**Performance  
Improvement  
Report  
2021/22**



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# Executive Summary

✓  
We increased participation in Council led activities, to maintain and improve physical and mental health and wellbeing for our citizens

✓  
We improved our citizen engagement methods and simplified processes for contacting the council

✓  
We achieved all of our Performance KPIs

## ACHIEVED

✓  
We achieved our statutory targets for:

- The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity
- The percentage of planning enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks
- The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled
- The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings

## IN PROGRESS

- Some service KPIs (including those that could not be accurately measured during 2021/22 as a result of technical issues)

Statutory targets for:

- The average processing time of major planning applications
- The average processing time of local planning applications
- The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)

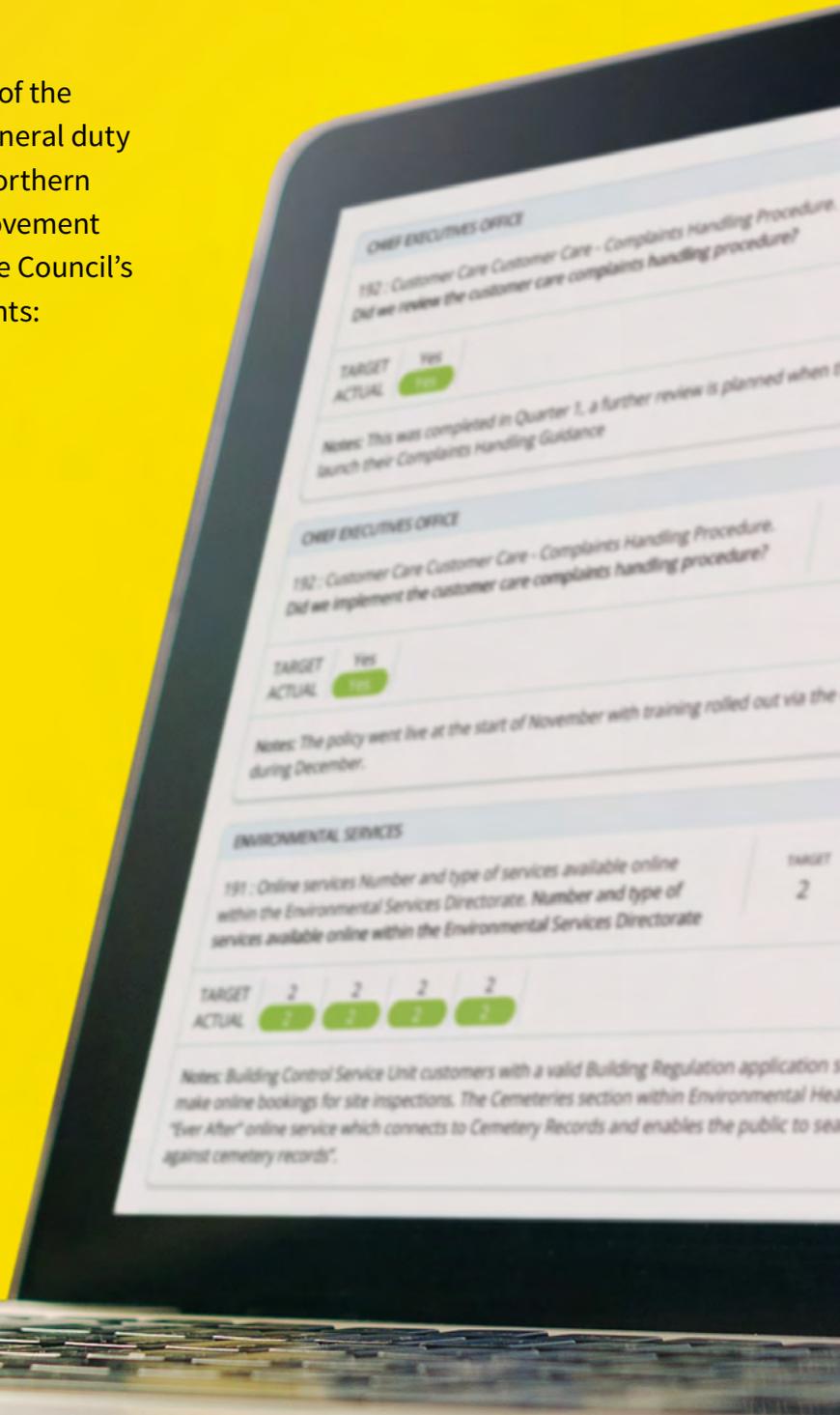
## SECTION 1

# Introduction

This summary 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 the Council's performance against the following requirements:

- Performance improvement objectives set out in the 2021/2022 Performance Improvement Plan;
- Statutory performance improvement indicators and standards for the functions of Economic Development, Planning and Waste for 2021/2022, including comparison with the previous two years; and
- Performance information on self-imposed indicators and standards collected during 2021-2022.

