

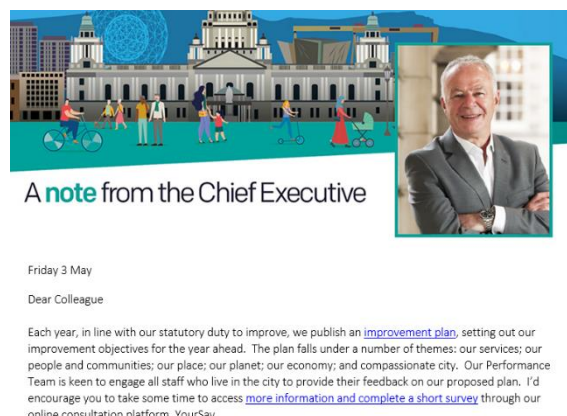
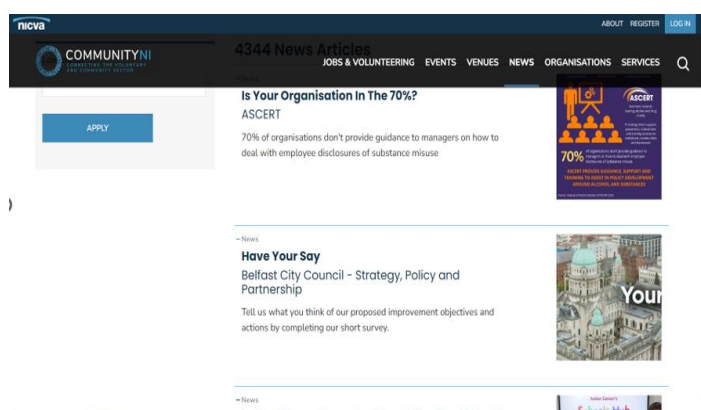
Appendix 2:

Draft Consultation Feedback Report: Performance Improvement Objectives 2024-25

Introduction

The eight-week public consultation period in relation to the Performance Improvement Plan 2024-25 ran between 9th April – 4th June 2024 via Council's YourSay engagement platform. In total, **92 individuals responded to the consultation**, a notable increase from a total of 40 respondents in 2023-24.

The public consultation was promoted using a range of communication methods including social media posts, posters in community buildings, email marketing to existing mailing lists, newsletters, news articles, staff memos, intranet promotion and websites, some of which are detailed below:



Respondent Profile

In total, 92 responses to the Performance Improvement Plan 2024/25 were received, all of which were from individuals / residents (no external organisations responded). Of those that responded:

- 56% were male, 43% were female and 1% preferred to use a different description.
- 39% were aged 40-54 years old, 25% aged 25-29, 18% aged 55-64, 13% aged 18-24 and 5% aged 65+. Notably no young people aged less than 18 years old responded to the consultation.
- 75% of respondents reside across Belfast with the remaining 25% residing in other areas outside of the city.

Support for improvement objectives

81%

strongly agreed or agreed with the 'Our services' improvement objective

89%

strongly agreed or agreed with the 'Our people and communities' improvement objective

83%

strongly agreed or agreed with the 'Our place' improvement objective

77%

strongly agreed or agreed with the 'Our planet' improvement objective

76%

strongly agreed or agreed with the 'Our economy' improvement objective

85%

strongly agreed or agreed with the 'Compassionate city' improvement objective

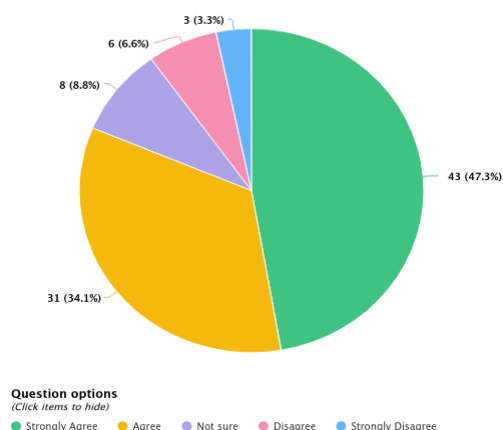
The charts below provide more detail in relation to the support for each improvement objective.

Improvement Objective 1

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following objective:

Our Services: We will continue to adapt and improve our services to better meet the needs of our residents and stakeholders.

- 81.4% strongly agreed or agreed with this proposed improvement objective;
- 8.8% were unsure about this proposed improvement objective and;
- 9.9% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the proposed improvement objective.

