



4 June 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 16 June 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 ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 3.1 Amendment to Financial Regulations
- 3.2 Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Anti-Bribery Policies
- 3.3 Year End Business Plans 2025/26 – Finance Directorate
- 3.4 Year End Business Plan 2025/26– Organisation Development Directorate
- 3.5 Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26, Performance Progress Report Quarter 4
- 3.6 Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27 (Final) and Performance Governance Arrangements
- 3.7 Dual Language Street Sign Applications

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

- 4.1 Section 75 Equality and Rural Needs Screening
- 4.2 Local Government Training Group 2026-2027
- 4.3 Customer Services Quarter 4 Update
- 4.4 Managing Attendance Update April 2025 – March 2026
- 4.5 Quarterly Report on FOI/EIR/DAP Requests

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

6 ITEM IN CONFIDENCE

- 6.1 Elected Member Development – Continuous Professional Development Application

**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2026**

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 F1/FIN/10 AMENDMENT TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend for approval the amendment to the Financial Regulations.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded that Council regularly review the Financial Regulations to ensure a high level of governance is in place in relation to financial activity. Amendments to the financial regulations were last approved at the Policy and Governance Committee in June 2025.

The Financial Regulations form part of the financial framework of Council which provides the necessary control on financial matters, whilst encouraging best practice and promoting local accountability.

The Financial Regulations provide a framework through which the Chief Executive can be satisfied that proper financial administration is in place. The aim of these Regulations is to help ensure that high standards of propriety and best value are achieved. All Elected Members and employees have a duty to promote these aims, not just by following Financial Regulations but in their general approach.

3. Review of the Regulations

Following review, amendments have been drafted and are summarised below:

Section 7 Procurement:

- Section 7.5 Quotations and Tenders

The guidance has been amended to be more explicit in the requirements for below threshold purchases. A de-minimis limit has been added to reduce the administration costs of undertaking and evidencing checks on purchases.

- Section 7.35 Social Value

The guidance has been amended to include reference to applicable Procurement Policy Notes as issued by the Department of Finance.

Section 20 Property Plant and Equipment

- Section 20 Property Plant and Equipment

This section has been amended to update the definition of the Council's capital assets which shall be recorded on the fixed asset register within the Council statements of Accounts.

- Updated guidance on Inventories has been included.

Other amendments

- Amendment of title from Director of Finance and Governance to Director of Finance throughout the document

A copy of the proposed updated Financial Regulations is **enclosed** for approval.

4. Screening Requirements

All necessary screening has been completed and relevant forms **enclosed** for information.

5. **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the updated Financial Regulations be approved

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed and Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance

3.2 FI/AUD/04 ANTI-FRAUD, CORRUPTION AND ANTI-BRIBERY POLICIES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval from Members for the revised Anti-Fraud & Corruption and Anti-Bribery Policies.

2. Background

Members are reminded that in April 2023, the Policy and Governance Committee approved both the Anti-Fraud & Corruption and Anti-Bribery Policies.

3. Key Points

In accordance with the Council's Policy Framework and Schedule, the Anti-Fraud & Corruption and Anti-Bribery Policies have been reviewed and updated.

There have been no significant amendments made to the Policies with the exception of amending job titles to reflect changes in Council structures, inclusion of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment and the provision of clarifications where appropriate.

A copy of the updated policies are **enclosed**, with amendments highlighted for information.

4. Screening Requirements

The Policy has been screened for the need for an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) and a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), and the relevant screening forms are **enclosed** for information.

The DPIA screening for the Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy indicated that a DPIA was required due to the combining, comparing or matching of personal data from multiple sources during an investigation.

Completion of the DPIA has indicated that all necessary steps have been taken to ensure that the data is held securely and so processing can be progressed. The DPIA will be kept under review.

The remaining screenings concluded that impact assessments were not recommended.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the revised Anti-Fraud & Corruption and Anti-Bribery Policies be approved.

