

A man and a woman are standing on a rocky cliffside. The man is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt, black pants, and a blue helmet. The woman is wearing a purple long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and a blue helmet. They are both smiling and looking towards the camera. A safety railing made of metal posts and chains is in the foreground. The background shows a large, dark rock formation under a blue sky.

Performance Improvement Plan 2024 - 2025

Quarter 1 Update Report

April - June 2024

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk



Mid & East
Antrim
Borough Council

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Other formats:

If you would like this publication in an alternative format, such as large print, or another language, please email us at:

communications@midandeantrim.gov.uk



Welcome

As the Interim Chief Executive of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, I would like to welcome you to our quarterly update on our Performance Improvement Plan.

As a council and as a community, we have experienced many challenges over the last number of years. As a result, we are taking a close look at our organisation to determine what we can do better, more effectively and more efficiently. We are in the process of designing and implementing significant change to achieve this and have made many adjustments over the past year.

Our annual Performance Improvement Plan is part of our arrangements to secure continuous improvement. Based on our understanding of local needs, this plan aims to improve the quality of life and environment for our ratepayers and communities over the year and beyond. This commitment is echoed in our new Corporate Plan, which will take us up to 2028.

Over the four key pillars of People, Place, Planet and Performance, the Corporate Plan will focus on the provision of value for money services, building prosperity, developing empowered, safe, and inclusive communities, protecting and enhancing our environment, demonstrating effective governance, and strengthening our operational and financial resilience.

Our quest for improvement is ongoing, and we welcome the input of all of our stakeholders at any time throughout the year. If you have an idea for improvement, please get in touch with our Performance and Improvement Team at:

performance@midandeantrim.gov.uk

I look forward to the year ahead, as we continue to work together to improve the quality of life for all.



Valerie Watts
Interim Chief Executive

Our Vision
Mid and East Antrim will be a strong, vibrant, safe and inclusive community, where people work together to improve the quality of life for all



Duty to Improve

Under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, councils have a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions.

Improvement in the context of the Act means more than gains in service outputs or efficiencies. Improvement means an activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities.

For each financial year, councils must set Improvement Objectives, and have appropriate arrangements in place to achieve them.

These objectives must be framed to bring about improvement in at least one of the following aspects:

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

A Performance Improvement Plan, setting out these objectives, must be published by 30 June each year. To view our plan in full, please visit:

midandeantrim.gov.uk/performance

Arrangements to Secure Continuous Improvement

Our arrangements to secure continuous improvement are outlined within our Performance Management Framework.

This framework drives performance at all levels within the organisation, and illustrates how our corporate strategies, aims and objectives, flow through the organisation to link to each employee's individual work plan.

We use a series of measures to monitor our performance and to identify any improvements that we make.

Our arrangements are supported by a dedicated performance management system and are subject to an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.



Our Improvement Objectives

1



People

We will work with partners to improve the lives of citizens.

2



Place

We will maintain and improve our local areas.

3



Planet

We will reduce our environmental impact and improve sustainability.

Quarter One Performance Summary

The following pages outline in detail what our citizens will see from the delivery of our Improvement Objectives. We refer to these as outcomes.