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



## SECTION 2

# Performance Improvement Objectives

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### Objective 1:

We will improve our citizen engagement methods and simplify processes for contacting the council.

### Aims:

- To deliver excellent and easily accessible public services, improve customer service and satisfaction;
- To improve efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery, offering ratepayers better value for money;
- To provide improved insight and management reporting, supporting better and more informed decision-making;
- To embrace the use of digital technology to improve efficiency and increase customer access to services;
- To deliver a high performing Council through digital transformation.

## CASE STUDIES

# What difference did we make?

### Highlights included:

#### Environmental Services

Customers who have engaged with the Environmental Services Directorate in an online capacity have reported many benefits, including the ability to conveniently submit Building Notice, Regularisation and Property Certificate Applications as well the ability to book site inspections online within Building Control. Year-end figures show that up to 80% of Regularisation applications and 75% of Building Notice applications are now made online. Online Property Certificate applications from conveyancing solicitors is around 50%.

Previous frustrations expressed around not being able to report a noise complaint and nuisance when it was ongoing, have been addressed.

Funeral Directors have also welcomed the benefits of being able to make the necessary arrangements for funerals at times which traditionally could only be made during office working hours. All of these customers have been able to access these services in a quick, efficient and easy to use manner on a 24/7 basis.





Much of the interaction through the Council's website is customers seeking information in relation to their bin collections and access to the household recycling sites. There has been significant uplift in website traffic growing from 27% of total traffic associated to waste related queries to 60% in December 2021.

In addition, customers have indicated that using the services online have been of particular benefit to those who do not have access to transport to come into the Council Offices and also during the travel restrictions imposed as a

result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the ability to be able to avail of services and communicate with the various service units within the Environmental Services Directorate through online services was particularly beneficial during the lockdown period.

As more online services were made available within the directorate during the 2021/22 financial year it is intended to carry out online surveys during 2022/23 to capture further feedback and testimonials.

*"It's very convenient. Would be great if other things could be added, example applying for birth certificates, marriage licence etc."*

*"I had recent contact with the building control department with a time sensitive issue, I spoke to administration staff. At a stressful time they were amazing help and fantastic at their jobs."*

*"As a funeral director I am now able to secure an interment time outside the traditional office working hours."*

*"As someone who is not tech savvy, I found this simple to navigate."*

*"A very efficient service. I was very pleased thank you."*

*"Found it very easy to navigate and to complete transaction."*

## Communities Outcomes

In 2021/22 the Participatory Budgeting Initiative was launched in Castlereagh East and Castlereagh South. Due to the public health guidance in place in April 2021 it was agreed that these two schemes would be delivered in an entirely on-line format. A total of 39 applications were received - 23 applications from Castlereagh East and 16 from Castlereagh South. Following the online voting process which generated 1877 votes (934 from Castlereagh East and 943 from Castlereagh South) funding was awarded to 16 projects in each DEA generating an investment of £15,000 in each district.

Below are some examples of feedback from beneficiaries.

### Carryduff Primary School

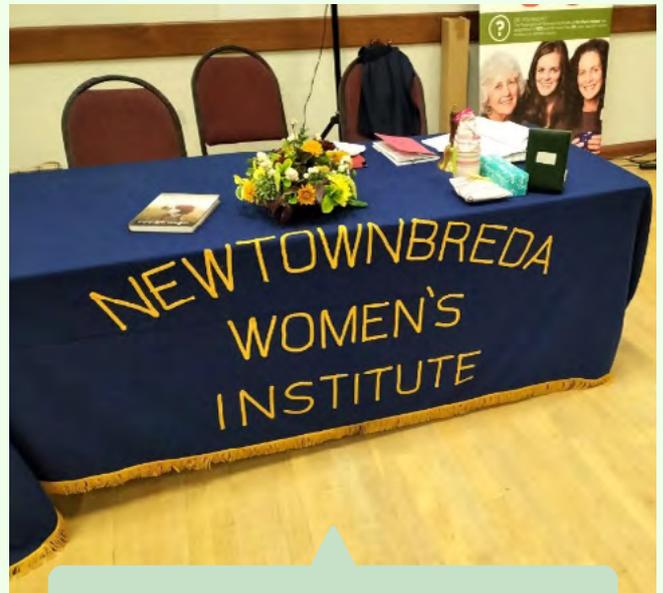


*“We were delighted to be awarded the £1000 grant for our Great Egg-Spectations project.*