Prepared by: Paul Caulcutt, Head of Internal Audit

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance

3.3 PT/CI/066 YEAR END BUSINESS PLAN 2025/26 – FINANCE DIRECTORATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Year End Business Plan 2025/26 for the Finance Directorate.

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. Specifically, the duties in the Act relate to Section 84(1), 85(2) and 85(9) whereby the Council has a statutory duty to make arrangements to:

- Secure continuous improvement
- Secure achievement of its improvement objectives
- Exercise its functions so that any Departmental specified standards are met.

3. Previous Decision of Council

In June 2025 the Council approved a strategic performance framework as part of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26.

4. Business Planning

Business planning plays a vital role in the Council's performance management and delivery processes. It offers a more efficient and cohesive approach to monitoring and evaluating performance while improving overall visibility.

The purpose of the Directorate Business Plans are to:

- Demonstrate how each of the Directorates are supporting and achieving Council's priorities.
- Provide a clear sense of purpose of the Directorate and the challenges it faces.
- Illustrate how it is aligning its resources to meet the challenges ahead.
- Measure performance and hold ourselves to account to ensure we deliver for the Council and its residents.

Year End Business Plan for the Finance Directorate 2025/26 is **enclosed** for approval.

5. Financial Position / Implications

As agreed, as part of the Council's rate setting process

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Year End Business Plan 2025/26 for the Finance

Directorate be approved.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Approved by: John Balmer, Head of Finance

3.4 PT/CI/066 YEAR END BUSINESS PLAN 2025/26 – ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Year End Business Plan 2025/26 for the Organisation Development Directorate.

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. Specifically, the duties in the Act relate to Section 84(1), 85(2) and 85(9) whereby the Council has a statutory duty to make arrangements to:

- Secure continuous improvement
- Secure achievement of its improvement objectives
- Exercise its functions so that any Departmental specified standards are met.

3. Previous Decision of Council

In June 2025 the Council approved a strategic performance framework as part of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26.

4. Business Planning

Business planning plays a vital role in the Council's performance management and delivery processes. It offers a more efficient and cohesive approach to monitoring and evaluating performance while improving overall visibility.

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- Demonstrate how each of the Directorates are supporting and achieving Council's priorities.
- Provide a clear sense of purpose of the Directorate and the challenges it faces.
- Illustrate how it is aligning its resources to meet the challenges ahead.
- Measure performance and hold ourselves to account to ensure we deliver for the Council and its residents.

Year End Business Plan for the Organisation Development Directorate 2025/26 is **enclosed** for approval.

5. Financial Position / Implications

As agreed, as part of the Council's rate setting process

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Year End Business Plan 2025/26 for the Organisation Development Directorate be approved.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

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

3.5 PT/CI/066 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025/26, PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT QUARTER 4

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26, Quarter 4 Performance Progress Report.

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 2025/26 was approved in June 2025. This set out a range of robust performance targets, along with identified improvement objectives and several Statutory Performance Targets.

4. Performance Progress Reports

Fourth Quarter Performance Progress Report is **enclosed** for Member's information.

5. Governance

Quarterly performance progress reports are reported to relevant Committees.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 4 Performance Progress Report be approved.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

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

3.6 PT/CI/071 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2026/27 (FINAL) AND PERFORMANCE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27 following consultation, and the Performance Governance Arrangements.

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 draft Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27 for consultation was approved in January 2026. This set out a range of robust performance targets, along with six identified improvement objectives and several statutory performance targets.

4. Consultation Period

A twelve-week public consultation commenced on 2 February 2026, to derive feedback from residents, stakeholders, local businesses, statutory and community planning partners, and other bodies with which collaborative working is taking place or planned.