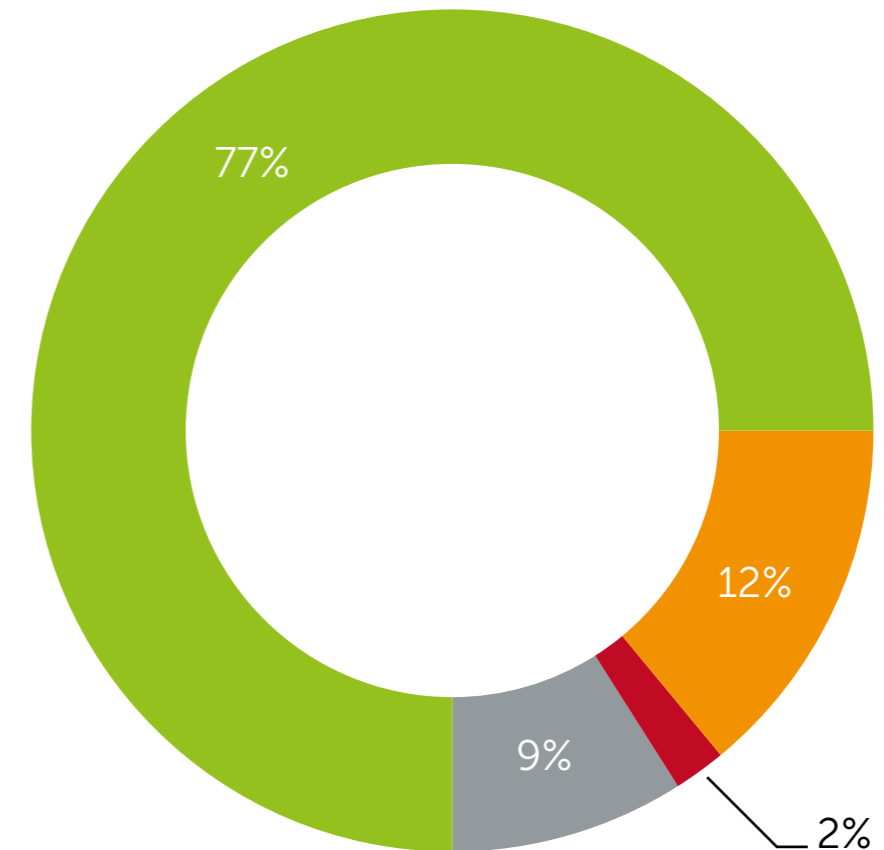
We use a series of key performance indicators to track the delivery of our outcomes. We refer to these as measures.

Our performance against our 56 measures during April to June 2024 is summarised below.

Greater detail on each of the objectives is provided throughout the remainder of this report.

Progress Key

- Achieved or on track
- Delayed but progressing
- Not achieved or stopped
- Data not due or not available



People

We will work with partners to improve the lives of citizens.

By:

- Fostering local enterprise and economic growth.
- Supporting skills development and improving employment outcomes.
- Helping citizens lead healthy and active lives.
- Supporting people who are vulnerable or marginalised, and promoting an equal, diverse, inclusive, and accessible borough.

Who is responsible:

- Director of Community
- Acting Director of Development
- Interim Director of Corporate and Support Services



Why?

- The actions set out to achieve this objective align with the key priorities identified through public consultation. They support priority groupings, and provide opportunities for skills development and employment progression. They offer both health and wellbeing support and help to improve equality of opportunity, accessibility, and inclusivity.
- Developing skills and job prospects, and support to reduce poverty, were two of citizens' top five priorities for making the borough a better place to live in. Only 28% agreed the area is a good place for job opportunities (MEABC Citizens Survey 2022).
- With the rising cost of living and the impact of the pandemic, the number of financially insecure households is increasing. Anecdotal evidence indicates that poverty is impacting families across the whole borough. Our Citizens Survey (2022) found on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all satisfied, half of respondents rated their satisfaction level with their financial health as being 5 or less.
- This objective aligns with the Department for the Economy's vision for Northern Ireland of creating jobs, increasing incomes, improving productivity, and providing opportunities for all.
- In terms of wellbeing, almost 50% of citizens said they want to see more support services for children and families, and/or people with disabilities (MEABC Citizens Survey 2022).
- The issue of inclusion was highlighted during the review of the Community Plan (2022), particularly for people with disabilities and learning difficulties. People from ethnic minority backgrounds, young people, and older people were also identified as being 'at risk'.

What you'll see

Outcome 1	Opportunities to start your own business.
Measure 1	240 participants supported through start-up assistance via Go Succeed by 31 March 2025.
Status	There are 107 participants currently receiving start-up support through Go Succeed.
Measure 2	107 jobs promoted through business start interventions by 31 March 2025.
Status	We are currently receiving monthly performance data, which is still subject to verification, and therefore not yet available for publication.
Outcome 2	An active Mid and East Antrim Manufacturing Task Force.
Measure 1	At least 3 new Manufacturing Task Force members by 31 March 2025.
Status	There are 2 new companies due to become members imminently.
Measure 2	£40,000 of Task Force members' in-kind time contributions by 31 March 2025.
Status	There were approximately £8,000 in-kind time contributions from April to June 2024. This amount is expected to increase by autumn.
Outcome 3	Opportunities to take part in skills and employability programmes.
Measure 1	200 people participating in employment and skills programmes by 31 March 2025.
Status	A Letter of Offer for delivery of the Labour Market Action Plan for 2024/25 was received in July 2024. The programme will now run from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 (extending the delivery timescale by three months). From April to June 2024, 68 people participated in the programmes, namely, the Graduate Disability Programme, Engineering (Coachbuilding), the Tourism Academy, Plant Operations, the Administration Academy, and Community Skills programmes (which includes, Building Confidence for Careers, Security Industry Association, Digital Accessibility, and Education and Training Level 3).
Measure 2	100 participants gaining employment via employment academies by 31 March 2025.
Status	From April to June 2024, 29 participants gained employment from programmes commencing in late 2023/24 and early 2024/25, including, the Childminding Academy, Enterprise Pathways, the Transport Academy, the Graduate Disability Programme, Engineering (Coachbuilding), the Tourism Academy, Plant Operations, the Administration Academy, and the Support Services Academy.
Measure 3	150 participants securing qualifications by 31 March 2025.
Status	From April to June 2024, 98 qualifications were secured.

Outcome 4	Support to lead a healthy and active life.
Measure 1	MEA Aqua Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan (including the expansion of toddler and disability sessions) delivered by 31 March 2025.
Status	Accessible swimming lessons have been introduced across all three leisure centres, with good uptake. The MEAqua Programme is now running over the summer months, with opportunities to participate in intensive swimming lessons. Improvements are underway within the MEActive mobile application, with promotion of the swimming academy now taking place via the app.
Measure 2	12 outdoor events to involve a wide range of abilities by 31 March 2025.
Status	From April to June 2024, over 50 events took place across the borough, which were attended by 3,147 people. These included, Easter events, tree, herb and vegetable planting, a Fossil and Geology Walk, a Bluebell Festival, an Eco Day at a local primary school, Women's Safety, Drowning Prevention, and more.
Outcome 5	A borough that values, engages, and supports everyone.
Measure 1	MEA Age-Friendly Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan launched by 30 June 2024.
Status	The consultation on the draft plan closed at the end of May 2024. A workshop was held in June to analyse feedback, with subsequent amendments made following a meeting held in July. The plan will now be launched in October 2024, to coincide with Positive Ageing Month.
Measure 2	An Older Person's Forum established by 31 December 2024.
Status	Progress has been made in identifying current structures within the borough. A meeting is due to take place with the Mid and East Antrim Agewell Partnership to advance the prospect of the partnership facilitating the forum as part of their existing arrangements.
Measure 3	MEA Age-Friendly Year 2 Action Plan confirmed by 28 February 2025.
Status	The Year 2 Action Plan will be developed to align with the new launch date. The timeframe for this will be updated accordingly.
Measure 4	Autism-Friendly Action Plans implemented in 4 Council venues by 30 September 2024.
Status	The action plans are progressing and are on track for implementation by 30 September 2024 at The Braid Museum and Arts Centre, Larne Arts Centre, Carrickfergus Museum, and Andrew Jackson Cottage.
Measure 5	4 additional Autism Champions developed within Council by 30 September 2024.
Status	The staff members remain on track for full accreditation by the end of September 2024.
Measure 6	An Autism-Awareness initiative Communications Plan developed by 30 September 2024.
Status	The Communications Plan is nearing completion, with implementation already underway.

What you'll see

Outcome 5	A borough that values, engages, and supports everyone.
Measure 7	4 arts and culture events delivered to address loneliness and improve accessibility by 31 March 2025.
Status	<p>We delivered 2 community initiatives from April to June 2024, alongside the Mid and East Antrim Agewell Partnership and funded by the Arts Council NI.</p> <p>The Rural Engagement Arts Programme, a mobile drama project, was created from stories and memories of local culture and home life in rural Mid and East Antrim. Over 300 local older people engaged in the Theatre in the Front Room project, which began with a tea dance, where stories were collected and developed into a touring play using local older actors. The drama was showcased in nursing homes, day-care centres, and to local community groups. Lots of positive feedback was received.</p> <p>The Arts and Older People Programme included a series of 20 workshops in various artforms, ranging from dance and movement, textiles, expressive and mural painting, to the Elder Arts Manifesto, which, through a series of interviews, will feed into the development of an Arts Manifesto for older people in the area. Over 200 older people took part in interviews, workshops, and a new online platform to share their stories.</p>
Measure 8	8 Council-managed community centres connected to full-fibre broadband by 31 March 2025.
Status	Both internet and public Wi-Fi access have been installed in Eden and Oakfield community centres. A further 8 centres are due to have operational internet before the end of October (Ahoghill, Ballykeel, Dunclug, Gracehill, Greenisland, Harryville, Kells, and Sunnylands).
Outcome 6	Collaboration with the Mid and East Antrim Poverty Action Group.
Measure 1	Attendance at Poverty Action Group meetings and support of initiatives.
Status	No meetings have taken place so far this year, with plans to recommence in the autumn.



Place

We will maintain and improve our local areas.

By:

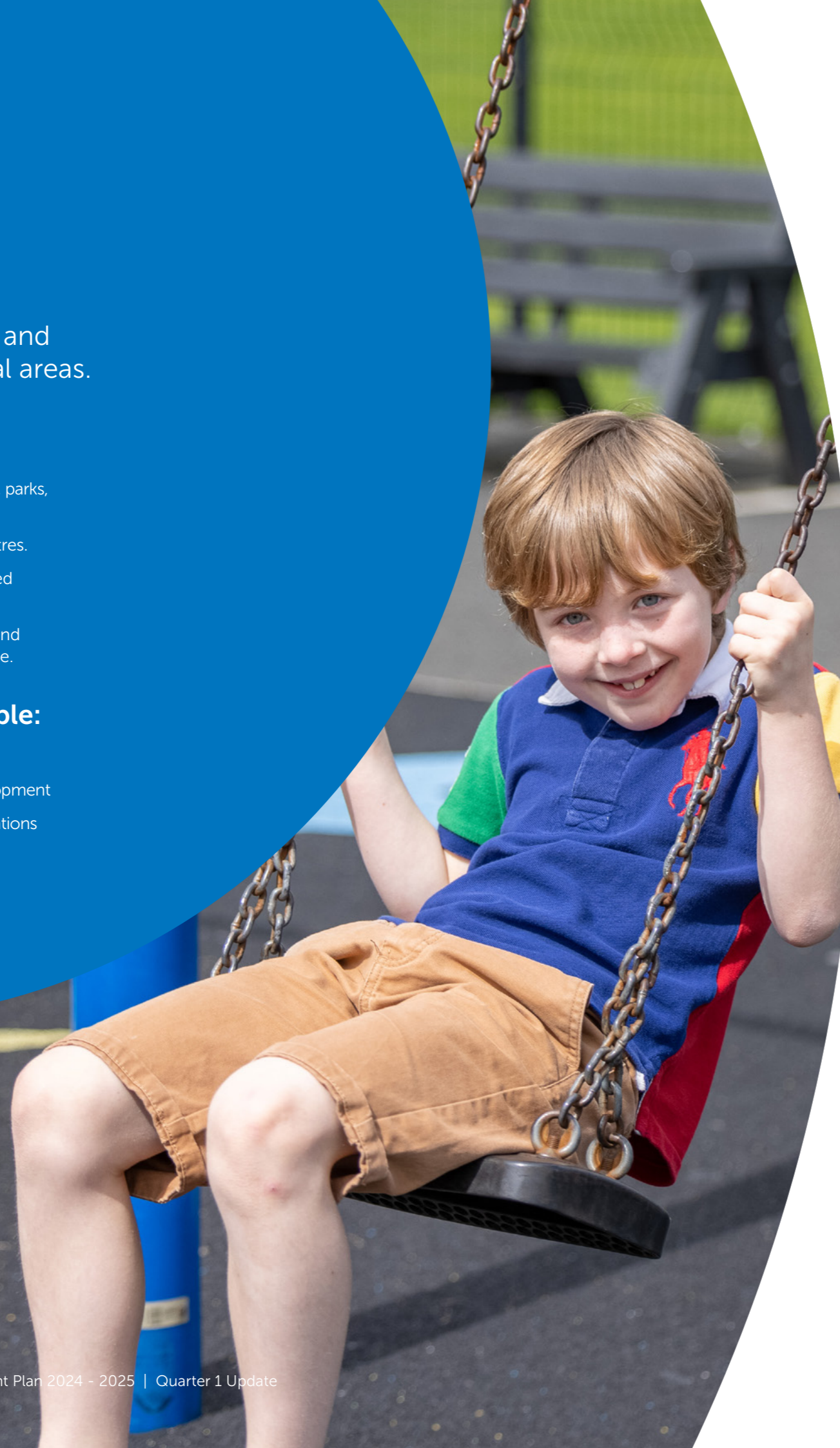
- Enhancing our amenities, parks, and open spaces.
- Bolstering our town centres.
- Nurturing community-led tourism.
- Delivering an effective and efficient Planning Service.

