



3 October 2024

Committee Chairperson: Councillor A O'Lone

Committee Vice-Chairperson: Alderman L Boyle

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

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

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Tuesday 8 October 2024 at 6.30pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

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

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

For any queries please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9448 1301/028 9034 0107

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 Finance Dashboards Presentation

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 Department for Communities, Sign Language Partnership Group Letter of Offer

4.2 Awards - APSE Council of the Year 2024

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 Prompt Payments Performance

5.2 Local Government Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) Compliance Check

5.3 Dual Language Street Sign Applications

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 Report on the Financial and Technical Implications of Holding Full Council Meetings in the Chamber in Antrim Civic Centre

6.2 Schedule of meetings of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025

6.3 Elected Member Continuous Professional Development

6.4 Organisation Development, Human Resources Structure

7 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2024**

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 FI/GEN/027 FINANCE DASHBOARDS PRESENTATION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this presentation is to provide Members with an update on the key benefits of using dashboards for monitoring financial performance and data analysis across Council.

2. Introduction/Background

The Head of Finance will summarise and present the key focus areas utilised within the Dashboards.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the presentation be noted.

Prepared by: Denise Lynn, PA to Director of Finance and Governance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 CCS/EDP/023 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES, SIGN LANGUAGE PARTNERSHIP GROUP LETTER OF OFFER

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Department for Communities (DfC) Sign Language Partnership Group (SLPG) Letter of Offer for grant funding.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded of Council's commitment as a Deaf Friendly Council through the signing of the British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL) Deaf Charter.

3. Funding Opportunity

The Council submitted an application for funding to the Department for Communities Sign Language Partnership Group for 100% funding for the delivery of BSL Level 1 and 2 Sign Language Training.

Members are advised that a formal letter of offer has been received for £10,183, a copy of which is **enclosed**.

Training will be offered to Elected Members, staff and Borough residents. This will be advertised in due course with an expected completion of March 2025.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Department for Communities (DfC) Sign Language Partnership Group (SLPG) Letter of Offer for grant funding be approved.

Prepared by: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

4.2 PT/CI/061 AWARDS – APSE COUNCIL OF THE YEAR 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to grant employees an additional half days leave in recognition for their part in the achievement of the APSE UK Council of the Year 2024 Award.

2. Background

APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) is a networking community and works with over 300 councils across the UK. It promotes excellence in public services and is the foremost specialist in local authority front line services.

3. APSE Service Awards & Council of the Year

Members will know that the Council has been named as the **APSE UK Overall Council of the Year 2024**.

The Council also won the Best Services Team for its Bereavement and Cemetery Services and was a named finalist in five other categories.

This is a huge accomplishment for the Council and illustrates the commitment of our Elected Members and all employees for the quality of services we provide.

4. Employee Recognition

As part of an overall programme of recognition, celebration and building on the profile of the Council, it is suggested that we recognise employees' contribution to the achievement of the Award in a tangible way. Therefore it is proposed that as a one-off gesture, an additional half days leave, be granted for use within the 2024/2025 financial year; this acknowledges both the significance of the win and the efforts of our employees.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that an additional half days leave in recognition of the Council of the Year achievement to employees be approved.

Prepared by: Katherine Young, Organisation Development & Employee Engagement Manager

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on Council's 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

The Council's prompt payment performance for the period **1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024** is set out below:

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

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

During the above period, the Council paid invoices totalling £40,873,110

The Council paid 9,513 invoices within the 30-day target. (92%)

The Council paid 8,398 invoices within the 10-day target. (81%)

The Council paid 873 invoices outside of the 30-day target. (8%)