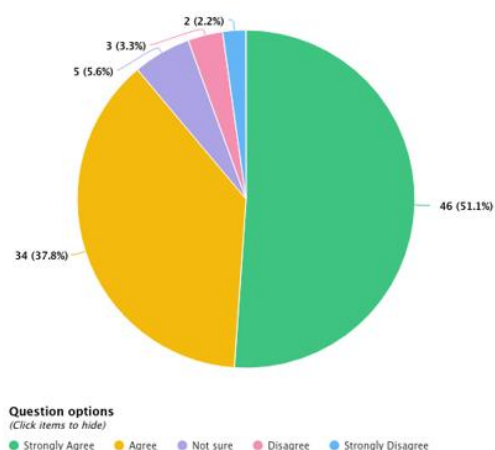


Improvement Objective 2

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following objective:

Our People and Communities: We will improve our local areas and support our residents to become healthier, engaged and more resilient.

- 88.9% strongly agreed or agreed with this proposed improvement objective;
- 5.6% were unsure about this proposed improvement objective and;
- 5.5% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the proposed improvement objective.

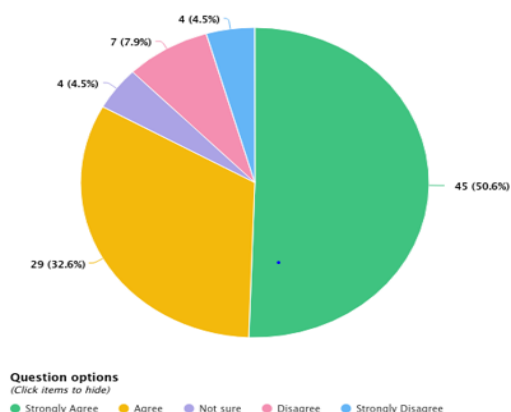


Improvement Objective 3

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following objective:

Our Place: We will create a more vibrant, attractive and connected city.

- 83.2% strongly agreed or agreed with this proposed improvement objective;
- 4.5% were unsure about this proposed improvement objective and;
- 12.4% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the proposed improvement objective.

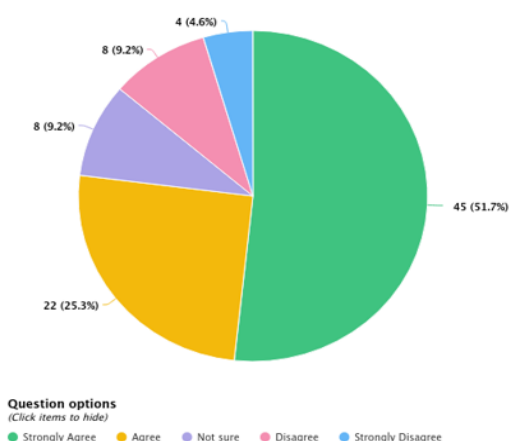


Improvement Objective 4

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following objective:

Our Planet: We will champion climate action; protect the environment and improve the sustainability of Belfast.

- 77% strongly agreed or agreed with this proposed improvement objective;
- 9.2% were unsure about this proposed improvement objective and;
- 13.8% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the proposed improvement objective.

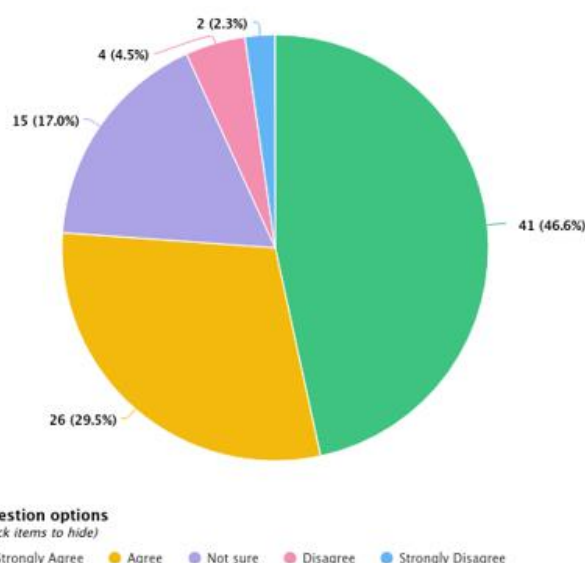


Improvement Objective 5

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following objective:

Our Economy: We will stimulate inclusive growth and innovation, help businesses to start-up and grow and create more and better opportunities for jobs and employment.

- 76.1% strongly agreed or agreed with this proposed improvement objective;
- 17% were unsure about this proposed improvement objective and;
- 6.8% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the proposed improvement objective.