Who is responsible:

- Director of Community
- Acting Director of Development
- Interim Director of Operations

Why?

- The actions set out to achieve this objective align with the key priorities identified through public consultation. Improvements to playparks and provision for outdoor recreation (particularly for young people) was a high priority for citizens. Actions will also support, improve, and revitalise the borough's town centres.
- Supporting and developing activities for children and young people, delivering clean and attractive streets and towns, and supporting our parks, green spaces and the natural and built environment, were within citizens' top five priorities for making the area a better place to live in (MEABC Citizens Survey 2022).
- More than a third of citizens would like to see more access to green spaces, such as parks and forests (MEABC Citizens Survey 2022).
- Community tourism can help boost local economies by encouraging visitor footfall, increasing jobs, and generating revenue for local businesses. This can help increase civic pride in a local area and develop more sustainable and prosperous communities.



What you'll see

Outcome 1		New or improved playparks.
Measure 1	Marine Gardens playpark completed by 31 August 2024.	
Status	The newly refurbished playpark officially reopened on 28 June 2024. The park has transformed into a vibrant and exciting playground for children of all ages and abilities. Following extensive consultation, the playpark was designed to encourage inclusive, accessible play, alongside adventure, challenge, and imagination. With swings and climbing opportunities, it also has a zipline, and the main feature, an impressive ship, allows all children to experience an adventure on the high seas.	
Measure 2	Larne Skate Park completed by 31 October 2024.	
Status	Works are continuing, with an anticipated completion in September 2024.	
Measure 3	2 additional new or refurbished playparks completed by 31 March 2025.	
Status	Designs are underway for 2 playparks, Bardic Drive in Larne, and Oakfield in Carrickfergus.	
Outcome 2		Greater provision for outdoor recreation.
Measure 1	Carnlough, Glynn and Portglenone MUGAs or kickabouts completed by 30 June 2024.	
Status	Both Carnlough and Portglenone sites completed and reopened to the public in June 2024, Glynn completed and reopened in July 2024.	
Measure 2	Carrickfergus Amphitheatre 2G pitch upgraded to 3G by 31 July 2024.	
Status	The pitch upgrade is complete.	
Measure 3	Phase 1 of the Cullybackey to Galgorm Greenway completed by 30 September 2025.	
Status	The Economic Appraisal was submitted to the Department for Communities and the Department for Infrastructure in May 2024, with an anticipated outcome expected by autumn. Detailed designs are underway. The next step will be the submission of the Planning application.	
Measure 4	Development of Carnfunnock Country Park completed by 31 March 2026.	
Status	The consultation is complete, and the Planning application has been submitted, with an outcome expected by autumn. The next step will be to commence the tender process.	
Outcome 3		Delivery of the Town Centre Revitalisation Scheme.
Measure 1	Sound systems installed in Ballymena and Carrickfergus town centres by 30 June 2024.	
Status	The sound systems have been procured and are due for installation in September 2024. The wayleaves are being agreed during the summer.	
Measure 2	2 street art schemes in Ballymena and Larne town centres by 31 July 2024.	
Status	The Larne installation was completed in July 2024. Ballymena was delayed due to the July holiday period and the artist's availability, and is due to be completed by autumn.	