*We recently received a chicken coop, three gorgeous hens and all the equipment necessary to look after them. All with the intention of extending our nurture and well-being curriculum. The hens have proved a big hit with both pupils and staff. The pupils have even been getting their hands dirty with mucking out.*

*With the constraints of money within schools, this project would never have been possible without this grant. We are so appreciative being able to provide this opportunity for our wonderful pupils.”*

### Newtownbreda Women’s Institute



*“A big Thank You to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council for their Grand Choice grant to Newtownbreda Women’s Institute. Our first session of the season was on the 2nd Friday in October 2021 with guest speaker Carol Ann Creagh who told us of her many walks on The Camino.*

*Without the funding from LCCC we would have been unable to book the programme we have been able to. Funding enables us to book speakers, pay for the rental of the hall we use and plan for the year ahead.”*



## Dreamscheme



*“The Grand Choice grant from Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council has been really valuable to Dreamscheme and has enabled us to provide a weekly safe space for local young people on Monday afternoons. The space is currently benefiting a group of young people aged 11 to 16, providing them with regular opportunities to connect with peers and to improve their emotional and mental wellbeing through participating in a programme of activities based on the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing: Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give!*”

*So far we have been able to use the funding to invest in new sofas for our youth centre. Funding is also being used for sports and games equipment, Christmas community service materials and snacks for weekly sessions.”*

A community showcase event for the Grand Choice participatory budgeting initiative for Downshire West was held in quarter four in St John’s Parish Centre, Moira. Around 800 people attended on the day to learn about the 23 projects competing for funding and to vote for their top ten initiatives. A total of 725 voting cards were submitted which resulted in 16 projects being funded generating an investment of £15,744 in the Downshire West DEA.

## Proms in the Car Park

A Proms in the Car Park event was held in car park of Hillsborough Presbyterian Church. Music was provided by a variety of performers including Downshire Primary School and locally known soloists and musicians. The musical extravaganza attracted 280 adults and 50 children. Face painting and balloon modelling was provided and each child was given a goodie bag with confectionary and juice.

Everyone in the local Hillsborough Village area was invited to attend with special invitation to young adults with learning difficulties. This was the first opportunity since COVID that the Church was able to engage with these young adults.

Positive feedback has been received from many attendees saying how much they enjoyed the event and how it had really lifted their spirits. There was great participation from the audience.

It is hoped that this event will now become a regular occurrence in the Church’s calendar.

Further participatory budgeting initiatives are planned to take place in the 2022/23 financial year. The proposed timetable for the community showcase events are as follows:

- Lisburn South – September 2022
- Downshire East – November 2022
- Lisburn North – February 2023

## SECTION 2

# Performance Improvement Objectives

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### Objective 2:

We will increase participation in Council led activities that seek to maintain and improve physical and mental health and wellbeing for our citizens.

### Aims:

- To contribute to the achievement of the outcome of our Community Plan that we live healthy, fulfilling and long lives
- To deliver an attractive range of programmes to encourage people of all ages and abilities to participate in and enjoy regular physical activity, sustaining good physical and mental health
- To provide safe, accessible leisure and sports facilities, endorsing pathways to sports for all
- To deliver high quality, cost effective services that meet people's needs making use of new approaches to continual improvement, innovation and performance management
- To ensure that:
  - Children and young people are physically active and enjoy good mental health
  - Good health will no longer be dependent on where we live or what income we have
  - Older people age actively and more independently to stay well and connected
  - People of all ages are more physically active more often.

## CASE STUDIES

# What difference did we make?

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### Highlights:

#### Sports Services

Our Council facilities continued to offer Vitality members an extensive timetable of classes, gym sessions and activities.

The total number of classes increased to 1,869 by the end of the year, which is a rise of 1503 classes from the start of the year when facilities re-opened. Class attendance also dramatically increased to 25,400 (increase of 5,729 from the start of the year), which highlights the growing demand and confidence for classes by the end of 2021/22.

