

Report on	Proposed Performance Improvement Objectives for 2026-2027 and timeline for public consultation.
Date of Meeting	Thursday 5 th February 2026.
Reporting Officer	J Mc Guckin, Head of Strategic Services & Engagement
Contact Officer	L Jenkins, Corporate Performance & Quality Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To consider and agree the proposed improvement objectives for 2026/27 as set in compliance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (the Act) and timelines for the associated public consultation exercise.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>The 2014 Local Government Act places a general duty on the Council to “...<i>make arrangements to secure continuous improvement...</i>” in the exercise of its functions, hereby referred to as “The Act”. Section 85 of the Act requires a council, for each financial year, to set itself improvement objectives for improving the exercise of its functions and to have in place arrangements to achieve those objectives. Section 87 of the Act also outlines that a Council; in deciding how to discharge its duty under sections 84 and 85 of the Act, <u>must consult</u> with persons appearing to the Council, “<i>to be representative of:</i></p> <p><i>a); persons liable to pay rates in respect of hereditaments in the district; b) persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the council; and c) persons appearing to the council to have an interest in the district.</i></p>
2.2.	Each year the Council develops an annual Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), containing improvement objectives, associated activity, measures and outcomes for citizens and local communities. The PIP plan, to comply with the Act, must be published by the 30 th of June each year. The PIP plan also includes the statutory performance indicators and standards as outlined in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022, as well as Council’s “set by us” performance indicators (measures - contained in Council’s Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028).
2.3	The council previously approved three improvement objectives at its February meeting in 2025 (outlined below in table one), which were then incorporated into two-year corporate improvement projects. The improvement objectives and associated improvement projects were structured as a two-year performance

improvement initiative (led by Senior Responsible Officers i.e. Assistant Directors and Heads of Service). The improvement initiative has planned activities, measures and outcomes over the two years, i.e. spanning 2025/2026 to 2026/2027.

Table One - Improvement Objectives 2025 - 2026 to 2026 - 2027

Proposed Improvement Objectives	
1.	Enhance the experience of our customers by working to embed a culture which puts them at the centre of how services are offered and accessed. Ensuring Council services are accessible, efficient and responsive to the needs of communities across our District.
2.	Provide diverse opportunities for children and *young people to access inclusive and engaging activities that promote skills development, physical health and well-being, encourages creativity and supports active community participation”.
3.	Achieve a reduction in Council’s carbon emissions through implementation of our Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan

**The United Nations defines young people as those aged 15 – 24 years*

2.4 A light touch review was commenced in November 2025 regarding the current improvement objectives and associated PIP plan to ensure their continued relevance/viability moving forward into 2026/27. Appendix One details the draft Corporate Improvement Objectives for 2026-2027, together with a section entitled “Why are we doing it?” i.e. the rationale. Each improvement objective has an assigned Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), along with a project team, who develop and embed a body of work to deliver improvement outcomes for citizens, specific to the improvement objectives. The current improvement objectives are also aligned with Council’s current Corporate Plan (2024 – 2028) and the Community plan.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Communities to Councils on taking forward the general duty on improvement, requires that the council consult on a yearly basis on their improvement objectives. This requirement on consultation falls from section 87 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

3.2	<p>There is no statutory duty to consult on the improvement plan, but rather the improvement objectives. Three new improvement objectives have been proposed for a two-year period from 2025 - 2026 to 2026 - 2027. Each improvement objective and their assigned SRO will conduct a review at the end of 2026 to ensure that the improvement objectives and associated milestones and activities are still relevant.</p> <p>A report on the delivery of the current three improvement objectives (2025 to 2026 – that is a retrospective report), detailing the key performance outcomes will be provided in September 2026, (that is within Council’s Annual Assessment Report).</p>
3.3	<p><u>Consultation on new Draft Improvement Objectives and Development of Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) 2025/26 to 2026/27 - Year Two.</u></p> <p>It is recommended that arrangements to consult on the Improvement Objectives, as referred to in section 2.3 above, commence following the Policy & Resources Committee and Council meetings In February.</p> <p>The following is an outline timeline for the consultation and development of the Council’s 2025-26 and 2026-27 Performance Improvement Plan (PIP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council’s Improvement Objectives Consultation to run from Friday 27th February to Friday 24th April 2025 at 12:00 (Midday). • Outcomes Report on the Consultation considered by May P&R Committee • Draft Performance Improvement Plan (2025-2026 to 2026-27 - Year Two) to be considered at June P&R Committee
4.0	<p>Other Considerations</p>
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: N/A</p> <p>Human: N/A</p> <p>Risk Management: In order to comply with Section 85 of Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 (The Act). The legislation requires a council, for each financial year, to set itself improvement objectives for improving the exercise of its functions and to have in place arrangements to achieve those objectives. Section 87 of the Act also outlines that a Council; in deciding how to discharge its duty under sections 84 and 85 of the Act. <u>must consult</u> with persons appearing to the Council, “<i>to be representative of:</i></p> <p><i>a); persons liable to pay rates in respect of hereditaments in the district; b) persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the council; and c) persons appearing to the council to have an interest in the district</i></p>
4.2	<p><u>Screening & Impact Statements</u></p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A</p>

	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That members consider and approve the three improvement objectives for 2026 - 2027 and the initiation of consultation together with associated timelines.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix One – Rationale for Corporate Improvement Objectives 2025-2026 to 2026-2027