



ANNUAL REPORT

2016 2017



TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD & INTRODUCTION	4
OUR VISION	6
MISSION STATEMENT	6
CORPORATE VALUES	8
OUR COUNCIL	10
ELECTED MEMBERS	12
PLACE	17
PEOPLE	47
PROSPERITY	67
PERFORMANCE	79



FOREWORD & INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Antrim and Newtownabbey's Annual Report on performance for the year 2016-17.

The Annual Report 2016-17 provides an overview of the progress made in terms of the four strategic pillars set out in the Corporate Plan 2015-30. It also includes an overview of the Council's financial performance for 2016-17.

The Council also has a statutory duty under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 to set improvement objectives and have arrangements in place to secure their achievement. A number of performance targets are also set by Central Government departments, in respect of job creation, planning and waste management. The appendix of this report (antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/performance) outlines the progress the Council has made in the delivery of these objectives and performance targets.

We know that there are many reasons why our citizens love living here; however, we also know there are areas where things could be improved. Throughout the last year we consulted widely with the public, have taken your feedback on-board, and will continue to make improvements to service delivery.

We published our Community Plan, setting out a shared vision and agreed outcomes for the area up to 2030. We also developed and consulted on a Preferred Options Paper. This was an opportunity for the public and other key stakeholders to debate issues of strategic importance that will influence the shape of future development in our Borough up to 2030. It sets out a number of planning issues that we want to engage with the public on and provides possible options for the strategic direction that our new Local Development Plan might take.

I would like to thank all of our Elected Members, staff and partners for their hard work over the past year. We wish to continue our partnership approach with residents, local businesses, communities, statutory partners and other organisations to build upon the successful achievements in order that we can look forward to a successful future together.

JACQUI DIXON BSC MBA

Chief Executive





OUR VISION

A prosperous place. Inspired by our people.
Driven by ambition.

MISSION STATEMENT

To meet and exceed the needs and aspirations of our people and be recognised for leadership and excellence both locally and beyond.

PLACE

- A place where people take pride in their surroundings.
- A place where people feel safe.
- A place where we protect and enhance, where possible, our natural habitats and built heritage.
- We have vibrant and welcoming towns, villages, neighbourhoods, and rural areas and an efficient planning process that promotes positive development.
- A place where people choose to reuse or recycle their waste.

PEOPLE

- Our communities will have access to high quality Council services and facilities. The support we provide will lead to a more active, healthy and empowered community.
- Communities and agencies work together to plan and deliver better services, address disadvantage and improve the quality of life for everyone.
- Our community is inclusive and supportive and encourages a culture of tolerance, diversity and respect.
- We communicate clearly with our residents, listen to their feedback and respond to their needs.
- We will achieve excellence in customer and service quality standards and this will be recognised through accreditation schemes.

PROSPERITY

- We identify and support entrepreneurship, have a strong competitive business advantage and are a centre of excellence for leading edge companies.
- We have a world class infrastructure which attracts inward investment and supports productivity, exports and business growth.
- We stimulate business activity to sustain existing jobs and create new employment opportunities.
- We maximise tourism opportunities and have a strong arts and cultural economy.

PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

CORPORATE VALUES



EXCELLENCE

We take pride in organisational and service excellence, delivering the highest quality services to customers through a professional, motivated and highly valued workforce. We use technology and innovation to improve our services and promote a proactive and modern approach to the development of our Borough.

■ **PROACTIVE**

■ **MODERN**

■ **RESPONSIVE**

■ **PROFESSIONAL**



INTEGRITY

We serve our Borough with integrity, honesty and fairness and treat all of our residents, visitors, stakeholders and employees with respect. We allocate our resources and provide our services in a fair and equitable way.

■ **RESPECT**

■ **HONESTY**

■ **FAIRNESS**

■ **CONSISTENCY**



COMMITMENT

We are committed to placing the customer at the heart of everything we do, achieving value for money and positive outcomes through high quality services and community empowerment. We demonstrate leadership and team work, engaging with the public to understand their needs and exceed their expectations.

■ **CITIZEN CENTRED**

■ **HIGH QUALITY SERVICES**

■ **POSITIVE LEADERSHIP**

■ **VALUE FOR MONEY**



RESPONSIBILITY

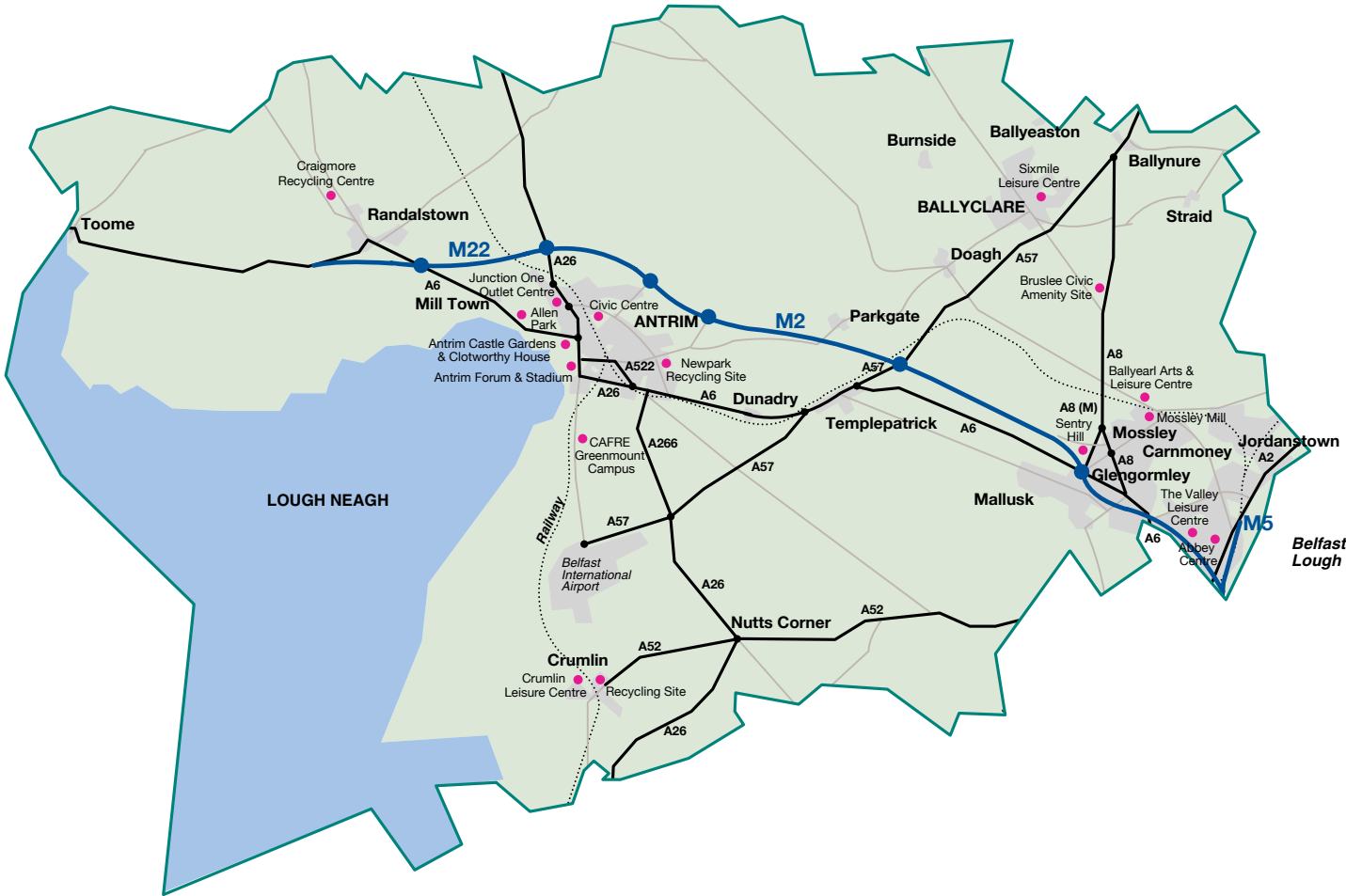
We make responsible decisions and are accountable, consistent and transparent in all our actions and behaviours. We strive for economic, social and environmental sustainability.

■ **TRANSPARENT**

■ **ACCOUNTABLE**

■ **ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

OUR COUNCIL



1

Our Council area covers **274 sq miles** from the shores of Lough Neagh in the west to the shores of Belfast Lough in the east and from its northern boundary with Ballymena, the Glens of Antrim and the Port of Larne to its southern borders with Belfast and Lisburn.