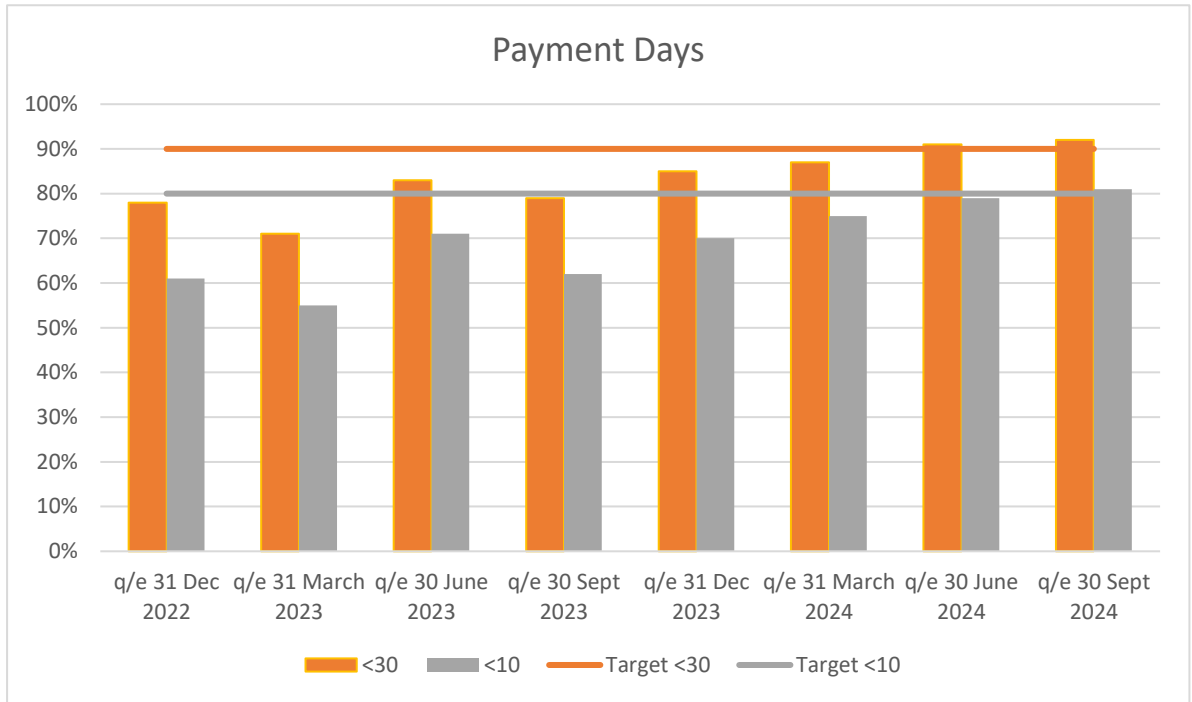
The Council has set a target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days and 80% within 10 days.

This compares to previous quarterly results as below:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
q/e 31 December 2022	5,780	78%	61%
q/e 31 March 2023	5,558	71%	55%
q/e 30 June 2023	7,050	83%	71%

q/e 30 September 2023	6,498	79%	62%
q/e 31 December 2023	7,074	85%	70%
q/e 31 March 2024	5,776	87%	75%
q/e 30 June 2024	5,533	91%	79%
q/e 30 September 2024	4,853	92%	81%

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



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

The RAG weekly status report shows the improvement in Quarter 2:

Period	No of invoices	% Paid Within 10 Days	11-30Cum	30plus cum	% Paid Within 30 Days
01/04/2024 - 06/04/2024	337	75%	18%	7%	93%
08/04/2024 - 14/04/2024	382	73%	14%	13%	87%
15/04/2024 - 21/04/2024	406	69%	8%	23%	77%
22/04/2024 - 27/04/2024	398	62%	33%	4%	96%
29/04/2024 - 05/05/2024	447	77%	15%	7%	93%
06/05/2024 - 12/05/2024	324	78%	10%	11%	89%
13/05/2024 - 19/05/2024	388	74%	14%	12%	88%
20/05/2024 - 25/05/2024	332	79%	11%	10%	90%
27/05/2024 - 01/06/2024	238	81%	8%	12%	88%
03/06/2024 - 08/06/2024	433	86%	9%	5%	95%
10/06/2024 - 15/06/2024	886	89%	6%	5%	95%
17/06/2024 - 22/06/2024	471	80%	11%	9%	91%
24/06/2024 - 29/06/2024	487	83%	10%	7%	93%
01/07/2024 - 06/07/2024	307	91%	5%	4%	96%
08/07/2024 - 14/07/2024	315	88%	9%	4%	96%
15/07/2024 - 20/07/2024	342	78%	14%	8%	92%
22/07/2024 - 28/07/2024	486	83%	6%	11%	89%
29/07/2024 - 04/08/2024	436	86%	9%	4%	96%
05/08/2024 - 11/08/2024	507	84%	5%	11%	89%
12/08/2024 - 18/08/2024	410	85%	7%	8%	92%
19/08/2024 - 25/08/2024	317	81%	9%	10%	90%
26/08/2024 - 01/09/2024	277	66%	27%	7%	93%
02/09/2024 - 07/09/2024	306	85%	8%	7%	93%
09/09/2024 - 15/09/2024	428	84%	9%	8%	92%
16/09/2024 - 21/09/2024	421	81%	11%	9%	91%
23/09/2024 - 29/09/2024	301	86%	8%	6%	94%