Outcome 3		Delivery of the Town Centre Revitalisation Scheme.
Measure 3	Feature lighting installed in Ballymena and Larne town centres by 30 September 2024.	
Status	This project remains on track for installation by 30 September 2024, pending the completion of electrical works.	
Measure 4	Additional funding application submitted to the Department for Communities by 30 September 2024.	
Status	A third application was submitted, and a Letter of Offer was received for £105,000, to provide 30-foot-high artificial Christmas trees within our three main towns. A further 2 funding applications are due to be submitted by autumn.	
Measure 5	25 businesses or groups utilising Pop-Up Shop opportunities by 31 March 2025.	
Status	So far, 14 groups have availed of the opportunity, with all shops booked across the summer. Amongst these groups was the Mid and East Antrim Community Advice Services (MEACAS) which operated for 5 weeks to deliver the School Uniform Scheme. More groups are scheduled from September, with a range of retailers commencing from October.	
Measure 6	15 events or activities held within Ballymena, Carrickfergus, and Larne town centres by 31 March 2025.	
Status	A range of events have taken place within our three main town centres, from our Easter events in April, to our Summer Splash Party in Larne in July, Summer Carnival in Ballymena, live music sessions, and markets in Carrickfergus.	
Outcome 4		Delivery of the Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme.
Measure 1	10 buildings of historical and architectural interest restored in Carrickfergus by 31 July 2024.	
Status	The tenth, and final property has experienced considerable delays in the drying of the internal plaster due to damp weather conditions, which has affected moisture levels within the stone walls. Dehumidifiers are in place to remove any remaining moisture. The project has received an extension until 31 October 2024.	
Measure 2	Increased floor space for retail, commercial or residential use in Carrickfergus by 31 July 2024.	
Status	This will be determined upon project completion.	
Measure 3	Closing event and publication issued on the Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative by 31 July 2024.	
Status	A closing event will take place and publication will be issued on the completion of the final property.	

What you'll see

Outcome 5	Locally led tourism.
Measure 1	Neighbourhood Tourism Scheme launched by 31 October 2024.
Status	The rollout of the scheme is now scheduled to take place between December 2024 and February 2025, in time for next year's tourism season. There are 6 Neighbourhood Tourism points agreed to date (Gracehill, Cullybackey, Broughshane, Portglenone, Carnlough and Whitehead).
Measure 2	3 local Neighbourhood Tourism participants by 31 March 2025.
Status	We are working with community organisations to identify local champions and secure buy-in.
Outcome 6	Achievement of our statutory Planning Service targets.
Measure 1	A processing time for major planning applications within an average of 30 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status	<p>From April 2023 to March 2024, the average time for the processing of major planning applications was 67.4 weeks, up from 47.6 weeks in 2022/23. This recent increase is primarily due to the prolonged review of an unusually complex application that, although now decided, has adversely impacted the average processing time for major applications.</p> <p>The average processing time across all Northern Ireland councils was 46.5 weeks. Only 3 councils met the 30-week target, with Mid and East Antrim Borough Council ranking ninth position.</p> <p>Verified data for April to June 2024 is not yet available and will be provided in the six-month update report.</p>
Measure 2	A processing time for local planning applications within an average of 15 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status	<p>From April 2023 to March 2024, the average time for the processing of local planning applications was 9.4 weeks, up from 8.6 weeks in 2022/23. The average processing time across all Northern Ireland councils was 20.8 weeks. Only 3 councils met the 15-week target, with Mid and East Antrim Borough Council achieving the shortest average processing time in 2023/24.</p> <p>Verified data for April to June 2024 is not yet available and will be provided in the six-month update report.</p>
Measure 3	At least 70% of enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks by 31 March 2025.
Status	<p>From April 2023 to March 2024, 87.3% of enforcement cases were concluded within 39 weeks, down from 89.5% in 2022/23. The average across all Northern Ireland councils was 76.4% in 2023/24, up from 74.2% in 2022/23, with 7 councils meeting the target last year. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council ranked third position.</p> <p>Verified data for April to June 2024 is not yet available and will be provided in the six-month update report.</p>



Planet

We will reduce our environmental impact and improve sustainability.

By:

- Moving towards cleaner energy and reducing our consumption.
- Delivering an effective and efficient Waste Management Service.
- Supporting biodiversity.
- Reaching environmental standards and targets.
- Sharing learning and best practice.

Who is responsible:

- Director of Community
- Interim Director of Operations



Why?

- The actions set out to achieve this objective align with the key priorities identified through public consultation. They demonstrate how the Council is leading by example, whilst also working to engage and educate on sustainability. They assist the development of the borough's electric vehicle charging network, they focus on providing an effective and efficient waste management service, and they demonstrate support for biodiversity within the borough.
- Our citizens identified help to reduce consumption, waste and litter, and awareness and assistance in tackling climate change as the two most important things the Council could do to be more environmentally friendly. Adopting environmentally sustainable transport ranked third and protecting plants and animals ranked fourth (MEABC Citizens Survey 2022).
- Measures to address climate change, environmental awareness, and the importance of respect for the local and natural environment, were points raised throughout the Community Planning Review (2022) consultation.
- The phase out date for the sale of new petrol and diesel cars is 2035.

