



3 September 2026

Committee Chair: Alderman P Bradley

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor S Cosgrove

Committee Members: Aldermen – L Clarke, M Cosgrove and S Ross

Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, J Burbank, M Goodman, N Kelly, H Magill, T McGrann, V McWilliam, M Ní Chonghaile, A O'Lone and B Webb

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 8 September 2026 at 6.30pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

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

Richard Baker, GM MSc
Chief Executive, Antrim and 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

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 4.1 2025/26 Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report
- 4.2 CPIP 2026/27, Quarter 1 Performance Progress Report, Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27
- 4.3 Equality Scheme 2026-2030, Equality Action Plan 2026 -2030, Disability Action Plan 2026-2030
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5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

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- 5.3 Quarterly Screening Section 75 and Rural Screening Report
- 5.4 Managing Attendance Quarter 1 2026/27
- 5.5 Quarterly Report on FOI/EIR/DPA Requests
- 5.6 National Fraud Initiative 2026
- 5.7 2027/28 Estimates Timetable
- 5.8 Prompt Payment Performance, Quarter 1
- 5.9 Budget Report - Period 4 April 2026 to July 2026
- 5.10 Annual Review of Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management
- 5.11 Quarterly Review of Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management

6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2026**

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 PT/CI/066 2025/26 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Members approve the Council's 2025/26 Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report.

2. Background

Members are reminded that under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Section 92(2)(b)(i) & (ii) of the Act requires the Council to publish an assessment of its performance.

3. Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan

The Council's Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan establishes a range of performance targets, identified improvement objectives and statutory performance indicators to support the monitoring and assessment of the Council's performance.

4. Self-Assessment Report

The Annual Self-Assessment report (enclosed) provides an evaluation of the Council's performance against its statutory and self-imposed corporate performance indicators. In line with the legislative requirements, it includes comparisons with previous financial years and, where possible, benchmarking against the performance of other councils.

For 2025/26 the Council's Performance against the Key Performance Indicators as set out in the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan is as follows

- Of the 10 Statutory Indicators all 10 were Achieved
- Of the 30 Corporate Performance Indicators linked to the six Corporate Objectives 25 were Achieved, 4 were Not Achieved, for 1 the Result was Not Available.
- Overall, the Council Achieved 35 indicators, 4 Not Achieved with, 1 Result Not Available.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council's 2025/26 Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report be approved.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

4.2 PT/CI/071 QUARTER 1 PROGRESS REPORT, CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2026/27

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Members approve the Quarter 1 Performance Progress Report, Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27.

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 2026/27, approved in June 2026, sets out the Council's improvement objectives together with its corporate and statutory performance targets.

4. Performance Progress Report

The Quarter 1 Performance Progress Report is **enclosed**. The report provides an update on progress against the Council's agreed improvement objectives and performance targets.

The Council's performance against the Key Performance Indicators for Quarter 1 is as follows:

Statutory Indicators

- Of the 10 Statutory Indicators, 7 are On Track and 3 indicators linked to Waste and Recycling have results not yet available and will be reported in Quarter 2.

Self-Imposed Indicators

- Of the 37 Corporate Performance Indicators linked to the six Corporate Objectives, 24 are On Track/Achieved, 4 are At Risk with mitigations in place to return them to target, 1 is currently outside the Council's control, and 8 do not yet have data available and will be reported in future quarterly reports.

Overall Indicators

- Council has 31 indicators On Track/Achieved, 4 indicators At Risk with mitigations in place, 1 indicator reported as outside Council control, and 11 indicators for which results are currently unavailable.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 1 Performance Progress Report, Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27, be approved.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

4.3 CCS/EDP/029 EQUALITY SCHEME 2026-2030, EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2026-2030, DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2026-2030

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members that the Equality Scheme 2026-2030, Equality Action Plan 2026-2030 and Disability Action Plan 2026-2030 are approved.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded that Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Council, when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine categories of persons noted within the legislative framework. The Council must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

3. Equality Scheme 2026-2030

The Council's Equality Scheme had been reviewed to ensure the arrangements in place continued to align with Council's statutory obligations and corporate priorities.