The table below shows the quarter performance by section;

section	Category	Number of Invoices	Number of Invoices %
Arts & Culture	1-10 days	280	83.33%
	11-30 days	19	5.65%
	30 Plus days	37	11.01%
Arts & Culture Total		336	6.92%
Chief Executive	1-10 days	12	85.71%
	11-30 days	1	7.14%
	30 Plus days	1	7.14%
Chief Executive Total		14	0.29%
Community Planning	1-10 days	271	92.18%
	11-30 days	7	2.38%
	30 Plus days	16	5.44%
Community Planning Total		294	6.06%
Environmental Health	1-10 days	31	72.09%
	11-30 days	8	18.60%
	30 Plus days	4	9.30%
Environmental Health Total		43	0.89%
Leisure	1-10 days	627	92.21%
	11-30 days	26	3.82%
	30 Plus days	27	3.97%
Leisure Total		680	14.01%
Parks	1-10 days	761	92.47%
	11-30 days	32	3.89%
	30 Plus days	30	3.65%

Parks Total		823	16.96%
Estate Services	1-10 days	387	69.48%
	11-30 days	105	18.85%
	30 Plus days	65	11.67%
Estate Services Total		557	11.48%
Waste Management	1-10 days	494	76.71%
	11-30 days	101	15.68%
	30 Plus days	49	7.61%
Waste Management Total		644	13.27%
Non-Order	1-10 days	707	81.73%
	11-30 days	78	9.02%
	30 Plus days	80	9.25%
Non-Order Total		865	17.82%
Finance & Governance	1-10 days	324	72.81%
	11-30 days	60	13.48%
	30 Plus days	61	13.71%
Finance & Governance Total		445	9.17%
Economic Development & Planning	1-10 days	137	90.13%
	11-30 days	12	7.89%
	30 Plus days	3	1.97%
Economic Development & Planning Total		152	3.13%
Grand Total		4853	100.00%

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

Service improvements have included:

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

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

Council	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Antrim & Newtownabbey BC (Quarter 2 24/25)	92%	81%
All Councils (Quarter 1 24/25)	93%	72%

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5.2 CCS/COM/050 LOCAL GOVERNMENT MODEL COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE (MCHP) COMPLIANCE CHECK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the outcome of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO), Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) compliance check.

2. Previous Decisions of the Council

Members are reminded that the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure was revised in accordance with NIPSO's general guidance to all Councils to ensure consistency.

3. NIPSO Compliance Audit Outcome

The NIPSO Complaints Standards team recently carried out a procedural compliance check on the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure (parts 1-3) and have confirmed that it complies with the Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the outcome of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO), Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) compliance check be noted.

Prepared by: James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

5.3 CCS/EDP/025 DUAL LANGUAGE STREET SIGN APPLICATIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the Dual Language Street Sign update.

2. Background

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

3. Application Update

STAGE 1: PETITION VERIFICATION

There are no applications at stage 1.

STAGE 2: RESIDENTS CANVASS

One application has been received at stage 2.

1. OLD MILL DRIVE, NEWTOWNABBAY, BT36 7XP

Canvass letters will be issued to residents, week commencing 30 September 2024.

STAGE 3: STREET SIGN INSTALLATION

There are no applications at stage 3.

4. Recommendation

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

Prepared by: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy