

Contents

Foi	reword from the Chief Executive	2
1.	Our Council Area - Lisburn Castlereagh	3
2.	Introduction and Context	4
3.	Achieving Continuous Improvement	5
4.	Our Governance	7
5.	General Duty to Improve	8
6.	Process for Identifying Performance Improvement Objectives for 2021/22	9
7.	Agreed Performance Improvement Objectives for 2021/22	9
8.	Statutory Indicators	15
q	Consultation:	19

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council - Performance Improvement Plan 2021/22

Foreword from the Chief Executive

I am delighted to introduce the Council's Performance Improvement Plan for 2021/22.

At the time of developing this plan, no one could have foreseen the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic which has acted as a 'disrupter' to how we live, work and play. The last twelve months have been particularly challenging for our communities and I am proud of how our staff and communities have shown resilience, flexibility and commitment to our citizens and council area.

This pandemic has provided an opportunity to pause and reflect, and to progress some key areas which will best support our community over the coming year and how we develop the best outcomes for our Citizens and Visitors to the City area.

In the next twelve months, citizens will see a channel-shift of community focus and engagement with achievable benefits. This is YOUR Council and we will continue to engage with you, for you.

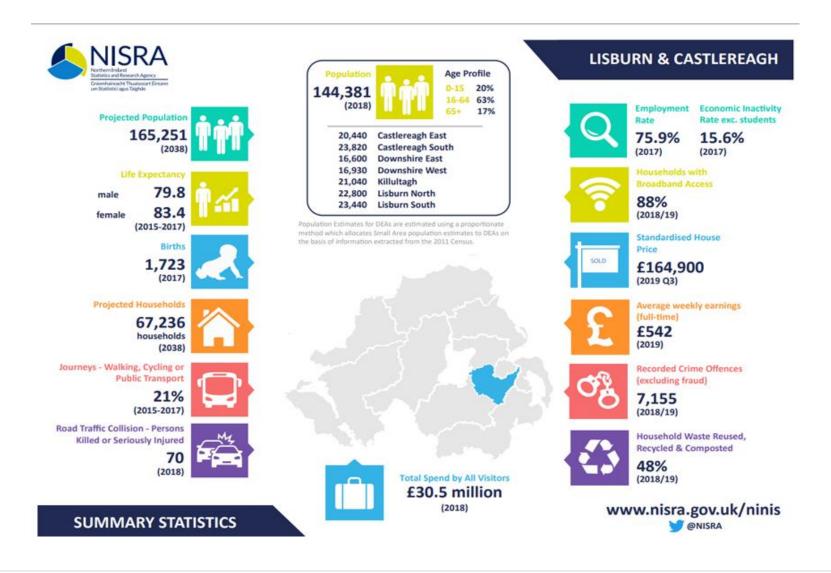
We will continue with our Community Investment Plans and our ambitious Capital Programme, all within the budgets prioritised for best outcomes.

This plan is not intended to describe all day to day work which is undertaken across the full range of Council Services. It focuses on continuous improvement, those issues that matter most to people and the priorities that are set out in the Community Plan. There are two areas that we will be focusing on in the year ahead, building on the progress that we made in recent years.

This will undoubtedly be a year for ongoing response to, and recovery from, the COVID-19 pandemic, however we want to give assurance to our residents, businesses, and all of our stakeholders that we are focused on delivering excellent services. We remain confident that the performance improvement objectives that we have chosen this year will continue to deliver positive outcomes and improve the quality of life for all our communities.

DAVID BURNS			
Chief Executive			
Date			

1. Our Council Area - Lisburn Castlereagh



2. Introduction and Context

The Council 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 Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22 sets out what we will do in the year ahead to deliver on our statutory duty, as listed in Part 12 of the Local Government Act 2014. These 'duties' relate to sections 84(1), 85(2) and 89(5) of the Act, whereby the Council has a statutory responsibility to make arrangements to:

- secure continuous improvement;
- secure achievement of its improvement objectives;
- exercise its functions so that any Central Government Departmental specified standards are met.

Specifically, the Plan provides a rationale for why we have chosen our improvement objectives and details the expected outcomes.

Each objective has been framed so as to bring about improvement in at least one of the specified aspects of improvement as defined in Section 86 of the Act: Strategic Effectiveness; Service Quality; Service Availability; Fairness; Sustainability; Efficiency and Innovation.

The Performance Improvement Plan 2021/22 sits within a hierarchy of plans which guide our strategic planning process and drive our service delivery arrangements (figure 1 below).

