



Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

FOR INFORMATION

2021/22 Performance Improvement Objectives 6-month update	23 November 2021
Corporate Policy and Resources Committee	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Improvement and Innovation
Outcome	Council maintains its performance as the most efficient of NI's local authorities
Lead Officer	Head of Performance
Cost: (If applicable)	Costs allowed for within the annual budget

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Elected Members for information a mid year update on performance against the Council's 2021/22 Performance Improvement Objectives.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014, Part 12, sets out the key responsibilities that each Council has in relation to the Performance Duty. One of these key responsibilities is to publish and then report against a set of annual Performance Improvement Objectives.

2.2 The 2021/22 Performance Improvement Objectives were set as part of the 2021/22 Performance Improvement Plan that was agreed by Council in June 2021 and a mid year update on their progress is included below.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Members are asked to note this update and to seek any further clarity if required.

2021/22 Performance Improvement Objective 1

We will lower staff absenteeism rates

Senior Responsible Officer

Director of Corporate Services

Why has this objective been chosen?

Successful delivery of Council services is reliant on our staff who are our most important asset. A full staffing compliment with improved attendance rates will increase the Council's ability to deliver services and implement its arrangement for improving performance and achieving Financial savings.

The health and well-being of our staff/workforce, is of the utmost importance to us. Ensuring high performance is inextricably linked to the well-being of our staff. An audit in this context is required to measure our strategic effectiveness and service quality.

During 2020/21 the quarterly reporting of the Council's Absenteeism Dashboard has demonstrated that long term sickness and the average days lost per employee across the Council are improving.

Whilst improvements have been made in 2020/21, the senior Council Officers still see absenteeism as an important issue for them, and would like to see continued improvements going forward.

As 2020/21 has not been a usual year due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, the sickness figures from the previous year (2019/20 actuals) will be used as a baseline to report against.

Outputs (The things that we will do in 2021/22)

- Work with stakeholders to identify and agree further measures to support employees such as access to private Health Care, access to specific treatments, health insurance etc by December 2021.
- Identify and implement improvements with the Occupational Health Provider to improve the service provided to employees.
- We will oversee an improved focus on the health and wellbeing of our staff by offering more education and opportunities for mental and physical activity. This will include a new programme of regional activities and education including for example Mental Health Week, walking challenges More focus on Mental Health activities and education

Outcomes (The measurable differences made)

- A 2.75% reduction in the number of days lost to Council through long term sickness (**9,382.64 days in 2019/20**, and 6,128.20 days in 2020/21)
- A 2.5% reduction in the average number of days lost per employee through sickness absenteeism (**17.66 days per employee in 2019/20**, and 11.41 in 2020/21)
- 150 staff members will take part in the Council's mental and physical wellbeing activities and events

Outputs and Outcomes - Update for April-September 2021

	12 months ending 30/09/19	Reduction target against same period last year	12 months ending 30/09/21	On Target/ Not On Target
Average number of days lost per employee through sickness absenteeism	7.97	7.77 (2.75% target)	7.38 (7.38% reduction)	On Target
Number of Days lost to Council through long term sickness	4,447.25	4,324.95 (2.5% target)	654.09 (14.71% reduction)	On Target
Average time for an Occupational Health Review (We will maintain the average time for an Occupational health Review from 4 weeks to 2)	4 weeks	2 weeks (from 4 weeks to 2 weeks)	2 weeks	On Target
150 Staff members engaging in Council's wellbeing activities			470*	Achieved

*93 participants involved in the Councils Walking Challenges / a further 6 employees have joined the Councils Gyms / 371 staff completed Online Mental Health Courses

2021/22 Performance Improvement Objective 2

We will improve and drive inclusive economic growth across the Borough through the Growth Deal

Senior Responsible Officer

Director Leisure and Development

Why has this objective been chosen?

The Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal is regarded by Council as one of the most important and tangible drivers for delivering improvements across the Borough.

Growth Deals are models of economic growth which provide regions with the opportunity to:

- Take charge and responsibility of decisions that affect their area.
- Do what they think is best to help businesses grow.
- Identify priorities for economic growth in the region.
- Decide how funding should be spent to meet those priorities.

Council has committed to a Growth Deal to deliver upon each of the key priorities identified above. Specifically, our Growth Deal will help grow our local economy over the next 5-10 years across six key themes/sectors i.e. Innovation; Tourism and Regeneration; Infrastructure; Employability and Skills; Digital Connectivity; and Energy/ Green Economy.

Outputs (The things that we will do in 2021/22)

- Agree and prioritise shortlist of Growth Deal projects to be carried forward for further assessment.
- Strategic Outline Cases developed and signed-off by lead NI Department.
- Confirm strong local / private sector partnership and investment.
- Funding and Governance arrangements agreed.
- Signing of the Heads of Terms.