The Equality Scheme describes certain arrangements that as a public authority the Council must set up and is obliged to apply and follow as a means of fulfilling the statutory requirements of Section 75(1) and (2) ie. the duties to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

This includes arrangements for training staff, assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity and monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that have been adopted. On an annual basis, the Council must provide a progress report to the Equality Commission NI to outline how those arrangements have been applied and to assess how effective they have been in supporting the Council to comply with the Section 75 duties.

4. Equality Action Plan and Draft Disability Action Plan 2026-2030

The Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan had been reviewed to ensure continued alignment with the Council's statutory obligations and corporate priorities. The revised Plans present a strengthened framework through which the Council would continue to advance equality, accessibility, and inclusion during the period 2026-2030.

5. Consultation

A 12-week public consultation on the Draft Equality Scheme 2026-2030, Draft Equality Action Plan 2026-2030 and Disability Action Plan 2026-2030 took place from 14 May 2026 to 6 August 2026.

As a result of the consultation exercise on the draft equality documents, we received 51 responses to the consultation survey and 2 email responses.

The feedback received reflects high levels of engagement, with respondents largely offering a mix of positive endorsement, constructive comments and forward-looking expectations. Recurring themes highlight the following priorities for stakeholders:

- Equality and Inclusion as a business priority
- Strengthened governance
- Accessibility across Council activities
- Enhanced training and capacity building
- Engagement and partnerships
- Workplace inclusion
- Resourcing and investment allocated to implementation
- Intersectionality
- Good Relations
- Accountability and transparency

The consultation exercise indicates a strong appreciation for the Council's commitment to accessibility and to build an inclusive Borough for everyone. Feedback has demonstrated a strong desire to see the plans lead to meaningful change, and highlights that their success will depend on appropriate investment and resourcing, robust governance, as well as meaningful engagement and accountability.

The feedback has provided a constructive evidence base to refine the draft documents which set out Council's vision of making meaningful improvements for all who live in, work in and visit the Borough.

The consultation feedback and final versions of the Equality Scheme 2026-2030, Equality Action Plan 2026-2030 and Disability Action Plan 2026-2030 are enclosed.

6. Equality and Rural Screening Requirements

S75 Equality screening and rural needs assessment exercises were undertaken on the draft Equality Scheme 2026-2030, draft Equality Action Plan 2026-2030 and draft Disability Action Plan 2026-2030. An EQIA was not deemed necessary, and the documents were screened out. The screening documents are enclosed.

7. Summary

Council has undertaken a 12-week consultation process on its Draft Equality Scheme 2026-2030, Draft Equality Action Plan 2026-2030 and Draft Disability Action Plan 2026-2030. The feedback has provided a constructive evidence base to refine the equality documents and the final versions are **enclosed** for Members to approve.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Equality Scheme 2026-2030, Equality Action Plan 2026-2030 and Disability Action Plan 2026-2030 be approved.

Prepared by: Claire Webb, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People and Organisational Transformation

4.4 G/HSWB/4 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Members approve the reviewed and updated Health and Safety Policy.

2. Background

With the introduction of the new Health and Safety Management Framework, the Health and Safety Policy becomes the Council's overarching document, setting out its approach to managing health and safety. It is supported by a suite of subject-specific Health and Safety Procedures, which provide detailed guidance on the management of individual health and safety matters.

The accompanying Health and Safety Policy Statement **enclosed** sets out the Council's commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for employees and others affected by its activities. Required under the Health and Safety at Work Act, the Statement will be signed by the Chief Executive as the Council's most senior officer and displayed in all Council premises and rolled out to both office based and operational staff.