Vitality membership also continued to increase throughout the year, to 11,910 on 28 March 2022, returning to pre-pandemic levels.

The Vitality membership was also expanded with the development of the new Vitality Plus package, which was promoted to new and existing members in March 2022. The package includes all the benefits of membership as well as golf membership at either Castlereagh Hills Golf Course or Aberdelghy Golf Course.





Vitality Plus members can now also benefit from:

- Unlimited golf 7 days per week
- Complimentary golf club hire
- Weekly golf lessons for children
- Monthly golf lessons for adults
- Golf competitions for children
- Golf Ireland Registration for children

The use of the Vitality App for online bookings also continued to grow reaching 23,003 App downloads by the end of the year, which is an increase of 31.4% from the start of the year.

Some of the new classes introduced during 2021/22:

- Mamafit
- Family Fun Sessions
- HITT & Core
- Basketball
- Fitness Classes
- Creative Learning Sessions
- Line Dancing
- Aquafit
- Women's Classes - includes Women's Self-Defence and Women's Kick-Boxercise
- Squats & Tots
- Billy Neill - Kettlebells and Bootcamp classes
- Senior Multi-Sports
- Healthwise Scheme
- Walking Group
- Post Exercise Referral Scheme
- Cardiac Rehab

## Class Feedback

Throughout the year class feedback was received through an on-line survey promoted on social media and via the Vitality App. The feedback was used to shape future timetables.

*“Being able to leave my cancer at the door for a short while and feel less useless as a member of society.”*

*“It’s fantastic to see Vitality/LCCC offering this kind of class, investing in women’s personal safety and self-confidence. Especially in light of recent tragic events it’s great to see Vitality living up to its promise of a ‘lifestyle membership’ offering something more than a standard gym and prioritising giving women something to help them feel safe and secure in a world that is increasingly not so.”*

*“Lough Moss is run fantastically by wonderful staff, especially the instructors. It’s fun and friendly and the instructors know their stuff and are so helpful. The classes and the gym are a lifeline to me. It feels like a family to me. Classes in the mornings and evenings seem to be well attended and the instructors are very popular. Please don’t ruin our wonderful leisure centre by changing things. If it’s not broke it doesn’t need fixing.”*

*“Having never did Pilates before this class is a great place to learn all the positions & exercise. Jayne the instructor is excellent and really puts you at ease if you are new to the class. The class progresses to give you easier & harder options for each move so that all ages are catered for. There is a range of ages that regularly attend and the room is large enough to safely space out but could do with being a bit cooler (as you do actually work up a sweat!!).”*

*“Cindy’s infectious enthusiasm, her guidance and humour makes this class accessible to the non-kettle bells ‘pro’ like me. I attended a kettle bells class some years ago and found it far too advanced and competitive so really welcome this class as the atmosphere is much more welcoming. The workout while challenging is doable and I am seeing I can now cope with heavier weights since starting this class. A bonus for me most of my class are women.”*

## Vitality Feedback

The following feedback was received on social media in relation to the Vitality Membership package.

*“Not gonna lie, probably the best thing I’ve done!! What would usually cost me a fortune is now completely doable. I’m a mom of 4 children and it’s benefitted them massively.”*

*“It’s an absolutely amazing package for the family. We use ours so much, I’m always worried we will get banned for overuse.”*

*“Great leisure centre - ice skating rink is well taken care of, friendly staff, very efficient at their jobs, relaxed atmosphere, good vibes and fun for the whole family. Recommended.”*



## Parks & Amenities

In 2021/22 we focused on improving the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of our citizens through a number of programmes to develop their horticultural skills and helping them understand the benefits of healthy eating.

One project saw thousands of plants and compost handed out to 36 community groups and five poly-tunnels were purchased and delivered to community groups in Stoneyford, Maghaberry, Moira, Derriaghy and Ballymacash.

The following are just some of the highlights and customer testimonials.

### Live Life Wellbeing Group Horticulture Project



*"We are so blessed to have been able to take part in the gardening programme. The tutors are stars. We love Wednesdays! Everything was tailored to suit us, we loved it."*

### Hillsborough Walking Group



*"Love it."*

*"Interactive with people the same age."*

*"Something to look forward to and get well updated about other programmes from C-SAW and get involved in more, as a result."*

*"Good craic, good company, keeps us active."*

“Making children aware of the importance of growing.”

“Great programme, healthy organic growing and healthy food.”

