



27 February 2025

Committee Chairperson: Councillor A O'Lone

Committee Vice-Chairperson: Alderman L Boyle

Committee Members: Aldermen – P Bradley, L Clarke and J Smyth

Councillors – A Bennington, J Burbank, M Cooper,
S Cosgrove, H Cushinan, H Magill, A McAuley,
E McLaughlin, V McWilliam and L O'Hagan

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Tuesday 4 March 2025 at 6.30pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Richard Baker".

Richard Baker, GM MSc
Chief Executive, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

PLEASE NOTE: Refreshments will be available in the Café from 5.20pm

For any queries please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9448 1301/028 9034 0107

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 3.1 Car Loan Scheme
- 3.2 LPS Supplementary Consultation on Domestic Rating Measures
- 3.3 Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25,
Performance Progress Report Quarter 3
- 3.4 Disability Action Plan (DAP) 2020-2025

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

- 4.1 Prompt Payment Performance
- 4.2 Quarterly Review of Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management
- 4.3 Quarter 3 Customer Services Report
- 4.4 Quarter 3 Managing Attendance Update April 2024-December 2024
- 4.5 Dual Language Street Sign Applications

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

- 6.1 Salary Sacrifice Pension AVC Scheme
- 6.2 Cycle 2 Work Scheme
- 6.3 Capital Projects Progress Report to 31 January 2025

**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 4 MARCH 2025**

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 FI/GEN/30 CAR LOAN SCHEME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Council's updated Car Loan Scheme.

2. Introduction/Background

Section 41B of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 provides district council's with the powers to make a loan to staff officers for the purchase of a motor vehicle or motorcycle, subject to such condition as the Department for Communities and Department of Finance may determine.

The Council Scheme offers the facility to Council Officers designated as requiring a form of transportation to fulfil their job, or in connection with their duties, to apply. All payments are repaid via a salary deduction agreement.

The Car Loan Scheme has been reviewed (enclosed) and thereafter will be reviewed on a four yearly basis, or sooner as necessary, to ensure that it remains up to date with any legislative changes.

3. Governance

The Car Loan Scheme has been equality screened, a copy of which is enclosed for information.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the updated Car Loan Scheme be approved.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

3.2 FI/FIN/050 LPS SUPPLEMENTARY CONSULTATION ON DOMESTIC RATING MEASURES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members instructions on the response to the Public Supplementary Consultation on Domestic Rating.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded that in January 2024, Council submitted a response to the Department of Finance's consultation on Revenue Raising Measures. Council has been notified that the Minister of Finance has commenced a supplementary consultation (**enclosed**) on two specific measures.

Proposal 1

Elevating the current level of the Maximum Capital Value (Cap) on domestic properties from £400,000 to £485,000.

Maximum Capital Value Cap – Summary of Measure

- Occupiers of domestic property with an assessed Capital Value of more than £400,000 pay rates as if the property's value is £400,000
- 183 Ratepayers in ANBC
- Cost of support in ANBC £163,038
- The cost falls on the NI Executive and district councils in revenue foregone

Proposal 2

Reducing the Early Payment Discount from 4% to 2%.

Early Payment Discount – Summary of Measure

- 4% Discount is applied to a domestic rate bill if it is paid in full by a specified date –usually in mid-May.
- 11,905 ratepayers in ANBC
- Cost of support in ANBC £574,408
- The full cost of the discount is met by the NI Executive

The consultation closes on 25 April 2025 and details of the consultation including the consultation response form can be accessed via the website link below:

[Supplementary Consultation on Domestic Rating Measures](#)

Members are advised that they may wish to respond on a corporate, individual or party basis.

3. Recommendation

Members's instructions are requested as to whether they wish to respond on a corporate, individual or party basis.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

3.3 PT/CI/060 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024/25, PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT QUARTER 3

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25, Quarter 3 Performance Progress Reports for Finance & Governance, Organisation Development, and overall Council.

2. Background

Members are reminded that Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 puts in place a framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Council's Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 was approved in June 2024. This set out a range of robust performance targets, along with identified improvement objectives and several Statutory Performance Targets.