2

141,000 people live in the area, there are **3,910 VAT registered businesses** and **212,000 annual visitors**.

3

65,000 vehicles pass through each day on the M2 - one of three major transport corridors through the area.

4

5.15 million people arrive or depart every year through Northern Ireland's busiest gateway, Belfast International Airport.

5

Two of Northern Ireland's most **popular and modern retail outlets**, The Junction and Abbey Centre, attract shoppers from far and wide. Our town centres offer a friendly local shopping experience.

6

Three higher education facilities, CAFRE Agricultural College at Greenmount Campus in Antrim, Northern Regional College and the Ulster University at Jordanstown, cater for over **20,000 students**.

7

Two hospitals, Antrim Area and Whiteabbey, are within its boundaries.

8

90 services delivered by **670 staff**.

9

Six top class recreation facilities are on offer at Allen Park, Antrim Forum & Stadium, Ballyearl Leisure Centre, Crumlin Leisure Centre, Sixmile Leisure Centre and Valley Leisure Centre.

10

Three theatres - Courtyard Theatre at Ballyearl, Theatre at The Mill, Newtownabbey and the Old Courthouse in Antrim provides excellent venues for all round entertainment.

11

At **833sq km**, Lough Neagh is the largest freshwater lake in the UK and an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI).

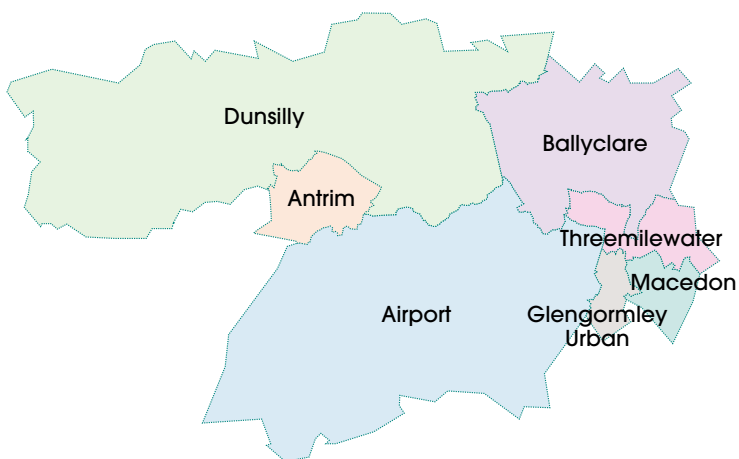




ELECTED MEMBERS

KEY ABBREVIATIONS

- DUP** Democratic Unionist Party
IND Independent
SDLP Social Democratic and Labour Party
TUV Traditional Unionist Voice
UUP Ulster Unionist Party



Airport District Electoral Area (DEA) covers Aldergrove, Clady, Crumlin, Mallusk and Templepatrick and consists of 5 members.



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Antrim District Electoral Area (DEA) covers Antrim Centre, Fountain Hill, Greystone, Springfarm, Steeple and Stiles and consists of 6 members.



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Ballyclare District Electoral Area (DEA) covers Ballyclare East, Ballyclare West, Ballynure, Ballyrobert and Doagh and consists of 5 members.

DEPUTY MAYOR



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Dunsilly District Electoral Area (DEA) covers Cranfield, Parkgate, Randalstown, Shilvodan and Toome and consists of 5 members



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Glengormley Urban Electoral Area (DEA) covers Ballyhenry, Burnthill, Carnmoney, Collinbridge, Glebe, Glengormley and Hightown and consists of 7 members.



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Macedon District Electoral Area (DEA) covers Abbey, Carnmoney Hill, O'Neill, Rathcoole, Valley and Whitehouse and consists of 6 members.

..... MAYOR



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Threemilewater District Electoral Area (DEA) covers Ballyduff, Fairview, Jordanstown, Monkstown, Mossley and Rostulla and consists of 5 members, with 1 vacant TBC.



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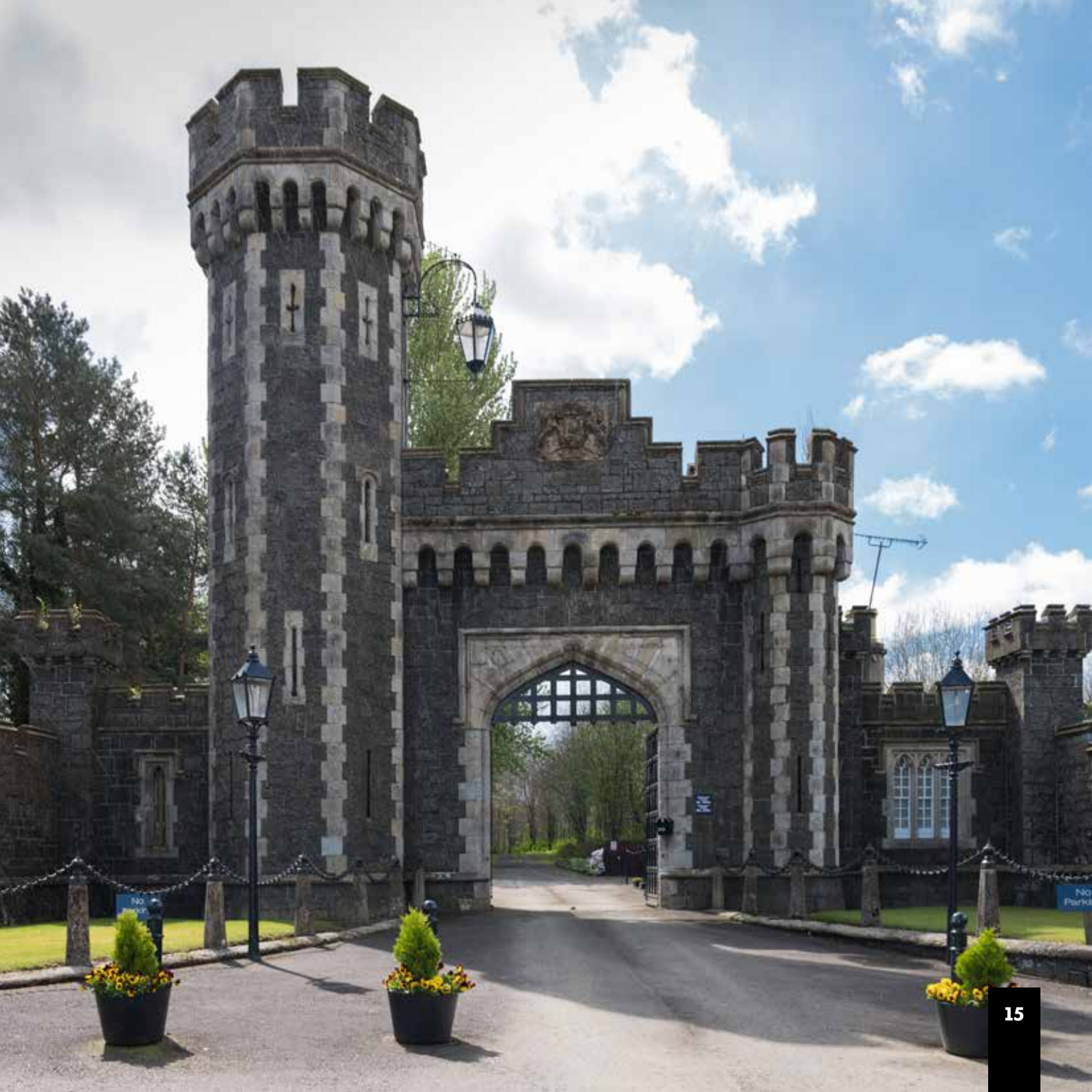
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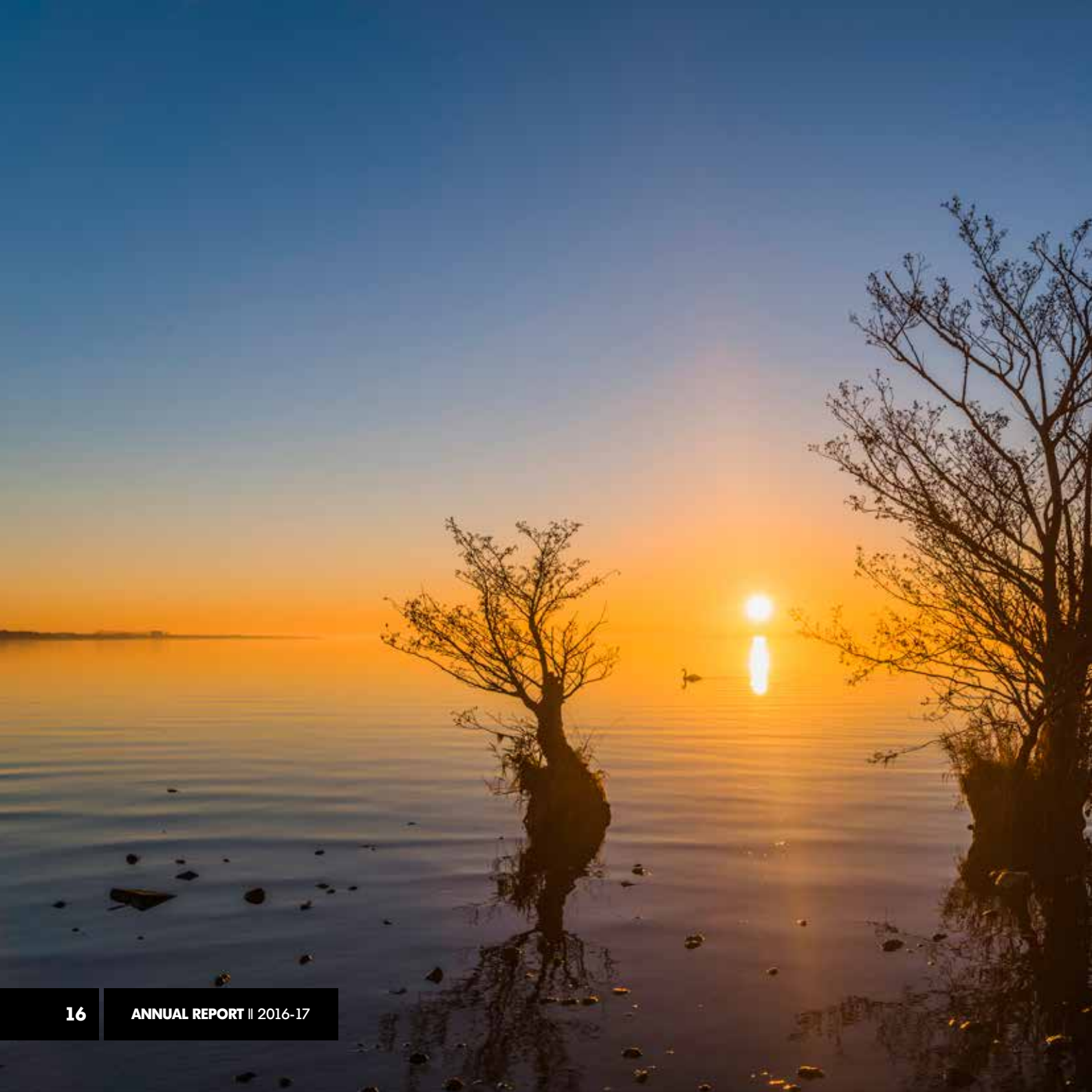