What you'll see

Outcome 1		Energy-saving and clean energy projects within Council buildings.
Measure 1	6 energy-saving projects delivered by 31 March 2025.	
Status	LED lighting was installed at Sullatober Household Recycling Centre in May 2024. LED lighting will be installed at a further 5 Council-owned locations by 31 March 2025.	
Measure 2	4 clean-energy projects delivered by 31 March 2025.	
Status	New Solar PVs are due to be installed at 2 Council-owned locations by 31 March 2025. We also plan to fit 2 of our current installations with battery storage, supporting our journey to net zero.	
Measure 3	Approximately 77,000kg CO ₂ e savings by 31 March 2025 (lifecycle saving - 1.5m kg).	
Status	This data will be available in April 2025.	
Measure 4	Approximately £80,000 savings through energy projects by 31 March 2025 (lifecycle savings - £1.6m).	
Status	This data will be available in April 2025.	
Outcome 2		Expansion of electric vehicle chargepoints within the borough.
Measure 1	12 fast chargers procured through the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) by 30 September 2024.	
Status	The tender process is underway, and is on track to award the contract by the end of September 2024.	
Measure 2	Installation date for ORCS chargers confirmed by 31 March 2025.	
Status	The date of installation will be confirmed upon the award of contract.	
Measure 3	6 upgraded charge stations through ESB by 31 March 2025.	
Status	The 6 locations have been agreed and are on track for delivery by 31 March 2025.	
Outcome 3		Achievement of our statutory Waste Management targets.
Measure 1	At least 50% of household waste collected sent for recycling by 31 March 2025.	
Status	<p>From April 2023 to March 2024, 50.7% of household waste collected was sent for recycling. This is a reduction on last year's result of 51.4%, and below the Northern Ireland 2023/24 council average of 51.6%, with annual rates ranging from 60.9% to 41.1%. A downward trend has been noted across all local councils.</p> <p>We are taking a number of steps to positively influence recycling rates, such as working alongside the Waste Resources Action Programme to co-design and promote waste and recycling communications campaigns.</p> <p>Verified data for April to June 2024 is not yet available and will be provided in the six-month update report.</p>	

Outcome 3		Achievement of our statutory Waste Management targets.
Measure 2	A maximum of 16,387 tonnes of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill by 31 March 2025.	
Status	<p>From April 2023 to March 2024, the amount of biodegradable waste collected that was sent to landfill increased to 15,239 tonnes. This is up 4.7% from the previous year and is the fourth consecutive rise in the borough since 2019/20.</p> <p>To reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill, we operate organic and dry recycling kerbside collections, textile and wood disposal services, and deliver various communications campaigns throughout the year.</p> <p>Verified data for April to June 2024 is not yet available and will be provided in the six-month update report.</p>	
Measure 3	Less than 75,797 tonnes collected municipal waste arisings by 31 March 2025.	
Status	<p>From April 2023 to March 2024, at 74,824 tonnes, there was a modest increase in the volume of collected municipal waste arisings, representing a 1.9% rise from the previous year.</p> <p>We delivered a number of programmes to support local communities and promote re-use in 2023/24, such as the School Uniform Scheme, Christmas Toy Container Scheme, and more.</p> <p>Verified data for April to June 2024 is not yet available and will be provided in the six-month update report.</p>	
Outcome 4		Delivery of our Tree and Woodland Management Strategy.
Measure 1	5,000 trees planted within the borough by 31 March 2025.	
Status	Over 350,000 trees have been planted since April 2024, in partnership with Northern Ireland Water. The majority were planted at Woodburn Forest, and the remainder via a local community group and local primary schools.	
Outcome 5		Achievement of environmental targets and accreditations, where viable.
Measure 1	Re-certification of International Management Standard ISO14001 by 31 August 2024.	
Status	The external audit took place on 13 August 2024 and re-certification was obtained for another 3 years. No non-conformances or observations for improvement were identified.	
Measure 2	A minimum of Gold Status in the NI Benchmarking Survey by 30 November 2024.	
Status	The survey was submitted to Business in the Community in June 2024. The outcome is expected in November 2024.	