The updated Health and Safety Policy has been consulted on with the recognised Trade Union Safety Representatives from NIPSA, GMB and UNITE, and with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee, in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

A copy of the updated Policy with tracked changes is **enclosed**.

3. Equality/Screening Requirements

A copy of the Section 75 Screening, Rural Needs Impact Assessment Screening and Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) are **enclosed** for information.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the reviewed and updated Health and Safety Policy be approved.

Prepared by: Kim Morrow, Health, Safety & Resilience Manager

Agreed by: Liz Johnston, Director of Organisational Development (Interim)

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

4.5 HR/ER/001 CATEGORISATION PROCEDURE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Council's Categorisation Procedure, which establishes a fair and consistent framework for placing employees into revised organisational structures arising from organisational change.

2. Introduction

The Council is committed to managing organisational change in a fair, transparent and consistent manner. Where approved organisational change results in revised organisational structures, it is essential that there is a clear and equitable process for determining how employees are matched to posts within those structures.

The proposed Categorisation Procedure, **enclosed**, has been developed to provide a consistent framework for assessing revised posts and determining the appropriate method of employee placement.

The procedure has been developed in consultation with recognised Trade Unions and supports the Council's commitment to managing organisational change fairly, transparently and in accordance with employment legislation and best practice.

3. Previous Decisions

The Procedure was subject to consultation with recognised Trade Unions between October 2025 and June 2026 and was approved by the Corporate Leadership Team on 29 June 2026.

Approval is now sought from Members to enable formal implementation across the Council.

4. Key Issues

The proposed Categorisation Procedure establishes a structured framework for categorising posts following approved organisational change.

5. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from approval of this procedure. Any future organisational change proposals will be considered on their own merits, with associated financial implications reported separately where required.

6. Screening

The procedure has been screened in accordance with the Council's statutory obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. A copy of the Screening is **enclosed** for information.

7. Governance

The procedure will be administered by Human Resources in partnership with Directors, Deputy Directors, Heads of Service, managers and recognised Trade Unions. Training will be rolled out to all relevant stakeholders.

Governance arrangements include Categorisation Panels, moderation by Human Resources and an independent appeals process to ensure fairness, consistency and transparency.

8. Summary

The proposed Categorisation Procedure provides the Council with a clear, consistent and transparent framework for managing employee placement during organisational change. It supports fair decision-making, protects employment wherever possible through assimilation and priority access arrangements, and ensures compliance with employment legislation and good governance principles.

9. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Categorisation Procedure be approved.

Prepared by: Pauline Greer, Human Resources Manager

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

4.6 G/MSMO/41 MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS – DECEMBER 2025 TO MAY 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of Members' attendance at Council and Committee meetings, for the period from December 2025 to May 2026, prior to publication on the Council's website.

2. Background

Members are advised that in February 2017 at the Policy and Governance Committee meeting it was agreed that six monthly attendance records for each of the Council and Committee meetings would be summarised on a six-monthly basis and published on the Council's website.

A summary sheet has been prepared showing the total attendance for each of the Council and Committee meetings for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 May 2026 (enclosed).

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the summary sheet recording Members' attendance at Council and Committee meetings, for the period from 1 December 2025 to 31 May 2026 be noted and published on the Council's website.

Prepared by: Member Services

Approved by: Liz Johnston, Director of Organisation Development (Interim)

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 OD/OD/002 ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Members note the minutes of the Elected Member Development Working Group meeting held on 15 June 2026.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Elected Member Development Working Group meeting are **enclosed** for information.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Elected Member Development Working Group meeting held on 15 June 2026 be noted.

Prepared by: Katherine Young, Organisation Development Manager

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

5.2 CCS/CS/011 CUSTOMER SERVICES 2026/27, QUARTER 1 UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Members note the 2026/27 Quarter 1 Customer Services update.

2. Introduction/Background

The Council's Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan sets out the Council's improvement objectives, together with its corporate and statutory performance targets.