4. Progress Reports

Third Quarter performance progress reports for Finance and Governance, Organisation Development and the overall Council are **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Governance

Quarterly performance progress reports are reported to relevant Committees.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 3 Performance Progress Reports for Finance & Governance, Organisation Development, and overall Council be approved.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Helen Hall Director of Organisation Development (Interim)

3.4 CCS/EDP/10 DISABILITY ACTION PLAN (DAP) 2020–2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve an extension to the Council's Disability Action Plan until 2026 to complete the remaining actions and align with the Council's Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2023-2026.

2. Introduction/Background

Council is required to submit a Disability Action Plan (DAP) to the Equality Commission. The DAP is a statement of Council's commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity for disabled people and complements its Equality Scheme under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The DAP is designed to ensure that Council fulfils its statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006) through to 2016.

The Disability Discrimination Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

These are collectively referred to as 'the disability duties'.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Disability Action Plan 2020-2025 was approved at Council in October 2020 following a 12-week consultation period.

4. Key Delivery of Disability Action Plan

The Disability Action Plan 2020-2025 actions are regularly reviewed and reported on, and an Annual Progress Report is brought to the Policy and Governance Committee and Council and then submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI). An update on the Disability Action Plan is **enclosed**.

To achieve some final outstanding actions, and bring in line with the timeframes of the Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2023-2026, it is recommended that the Disability Action Plan 2020-2025 be extended to March 2026.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that an extension to the Council's Disability Action Plan until 2026 to complete the remaining actions and align with the Council's

Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2023-2026 be approved.

Prepared by: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Organisation Development (Interim)

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the Council's quarterly prompt payment performance.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded that the Department for Communities (DfC) issued revised guidance (Local Government Circular 19/2016) on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments in November 2016. This guidance requested Councils to record specific performance targets of 10 working days and 30 calendar days and continue a cycle of quarterly reporting on prompt payment performance by Councils to the DfC and its publication on their website.

3. Prompt Payment Performance

Council's prompt payment performance for the period **1st April 2024 to 31st December 2024** is set out below:

The default target for paying invoices, where no other terms are agreed, is 30 days.

(N.B. 30 days target is 30 calendar days and 10 days is 10 working days).

During the above period, the Council paid invoices totalling £12,364,942.

Council paid 4,339 invoices within the 30-day target (93%).

Council paid 3,821 invoices within the 10-day target (82%).

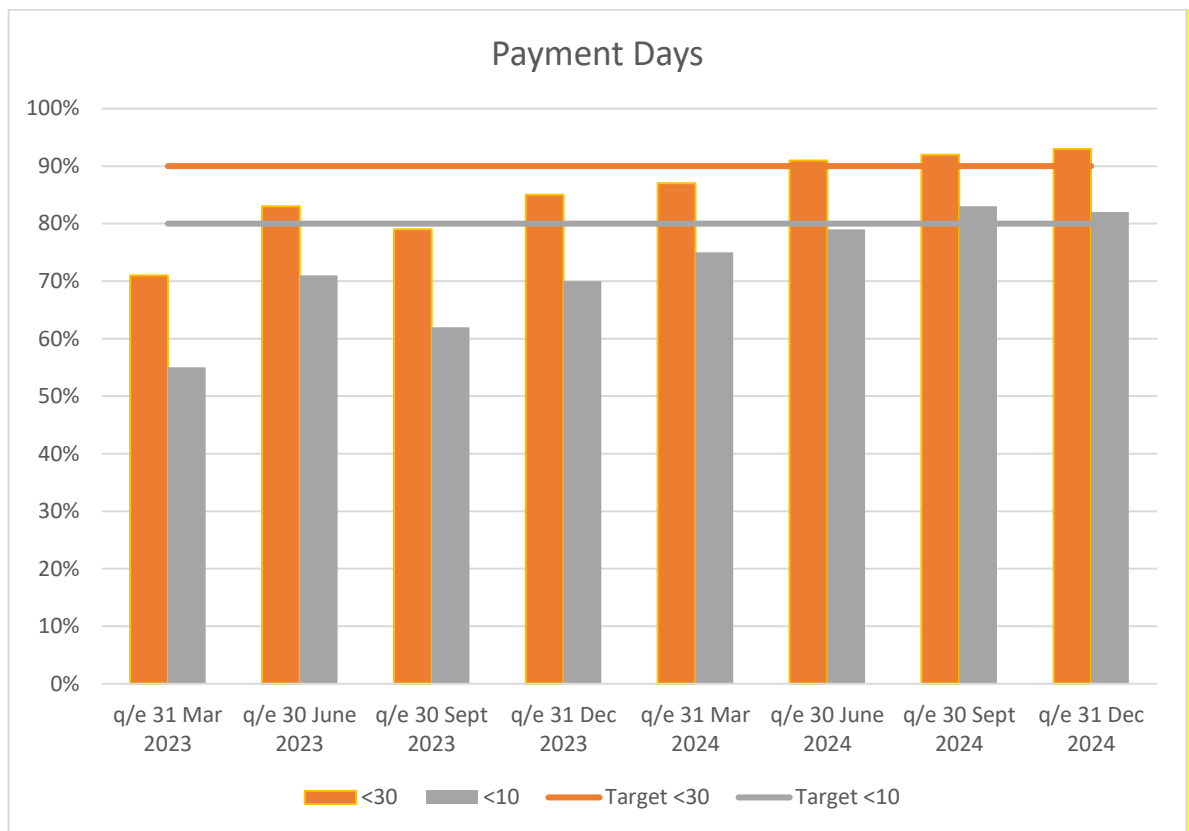
Council paid 325 invoices outside of the 30-day target (7%).