Multiple channels were used for consultation to ensure robust feedback on the Plan:

- Copies of the draft Plan along with the consultation document and pop-up banner with QR Code were available in the reception areas in Mossley Mill and Antrim Civic Centre.
- The draft Plan, Executive Summary and consultation document were available on the Council's website and a QR code was created linked to the consultation survey.
- Face-to-face consultation events were held in Leisure Centres, Libraries, Civic Centres and events across the Borough.
- Weekly digital surveys were conducted via the Council's social media channels.
- 13,608 stakeholders were contacted directly requesting feedback on the Plan.

As a result of these 152 completed consultation surveys and 509 digital responses were received.

The consultation feedback, **enclosed**, has been considered, and no changes were required to the draft Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27.

5. Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27

Following consultation, the final Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27 is **enclosed** for approval.

6. Performance Governance Arrangements

To support the delivery of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27, the Performance Governance Arrangements **(enclosed)** and are reviewed annually.

These arrangements outline the Council's duty to set objectives for the improvement of services, the performance framework and reporting, the Corporate Performance and Improvement Objectives and how we will monitor and measure these objectives.

7. Section 75 Screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment

A copy of the Section 75 Screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment are **enclosed** for information.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the final Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27 and Performance Governance Arrangements be approved.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

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

3.7 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 update and seek approval where required in accordance with the Policy.

2. Background

The Dual Language Street Sign Policy (**enclosed**) was adopted by Council in May 2022. The Policy was drafted in accordance with Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, which grants councils broad discretionary powers to erect dual language street signs or secondary nameplates in languages other than English.

3. Applications

Applications supported by a petition have been received for the following areas. The petitions will now be verified against the Electoral Register.

- Brecart Road, Toomebridge, BT41 3TH and BT41 3PJ
- Pakenham Court, Crumlin, BT29 4EP
- Mayfield Park, Newtownabbey, BT36 7WP

Stage 1 – Petition Verification (For Approval)

Three applications are at this stage. The occupiers signing the petition have been verified against the Electoral Register and the applications meet the required one-third threshold. Approval is requested for these applications to progress to Stage 2.

- Cargin Road, Toomebridge, BT41 3NS
- Hollybrook Gardens, Newtownabbey, BT36 3ZS
- Loup Road, Toomebridge, BT41 3TW

Stage 2 – Residents Canvass (For Approval)

Two applications have progressed to this stage. Canvass letters have been issued to occupants, and both applications met the required threshold of two thirds of residents. Approval is requested for these applications to progress to Stage 3.

- Longlands Walk, Newtownabbey, BT36 7NQ
- Longlands Park, Newtownabbey, BT36 7NG

Stage 3 – Street Sign Installation (For Noting)

- No applications are at this stage.

4. Map and Costs

Maps and associated costs are **enclosed** for information.

5. Recommendation

Members are asked to note the Dual Language update and approve the applications at Stage 2 and Stage 3 in accordance with the Policy.

Prepared by: Claire Webb, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

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

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 CCS/EDP/7 SECTION 75 EQUALITY AND RURAL NEEDS SCREENING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the quarterly Section 75 Equality and Rural Needs Impact Assessment policy screenings.

2. Background

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places a statutory duty on designated public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and the desirability of promoting good relations. Compliance with these duties is a legal requirement.

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. Screening Update

The policies noted below have been screened between January and March 2026.

POLICY	SCREENING DECISION
Internal Audit Strategy 2026-2030	1
Risk Management Policy	1
Good Relations Audit and Strategy 2026-2031	1
Rural Investment and Growth Fund	1
Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2026/27	1
Council Reserves Policy	1
Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2026/27	1
Grant Funding Policy	1
Rural Investment and Growth Fund	1
Review of Entertainment Licensing Policy	1
Winter Woolies Update	1

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

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the quarterly Section 75 Equality and Rural Needs Impact Assessment policy screenings be noted.

Prepared by: Claire Webb, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

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

4.2 HR/LD/004 LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING GROUP 2026/27

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the Council's contribution to the Local Government Training Group for 2026/27.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded that the functions of the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) are still being administered by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and will continue until 1 April 2029.