The Council is committed to delivering high-quality customer services that ensure residents feel valued, informed and engaged. This will be achieved through building trust, fostering effective leadership, attracting and retaining talented employees, supporting staff wellbeing, and continuously improving customer satisfaction.

The **enclosed** quarterly report provides an overview of Customer Services performance, including customer satisfaction levels, telephony performance, consultation and engagement activity, complaints handling, and performance against agreed targets. The report also includes examples of customer compliments received during the reporting period.

In addition, the report highlights key trends, areas of activity and service developments across the Customer Services function during the quarter.

3. Key Findings

Performance indicators are on track during quarter one, except for one (telephony) which has mitigations being put in place to return to on track.

Overall satisfaction with Council service is 91.1%, based on 757 during quarter 1.

6.5% of telephone calls to frontline customer service teams were abandoned.

From April to June 2026, there were 2,590 responses to 18 surveys/consultations.

126 stage one and 11 stage two complaints were responded to, with 86.1% within target timeframes.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the 2026/27, Quarter 1 Customer Services report be noted.

Prepared by: James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

5.3 CCS/EDP/7 QUARTERLY SCREENING SECTION 75 AND RURAL SCREENING REPORT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the quarterly section 75 and rural screenings which have taken place within the period of April 2026 to June 2026.

2. Background

Members are advised that in line with the Council's Equality Scheme, it was agreed to provide quarterly updates on the screening of policies under Section 75. Within the Scheme, the Council made a commitment to apply screening methodology to all new and revised policies. Where necessary and appropriate, these new policies would be subject to further equality impact assessment.

3. Section 75 and Rural Screenings

The policies noted below have been screened between April and June 2026.

POLICY	SCREENING DECISION
Antrim Skate Park	1
Anti-fraud & Corruption Policy	1
Anti-Bribery Policy	1
Filming Policy	1
Environmental Health Enforcement Policy	1

- (1) Screened with no mitigation
- (2) Screened with mitigation
- (3) Screened and EQIA required

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the quarterly screening report for April 2026 to June 2026 be noted.

Prepared by: Claire Webb, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

5.4 HR/GEN/019 MANAGING ATTENDANCE QUARTER 1 2026/27

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update Managing Attendance for the Quarter 1 2026/27 reporting period, including attendance trends, absence data and the actions currently being taken to improve attendance management across the Council.

2. Introduction/Background

The Council is committed to reducing sickness absence through proactive attendance management, early intervention, and the provision of appropriate support to employees to promote health, wellbeing, and sustained attendance.

The Council's 2026/27 annual target for sickness absence is 16.5 days lost per employee.

Sickness absence at the end of Quarter 1 2026/27 was marginally above the target of 4.13 days lost per employee, with an average of 4.21 days lost to sickness absence recorded during the quarter.

The **enclosed** Managing Attendance Performance Summary for Quarter 1 2026/27 provides further detail on:

- Overall absence performance across the Council.
- Directorate and grade analysis.
- Short-term and long-term absence trends.
- Key reasons for absence.
- Wellbeing and occupational health interventions.
- Reasonable adjustments and flexible working arrangements.
- Employee Relations timelines.

3. Financial Position/Implication

Potential budgetary implications may arise where agency staff are required to maintain service provision during periods of employee sickness absence.

4. Summary

Mental health-related absences continue to represent a significant proportion of overall sickness absence levels. During Quarter 1 2026/27, stress associated with non-work-related factors, including bereavement and family or domestic pressures, accounted for 32% of all sickness absence days lost, comprising 12 individual cases.

In addition, long-term absences accounted for 31% (24 individual cases) of all sickness absence days lost during Quarter 1 2026/27. Although fewer in number than short-term absences, long-term cases tend to have a disproportionate impact on overall absence levels due to their extended

duration, contributing significantly to the total number of working days lost. As a result, a relatively small number of long-term absences can significantly influence overall absence during the reporting period.