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PLACE

The Council's commitment to 'PLACE' as identified in the Corporate Plan states that *"from a civic leadership perspective, the community planning process and the Local Development Plan will enable us to plan positively for the future of our Borough."*

We will ensure that lands are appropriately zoned and that our infrastructure is enhanced to develop the Borough for future generations.

We will support sustainable communities by empowering residents to take responsibility for their environment."

Examples of how we have delivered under this theme are outlined overleaf.



A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR SURROUNDINGS

The Council was delighted when Antrim Castle Gardens was named Best Northern Ireland Park at the Fields In Trust Awards and was shortlisted for UK's Best Park 2016.

We have 14 Green Flag accredited sites across the Borough (2015-16: 11) and overall we achieved a satisfaction rating of 62% with our Parks and Open Spaces and 58% of residents stated that they felt proud of their surroundings (Borough Life, January 2017).

In other research carried out as part of the development of the new Tourism Strategy 2017-2030, 81% of respondents stated that the Borough had attractive Parks, Gardens and Public Spaces.



Sentry Hill received a second Green Heritage Award.



Ballyeaston Church Ruin received a second Green Flag Community Award.

This is a special award for sites which conserve, enhance and help people enjoy the heritage value of the site.

This site is managed and maintained by volunteers from Ballyeaston Village Committee.



Antrim Castle Gardens and Clotworthy House voted Best Northern Ireland Park.



The Council was delighted that four towns and villages throughout the Borough were recognised in the Ulster in Bloom Awards;

- Antrim Town was awarded second place in the Large Town Category
- Randalstown was awarded second place for Small Town Category
- Ballynure was awarded 3rd place for Large Village Category
- Ballyeaston was awarded 3rd place for Small Village Category

In addition, the Council agreed to support 13 towns and villages throughout the Borough to enter the prestigious Northern Ireland Amenity Council Best Kept Competition 2016.

The annual competition highlights and recognises outstanding community spirit and the dedication of individuals who volunteer their time to improve their environmental surroundings.

Three towns and villages from Antrim and Newtownabbey received awards:

- Randalstown was awarded Best of the Best Award
- Randalstown was awarded Best Kept Small Town
- Antrim was awarded Best Kept Large Town
- Merville Garden Village was awarded Best Kept Large Housing Area



"These Awards demonstrate the success that can be achieved when we work together to create a better environment, by enhancing and preserving our outdoor spaces and when we take pride in the places we live."

Councillor John Scott, Mayor of
Antrim and Newtownabbey
(2016-17)

One of our Corporate Improvement Objectives during 2016-17 has been *“Improving the level of cleanliness of the roads and streets across our Borough”*.

Using resident satisfaction as a measure of success we carried out a survey in Borough Life during March 2017 and followed this up with face-to-face interviews. We are pleased to report an increase from 55% (2015-16) to 62% (2016-17).

We also measured satisfaction with the provision of litter bins, with residents indicating they were 43% satisfied (56% in 2015-16) with the maintenance of litter bins, 54% satisfied (65% in 2015-16). Clearly we have more work to do in each of these areas and this will continue to be a focus of improvement during 2017-18.

In 2016-17 our ‘Support In Kind’ scheme facilitated 31 clean ups in the Borough. Approximately 1,200 volunteers and school children attended and volunteered time to help to clean up their local area.

The number of fixed penalties issued during 2016-17 was lower than the previous year however enforcement patrols throughout the Borough increased by 30%.

In 2016-17

We emptied

1,428

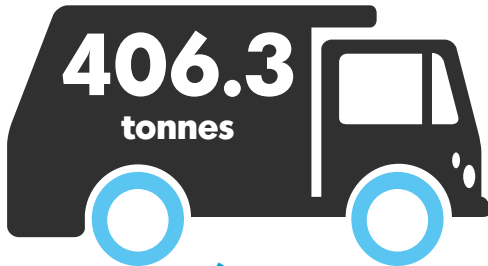
**litter and
dog fouling
bins every
week**

(2015-16: 1,313)



We disposed of

406.3
tonnes



**street litter (includes street
bins and small sweeper waste)**

(2015-16: 533 tonnes)



We issued

44

**fixed penalty notices
for dog fouling and littering**

(2015-16: 191)



A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE FEEL SAFE

Antrim and Newtownabbey Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) works to help make communities safer and ensures that the voices of local people are heard on local policing and community safety issues.

The aim is to empower communities to develop solutions in partnership to tackle crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. The Partnership is made up of a number of Elected Members, statutory bodies and independent representatives, operating through a regular schedule of private, public and working group meetings.

Themed working groups have been established to provide a collaborative approach to Communications, Vulnerable People and Anti-Social Behaviour, which were identified by the Partnership as three priorities.

Each of the working groups is made up of service providers who specialise or deal specifically with groups under each of the three priority headings, statutory agencies and members of the Partnership.

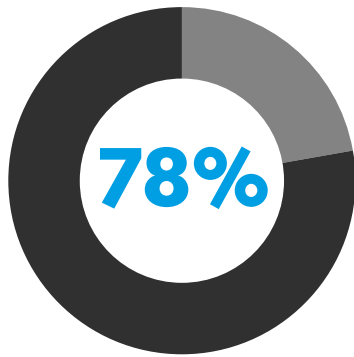


Monthly working group meetings provide opportunities for updates on activities, create opportunities to problem solve, share ideas and form initiatives which serve to promote, enhance and add value to the work carried out within the community by the PCSP.

This operating arrangement has developed and strengthened the relationships between all stakeholders within the PCSP. This has not only enhanced the service levels to the community but has helped foster a true partnership approach to issues that arise within the community.