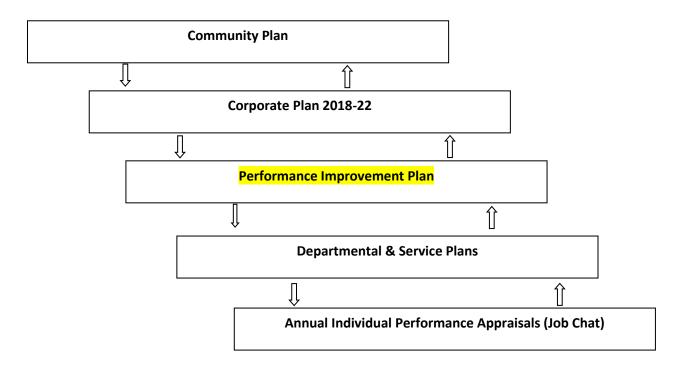


Figure 1: Our Strategic Planning Process

3. Achieving Continuous Improvement

Central to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's (hereafter referred to as LCCC) Performance Improvement Framework is the achievement of our Purpose:

'Working together to deliver better lives for all'.

The Council has put in place a performance improvement process which, through this plan, will drive and provide assurance that we are delivering on our vision, shared outcomes and improvement objectives.

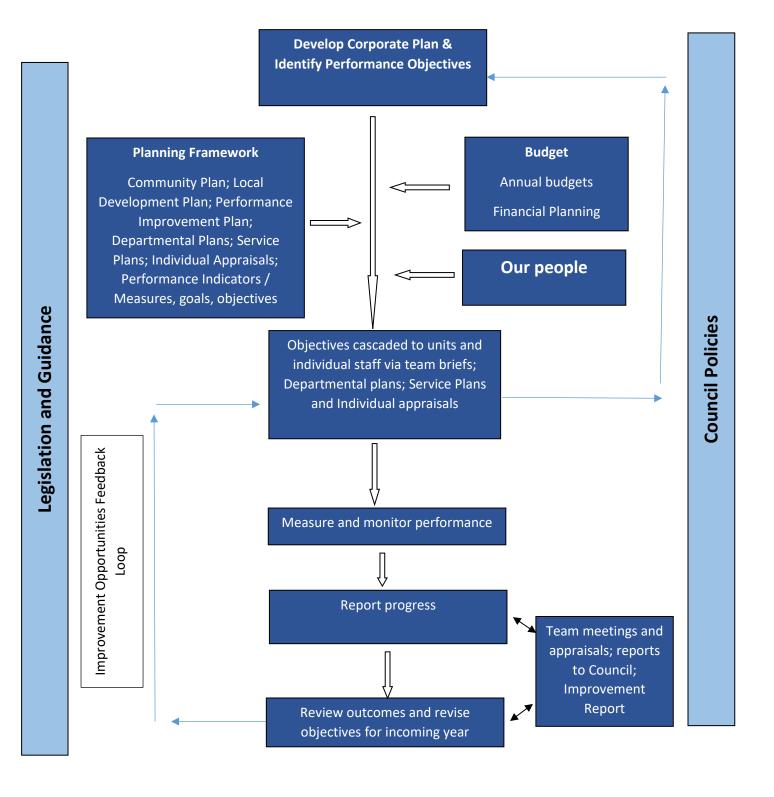
The diagram overleaf (figure 2) illustrates our performance improvement framework and the various processes within this which combine to ensure that we effectively manage performance and that we have taken all possible steps to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of our functions.







Figure 2: LCCC's Performance Improvement Process



4. Our Governance

The Council is made up of 40 Elected Members, representing 144,381 residents in 58,868 homes. The Council is represented by seven District Electoral Areas:



Performance Reporting

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) will oversee the development and delivery of the Performance Improvement Plan, they will:

- Agree the draft Performance Improvement Plan for approval by Committee/Council.
- Monitor the delivery of the overall achievement of the objectives, quarterly.
- Approve the necessary resources (HR & Finance) to deliver upon these objectives.

Progress on the Council's Performance Improvement Plan, is monitored and reported on through quarterly progress reports which are submitted to CMT and then to the Governance & Audit Committee for scrutiny and challenge to ensure that an evaluation of risk and an assessment of performance is carried out, prior to a subsequent Council meeting for approval. Performance will be reviewed using a range of quantitative and qualitative measures.