To manage attendance within Council, an Attendance & Wellbeing Framework 2026/27 is in place and aspects of this have already been implemented in Q1. The finalised Attendance & Wellbeing Framework will be shared as an enclosure for the October 2026 Policy & Governance meeting.

This framework aims to create a workplace culture that promotes employee wellbeing, resilience and regular attendance through early intervention, supportive management and shared accountability.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 1 2026/27 Managing Attendance Performance Summary for the period of April 2026 to June 2026 be noted.

Prepared by: Gary Gardner, Human Resources Manager & Victoria Stewart, HR Systems and Analytical Manager

Approved by: Collesa Brown, Director of People & Organisational Transformation

5.5 G/DPFI/2 QUARTERLY REPORT ON FOI/EIR/DPA REQUESTS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Members on the Quarter 1 statistics relating to FOI/EIR/DPA Requests.

2. Introduction/Background

A report has been prepared on requests received and completed in the fourth quarter of the year (1 April to 30 June 2026) under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) and this is **enclosed**.

3. Summary

A summary of the quarter's statistics is as follows:

- The number of requests received was lower than the number in the same period the previous year – a decrease of 12%.
- Of the 111 requests received, 73 were under FOI, 30 under EIR and 8 under DPA.
- 94 requests were completed within the quarter.
- 89% of the requests received within the quarter were completed within the legislative deadlines of 20 days for FOI and EIR requests and a calendar month for requests made under DPA.
- The sections that received the most requests in the quarter were Environmental Health (28), Governance (20), Estate Services (19), Planning (16), and HR (15).
- Four appeals were received during the quarter. The Council's original decision was upheld on 1 occasion, and additional information was provided on 3 occasions.
- No complaints to the ICO were notified within the quarter.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 1 statistics relating to FOI/EIR/DPA Requests be noted.

Prepared by: Helen McCreight, Lead Information Governance Officer

Approved by: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer, Legal, Land, Governance & Policy

5.6 NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the National Fraud Initiative 2026 report.

2. Background

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is a data matching exercise designed to help participating bodies identify possible cases of fraud and detect and correct under or overpayments from the public purse.

3. Key Points

The Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) for Northern Ireland, head of the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO), has statutory powers to conduct matching exercises for the purpose of assisting in the prevention and detection of fraud. These powers are contained in the Serious Crime Act 2007, which inserts Articles 4A to 4H into the Audit and Accountability (Northern Ireland) Order 2003.

The Council must participate in this exercise and supply the following dataset information for matching to that of other public sector bodies to identify possible fraud or error:

1. Payroll – total payments made to current employees and Elected Members for the 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026.
2. Trade creditors payment history – payment history for the period 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2026.
3. Trade creditor Standing Data – current creditor information held at the date of data extract (from 1 October 2026).

Where a match is found, it indicates that there is an inconsistency that may require further investigation to establish what has caused the match and any further action that may be deemed necessary. Examples of possible matches are as follows:

- An employee with the Council who has a second employment with another Council or public body.
- An employee who is also a supplier to the Council or has been paid through Creditors.
- Suppliers who are associated with other suppliers, eg. through address.
- Duplicate payments made to suppliers.

Dataset Upload

Datasets must be provided to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (responsible for the collection and processing of data on behalf of the C&AG) from 1 October 2026. A secure electronic upload facility is available enabling data for NFI to be submitted directly.

This facility is contained within the existing secure NFI web application and no other method of data transfer to the NFI is acceptable.

Access to the NFI website will be restricted to those officers deemed necessary by the Chief Executive.

Results notification and possible action

Data extracted will then be matched with other Public Sector datasets and prioritised into the order of how closely the dataset matches. Initial matches should be available from mid-December 2026, with additional matches made available in the New Year.

The Council is responsible for investigating these matches. All matches will be considered by the Head of Internal Audit, who will determine further action if appropriate, including invocation of the Fraud Response Plan.