“Sense of achievement and motivation for the children to grow veg themselves.”

“I just wanted to thank you for organising what was a brilliant two days for the children. They loved every minute of it as did the staff attending.

We are working on outdoor learning across the school and would be interested in any other workshops you would have throughout the year.”

## Moira poly tunnel



“The new poly tunnel, especially once it has a water supply nearby, will let Moira in Bloom broaden our activities and get more residents involved. We’ll be able to grow foodstuffs, keep perennial bedding going when we need to lift it from the beds and not least, provide somewhere for the community to be involved whatever the weather. We’re already looking after several Duke of Edinburgh students; this will expand to other youth and residents’ groups as we’re able to get them involved in year-round poly tunnel gardening.

First on the list is creating a growing medium. We’re going to turn stony waste ground into fertile beds by layering up from cardboard to manure to green mulch to compost, giving crops a foot thick bed to grow in.”

– **Local community representative**

## Older Gardening Programme



“Has helped me with my mental health and improved my gardening skills while learning.”

“I have learnt wood working skills making bird boxes and window box. I have learnt about planting seeds, tending and harvesting plants, manuring the beds and care of tools. It was great to learn from other gardeners. Overall the horticultural class has been a great learning experience.”

## SECTION 3

# Statutory Indicators – Self Assessment

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Annual standard to be met	Year End Results			Explanation of 2021/22 result
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
ED1	<p><b>The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity.</b> </p> <p><i>[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.]</i></p>	85 (DfE) 116 (GfI)	112	106	129	<p>Target Achieved</p> <p>Northern Ireland Business Start Programme for NI launched in September 2017 as a collaboration between all 11 Councils. Job creation targets for the programme are being achieved nationally.</p> <p>For LCCC this has resulted in 129 jobs being created in 2021/2022 versus a statutory indicator of 85. This remains well in excess of the statutory requirement. During 2021/2022 DfE carried out a consultation on the proposed Annual Statutory Target with a revised minimum target of 116 jobs for LCCC. In light of this, an increased Annual Target of 116 has been built into LCCC's Economic Development plans for 2022-2023 and will be managed by the Economic Development Unit.</p> <p>For 2021/2022 the Council remains in 1st place in NI in terms of jobs promoted versus this statutory target, this number of jobs is reflective of the council's total business base and number of population within the Council area who are economically active.</p> <p>Forecast for 2022/2023 is 126 jobs against an unchanged statutory indicator of 85 jobs.</p>

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Annual standard to be met	Year End Results			Explanation of 2021/22 result
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
P1	<p><b>The average processing time of major planning applications.</b> </p> <p><i>[An application in the category of major development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015(a)]</i></p>	Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 30 weeks.	55.2 weeks	79.7 weeks	Estimated to be 106.8 weeks	<p>The major category of applications represent only a small percentage (approximately 2%) of the total applications processed in this Council. The challenge in achieving good performance consistently can depend on a number of unrelated factors and delays linked for example, to the consultation process for a major piece of road infrastructure in one application, can mask good performance generally.</p> <p>However the importance that the contribution that applications of a large scale make to the local economy of Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh is recognised and the Council continue to manage these cases proactively and processed expeditiously where possible.</p> <p>It is recognised in a recent NIAO Audit Report that funding of the Northern Ireland planning system needs to be reformed and put on a more sustainable model. How performance is measured in the future is part of a wider improvement agenda and officers from this Council are participating in an ongoing review which is being co-ordinated by the Department of Infrastructure.</p> <p>The average processing times for major applications for all Councils was reported in the Planning Annual Framework as 52.8 and 61.4 weeks respectively for the years 2019-20 and 2020 – 21. Performance within LCCC for the periods outlined 55.2 and 79.7 weeks for the same period, which is marginally higher when compared with the Council wide average. This is as a number of major applications decided in this period that have been subject to Section 76 planning agreements.</p> <p>Good performance, relative to other councils, remains a challenge, given the complexity of a number of major applications received in the past two years. The Council has been actively managing this in attempting to take at least one application to Council each month. A number of legacy major applications moving out of the planning system has pushed out performance to approximately 106 weeks however in spite of this officers are continually focused on moving major applications particularly where there is a demonstrable economic growth opportunity. There are currently 21 in the system and we are committed to bringing forward all major applications as expeditiously as possible. The planning committee are briefed monthly on performance and we attempt to bring forward a minimum of one major application per month.</p>

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Annual standard to be met	Year End Results			Explanation of 2021/22 result
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
P2	<p><b>The average processing time of local planning applications.</b></p> <p><i>[Local applications means 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)]</i></p>	<p>Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 15 weeks.</p>	16.6 weeks	23.8 weeks	Estimated to be 16.2 weeks	<p>The average processing times for local applications for all Councils was reported in the Planning Annual Monitoring Framework as 14.0 and 17.8 weeks respectively for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21.</p> <p>Performance within LCCC for the periods outlined was 16.6 and 23.8 weeks for the same period.</p> <p>The Planning Annual Monitoring Framework 2020 – 21 is published without regard to COVID emergency.</p> <p>The 23.8 weeks in the year 2020/21 reflects the impact of operating through a series of lockdowns and other COVID restrictions. There is a return to normal performance and a significant improvement in performance which is estimated to be 16.2 weeks.</p> <p>In addition performance against the statutory target for local applications was and will continue to be impacted in the Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council Area as a consequence of the publication and subsequent withdrawal of the Department for Infrastructure Planning Advice Note on the Implementation of Strategic Planning Policy on Development in the Countryside.</p> <p>The Planning Advice Note was quoted in a large number of Judicial Review challenges received that required the Council to pause issuing decisions for single dwellings in the Countryside until more was known about the outcome of these challenges was known. Not being complacent and to manage this unforeseen risk additional internal resources have been realigned to assist in reducing the backlog of decisions and assist in recovering a position of good performance.</p>

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Annual standard to be met	Year End Results			Explanation of 2021/22 result
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
P3	<p><b>The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks.</b> </p> <p><i>[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).]</i></p>	70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.	84%	83.6%	Provisional 83.9%	<p>Target Achieved through another challenging year of the Covid-19 Pandemic which again saw a high level of planning enforcement complaints being received by the council.</p> <p>Council officers continued to adapt to alternative working practices to ensure continuity of service through the pandemic and recovery period.</p> <p>Officers had to prioritise cases to ensure a high level of service was maintained and this will continue to be the case in the near future as the unit balances workloads in line with the agreed enforcement protocols.</p>
W1	<p><b>The percentage of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse).</b> </p> <p><i>[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)]</i></p>	50% household recycling by 2020	50.79%	50.4% (unverified)	49.68% (unverified)	<p>LCCC has fallen short of achieving a household waste preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting rate, KPI of over 50%.</p> <p>As referenced in the 2020/21 Performance Improvement plan the global Covid-19 pandemic impacted waste and recycling services as well as effecting the types and volumes of waste generated from local households. It was anticipated that this impact would likely continue into 2021/22 which has been the case. During these unprecedented times the focus has been on maintaining service provision to local households.</p> <p>Ongoing work on harmonisation of kerbside dry recycling collections will help make a positive impact on household recycling rates moving forward however implementation is not likely to be until 2023/24.</p> <p>Validated 2021/2022 figures will be included in the NIEA NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Statistics annual report when published later this year. (Approx. November 2022)</p>

Ref	Statutory Indicator	Annual standard to be met	Year End Results			Explanation of 2021/22 result
			2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
W2	<p><b>The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste (BLACMW) that is landfilled.</b></p> <p><i>[Local authority collected municipal waste is as defined in section 21 of the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003(c)]</i></p> 	16,444 tonnes	14,373 tonnes	15,967 tonnes (unverified)	14,753 tonnes (unverified)	<p>NILAS targets were set until 2019/20 so while there is no target for 2021/22 it is the expectation that levels of BLACMW should remain within the final year allowance.</p> <p>The validated 2021/2022 figure will be included in the NIEA NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Statistics annual report when published later this year. (Approx. November 2022)</p>
W3	<p><b>The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings.</b></p> <p><i>[Local authority collected municipal waste arisings is the total amount of local authority collected municipal waste which has been collected by a district council]</i></p> 	N/A	78,905	80,846	80,299 (unverified)	<p>The 2021/2022 figure is subject to final validation by NIEA/DAERA and will be included in their annual statistical report when published later this year.</p>

# Feedback and Review

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

**Website:**

[www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/performance-improvement](http://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/performance-improvement)

**Telephone:**

Performance Improvement Officer on 028 9244 7559

**Email:**

[performance@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk](mailto:performance@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)

**Write to us:**

Performance Improvement Officer,  
Chief Executive's Office,  
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council,  
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