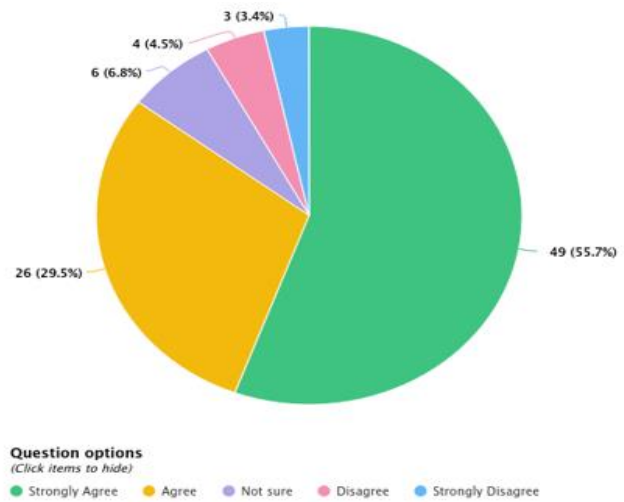


Improvement Objective 6

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following objective:

Compassionate City: We will support our residents through the cost-of-living crisis.

- 85.2% strongly agreed / agreed with this proposed improvement objective
- 6.8% were unsure about this proposed improvement objective and;
- 7.9% strongly disagreed / disagreed with the proposed improvement objective.



Key issues or improvements for consideration

Respondents were asked to identify key issues or improvements that they felt should be considered in relation to the draft 2024-25 improvement objectives and actions. For ease of reading a generic and thematic summary of the qualitative feedback is presented below, including a council response and action on how the proposed suggestions will be taken forward by council.