Details of the total matches received, and amounts recovered following the previous NFI exercises are as follows:

Year	Matches		Amounts Recovered	Reason
	Total	Investigated		
2020	1,036	153 (15%)	£1,837.31	2 duplicate payments
2022	648*	218 (34%)	Nil	
2024	1,389	278 (20%)	£8,685.36	4 duplicate payments

* The period of data extraction for Creditors Payments was reduced due to the introduction of the CiAnywhere finance system.

A summary of the NFI 2024 exercise completed in Northern Ireland, as reported by the Northern Ireland Audit Office, has been **enclosed** for information.

Participating bodies

Organisations participating in this exercise are those that provide data for the purposes of a data matching exercise, which may be on either a mandatory or voluntary basis.

Mandatory bodies are those bodies whose accounts are required to be audited by:

1. the Comptroller and Auditor General, except for bodies audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General by virtue of section 55 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998; or
2. a Local Government Auditor.

Since the Council's accounts are audited by a Local Government Auditor the Council must supply the required information.

The cost of participating in the National Fraud Initiative will be approximately £1,500 (final cost will not be known until invoiced) which is payable to the Northern Ireland Audit Office in February 2027.

Other mandatory participants include Central Government, Education Boards, and Health Trusts throughout the United Kingdom.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the National Fraud Initiative 2026 report be noted.

Prepared by: Paul Caulcutt, Head of Internal Audit

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance

5.7 FI/FIN/011 2027/28 ESTIMATES TIMETABLE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the 2027/28 Estimates Timetable for noting.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded that under the Local Government Finance Act Northern Ireland 2011, District Councils are obliged to set the estimates of rates before 15 February each year. District Councils are also obliged under the Rates Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 to set both domestic and non domestic district rates no later than this date.

A timetable outlining key stages in the process is **enclosed**. This includes the work that will be completed by budget holders as well as Corporate Workshops and presentations to Committees and Council. CLT approved the timetable on 17 August 2026.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Estimates Timetable be noted.

Prepared by: Denise Lynn, PA to the Director of Finance

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance

5.8 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE, QUARTER 1

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 to 30th June 2026 is set out below:

Prompt Payments : 01-Apr-2026 to 30-Jun-2026

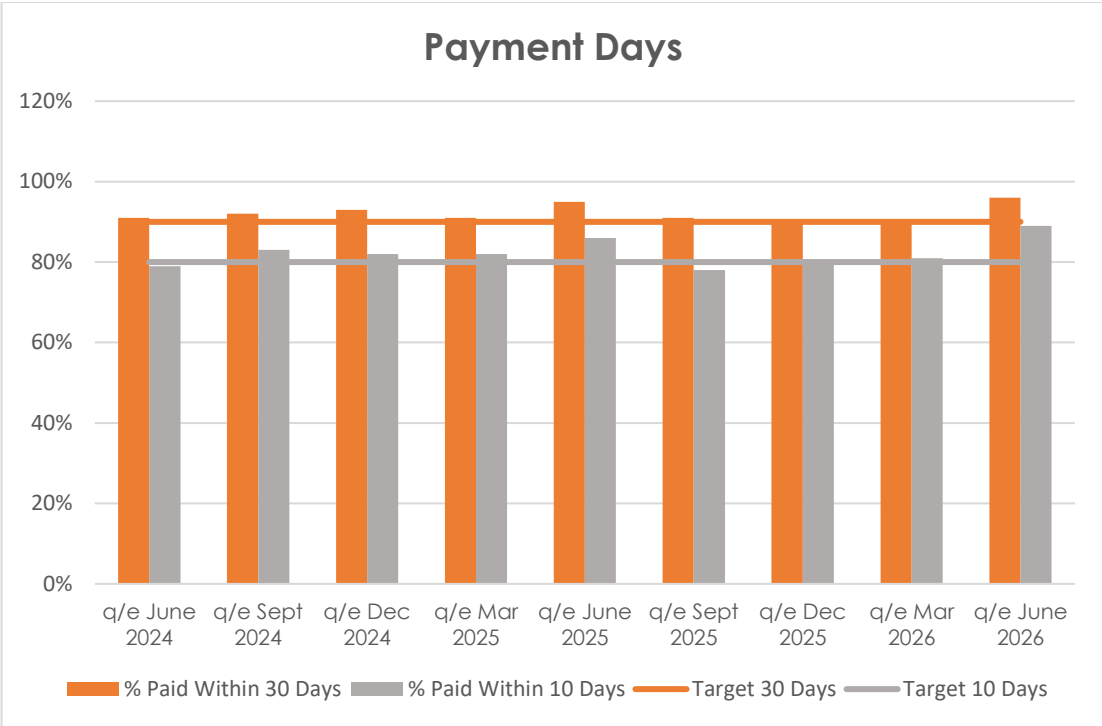
Invoices in Period	Invoices Paid 1-10 Days	Invoices Paid in less than 30 Days
5,069	4,512	4,865
	Invoices Paid 1-10 days	Invoices Paid less than 30 days
	89.0%	96.0%