By 30 September 2022 the Council will produce and publish an Annual Report which will set out a self-assessment of our performance improvement objectives over the previous financial year. This reports on progress towards our Performance Improvement Plan commitments, the achievement of our Improvement Objectives and performance against a

range of statutory and self-imposed performance indicators. This report is reviewed by the Governance & Audit Committee and approved by Council.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) will carry out an improvement assessment to assess if the Council is likely to comply with its performance improvement responsibilities under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The Act requires the Local Government Auditor to summarise their assessment in an annual improvement report. This is published on the NIAO website in March each year, making it publicly available.

5. General Duty to Improve

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 put in place a framework to support continuous improvement in the delivery of council services. In addition to the plans and strategies outlined above, LCCC demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement in the delivery of our services through the development and implementation of an annual Performance Improvement Plan.

In this Performance Improvement Plan for 2021–22, we set out how we will deliver improvement in at least one of these seven improvement areas as stipulated in S.84(2) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014:

- Strategic effectiveness
- Service quality
- Service availability
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Innovation

"Improvement" in the context of the Act means more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of the Council. Improvement for LCCC focusses on the issues that are important to our citizens and customers. Improvement for LCCC means doing things that will help us to achieve our purpose of working together to deliver better lives for all.

The Council continues to engage with the Department for Communities (DfC) along with the other Northern Ireland councils to develop a benchmarking framework for the Local Government sector.

6. Process for Identifying Performance Improvement Objectives for 2021/22

The Performance Improvement Objectives have been identified through several sources:

- The Community Plan this is the overarching strategic document aiming to improve the sustainable social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area.
- The Corporate Plan 2018-22, which sets out the corporate priorities up to the end of 2022.(https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/uploads/general/CORPORATE PLAN 2 018.pdf)
- The Council's DRAFT INTERIM Corporate Plan 2021 2023 Response and Recovery to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Council performance data, where this is available, has been taken into account. This includes key performance indicators at service and departmental level.
- Statutory targets have been set for Planning Services; Economic Development and Waste Management, as set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015. These have also been considered when setting these Performance Improvement Objectives.
- The Council wants to continue on its journey as a customer centric organisation and is focused on using the Performance Improvement Plan as an enabler to achieve better customer experience, customer engagement and accessibility to customer services.
- The Council wants to continue responding to, and recovering from, the COVID-19 pandemic.

To facilitate this approach LCCC have decided to carry forward two of the objectives that had been planned to be delivered in 2020/21 with some additional improvement projects.

7. Agreed Performance Improvement Objectives for 2021/22

There are 2 Performance Improvement Objectives for 2021/22:

- We will improve our citizen engagement and simplify processes for contacting the Council; and
- We will increase participation in Council led activities, that seek to maintain and improve physical and mental health and wellbeing for our citizens.

Why Have We Chosen These Objectives?

The Covid-19 global pandemic has had a huge impact on all our lives. We recognise now more than ever that the customer is pivotal to everything that the Council does. Providing excellent customer service is a fundamental part of everything we do and all the services we offer.

As a result of the pandemic and in line with our emergency plan and guidance from the DfC the publication of a Performance Improvement Plan for 2020/21 was cancelled. Therefore the most recent published Performance Improvement Plan was in the financial year 2019/20.

In 2019/20 LCCC decided to focus its Performance Improvement Plan on the customer, in particular customer satisfaction and customer engagement and also health and wellbeing. The Performance Improvement projects for 2019/20 did deliver success, and they have established the foundations to achieving longer term outcomes which is integral to Community Planning. LCCC's Community Plan takes an outcome based approach, which is about focusing on the changes we want to see as a result of the work we do and allocating our resources to this.

In 2021/22 LCCC would like to continue on its journey as a customer centric organisation and is focused on using the Performance Improvement Plan as an enabler to achieve better customer experience, customer engagement and accessibility to customer services. Health and Wellbeing is a long term objective and as a Council we would like to continue to focus on this during the coming year especially in light of the current pandemic.

Therefore the 2021/22 Performance Improvement Plan will do two things:

- 1. Build upon the success of 2019/20 by continuing a number of existing projects; and
- 2. Challenge ourselves on how we can achieve even better outcomes by identifying new improvement projects.

A brief narrative is provided overleaf for each Performance Improvement Objective, including what we are continuing / building upon from 2019/20 together with details of the new projects that are planned.