Annually a request for contribution from the participating Councils is sought. This is based on the Council's percentage rateable value in relation to all rate payers across Northern Ireland and applied to the total amount agreed to run the LGTG.

3. Local Government Training Group

Council currently benefits most from the below elements provided by the Local Government Training Group:

- LGTG e-learning platform: relaunched as the iLearn Portal
- LGTG Call Off Framework
- Funding towards NILGA Elected Member Learning and Development
- ILM People Development Framework

Enclosed for Members information is the agreed Governance, Accountability and Audits Arrangements Paper and the Service Level Agreement.

4. Financial Position/Implication

Council's contribution for 2026/27 is £19,128.08 and is in line with budget allocations.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council's contribution to the Local Government Training Group for 2026/27 be noted.

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

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

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

4.3 CCS/CS/011 CUSTOMER SERVICES QUARTER 4 UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the Quarter 4 Customer Services report for the period January to March 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 sets out the performance improvement objective; *'We will provide best-in-class services for our residents and make them feel valued and engaged. By fostering trust, engagement and increased satisfaction, we are committed to elevating the customer service experience.'*

Four indicators are set as measures of success and the Customer Services Report for Quarter 4 2025/26 (**enclosed**) provides an update on performance.

In addition, there is an update on key consultations to serve the Plan, and the performance of the Complaints Handling Procedure, during the period January to March 2026.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 4 Customer Services report for the period January to March 2026 be noted.

Prepared by: James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Agreed by: Lesley Millar, Head of Organisation Development

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

4.4 HR/GEN/019 MANAGING ATTENDANCE UPDATE APRIL 2025 – MARCH 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the final position for Managing Attendance for the 2025/26 reporting period, including attendance trends, absence data and the actions currently being taken to improve attendance management across the Council.

The report also outlines the proposed priority actions for Quarter 1 of 2026/27, which will inform the development of a broader Managing Attendance Action Plan following further analysis and benchmarking activity.

2. Managing Attendance Update Summary

Absence at the end of 2025/26 was above the Council target, with an average of 16.92 days lost per employee against a target of 14 days.

The **enclosed** Managing Attendance Performance Summary 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.
- Quarter 1 priority improvement actions for 2026/27.

Analysis of absence data has identified mental health related absence as the most significant absence category, alongside respiratory illnesses, musculoskeletal conditions and digestive health related absences as continuing areas of focus. The absence profile reflects a continued prevalence of these absence types, which remain common absence drivers across the wider public sector workforce.

A number of operational improvement measures are already underway as part of Quarter 1 activity, including:

- Implementation of the HR Business Partnering approach.
- Weekly absence monitoring arrangements.
- Enhanced use of real-time HR dashboards.
- Targeted management support and training.
- Continued monthly attendance review meetings with Directors and Heads of Service.

Further detailed analysis and benchmarking work with other councils is also being undertaken during Quarter 1 to help inform the development of a broader Managing Attendance Action Plan for 2026/27.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members:

- a) Note the final position for Managing Attendance for the 2025/26 reporting period.**
- b) Note the Quarter 1 improvement actions currently underway.**
- c) Note that a broader Managing Attendance Action Plan for 2026/27 will be developed following further analysis and benchmarking activity.**

Prepared by: Jane Clarke, Head of Human Resources

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

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

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to note the Quarter 4 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 January to 31 March 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 higher than the number in the same period the previous year – an increase of 60%.
- Of the 155 requests received, 90 were under FOI, 58 under EIR and 7 under DPA.
- 134 requests were completed within the quarter.
- 100% 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 (38), Waste (34), Governance (25), Planning (16), and Finance (14).
- Ten appeals were received during the quarter. The Council's original decision was upheld on 6 occasions and additional information was provided on 4 occasions.
- Two complaints to the ICO were notified within the quarter.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 4 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 and Policy)

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

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