Council has set a target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days and 80% within 10 days.

This compares to previous quarterly results as below:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
q/e 31 March 2023	5,558	71%	55%
q/e 30 June 2023	7,050	83%	71%
q/e 30 September 2023	6,498	79%	62%
q/e 31 December 2023	7,074	85%	70%

q/e 31 March 2024	5,776	87%	75%
q/e 30 June 2024	5,533	91%	79%
q/e 30 September 2024	4,871	92%	83%



The performance presented graphically highlights the performance metrics for the above.

The table and graph above show the performance over the last two years. In comparison with the previous quarter, performance levels have improved for both the 30-day figure and 10-day figure.

The RAG weekly status report shows the continuing improvement that have been made over the last quarter to the end of December.

Period	No of invoices	% Paid Within 10 Days	11-30Cum	30plus cum	% Paid Within 30 Days
30/09/2024 - 06/10/2024	275	73%	12%	15%	85%
07/10/2024 - 13/10/2024	493	78%	9%	13%	87%
14/10/2024 - 20/10/2024	439	85%	9%	6%	94%
21/10/2024 - 27/10/2024	368	81%	12%	8%	92%
28/10/2024 - 03/11/2024	328	81%	10%	9%	91%

04/11/2024 - 10/11/2024	412	86%	13%	1%	99%
11/11/2024 - 17/11/2024	437	84%	12%	4%	96%
18/11/2024 - 24/11/2024	401	78%	15%	8%	92%
25/11/2024 - 01/12/2024	253	78%	15%	7%	93%
02/12/2024 - 08/12/2024	430	86%	8%	6%	94%
09/12/2024 - 15/12/2024	351	86%	9%	5%	95%
16/12/2024 - 22/12/2024	330	86%	10%	4%	96%
23/12/2024 - 24/12/2024	147	77%	16%	7%	93%

There is now a full complement of staff within the Finance section and work is ongoing with all departments to make further improvements.

Service improvements have included:

- Additional reporting capability to monitor performance
- Staff training/refresher sessions
- Process review for high volume suppliers

The prompt payment performance for Councils in Northern Ireland is published quarterly by the Department for Communities September 2024 (DfC). The prompt payment performance for the quarter ended March 2024 is shown in Appendix 1 (**enclosed**); the Council's performance for Quarter 2 of 2024/25 against the average performance for the other Councils for Quarter 2 (September) of 2024/25 is set out in the table below:

Council	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Antrim & Newtownabbey BC (Quarter 2 24/25)	92%	83%
All Councils (Quarter 2 24/25)	92%	73%

4. Supplier Balances

	December 2024	September 2024
	£	£
Creditors Control Account	599,109	200,365
% Total amount spend	0.10%	0.02%

The outstanding amount due to suppliers will fluctuate markedly depending on the timing of payment, invoice value and timelines of verification. The low value of the outstanding amount is consistent with the payment performance for the quarter.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council's quarterly prompt payment performance report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

4.2 FC/FA/8 QUARTERLY REVIEW OF PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a third quarter review of the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management activities for the 2024/25 financial year for noting.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded that the Council measures and manages its capital expenditure, borrowings and investment activities with reference to the CIPFA Prudential Code. This report provides an update on these activities that took place during the first three quarters of the 2024/25 financial year.