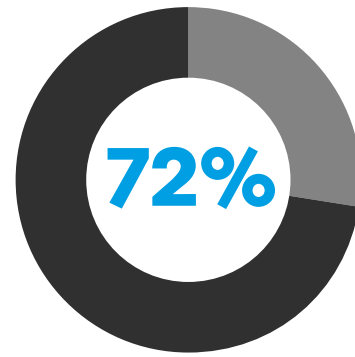
A number of very successful summer intervention initiatives were also delivered to include activities such as: team challenges, good relations programmes, drug and alcohol awareness, healthy relationships and personal development opportunities.

We carried out a survey in Borough Life (November 2016), to ascertain if residents consider Antrim and Newtownabbey a safe place to live (78%) and whether or not community relations have improved within the Borough (72%). This exercise provided baseline information and feedback which we will use to improve the delivery of the Partnership and Council activities through a community planning approach.



"78% of residents consider Antrim and Newtownabbey a safe place to live."

Borough Life, November 2016



"72% of residents state that community relations have improved within Antrim and Newtownabbey."

Borough Life, November 2016

A graphic for an E-Safety campaign. At the top left is the RCP logo. The main text reads 'THINK! WHO'S BEHIND THE SCREEN?' in large, bold, blue and white letters. Below this, it says 'Stay safe online; only make friends with the people you really know...'. There is a small image of a person in a hoodie holding a tablet. At the bottom, there are links for 'Like', 'Share', 'More', 'Add Friend', and 'Message'. The footer includes contact information for the PCSP and the council's Twitter handle @ANBorough.

A graphic for a 'Heads Up' campaign. The top left features the 'HEADS UP' logo with a green arrow. Below it, the text reads 'Health Education on Alcohol, Drugs & Substance'. The main image shows a silhouette of a person with their arms raised, holding two long poles that form a 'V' shape. The text 'DON'T LET DRUGS TAKE CONTROL' is written across the image. At the bottom, there is contact information for the Antrim Youth Information & Counselling Centre (AYICC) and logos for the council, RCP, and AYICC.





A PLACE WHERE WE PROTECT AND ENHANCE OUR NATURAL HABITATS AND BUILT HERITAGE

There are a great range of landscapes, habitats and species found across the Borough. From coastal and freshwater shores to woodland and the variety of farmland to our own back gardens; all are part of the fabric which makes up the biodiversity of the Borough of Antrim and Newtownabbey.

During 2016-17 the Council:

- Approved an environmental policy and continued with the ongoing implementation of an Environmental Management System, ISO 14001.
- Continued to work on the development of a Local Biodiversity Action Plan, reflecting on the habitats and species found across our shared landscape from Lough Neagh to Belfast Lough.
- Supported a community group to develop a Kew Grow Wild initiative to fund a 'Walk on the Wildside' wildflower meadow project.



The Council led an eight Council partnership project, supported by the National Lottery, through the Heritage Lottery Fund, 'Our Heritage Programme'.

This project named 'Bee-licious' was set up to help pollinating insects.

There are 10 'Bee-licious' sites across the Borough.



The Swift was given 'Bird of the Borough' status by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council in May 2015, following a request from the Antrim RSPB Local Group.

Councillor Neil Kelly became the Swift champion.



people participated
in biodiversity events
across the Borough

(2015-16: 4,075)



clean-ups took place
during 2016-17, with the
Council supporting 24
groups and businesses

(2015-16: 36 clean-ups with the Council
supporting 30 groups and businesses)



barn owl nesting
boxes were built

The Council recognises the need to provide a sharper focus to the energy and sustainability agenda.

During 2016-17 systems have been put in place to collate and review the energy usage data for each Council building. An Energy Strategy is being drafted with a view to driving forward renewable energy projects, energy efficiency projects and sustainable behavioural change.

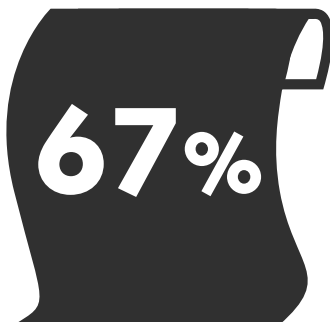
The Council ensures that all capital scheme designs consider sustainability issues, such as energy efficient lighting, building energy management systems, biomass, solar panels, green roofs, rain water and harvesting.

The Council was awarded two sustainability awards for the building work carried out at Crumlin Leisure Centre. These awards celebrate the achievement of high environmental and social performance in civil engineering, infrastructure, landscaping, and public realm projects.

The Council has a regulatory duty to assess the energy information displayed by business owners.

The performance of business owners in the areas of Energy Performance Certificate and Display Energy Certificate compliance is as follows:

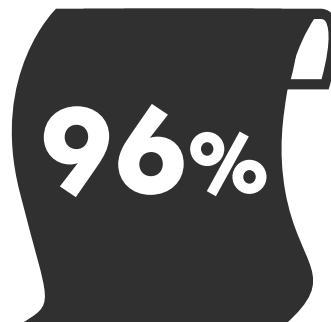
Achieved



**Energy
Performance
Certificate**

2015-16: 94%

Achieved



**Display Energy
Certificate
Compliance**

2015-16: 100%

**Sustainability awards
for Crumlin Leisure
Centre**

BREEAM[®]





WE HAVE VIBRANT AND WELCOMING TOWNS, VILLAGES, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND RURAL AREAS

Improving the physical environment and working with partners to deliver town and village regeneration was identified as an improvement objective for 2016-17. During the year the Council was successful in delivering real improvements to our facilities and delivered shop front and streetscape improvement programmes.

Four major regeneration projects were delivered with the aid of £1.03m funding in from the Department for Communities in;

- Randalstown
- Carnmoney Road, Glengormley
- Ballyclare (North)
- Bridge Street/ Dublin Road, Antrim



"I would like to congratulate the Council on the upkeep of our Borough, derelict shop buildings are much improved by fake frontages."

Residents' Survey, January 2017

Street markets which were delivered or funded by the Council, took place in Antrim, Ballyclare, Glengormley, Randalstown and Toome over the Christmas period and Antrim Live, a two day arts and entertainment festival, took place in Antrim town centre in February 2017.

Six new village / hamlet plans were developed and five existing village / hamlet plans were updated. These were developed in consultation with residents and set out what they would like to see in terms of village development over the next five years.

The Council also secured project funding from the Department for Communities and delivered two linkage schemes (shop front improvements and marketing campaigns) in Antrim and Ballyclare town, with a total of 46 commercial properties enhanced.

A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE CHOOSE TO REUSE OR RECYCLE THEIR WASTE

One of the improvement objectives that the Council identified for 2016-17 was *"We will minimise waste through adherence to government and European targets."* In addition, the Council has statutory performance targets to meet in relation to waste management.

Residents in the Borough can recycle a wide range of products, e.g. paper, cardboard, plastic bottles and containers, metal, food, drink cans and garden waste. In addition, our Recycling Centres also accept timber, rubble, carpets, and old electrical items. The Council continues to adopt innovative methods of recycling and has participated in a province wide study to identify other areas where it can make improvements and increase recycling performance.

Continuing to improve our recycling performance is not only important for the environment but also is financially advantageous. The costs of waste disposal per tonne are increasing due to inflationary pressures and a rise in landfill tax. On average the cost of recycling is £50 per tonne, whereas to landfill a tonne of waste costs approximately £100. By recycling 47.6% of our waste the Council saves £2.17m in landfill costs.



Our performance in relation to the statutory performance targets for waste management are:

■ **THE PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTED THAT IS SENT FOR RECYCLING**

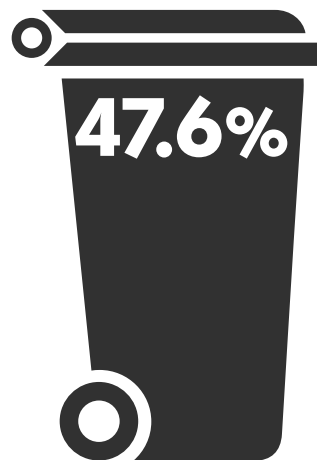
- Through a range of measures, the Council has increased the percentage of household waste collected that is recycled from 47.5% (2015-16) to 47.6% (2016-17).
- The Council is on target to achieve a 50% recycling rate by 2020. In comparison with other councils, Antrim and Newtownabbey ranked 4th out of the 11 councils.