The total value of invoices paid was £17,666,193.

This compares to previous quarterly results over the past two years as below:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
q/e 30 June 2024	5,533	91%	79%
q/e 30 September 2024	4,871	92%	83%
q/e 31 December 2024	4,849	93%	82%
q/e 31 March 2025	6,787	91%	82%
q/e 30 June 2025	4,891	95%	86%
q/e 30 September 2025	4,992	91%	78%
q/e 31 December 2025	5,644	90%	80%
q/e 31 March 2026	5,803	90%	81%
q/e 30 June 2026	5,069	96%	89%

This performance is shown graphically below:



Both targets were met during the quarter.

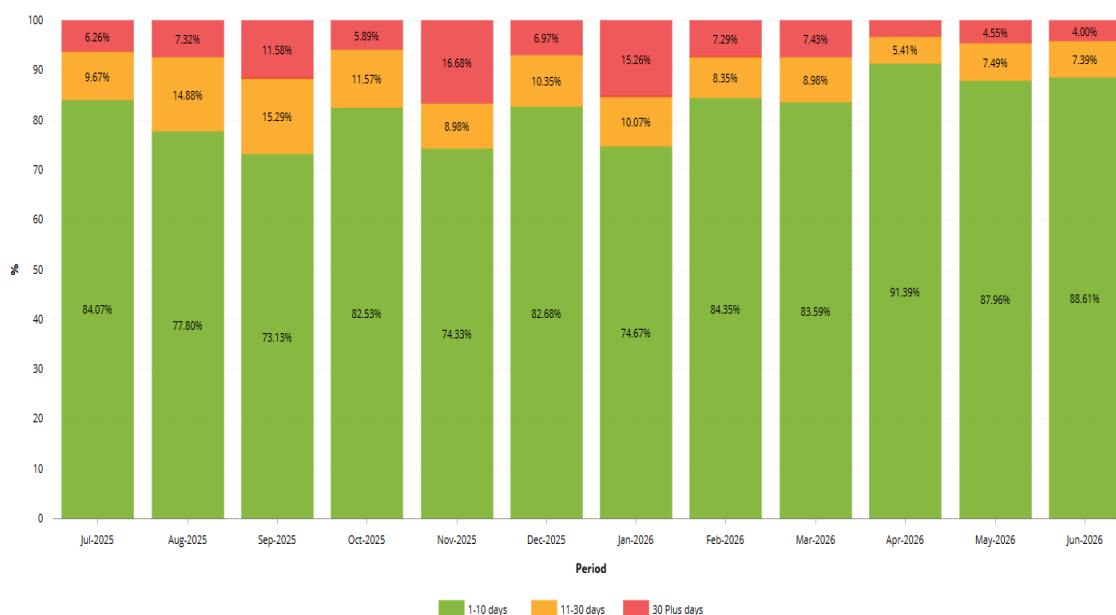
The 10 day target has now been achieved for seven out of the past nine quarters and the 30 day target has been achieved for the past nine consecutive quarters.