What you'll see

Outcome 5	Achievement of environmental targets and accreditations, where viable.
Measure 3	Gaps identified in the 2023 NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey addressed by 31 October 2024.
Status	<p>We have taken the following steps to address the gaps identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green House Gas emissions - We are working collaboratively with Climate Essential to manage and monitor carbon emissions, this will eventually include the measurement of Scope 3 emissions. • Energy - We are continuing to roll out energy efficient technologies, including LED lighting, solar PV projects, and an additional project initialising at ECOS in Ballymena to support the production of green hydrogen battery storage. • Recycling - We completed a review of internal recycling provision, with a view to introducing efficiency measures in collections. Recycling education is planned for 2024/25. • Climate Mitigation - We have developed and launched our Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2023-27, which includes 6 goals and 93 actions, across 6 key themes. We have embedded a more sustainable approach within our Procurement Policy, with an environmental weighting now included within tender reviews. • Biodiversity - We have progressed several biodiversity-related projects, including, the MEA Woodland Strategy, an Oyster Restoration Project, the planting of a carbon woodland at Carnfunnock Country Park, and plans to plant one million trees across the borough via the Climate Canopy Project.
Outcome 6	Opportunities to engage in environmental education programmes.
Measure 1	10 community engagement sessions held on Waste and Recycling, and Climate and Sustainability by 31 March 2025.
Status	We delivered 5 sessions to a range of community groups between April and June 2024.
Measure 2	Support for the Eco-Schools programme, with a 5% increase in the number of schools with Green Flags by 30 June 2025.
Status	As of June 2024, 26 schools had Green Flag status, our baseline for the upcoming year. An Eco-Schools Cluster information evening will take place in October 2024.
Measure 3	Delivery of 5 circular economy waste initiatives by 31 March 2025.
Status	<p>We aim to deliver 5 initiatives this year, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MEA School Uniform Scheme (ran during July and August 2024). • The MEA Christmas Toy Container Scheme (commencing October 2024). • A total of 5 Community Fridges (operational all year). • The Community RePaint Scheme (operational all year), with 1,250 litres given away from our main Household Recycling Centre sites from April to June 2024. • The Spectacle Re-use Scheme (commencing later in the year).



Get Involved

It is really important that Mid and East Antrim citizens' voices are heard, and that they have the opportunity to play their part in shaping local democracy.

We want your input, views and feedback as we continue our transformation, and as we work to deliver the very best public services, including waste collections, recycling, leisure services, business support, parks, funding, economic development, health and wellbeing, and much more.

We are committed to championing openness and transparency, and invite members of the public who live, work or study in the borough to put their questions directly to Elected Members and officers.

To submit a question to the Council, please complete the short form at:

midandeastantrim.gov.uk/publicquestions

Suggestions and comments on areas where we can enhance our services can also be submitted directly to the Performance and Improvement Team at any time throughout the year, via any of the following methods:

@: performance@midandeastantrim.gov.uk

☎: 0300 1245 000

✉: **Corporate Performance and Improvement Team**
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
1-29 Bridge Street
Ballymena
BT43 5EJ

Closing Remarks

I would like to reiterate our commitment to the understanding of local needs, and our enthusiasm for making improvements, where we can, to improve the quality of life for our ratepayers and our communities.

This commitment is laid out within our new Corporate Plan, and while our goals are ambitious, by working together, we will forge a future that reflects our shared values and ambitions, ensuring a prosperous and sustainable borough for the generations to come.

For those eager to stay informed and engaged with our efforts, I warmly encourage you to follow our journey via our social media channels, which offer a window into the transformative work we are carrying out across the borough.

For more detailed updates on our Improvement Objectives, I invite you to monitor our website for quarterly progress reports, which will allow you to see the tangible benefits of our actions.

The road ahead may present challenges, but please be assured, addressing the needs of the borough remains our highest priority.



Valerie Watts
Interim Chief Executive



HYDROGEN ACADEMY

Supporting a greener future through skills and training.



For further information contact us at:

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
1-29 Bridge Street
Ballymena
BT43 5EJ

Tel: 0300 1245 000

Email us at: enquiries@midandeastantrim.gov.uk

Visit our website: www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk

Feedback

We welcome your suggestions and comments on areas where we can enhance our services at any point throughout the year. Please feel free to reach out to us by emailing:

performance@midandeastantrim.gov.uk