■ **THE AMOUNT OF BIODEGRADABLE WASTE THAT IS LANDFILLED (TONNES)**

- The Council has landfilled 17,469 tonnes of biodegradable waste and used 87.1% of the landfill allowance.
- Our 2016-17 performance ranked 5th when compared with other Northern Ireland councils.

■ **THE AMOUNT OF MUNICIPAL WASTE ARISING (TONNES)**

- 91,263 of municipal waste was collected during 2016-17. This is an increase of 6,206 tonnes on the previous year. In comparison with other Council areas, the Borough produces more waste than 7 other councils (ranked 8th out of 11).



**of household
waste is sent
for recycling**

(2015-16: 47.5%)



AN EFFICIENT PLANNING PROCESS THAT PROMOTES POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Planning powers were transferred to local Councils on 1 April 2015 as part of the local government reform process. Planning is all about shaping the future of our Borough and endeavouring to achieve the right development in the right place at the right time.

The objective is to create a sustainable, prosperous and attractive place for residents and visitors alike, a place where people take pride in their surroundings, where we look after our natural and built heritage and support sustainable growth for future generations.

STATUTORY INDICATORS

In the second year following the transfer of powers, the Council's Planning Section sought to reduce the number of older planning applications in the system and witnessed a reduction in the number of applications over 12 months from 35 to 24. The Section continued to promote a speedier, simpler and a more streamlined process, making it easier for everyone living, working or undertaking business in the Borough to access and participate in the planning process. We are continuing to work hard to



deliver faster and more predictable decisions and keen to ensure there is stronger and more effective planning enforcement on the ground.

Working closely with the Council's Planning Committee almost 800 decisions on planning applications were issued during 2016-17, an increase of some 15% over the preceding year including 126 decisions taken by the Planning Committee itself, with an overall approval rate in excess of 93%.

At the end of 2016-17, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council met two of the three statutory performance targets. No Council met the Major performance target during the year. The Council recorded the strongest performance across all Councils in processing enforcement cases and as part of this work, the Planning Committee agreed to take formal enforcement action in some 17 cases during the year.

The Council also published its Preferred Options Paper for the new Local Development Plan and undertook a public consultation exercise on this document.

During 2016-17 the Planning Appeals Commission decided 37 appeals, including 9 enforcement related appeals, against planning decisions taken by the Council. The Commission allowed 11 appeals and upheld the Council's decision in 26 cases. This equates to some 30% of appeals being allowed in the Borough which is broadly in line with the Northern Ireland average of 28%.

The assessment of land availability identifies a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing. The Council has assessed that the supply of land available for housing development in the Borough is 15 years.

PERFORMANCE AGAINST STATUTORY TARGETS

■ MAJOR APPLICATIONS

The target for major applications is to process 50% from submission to conclusion within 30 weeks. Council processed 13 major applications to conclusion with an average processing time of 73.6 weeks (2015-16: 28 weeks) meaning that we achieved 15.9%, which did not meet the statutory target set (2015-16: 52.4%).

An action plan has been developed to enhance performance in this area.

■ LOCAL APPLICATIONS

The target for local applications is to process 50% from submission to conclusion within 15 weeks. Council processed 790 local applications to conclusion with an average processing time of 12.6 weeks meaning that we achieved 65.9%, which met the statutory target set.

This marked an improvement on performance in 2015/16 despite an increase of some 10% in the number of local applications received.

■ ENFORCEMENT CASES

The target for enforcement cases was to process to a conclusion 70% of cases within 39 weeks of receipt. Council opened 440 new cases with an average processing time of 14.2 weeks meaning that we achieved 93.5%, which met the statutory target set.

This marked an improvement on performance in 2015-16 despite an increase of some 30% in the number of cases opened.



AN EFFICIENT STATUTORY PROCESS THAT PROTECTS OUR CITIZENS

The Council's Environmental Health Service is central to the Council's duty to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of citizens and visitors to Antrim and Newtownabbey. During 2016-17, the team carried out:

- 1,327 food safety inspections (2015-16: 1,212)
- 932 workplace safety inspection (2015-16: 592)
- 114 tenancy related inspections (2015-16: 100)
- Investigated 578 non-domestic noise complaints (2015-16: 575)
- Carried out 1,967 enforcement patrols for litter and dog fouling (2015-16: 1,515)
- Responded to 3,979 service requests (2015-16: 4,644)

The team also:

- Issued 13,409 dog licenses (2015-16: 12,835)
- Issued 39 fixed penalties notices for dog straying, dog fouling and having no dog license (2015-16: 36)
- Issued 130 licenses for entertainment, petroleum and amusement (2015-16: 178)

98.7%

**of businesses in
the Borough have
a Food Hygiene
rating of between
3 and 5**



**The Council
undertook
its statutory
obligations
with regard to
Environmental
Health legislation
and reported
levels of
compliance via
the appropriate
statutory return**



The Council's Building Control Section ensures that all building work carried out meets the building codes and regulation requirements.

Our Building Control Service ensures that buildings are designed and constructed in accordance with the Building Regulations and associated legislation.

During 2016-17:

- 70.4% of domestic applications were assessed within the 21-day target timescale (2015-16: 65%)
- 80.9% of non-domestic applications were assessed within the 35-day target timescale (2015-16: 72%)
- 9,089 building regulation inspections were carried out throughout the year (2015-16: 9,395)







PEOPLE

The Council's commitment to 'OUR PEOPLE' as identified in the Corporate Plan is *"to be an area where people choose to live and where residents enjoy a high quality of life."*

Through the Community Planning process, we are committed to working with our partners to streamline service delivery and share resources.

We aspire to be a place where our people work together to encourage a culture of tolerance, diversity and respect. We aim to support and enrich the knowledge and skills of the community and voluntary sector to address disadvantage and promote opportunities."

Examples of how we have delivered under this theme are outlined overleaf.



OUR COMMUNITIES WILL HAVE ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES AND THE SUPPORT WE PROVIDE WILL LEAD TO A MORE ACTIVE, HEALTHY AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITY

During 2016-17 the Council approved a Community Plan and is working with the Community Planning Partnership to ensure “Our citizens enjoy good health and well-being.” In addition the Council is committed to supporting a healthier and empowered community through effective partnership working and an investment programme in our leisure, sport, play park and recreation facilities. This was selected as an area for improvement during 2016-17.

The Council has many excellent joint-working arrangements in place to improve the general health and well-being of our residents; these arrangements include our Exercise Referral Scheme, Everybody Active 2020, Regional Obesity Prevention Group, Macmillan Move More and the Warmer Homes Scheme.



Retained Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence for Antrim Castle Gardens



The newly transformed Allen Park opened on 25th October 2016 following Council investment of £4.15m and a further £350,000 from the Enkalon Foundation



Retained Museum Accreditation for Sentry Hill and Museum at the Mill



Through our consultation and engagement process with the public we have listened and responded to your feedback and over the past year we have continued our investment programme, spending over £6m to improve and modernise our leisure, sport, play park, recreation and burial facilities. The following schemes were completed:

- Allen Park regeneration
- Antrim Forum CCTV and Public Address System
- Antrim Forum and Valley Park hockey pitches upgrade
- Carnmoney Cemetery Extension
- Castle Gardens Pump Chamber
- Rathcoole Multi Use Games Area
- Valley Car Park Resurfacing
- Valley Conference Suite, Hall 2 and Hall of Fame

The Council has been working on a new strategy and vision for leisure services and will be ready to launch both the strategy and new leisure membership pricing policy in October 2017. This marks a very exciting and ambitious phase for the delivery of leisure and physical activity and will support the ambition of *“More People, More Active, More Often”* within our Borough.

Ensuring the Borough has sufficient provision of burial space is a priority for the Council. There is enough space presently, however the Council continue to monitor and review options where cemeteries are reaching capacity in coming years. The Council is continuing to explore options for a crematorium on the Doagh Road site.



5,004

participants took part in
the Every Body Active 2020
Programme (6 months)

(2015-16: 7,266, 12 months)



1,145,621

people used our leisure
and community centres

(2015-16: 1,086,604)



344

patients completed the
12-week Exercise Referral
programme in our leisure
centres

(2015-16: 250)

70%

Customer Satisfaction
with leisure facilities

(2015-16: 74%)




851

patients have been referred
through the Exercise Referral
Scheme funded by the Council
and delivered in partnership
with GP's and Health Trusts

(2015-16: 699)





COMMUNITIES AND AGENCIES WORK TOGETHER TO PLAN AND DELIVER BETTER SERVICES, ADDRESS DISADVANTAGE AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR EVERYONE

The Community Plan for the Borough was agreed. 'Love Living Here', sets out a shared vision and agreed outcomes for the area up to 2030. The Community Planning Partnership has sought to understand the challenges which face those who live in, work in or visit our Borough. The successful implementation of the Plan will be marked by a demonstrable improvement in how services are delivered across our Borough and the quality of life our citizens experience.