Consideration	Feedback received	Council response and action
<p>Generic feedback – rewording and use of simple and clear language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various suggestions for rewording and more detail to help clarify or emphasise the objectives and proposed actions to make it clear on how we would achieve our proposed improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted and agreed. • Action: Wording amendments made and some realignment of objectives to provide clarity, improve emphasis of what we want to achieve and the ability to achieve the objectives – using simple and clear language. The actions (what we will do) in the draft performance improvement plan have been updated to set out clearly what we intend to do and why we are doing it to ensure that all stakeholders are better informed around our intended delivery to achieve objectives. Measures of success have also been included which state clearly how we measure our performance and impact in 2025. The measures of success either include what performance targets will be achieved and what actions will be delivered by 2025.
<p>Enhanced active travel infrastructure and opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrianisation of York Street that runs between Ulster University campus. • Improvement to existing and creation of additional safe cycle routes throughout Greater Belfast area. • Prevention of free day long roadside parking for motorists within Greater Belfast area - short-term parking only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted. • Action: Where suggestions do not fall or have not been considered within the scope of the improvement plan, they will be considered by the appropriate Chief Officer, Department or Service and if applicable may be supported through the implementation of other existing plans and policies. Some of the suggestions are already being supported through the implementation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote public transport and encourage shared versus individual travel options. • An active travel plan. Active travel has regressed from development to "engagement" and "awareness". • Greater pedestrianisation and a reclaiming of the streets to meet a changed, post-Covid landscape. • Clampdown on double-yellows, cycle lane parking, abuse by party bikes etc. • More cycling infrastructure and dedicated cyclist lanes. 	<p>of existing or emerging strategies and plans, such as the Belfast Agenda 2024-28 being delivered collaboratively with partners and the Belfast Local Development Plan.</p>
<p>City centre improvements/ interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted plan for Royal Avenue, Belfast - make it safe, clean and lively. • Please keep 2 Royal Avenue in its current form as shared civic space. • Resolve the looming crisis from Belfast's abundance of vacant office sites, most of which occupy upper floors for buildings with ground floor occupancy. • Street begging feels like it has increased, but I understand that this is complex and multi-agency related. The anti-abortion people and preachers in front of city hall are also off putting. If you could do anything about that it would be amazing. Not easy though. • Need for city centre greenery, requirement to adapt to city centres as service-heavy attractors as opposed to status quo of inherent gravity via office work. • There is a requirement to address the homeless on our streets, if we can place the homeless in accommodation during covid we should be able to assist now. • Support for the city centre as it is becoming more and more dangerous, and uncomfortable to be in the city centre even during the day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted. • Action: Where suggestions do not fall or have not been considered within the scope of the improvement plan, they will be considered by the appropriate Chief Officer, Department or Service for consideration and if applicable may be supported through the implementation of existing plans and policies. Some of the suggestions are already being supported through the implementation of existing or emerging strategies and plans, such as the Belfast Local Development Plan, Belfast Agenda 2024-28 and A Bolder Vision Strategy being delivered collaboratively with partners.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large amounts of vacancy is impacting the look and feel of the city centre. The VCSE sector and arts sectors can support changing this. • Knock on effect of homelessness is off-putting for people who wish to visit the city centre. There is a massive drug usage problem in the city centre which reduces the amount of people willing to go in. • More flexible and dynamic rates system for city centre properties to encourage better utilisation - lower rates for independent businesses and encouraging the use of under-utilised upper floors above ground floor retail/commercial units for the purposes of accommodation. • Rates need to be increased on dereliction not removed. The Council also needs to enforce legislation in relation to maintenance of listed buildings. • Address the battery powered amplification in the city centre and speakers on the outside of businesses. The sound of a city is just as important as how it looks. 	
Focus on key services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council should stick to the areas that it has responsibility. Focus on keeping our streets and parks free from litter, lifting our waste on time etc. • Cleaning of streetscapes to continue to improve, particularly around the city centre. • A more thorough review of the customer focus programme as it has failed to deliver on a number of objectives. • Services are councils' bread and butter issues (improving customer experience, planning, waste collection, street cleansing, etc.). The fact council has highlighted its own shortcomings as issues is commendable, but these should have been dealt with years ago. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted. • Proposed action: Where suggestions do not fall or have not been considered within the scope of the improvement plan, they will be considered by the appropriate Chief Officer, Department or Service for consideration and if applicable may be supported through the implementation of existing plans and policies. An additional action has been added to include the development of an improvement plan for parks and open spaces to create a standardised approach to monitor internal quality and operational standards.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street Cleansing a big problem. Belfast has never been in a worse state, the streets are filthy with dirt and rubbish. 	
Climate interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get serious about decarbonising the energy Belfast consumes as a city. Find out what this is, have a targeted, costed plan for generating it. • Put in place ground source heating schemes and district heating schemes in all new developments and retrofit existing buildings. Invest in wind and solar power for the city. • Truly make the economy inclusive by Investing in community energy, making sure low-income homes have access to free, emission free, renewable energy generation. (See https://www.power.film/home) • Needs to be a push on domestic recycling, not just through recycling centres and promotion of recycling and waste reduction to schools, community groups and households. • More focus on waste reduction and educational elements in this direction. • More affirmative action on the climate - not just summarising what everyone else in the organisation is doing in relation to it. Waste is a large part of action on the climate in terms of outcomes. • Transition to renewable energy and the subsidisation of green technologies such as heat pumps, solar panels, and EVs. • Cities, towns and villages are for people not planet polluting motors. Pedestrians and cyclists should be prioritised over motorists (especially single occupancy motors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted. • Action: Where suggestions do not fall or have not been considered within the scope of the improvement plan, they will be considered by the appropriate Chief Officer, Department or Service for consideration and if applicable may be supported through the implementation of existing plans and policies. Some of the suggestions are already being supported through the implementation of existing or emerging strategies and plans, such as the Belfast Agenda 2024-28 being delivered collaboratively with partners and the Belfast Local Development Plan. Additional delivery actions have been added to the improvement plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop an evidence base to enable a cost-effective transition to net-zero by commencing the delivery of the Belfast Local Area Energy Plan. ○ Promote access to sustainable and healthy food for all through the development of a sustainable food strategy. ○ Promote and educate young people on the reduce, reuse and recycle message to improve environmental awareness on waste management.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with QUB to study the potential and invest in research on sustainable battery storage. 	
Economic growth and circular economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support young people, especially those who are disengaged with schools, or at risk of becoming NEET. • To tackle embedded structural issues and economic inactivity engagement and supports are required especially in those areas experiencing disadvantage to address cyclical and embedded challenges especially around economic inactivity and health inequalities and educational attainment. • Provide proper financial support for the disadvantaged to create social businesses, not just endless advice. • The economy section should include promoting the circular economy for a more sustainable economy, not just growing the economy, which can conflict with other objectives such as tackling climate change. • Better support for businesses in specialised areas. Belfast is marketing itself as a digital city but the Council could also do more in the area of Cyber security to help small business plan and respond to Cyber incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted. • Action: Where suggestions do not fall or have not been considered within the scope of the improvement plan, they will be considered by the appropriate Chief Officer, Department or Service for consideration and if applicable may be supported through the implementation of existing plans and policies. Some of the suggestions are already being supported through the implementation of existing or emerging strategies and plans, such as the Belfast Agenda 2024-28.
Greater support for VCSE organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As well as delivering advice services to the residents of Belfast, to provide funding and grants to individuals would be an ideal world. • Provide funding and support to community-based advice services across the city. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted. • Action: Where suggestions do not fall or have not been considered within the scope of the improvement plan, they will be considered by the appropriate Chief Officer, Department or Service for consideration and if applicable may be supported through the implementation of existing plans and policies. Some of the suggestions are already being supported through existing plans or structures in place including the Belfast Community Planning Partnership governance structure through the VCSE panel.