As shown below over the last rolling calendar year 1st July 2025 to 30th June 2026 both targets have been achieved with 82% of invoices paid within 10 days and 92% within 30 days.

Prompt Payments : 01-Jul-2025 to 30-Jun-2026

Invoices in Period	Invoices Paid 1-10 Days	Invoices Paid in less than 30 Days
21,508	17,609	19,747
	Invoices Paid 1-10 days	Invoices Paid less than 30 days
	81.9%	91.8%

The monthly performance for the financial year to date is shown overleaf:



Staff within the Finance section continue to work with all departments across the Council and with the software provider to ensure that the targets continue to be met and improved as much as possible.

Service improvements have included:

- Additional reporting capability to monitor performance
- Staff training/refresher sessions
- Process review for high volume suppliers
- Introduction of a new process to scan invoices and send to Council officers for action or to return invoices to the supplier for more information.

The prompt payment performance for Councils in Northern Ireland is published quarterly by the Department for Communities (DfC). The prompt payment performance for the 2025/26 financial year is shown in Appendix 1 (enclosed); the Council's performance for Quarter 1 of 2026/27 against the average performance for all Councils for 2025/26 is set out in the table below:

Council	% Paid Within 10 Days	% Paid Within 30 Days
Antrim & Newtownabbey BC (Quarter 1 26/27)	89%	96%
All Councils (25/26)	72%	93%

4. Supplier Balances

	June 2026	March 2026
	£	£
Creditors Control Account	2,593,021	666,963
% of quarterly spend	14.68%	3.16%

The outstanding amount due to suppliers will fluctuate markedly depending on the timing of payment, invoice value and timelines of verification.

5. Recommendation

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

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance

5.9 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – PERIOD 4 APRIL 2026 TO JULY 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the financial performance for the Directorates reporting to the Policy and Governance Committee and for the whole Council for Period 4 - April 2026 to July 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

As agreed, quarterly budget reports will be presented to the relevant Committee. All financial reports will be available to all Members.

3. Summary

As at period 4:

The Finance Directorate has a favourable variance of £36k, or 3.6%, against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

The People and Organisation Transformation Directorate has a favourable variance of £45k, or 3.1% against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

Overall, the Council has a favourable variance of £568k or 2.6% against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

A report on the financial performance, employee costs, highest areas of expenditure and income, and the financial performance by Head of Service is **enclosed** for Members' information.

This report also includes the overall financial performance of the Council, including a summary of the financial performance of each Directorate.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance

5.10 FC/FA/8 ANNUAL REVIEW OF PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a review of the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management activities for the 2025/26 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 2025/26 financial year.

3. Previous Decisions of Council

Council approved the Prudential Indicators for 2025/26 to 2027/2028 and the Treasury Management Strategies for 2025/26 in February 2025.

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 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 for 2025/26 with the actual results for the year; and provides detail of the Council's borrowing and investment activities for 2025/26.

A copy of the 2025/26 report is **enclosed** for Members' information.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Approved by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

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

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a review of the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management activities for the first quarter of the 2026/27 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 April to June 2026.

3. Previous Decisions of Council

Council approved the Prudential Indicators for 2026/27 to 2028/29 and the Treasury Management Strategies for 2026/27 in February 2026.

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 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 for 2026/27 with the quarterly position and the quarterly report on the Council's borrowing and investment activities for 2026/27.

A copy of the Quarter 1 report is **enclosed** for Members' information.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance

6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Any Other Relevant Business (AORB) may be taken at this point.