To support the implementation of the Community Plan, Place Shaping Forums have been established in each of the seven District Electoral Areas (DEA) across the Borough. Funding has been allocated to each DEA and over 100 initiatives ranging from small short term projects to larger long term projects are being delivered.



A number of schools across the Borough have benefited from DEA funding to develop and open up their facilities for community use

Monkstown Boxing Club won the Best Education Project (2015) under the 'Positive Futures' Youth Diversion Programme



Speciality/themed markets were organised for Antrim and Ballyclare and a Christmas market in Randalstown

The Council continues to make the most of our resources to tackle areas of disadvantage, inspiring and creating opportunities for our citizens, encouraging ambition and aspiration to build a sustainable community and improve the quality of life for our citizens.

16 projects which aim to improve life in specific areas across the Borough are underway. These projects have been jointly funded by the Council and the Department for Communities. Areas which have benefited from the funding are Monkstown, Carrmonee, Mossley, Steeple, Ballycraigy and Farranshane.



The Council is committed to providing advice and support to the community and during 2016-17 a range of schemes and initiatives were delivered.

Some key results were:



104

participants attended a capacity and skills programme for community groups, delivered by the Council

(2015-16: 85)



£126,500

of stamps purchased, assisting residents to budget for their central heating oil payments

(2015-16: £158,000)



676

residents referred for Energy Efficiency Grants

(2015-16: 260)

1,250

warm packs distributed to vulnerable people across the Borough with the support of Public Health Authority funding

(2015-16: 762)



51,000

clients were supported through an advice service provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau

(2015-16: 52,947)

99%

of respondents to a survey about advice service provision in the Borough were either "very" or "fairly" happy with the service they received

£7.4m

of benefits have been taken up as a result of the advice service provided

(2015-16: £9.8m)

£265,384

of funding was awarded through the Council's Community Grants Scheme

(2015-16: £253,875)



£159,000

of funding was awarded through Council leisure grants



£21,307

of funding was awarded through the arts and culture grants

(2015-16: £2,457)





OUR COMMUNITY IS INCLUSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE AND ENCOURAGES A CULTURE OF TOLERANCE, DIVERSITY AND RESPECT

During 2016-17 a total of £3.2m of funding under the European Union's PEACE IV Programme was secured.

The Antrim and Newtownabbey PEACE IV Local Action Plan was agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government with the overarching priority of supporting peace and reconciliation within three main themes:

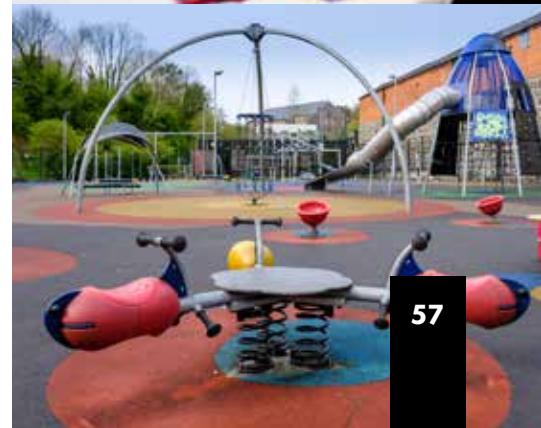
- Children and Young People
- Shared Spaces and Services
- Building Positive Relations



The funding will be used to support a number of locally-based projects and initiatives that will promote positive relations between people from different communities and backgrounds.

We successfully delivered our Good Relations Action Plan and implemented a number of events and programmes such as Good Relations awareness raising events, 'Christmas around the World' activities and the delivery of the 'Moving Forward Together' programme.

We secured £133,450 funding from the NI Executive Office, with added funding from the Council to deliver a Good Relations Grant Aid Programme and a Summer Intervention Programme. The programmes which were supported were designed to promote community and/or race relations, address sectarianism and racism and build positive relations.



To ensure a better experience for every website visitor we have incorporated the following elements:

- Browse Aloud - this innovative support software adds speech, reading, and translation to websites facilitating access and participation for people with Dyslexia, Low Literacy, English as a Second Language and those with mild visual impairments.
- Google Translate - Google Translate is a multilingual machine translation service developed by Google to translate text, speech, images, sites or real-time video from one language into another.
- Resizeable Text - this website function enables the user to make text larger if necessary.
- Disabled Go - provides detailed online access guides to a huge range of places that you will want to visit.

To ensure that our buildings and facilities are welcoming and accessible we have made a number of modifications, these include:

- Accessible Play Park equipment has been installed at V36 with plans to expand this equipment to other areas.
- Rear entrance modifications were made at the Antrim Civic Centre to allow improved mobility access.
- We carried out a review of the Tactile/ Braille and Hidden Disability Signage with a view to updating current signage during the latter part of 2017.
- We identified additional locations for accessible changing facilities and we have an ongoing programme of upgrading and updating our toilet provision throughout the Borough.
- We also expanded the accessibility of our arts and cultural performances and delivered 3 signed/captioned performances and 4 relaxed performances to enable those with hearing difficulties or those with special needs to enjoy the theatre experience to the full.



WE COMMUNICATE CLEARLY WITH OUR RESIDENTS

The key to the continued success of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council is listening to and responding to the needs of people in our Borough.

During 2016-17 we conducted 30 consultations and community engagement exercises with a total of 5,074 participating. This is a significant improvement on the previous year, (2015-16: 24 surveys, 2,063 respondents). The Council also approved a consultation and communication strategy and an online consultation portal went 'live' in January 2017.

The residents' magazine, 'Borough Life' helps keep residents up to date with life in the Borough, including events. During 2016-17, the magazine was published six times and delivered to all households in the Borough. A digital version was also made available.



**online services available to
customers**

**(seven additional services were
brought online during 2016-17)**



"Enjoy receiving Borough Life and seeing what is on and happening in the area. Always lots to do. Also find the Council's website useful and full of information."

Resident's Survey, January 2017

"The digital version is handy with the booking links and the video content. It's great to flick through my phone or the ipad. To be honest 90% of what I read these days is on my phone or iPad."

46 year old resident, Antrim

"Getting the opportunity to advertise in Borough Life provides a fantastic platform for us as a business"

Newtownabbey Resident



348

compliments
(2015-16: 192)



63

complaints
(2015-16: 21)



72,011

**online transactions
for Council services**
(2015-16: 32,550)

778,558

visitors to the website
(2015-16: 527,000)



2,408

**Facebook
followers**
(launched Jan 2017)



5,703

Twitter followers
(2015-16: 4,325)

70%

**overall satisfaction
with Council Services**
(2015-16: 74%)

79%

**satisfaction with
Borough Life**

USING OUR WEBSITE TO ORDER, PAY AND REQUEST SERVICES

Throughout the year we achieved excellence in customer service through maximising technology and our standards of customer service. Some examples of our work in this area include:

ONLINE SUMMER SCHEME BOOKINGS

The booking of the Council's Summer Scheme programme went online for the first time in May 2016. 37% of places were booked online within 24 hours. In total 2,499 bookings were made online.

ONLINE SERVICE REQUESTS FOR BULKY COLLECTION

The online service requests for bulky collections went online from July 2016 and we processed 870 online enquiries. The Council has now developed an online portal which will provide a more personalised approach.

■ ARTS, CULTURE AND LEISURE

Arts and culture classes can now be booked online and the new Theatre booking software was procured which provides a more customer friendly and efficient system of booking.