3. Previous Decisions of Council

Council approved the Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 to 2026/2027 and the Treasury Management Strategies for 2024/25 in February 2024.

Under the Prudential Code and the Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services the Council is required to monitor and review its prudential indicators. The key objective of which is to ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the Council are affordable, prudent and sustainable and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice.

The Council's Treasury Management Policy requires quarterly and annual reports on treasury management activities.

This report compares the approved Prudential Indicators with the quarterly position for 2024/25 and the quarterly report on the Council's borrowing and investment activities for 2024/25.

A copy of the quarter 3 report is **enclosed** for Members' information.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance

4.3 CCS/CS/010 QUARTER 3 CUSTOMER SERVICES REPORT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the Quarter 3 Customer Service report for the period October to December 2024.

2. Introduction/Background

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024-25 sets out the performance improvement target; 'we will achieve high levels of customer satisfaction', with four indicators set as measures of success.

The Customer Services Report for Quarter 3 2024-25 (enclosed) provides an update on performance.

In addition, there is an update on key consultations during 2024-25 to serve the Plan and the performance of the Complaints Handling Procedure during October to December 2024.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 3 Customer Service report for the period October to December 2024 be noted.

Prepared by: James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Organisation Development (Interim)

4.4 HR/GEN/019 QUARTER 3 MANAGING ATTENDANCE UPDATE APRIL 2024 – DECEMBER 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the Quarter 3 Managing Attendance update for the period April 2024 to December 2024.

2. Managing Attendance Update Summary

Members are reminded that the Councils 2024/25 annual target for absence is 12 average days lost per employee.

Absence at the end of Quarter 3 was above target by 2.25 days, with 11.47 days being lost against a quarterly target of 9.22 days.

A comprehensive action plan is in place to manage absence, with further details provided in the (**enclosed**) Managing Attendance Performance summary.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 3 Managing Attendance update for the period April 2024 to December 2024, be noted.

Prepared by: Victoria Stewart, HR Systems and Analytics Manager

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Organisation Development (Interim)

4.5 CCS/EDP/025 DUAL LANGUAGE STREET SIGN APPLICATIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note Dual Language Street Sign applications as follows:-

Stage 1	No applications, be noted.
Stage 2	Ballytromery Avenue, Crumlin, BT29 4ZN, be noted Camlin Park, Crumlin, BT29 4HE, be noted Longlands Avenue, Newtownabbey, BT36 7FD, be noted
Stage 3	No applications, be noted.

2. Background

Members are reminded that in accordance with the Dual Language Street Sign Policy, adopted by Council on 30 May 2022 (**enclosed**) at Appendix 1, the following update outlines the current status of applications received.

3. Application Update

STAGE 1: PETITION VERIFICATION

There are no applications at Stage 1.

STAGE 2: RESIDENTS CANVASS

Three applications are at Stage 2.

1. BALLYTROMERY AVENUE, CRUMLIN, BT29 4ZN
2. CAMLIN PARK, CRUMLIN, BT29 4HE

Canvass letters were issued to residents of the above streets, and the returns in favour do not satisfy the two-third threshold as required within the approved Policy.

3. LONGLANDS AVENUE, NEWTOWNABBEY, BT36 7FD

Canvass letters have been issued to residents of the above street with a February 2025 return date. The outcome will be reported to Members in due course.

STAGE 3: STREET SIGN INSTALLATION

There are no applications at Stage 3.

Members are reminded that during the Policy and Governance Committee in February 2025, queries were raised regarding the fabrication and installation of dual language street signs. A response from Estates Services is **enclosed** at Appendix 2.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Dual Language Street Sign applications update be noted.

Prepared by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Organisation Development (Interim)

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Members are advised that any Other Relevant Business (AORB) may be taken at this point.