Outputs – Update for April-September 2021

- Council agreed Growth Deal key themes and projects.
- Council agreed Governance Framework and roles and responsibilities.
- Council establish Growth Deal Programme Management Office.
- Funding applications submitted to alternative funding sources to support Growth Deal Projects i.e. Levelling Up Fund; Complementary Fund; and UK Community Partnership Fund.

Outcomes (The measurable differences made)

- Maximum 14 Growth Deal projects to be prioritised for further assessment by May 2021.

- Maximum 14 Strategic Outline Cases signed-off by lead NI Department in 2021/22.
- Funding and Governance arrangements agreed in 2021/22.
- Re-assess the proposed projects based on the SOCs by 31st March 2022.

Outputs – Update for April-September 2021

- May 2021 - Full Council agreed six key themes and 14 projects.
- September 2021 - the Council agreed Governance Framework and roles and responsibilities (pre-Heads of Terms).
- September 2021 – the Growth Deal Programme Management Office established.
- Five SoCs currently under development

2021/22 Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will introduce a robust arrangement for engaging with our citizens

Senior Responsible Officer

Head of Performance

Why has this objective been chosen?

This Improvement Objective is a rollover from the previous Performance Improvement Plan, as the restrictions put in place due to the Covid-19 pandemic seriously affected our ability to proceed with engagement in the form that we had planned. However, the core reasons for wanting to pursue such an Objective remain, so Council has committed to completing this work and delivering this improvement within the 2021/22 reporting year.

Critical self-analysis has identified that Council requires a more innovative and direct engagement relationship with citizens and rates payers

In order for Council to fully understand the impact of its service delivery, for Council to understand where it needs to improve, and for Council to receive consistent and accurate feedback on how it performs, it is key that we develop the arrangements that we have for engaging with our citizens.

Direction from the NIAO audit of arrangements for Performance Improvement highlighted that Council was lacking in defined, representative and statistically accurate arrangements for gathering the views and opinions of the citizens of the Borough

Outputs (The things that we will do in 2019/20)

- We will work with internal and external partners to conduct a Citizen's Survey which will be open to every household in Causeway Coast and Glens
- We will create a survey for Causeway Coast and Glens that will include key questions and measures on the services we provide, the perceptions of our citizens and indicators that are demonstrative of how we are delivering for our citizens.
- We will report to Council and to our citizens with the full outcomes of this consultation exercise

Outcomes (The measurable differences made)

- We will receive Citizen's survey response from at least 2000 households across the Borough
- We will publish the findings of the first Causeway Coast and Glens Citizen's Survey

Outputs and Outcomes – Update for April-November 2021

- As of August 2021, the scope, method, questions and format had been agreed.
- Party leads and senior managers have had input into this development
- PR and Communications Plan for Citizens survey beginning to be rolled out
- Leaflets will be delivered to every household, to all citizens, asking them to take part before the end of November 2021. Delivered by Royal Mail.
- The logistical rollout of this exercise has taken slightly longer than originally planned, but Council is very confident that the process will be completed and reported to Members before the end of this Business Year in March 2022

2021/22 Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will develop and embed improvements to Council's Performance Improvement and Business Planning processes

Senior Responsible Officer

Head of Performance

Why has this objective been chosen?

Council has been working over the past 2-3 years to develop and grow a culture of Performance, Improvement and Reporting within its corporate structures. This has been acknowledged by both Internal Audit and the annual NIAO Performance Audit. However, there has been still some distance to travel, and indeed many of the recommendations and areas for improvement made within Audits have been focused on the following themes:

- Business Planning – Date of approval within financial year, regularity of update reporting, quality of indicators and outcomes included
- Benchmarking – low levels of Benchmarking performance against other Local Authorities
- Lack of coordinated, accessible, digital Performance Management software
- Requirement for an updated Performance Improvement Policy and the creation of an agreed and documented Performance Improvement Cycle for Council.

This Objective has therefore been chosen to ensure prominence is given to addressing these issues highlighted above and to bring the clear improvements that they will present.