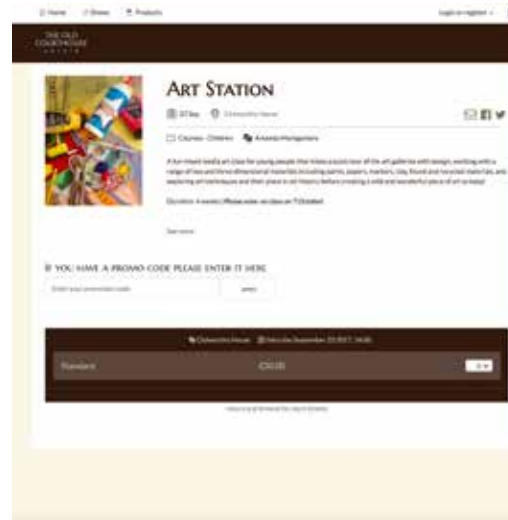
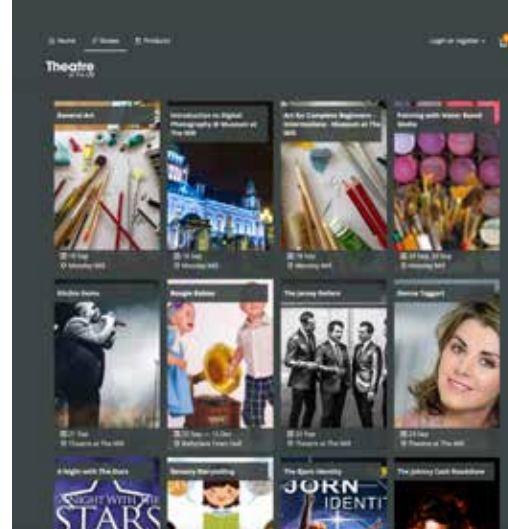
The very popular gymnastic courses can also be booked online and customers were able to book tickets for the Halloween Inferno event at Antrim Forum.

■ ONLINE REPORTING OF SERVICE REQUESTS

The online reporting of service requests, comments and problems was reviewed to improve ease of access for customers and improve operational responses to these requests.

■ OTHER SERVICES WE MADE AVAILABLE DIGITALLY OR IMPROVED INCLUDE:

- Dog Licensing
- Leisure Grants
- The Council's Consultation Hub





WE ACHIEVED EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER AND SERVICE QUALITY STANDARDS

During 2016-17 we achieved or retained a number of awards and accreditations, demonstrating excellence in customer and service quality standards.



Green Flag Award Scheme
14 Green Flag accredited sites



Fields in Trust Awards
Best NI Park:
Antrim Castle Gardens



Green Heritage Awards
(a category of Green Flag):
Sentry Hill,
Antrim Castle Gardens



Ulster in Bloom Awards
Antrim Town, Randalstown,
Ballynure, Ballyeaston



Trip Advisor
Certificate of Excellence:
Antrim Castle Gardens



BREEAM
Sustainability Accreditation for
Buildings



CEEQUAL
Sustainability Accreditation for
Civic Engineering



**NORTHERN IRELAND
AMENITY COUNCIL**

NI Amenity Council
Best Kept Competition 2016:
4 Awards



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

Investors in People
Silver Award



ISO 14001
Environmental Management
Accreditation



**Charter for Member
Development**





PROSPERITY

The Council's commitment to 'PROSPERITY' as identified in the Corporate Plan is that *"through the community planning process, we will encourage and support economic growth in our Borough to create a vibrant and prosperous economy which is attractive to new and existing businesses.*

We will encourage innovation and support skills development to meet the future needs of local businesses. We will support the physical regeneration of our Borough and make it attractive for residents, investors and visitors. We will build on the strengths of our area and maximise tourism opportunities."

Examples of how we have delivered under this theme are outline overleaf.



IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND STIMULATE BUSINESS ACTIVITY TO SUSTAIN IT

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council is committed to supporting economic growth in our Borough and delivering a high value service to local businesses. As part of our commitment we set an improvement objective which stated “We will seek to encourage and support those who wish to start their own business and we will strengthen and grow the business base of the Borough”. Through this the Council delivered a range of programmes.

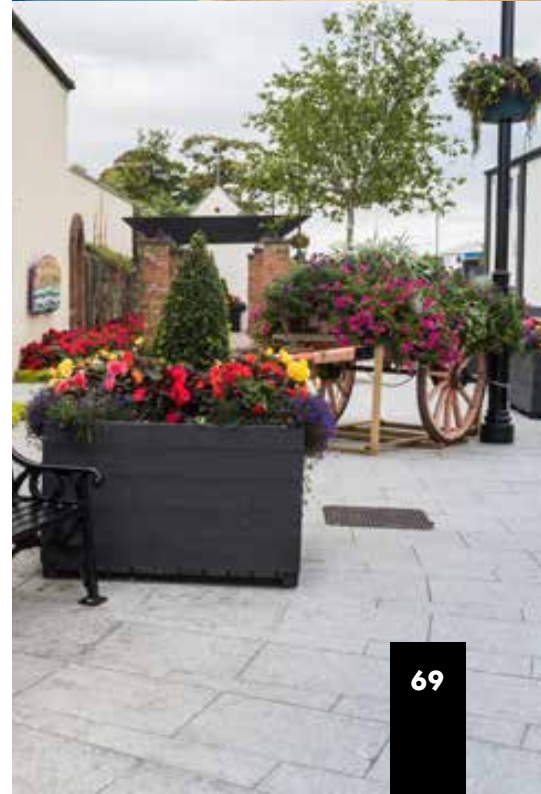
During 2016/17 we delivered the following results:

- 92 new jobs were promoted through business start-up activity during 2016-17, this exceeds the statutory target set (80 jobs promoted). 105 jobs were promoted during 2015-16.
- The STAR2 and ‘Bricks ‘n’ Clicks business development programmes supported 51 businesses in the services, tourism and retail sectors. (30 businesses were supported in 2015-16).

- The Council sponsored a 'pop-up' shop scheme in Antrim and provided 6 new business starts with an opportunity to test trade from established commercial premises for up to 9 weeks
- 54 businesses availed of ASK business mentoring (34 businesses supported during 2015-16)
- 12 LEAN Business Network events were delivered with 318 participants. (2015-16: 13 events, 355 participants)

Five town teams in Antrim, Ballyclare, Crumlin, Glengormley and Randalstown delivered a range of projects, including:

- Free public WI-FI
- Promotional campaigns for shop local
- Contributions to street markets
- Town centre events
- New town signage and lighting
- Local business awards
- Pop-Up Shops
- Virtual windows on vacant properties
- Small scale environmental improvements including planters and hanging baskets
- Networking events for town centre traders



In addition:

- The Council offered grant assistance of £203,000 to 7 rural businesses (2015-16: programme closed to applications).
- We secured £26,400 funding from GROW South Antrim under Village Renewal to produce 6 new village/hamlet plans across the Borough and updated 5 existing plans.
- We encouraged 623 school children to participate in a self-employment programmes (2015-16: 640).
- The Council provided educational support and mentoring for 90 children and 36 parents (2015-16: 56 children, 22 parents). This programme runs from November to June each year.
- The Council provided 35 placements to school children and assisted 6 people through employability programmes (2015-16: 26).



■ INDICATORS OF THE ECONOMIC HEALTH OF THE BOROUGH



2.2%

**unemployment
in the
Borough**

NISRA, March 17

3% as at March 2016



100

**Invest NI clients in
the Borough**

NISRA, March 17

100 as at March 2016



3,910

**VAT Registered
Businesses in the
Borough**

NISRA, March 17

3,660 as at March 2016



MAXIMISING TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES IN THE BOROUGH

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council possesses a rich cultural and natural heritage, good access and sufficient business infrastructure to establish and sustain a substantial and successful tourism sector. The Borough's principal resources with potential for development for tourism are cultural heritage supported by gardens and parks, waterways and festival and events programme.

In order to enhance and improve such assets, we have set an improvement objective which states *"We will maximise tourism opportunities and have a strong arts and cultural economy, through working in partnership to deliver showcase events and enhancing the visitor experience"*.



Visitor spending in the Borough

(NISRA: 2016)

(2015: £34.3m)



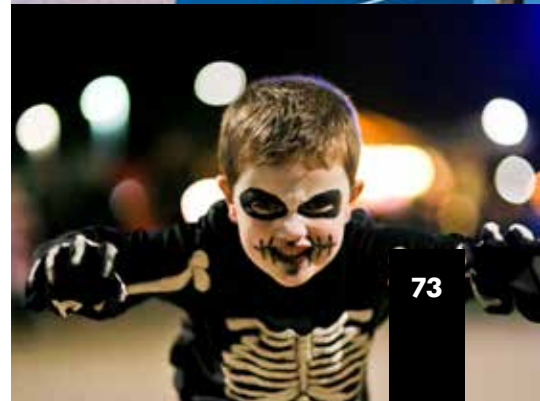
672,929 overnight stays

(NISRA: 2016)

(2015: 673,876)

During 2016/17 we delivered the following results:

- The Council established a local Tourism Forum with representatives from the local tourist industry and a new action plan for 2016/17 seeks to enhance the quality of attractions to increase visitor numbers, spending and overnight stays.
- We launched our Draft Tourism Strategy for 2017-2020. We aim to see and develop the Borough as a place to be admired and recognised by all, a place that locals and visitors want to explore, discover and return to.
- We attracted 101,281 people to Council showcase events: Dragon Boat Race, Enchanted Winter Gardens at Antrim Castle Gardens, May Fair, Party in the Park, Shoreline Festival, 'Spooktacular' at Junction One and Spooked Out at V36.
- Antrim Castle Gardens and Clotworthy House enjoyed a customer satisfaction rating of 88% (Source, Visitor Survey, Tourism Strategy 2017-2020).