Performance Improvement Objective 1: We will improve our citizen engagement and simplify processes for contacting the Council

Outcomes contributing to our Community Plan

• Public Services are enhanced through co-design and co-production

We want to challenge ourselves differently and look at our Customer more broadly by improving our engagement methods. This is even more important and relevant now in the virtual world we have been pushed into as a result of the global pandemic. As we embrace a digital-first approach to service delivery, we are committed to ensuring that our digitally excluded customers are supported and that all of our customers' needs remain at the heart of redesigned council services. We want to ensure that no one is left behind. We want to be a digital first not a digital only Council.

In 2019/20 we set ourselves an objective;

We will improve customer satisfaction by using technology to increase accessibility to information and services.

In the year ahead we will build upon this by offering more services online and we will measure the customer satisfaction of those who engage with our services using technology. This is a continuation of one of our previous improvement objectives.

Two new improvement projects will be delivered in 2021/22. They are;

We will undertake a review of the customer care complaints handling procedure, by reducing it to a two stage process and improve our timeliness of response by stipulating timescales at each stage. This review is in advance of guidance due to be issued by the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman to recommend a standardised two staged complaints procedure throughout the public sector.

As we continue to deliver positive outcomes and improve the quality of life for all our communities we will deliver a Participatory Budgeting Initiative across 3 DEA's (District Electoral Areas) to allow local people to have a say in the projects that receive funding in their communities.

Risks associated with Objective 1:

- Poor usage of online services
- Poor interest or low participation in the Participatory Budgeting Initiative across 3 DEA's

Performance Improvement Objective	Performance Improvement Project	Improvement area stipulated in S.84(2) LG Act (NI) 2014	Community Planning Theme	Continuing or New?	Measure of Success
1. We will improve our citizen engagement and simplify processes for contacting the Council	Improve accessibility to information and services by expanding our suite of online facilities within the Environmental Services Directorate.	Strategic Effectiveness Service Quality Fairness Efficiency Innovation	Our Community	Continuing	Number and type of services available online 8 services across the Environmental Services Directorate will be made available online during 21/22.
	Undertake a review of the customer care complaints handling procedure, by reducing to a two stage process and improve our timeliness of response by stipulating timescales at each stage.	Strategic Effectiveness Service Quality Service Availability Fairness Efficiency Innovation	Our Community	New	Did we review the customer care complaints handling procedure Y/N Did we implement the customer care complaints handling procedure Y/N
	Deliver a Participatory Budgeting Initiative across 3 DEA's to allow local people to have a say in the projects that receive funding in their communities	Strategic Effectiveness Service Quality Service Availability Fairness Efficiency Innovation	Our Community	New	Number of applications received Number of awards made Case studies on the difference the grants have made within the DEAs

Performance Improvement Objective 2: We will increase participation in Council led activities that seek to maintain and improve physical and mental health and wellbeing for our citizens

Outcomes contributing to our Community Plan

- We live healthy, fulfilling and long lives
- Good health will no longer be dependent on where we live or what income we have
- Older people age actively and more independently to stay well connected
- People of all ages are more physically active more often
- We enjoy good mental health

We recognise that the Vitality programme has been extremely successful however it has been seriously affected in the past year because of the closure of Sports Facilities as a result of Covid-19. Prior to the pandemic we had increased the number of people availing of our Leisure facilities as a result of Vitality, as well as this the programme had encouraged participation and promoted health and wellbeing. During 2021/22 we intend to make Vitality one of our focused areas of recovery, we would like to re-establish the Vitality membership programme and supplement it with a targeted and appropriate virtual programme.

Vitality is not the only way that as a Council we can contribute to improving the Health and Wellbeing of our Citizens. There are many other ways such as providing access to our parks and open spaces, allotments, C-SAW (Castlereagh Safe and Well) programmes, provision of our Arts and Cultural Services as well as the many classes and courses available in our various Community Centres. In 2021/22 we will focus on improving the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of our citizens through a number of programmes to develop their horticultural skills and help them understand the benefits of healthy eating.