Outputs (The things that we will do in 2021/22)

- Deliver improved Directorate Business Plans to Council
- Complete our first full year as a contributing member of the APSE led National Performance Benchmarking Network
- Design, develop, and rollout a new Performance Management Software solution for Council called "**Perform**".
- Develop and deliver an agreed and combined documented Performance Improvement Cycle and Policy for Council
- Assess training needs of staff and Elected Members in relation to the Council's Performance Improvement Cycle, and then provide said training

Outcomes (The measurable differences made)

- Deliver 2021/22 Directorate specific Business Plans to Council, containing key indicators, outcomes and budgetary targets, by end May 2021
- Provide a mid year update on progress against Business Plan targets to Council Committee by end December 2021

- Contribute a full batch of 2020/21 performance related data to the APSE Performance Benchmarking portal by July 2021, as well as a further refined contribution for the “second batch data capture” exercise in February 2022.
- Complete the build and population of the Perform software solution for the year 2021/22 by end July 2021
- Use Perform to collate data and issue reports for Business Plan updates in December 2021 and to collate data and issue reports for APSE Indicators return in January 2022
- A new Performance Improvement Cycle and Policy Document to be agreed by Council by September 2021.

Outcomes and Outputs – Update for April-November 2021

- Performance related updates provided to Committee in April, May and September and November 2021

National Performance Benchmarking

- All requirements and data submissions where met for the July 2021 APSE submission deadline.
- Benchmarking outcomes following this process were included within Council’s Performance Self-Evaluation document for 2020/21 and outcomes have been reported to CPR Committee in September 2021
- Analysis under way to determine the extent to which Council will be taking part in the 2nd batch of APSE data submission in January 2022, mainly as a result of Council’s successful data submission in July 2021

Business Planning

- All Service and Directorate Business Plans where completed and approved within the first 2 months of the business year
- Services are working towards 6 month reporting of their Business Plan targets to their Committees before the end of 2021 with Environmental Services and Corporate Services submitting updates to Committee in November 2021

Perform

- Development and population of Perform 21/22 has been completed for 2021/22 APSE indicators and 2021/22 Service Business Plan indicators.
- PERFORM system is almost ready for Services to utilise for performance reporting in tandem with Committee reporting. Lessons continue to be learned in terms of development, management and updating of the system.
- Council still awaits the outcome of review/update of Performance Improvement legislation and Performance Duty responsibilities before progressing work on an update Performance Improvement Policy.

2021/22 Performance Improvement Objective 5

We will improve the environment in which we live by continuing to develop and improve our approaches to, and processes for, managing the removal and recycling of waste from our homes and streets.

Senior Responsible Officer

Director Environmental Services

Why has this objective been chosen?

The year 2020/21 has reminded us all just how important our waste disposal and recycling functions are. In the face of Covid-19 most areas of our business were closed or significantly reduced, but Council's Operations Team continued their vital work lifting bins, cleansing streets and processing waste. Such a vital service needs to be continually developed and new ideas considered to help maintain its strong performance.

2021 is very likely to be the year of "staycations", Council's statutory environmental commitments, as well as newly agreed Corporate Strategy strategic priority of - Climate Change and Our Environment - all further set the rationale for such an Improvement Objective.

Outputs (The things that we will do in 2021/22)

Increased visibility of advice and information for citizens and visitors with regards to litter and recycling.

Conduct a trial of an 80 Litre black bin (residual) (one day collection). This will trial the potential replacement of the standard 240 litre black bin and aims to increase blue and brown bin recycling.

Council will contribute to the Northern Ireland Waste from Households statutory recycling targets of 50%

Council will introduce the Community Environmental Grant Programme for Community Groups. Applications will focus on waste reduction/reuse, energy saving and sustainability.

Implement a programme aimed at responsible dog ownership to reduce littering and dog fouling.

Outcomes (The measurable differences made)

- Deliver Community Environmental Grant Programme with a Total grant funding pot of £10,500 available and a Maximum grant of £500 available per application.
- Council will aim to exceed its previous performance of 50% in terms of its Statutory Recycling targets

- Trial a 180 Litre black bin (residual) for circa 700 houses
- Reduce number of dog fouling and litter complaints by 15%
- 5% of all dog licence holders to sign up to responsible dog ownership scheme in first year of implementation.

Outputs and Outcomes – Update for April-September 2021

- Consultation ongoing between DAERA and Councils on future waste collection systems
- “Towards a LitterSmart Borough”, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council’s Litter Strategy 2021 to 2025 has been agreed in draft form and now is open to a 12 week public consultation period.
- Statutory Recycling target of 50% rate has been exceeded
- Community Environmental Grant Programme successfully launched
- Responsible dog walker scheme was launched in April 2021 with associated press releases and the creation of a new webpage on the Council website which allowed applicants to join the scheme and receive their Green Dog Walker pack containing a branded dog lead and collar, four bags and a mini torch. The scheme has been very popular among the public with 712 dog owners signing up for the scheme. 690 Green Dog Walker packs have been sent out to those who joined up and Council continues to work through the applications to provide packs.
- Fouling complaints down 13% or previous years
- A new litter enforcement service, working with private contractors commenced 2nd August 2021. In the first month of this new service 749 fixed penalty notices were issued for litter offences.