Officers are working closely with Tourism NI to explore new partnership opportunities involving the private sector to take forward the development of the Borough's visitor trails and activity tourism products, launching a fresh marketing campaign called "It's in Our Nature", improving tourist signage, creating a dedicated tourism 'micro' website and lobbying Tourism NI and Transport NI to improve access/transport links.

The Council promoted and worked in partnership to support 6 major tourism events across the Borough, increasing visitors from 20,000 in 2015-16 to 55,350 in 2016-17: Circuit of Ireland, Festival of Food and Festival of Cycling, Garden Show Ireland, Armed Forces Day, Ulster Pipe Band Championship, River to the Lough Festival and International Cross County event at Greenmount.

Christmas in the Borough was celebrated with markets in Antrim, Ballyclare, Glengormley, Randalstown and Toome and three very successful shows performed in our three theatres.

Customers attending our Theatres participated in a UK wide Theatre experience survey in March 2017 and achieved a rating of 4.61 out of 5. (2015-16: 4.49 out of 5). This compares favourably against a UK average of 4.35 out of 5.

16,500 people visited Antrim Town Centre in February 2017 to enjoy Antrim Live, a two day arts and entertainment festival. Highlights of the event included the Antrim Town Business Awards, street entertainment and a Craft/Twilight Market.

**BOOKING
CUSTOMER
COUNTRY**

ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
BELGIUM
BRAZIL
CANADA

CENTRAL AFRICAN
REPUBLIC
CHINA
CZECH REPUBLIC
DENMARK
FINLAND
FRANCE
GERMANY
GIBRALTAR
IRELAND

ISLE OF MAN
ITALY
JAPAN
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF
LITHUANIA
LUXEMBOURG
NETHERLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
POLAND
PORTUGAL

SINGAPORE
SLOVENIA
SOUTH AFRICA
SPAIN
SWAZILAND
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TAIWAN
UNITED KINGDOM
UNITED STATES





Increased bookings in
both caravan parks from
3,928 in 2015-16 to

4,266

in 2016-17



58,057

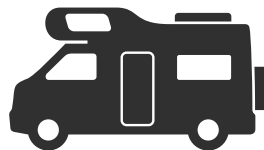
theatre goes in 2016-17

(2015-16: 45,028)



6,546

**visited the 'Brick
City' event**



96%

**of reviews recommend
Sixmile Water Caravan
Park (2015-16: 87%)**

94%

**recommend
Jordanstown Loughshore
Park (2015-16: 88%)**

(Source: gocampingni.com)





62%

**of visitors to the
Borough, came from
outside Northern
Ireland**

(NISRA)



34%

Mossley Mill

28%

Antrim Civic Centre

**increase in income
generated through
the Council's meeting
and conferencing
facilities**

481,547

**visitors to Antrim
Castle Gardens,
the Enchanted
Winter Garden,
Sentry Hill Historic
House Museum and
Museum at the Mill
in 2016-17**

(2015-16; 380,232)







PERFORMANCE

The Council's commitment to 'PERFORMANCE' as identified in the Corporate Plan is to be a Council renowned for excellence in service delivery.

"We will do this by ensuring that our culture is constructive and provides employees with opportunities to reach their potential whilst achieving community outcomes.

We will be recognised for excellence in governance and our commitment to using a best practice approach to accountable decision making."

Examples of how we have delivered under this theme are outlined overleaf.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

During 2016-17 we:

- Trained Councillors and employees on areas relating to Governance, Financial Regulations, Information Governance, Health and Safety, Contract Management and Anti-Fraud and Bribery and Audit Committee training.
- Continued with paperless working for Elected Members.
- Continued to work towards the achievement of 'Charter Plus' which is an Elected Member Development Accreditation Programme.
- Renewed its Gold Workplace Charter Award and also achieved Safe Borough Charter status.
- Carried out a review and implementation of our Emergency Plan.

Under the Rural Needs Action (NI) 2016, Council has a responsibility to carry out Rural Proofing assessments when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans as well as designing and delivering public services.

A procedure has now been developed to carry out such assessments and is being adopted for recent strategies.



97%

**of Freedom of Information
responses were responded
to within the deadline**

2015-16: 97%



754

**Mayoral
engagements**

2015-16: 850



100%

**of minutes and audio recordings of
Council and Committee meetings were
uploaded to the Corporate Website
within agreed timescales**

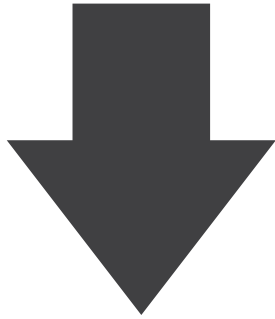
2015-16: 100%



4

**reportable health and
safety incidents in the
Council**

2015-16: no incidents reported



32%

reduction in legal
costs against budget

99%

of employees
have a personal
development plan

14.36

average number of
days lost per employee
(2015-16: 12.12)

% of invoices paid within 30 days

72.7%

2015-16

83.7%

2016-17

% of invoices paid within 10 days

48.4%

2015-16

49.5%

2016-17



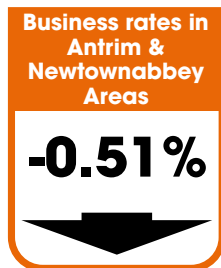
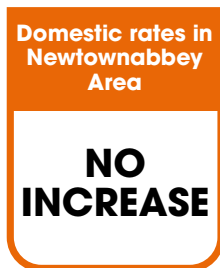
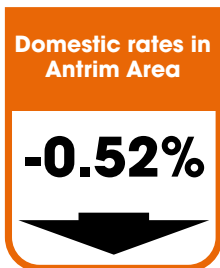
MAKING THE BEST USE OF RESOURCES

The Council focusses on making the best use of our resources through innovative practices and strong financial arrangements. This was identified as an area where we could continue to improve.

During 2016-17 we delivered the following results:

- Decreased the domestic rates for our residents in the Antrim area, maintained a freeze in the rates for our residents in the Newtownabbey area and decreased the non-domestic rates for our customers across both the Antrim and Newtownabbey area.
- Managed our finances in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finances Act (NI) 2011 and the Prudential Code.
- Subjected the 2016-17 annual accounts to an unqualified audit opinion (subject to confirmation).
- We had controlled our net costs of services to come within budget, but for a late adjustment of £959,000, that we were notified of over five months after the year end. This late adjustment, which was completely outside of the control of the Council was as a consequence of notification by Land and Property Services that a ratepayer within the Borough had successfully appealed their rates' property valuation. This late adjustment resulted in Council recording a deficit of £483,000.

- Received £2.79m in external funding for the Borough. All staffing structures (except waste management) were approved by March 2017.
- 282 jobs on new structures have been filled (2015-16: 150).
- Facilitated voluntary severance applications to allow savings of £493,277 on annual salary costs going forward.
- 53% of our staff had 100% attendance (2015-16: 48%).
- Recorded 1,254 days of employee training for 2,235 attendees (2015-16: 1,482 days, 2,654 attendees).



HOW WELL ARE WE MANAGING YOUR MONEY?

The Council continued to keep expenditure within budget in 2016-17.

Our financial performance is set against a backdrop of efficiency targets, and we were able to achieve a decrease in the domestic rates within the Antrim area, maintain a freeze in the domestic rates within the Newtownabbey area and a reduction in the non-domestic rates for customers across the Borough.

FOR EVERY POUND THAT IS RAISED THROUGH YOUR RATES... THIS IS HOW IT IS SPENT

£0.30

Recreation and
Sport
(£0.25, 2015-16)

£0.35

Waste
Management
(£0.39, 2015-16)

£0.10

Corporate
Management and
Democratic Services
(£0.13, 2015-16)

£0.07

Culture, Heritage
and Tourism
(£0.03, 2015-16)

£0.06

Other Services
(£0.08, 2015-16)

£0.07

Environmental
Health
(£0.07, 2015-16)

£0.05

Community
Services
(£0.05, 2015-16)



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