Risks associated with Objective 2:

- Vitality success might plateau
- Changing fitness trends might impact on Vitality membership
- Further waves of Covid-19 might force further closure of Sports Facilities
- Poor participation in Health & Wellbeing programmes

Performance Improvement Objective	Performance Improvement Project	Improvement area stipulated in S.84(2) LG Act (NI) 2014	Community Planning Theme	Continuing or New?	Measure of Success
2. We will increase participation in Council led activities, that seek to maintain and improve physical and mental health and wellbeing for our citizens	Recover the number of Vitality memberships and people attending our leisure centres to pre Covid-19 levels (this is based upon Covid restrictions being lifted and reopening of facilities)	Service Quality Service Availability Fairness Efficiency Innovation	Health & Wellbeing The Economy Where we Live	Continuing	Active encouragement for people to re-engage with our Sports Facilities to achieve • the pre Covid-19 annual target of 4000 Vitality members per year (this is based upon Covid restrictions being lifted and reopening of facilities) • the pre Covid-19 annual target of over 650,000 people attending our sports facilities per year (this is based upon Covid restrictions being lifted and reopening of facilities) Targets have been pro rata based on facilities reopening in Q2. Targets will be reviewed in October 2021.
	Build upon the success of the Vitality programme by supplementing the range of activities available to members with a targeted virtual programme	Service Quality Service Availability Fairness Efficiency Innovation	Health & Wellbeing The Economy Where we Live	New	Number of online classes included in Vitality Programme Number and type of classes available online e.g. live online classes, videos etc
	Improve the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of our citizens through a number of programmes to develop their horticulture skills and understand the benefits of healthy eating	Service Quality Service Availability Fairness Efficiency Innovation Sustainability	Health & Wellbeing Where we Live Our Community	New	10 horticultural projects will be delivered in FY 2021/22 4 Poly-tunnels will be purchased and delivered to Community groups in Stoneyford, Maghaberry, Moira and Derriaghy Number of CSAW programmes delivered - 20 per annum Number of programme participants - 400 per annum User evaluation and feedback

8. Statutory Indicators

A set of seven performance indicators are in place for Local Government through the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015.

Our arrangements to meet these statutory indicators are through the delivery of our statutory services in Planning, Economic Development and Waste and through our annual performance improvement projects. Resources are allocated to each of these services and approved through the annual budgeting process. Performance measures and indicators are in place for each of the services (see below tables). Monitoring, reporting and scrutiny arrangements are in place with Senior Management and Committees for the management and delivery of these statutory services and statutory indicators.

Progress against the indicators is submitted to the relevant regional body and reports are issued showing comparisons across all 11 Councils. Where the statutory target is not met the need to improve in accordance with the general duty set out in the Act is considered.

In respect of planning the Council must have regard to external factors such as the need to consult widely which prolong the application process and mean the statutory target cannot always be met. The quality of our decision making is also of great importance to our members and citizens. Poor decisions can give rise to budgetary implications arising from cost awards from planning appeals and judicial review. It is for these reasons the Council maintain a focus on continuous improvement which seeks to balance the need for good and timely decision making.

The NI Performance Improvement Working Group has been in consultation with DfC regarding the impact on the Statutory Performance Indicators as a result of the pandemic and other factors. For example, enquiries for business start-ups have contracted significantly in 2020, due in part to COVID-19 and the uncertainty around the implications of the NI Protocol impacting negatively on people actively pursuing self-employment. Waste arisings generally have increased as a result of people staying at home and changes in lifestyle due to the pandemic. Local government are awaiting guidance from DfC on the statutory indicators for the 2021/22 year.

Similarly with Planning the opportunity to perform against the statutory target was adversely impacted by travel restrictions, remote working and the need to introduce new practices for the operation of planning committees. There is ongoing engagement with the Department for Infrastructure in respect of the planning monitoring framework and the need to reflect the challenges faced by local government in operating the planning system for the year 2020/21.

LCCC will report on these in the annual report in September 2022, which will set out a self-assessment of our performance during the 2020/21 financial year.

The Council also publishes its performance results against these indicators on our website: www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/performance-improvement

8.1 Waste and Recycling

Performance against Waste Management targets and standard to be achieved for 2021-22 are:

Measure of Success	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Annual Target
The percentage of household waste collected by LCCC that is sent for recycling.	48.1%	50.79%	TBC June 2021	50%
The total amount (tonnage) of biodegradable waste that is landfilled by LCCC.	16,108	14,373	TBC June 2021 (unverified)	16,444 tonnes
The total amount (tonnage) of Waste collected by LCCC.	77,861	78,905	TBC June 2021 (unverified)	No target set as this represents total amount of waste collected.

Under the Waste Framework Directive, members of the EU were required to meet a target to recycle 50% of household waste by 2020, which was achieved. Due to the impact of Covid-19 it is accepted that recycling performance has reduced, therefore the immediate focus for 2021/22 will be to again achieve the 50% target. The focus in coming years thereafter will be to achieve the Circular Economy Package (CEP) targets for municipal waste recycling as follows:

- 55% recycling by 2025
- 60% recycling by 2030
- 65% recycling by 2035

Until 2019/20 LCCC operated within the Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) along with the 5 other Councils in the waste management group known as arc21. NILAS provided annual allowances for each District Council in Northern Ireland; whilst this scheme is no longer in place it is the expectation that levels of biodegradable waste within LCCC should not exceed the 2019/20 allowance.

It is important to note that the global Covid-19 pandemic has adversely impacted on waste and recycling services. In 2020/21 the challenges for LCCC included increased volumes of

household waste as a result of lockdowns, school closures and increased home-working, along with a reduction in global recycling markets. This resulted in an increase in waste collected from homes for dry recycling and composting but also an increase in household waste to landfill.

8.2 Economic Development

Measure of Success	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Annual Target
The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity via the Go for It Programme	140	112	ТВС	116

GoForIt was transferred to Local Government in April 2015. The business start-up activity is the delivery of the statutory jobs promotion target of 85 minimum jobs as set by Department for the Economy (DfE) and delivered via the NI 'GoForIt' Programme. This target has been outperformed by LCCC each year.

DfE have confirmed they are planning a consultation that may result in a new LCCC Annual Statutory Target in June 2021 of a minimum 116 jobs. In light of this, an increased Annual Target of 116 has been built into LCCC's Economic Development plans for 2021-2022 and will be managed by the Economic Development Unit.

8.3 Planning
Performance against Planning targets and standard to be achieved for 2021-22 are:

Measure of Success	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Annual Target
The average processing time of major planning applications. [An application in the category of major development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015(a)]	78 weeks	55.2 weeks	TBC	Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 30 weeks. Comment: The average processing times for major applications for all Councils was reported in the Planning Annual Monitoring Framework as 59 and 52.8 weeks respectively for the years 2018-19 and 2019-20. A significant improvement in performance is demonstrated year on year aligned which is more closely aligned with the average processing times for

Measure of Success	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Annual Target
				major applications in Northern Ireland.
The average processing time of local planning applications. [Local applications means an application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and any other applications for approval or consent under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (or any orders or regulations made under that Act)]	17.7 weeks	16.6 weeks	TBC	Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 15 weeks. Comment: The average processing times for local applications for all Councils was reported in the Planning Annual Monitoring Framework as 14.8 and 14 weeks respectively for the years 2018-19 and 2019-20. An improvement in performance is demonstrated year on year towards meeting the statutory target.
The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks. [Enforcement cases are investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under Part 5 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (or under any orders or regulations made under that Act). (b).]	84%	84%	TBC	70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.

The Council's Planning Service sits within the Service Transformation Directorate and is responsible for:

- Receiving and making decisions on the majority of planning applications
- Enforcing breaches of planning permission
- Making tree preservation orders
- Producing a Local Development Plan outlining how land should be used and developed in the future

The Planning function transferred to local government from the former Department of the Environment and the statutory indicators were introduced at that time to ensure that the planning functions were carried out in a clear, fair and consistent manner. Quarterly reports are produced by the Department for Infrastructure (referred to as DfI hereafter) based on information available through the Planning Portal, i.e. a regional website where you can

track all planning applications. Every application received, across all 11 Councils and by the Dfl (i.e. regionally significant applications), is entered onto the Planning Portal.

The quarterly statistical reports are compiled by DfI and provided to each of the Councils. The reports are also available through the DfI website.

Council Planning Officers also have the ability to produce management reports from the Planning Portal to monitor application processing.

9. Consultation:

An online consultation exercise on a draft version of this plan will be carried out during April / May 2021. In previous years consultation would also have included focus groups but unfortunately due to the ongoing pandemic this is not appropriate. (Approval for this online consultation was granted by the Governance & Audit Committee in March 2021.)

A consultation outcome report will be published at the end of the consultation exercise.

Any comments and suggested amendments from consultees will be incorporated where appropriate in the final published document by 30th June 2021.

As detailed in 'LCCC's Performance Improvement Process' shown in figure 2, page 7 stakeholders can propose new improvement objectives through the feedback loop, during the year and using the contact details below.

Contacts for Feedback and Review

If you would like to get in touch please do so by one of the following methods:

Telephone: Performance Improvement Officer on 028 9250 9559 **Email by return:** <u>kerrie-anne.mckibbin@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk</u>

Write to Us: Performance Improvement Officer, Chief Executive's Office, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Civic Headquarters, Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn, BT27 4RL.