



Antrim Borough Council Annual Report 2010 - 2011

This Annual Report 2010 - 2011 highlights the key achievements of Antrim Borough Council as it continues working to improve the quality of life of its residents and ratepayers by fulfilling its vision to make the Borough of Antrim:

'An attractive, outward looking place, where people enjoy an enriched quality of life and increasingly want to live, work, visit and invest'.

In pursuing this vision, the Council identified four key themes within which it would work. Our primary purpose is to serve the people (**Community**), within the boundaries of our Borough (**Environment**) and promote and develop our physical, financial and people resources (**Economy**). The fourth key theme is to ensure that our services and those of other public bodies are delivered efficiently, effectively, and economically (**Excellence**). These themes are used in the Annual Report as headlines for the Council's key achievements during 2010 - 2011.

'Our aim therefore is to position the Council more firmly at the centre of its community...'
(Corporate Plan 2006 - 2010)

In addition to our four themes, we are guided in all that we do by the Council's values – **Respect, Integrity, Innovation** and **Responsibility**.



Corporate Theme - Community

Priorities	Comment
Improved Community Safety (DPP/CSP alignment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued active role in the Borough anti-social behaviour forum. Home safety checks carried out for the under 5s and over 65s supported by provision of free home safety equipment. Successful collaboration across sections & other public sector partners to run BEAT (Be Educated Be Active Be Together) Programme involving young people at risk over summer months. External funding secured for Community Safety Wardens pilot which is proving very successful.
Improved Community Cohesiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding secured for CEET (Communities Engaged & Empowered for Tomorrow) Programme & appointment of Engagement, Integration and Diversity Officer. 1st Fairtrade Borough in Northern Ireland. Fuel poverty interventions e.g. referrals for assistance with installation of efficient heating systems & insulation. Implementation of the Active Communities Programme with external funding awarded to the value of approximately £1m.

Corporate Theme - Economy

Priorities	Comment
GROW Rural Development Programme (Approximately £8m awarded across three Council areas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 rural projects were assisted in Antrim Borough. • £978,928 of grants were awarded to these projects. (Business Start-up, Tourism, Basic Services, Heritage and Farm Diversification Projects).
Increase visitor numbers (events, capital, caravan park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50,000 people attended events within the Borough. • Number of bed nights and local spend increased through events e.g. Athletics, Netball and Ulster Rally. • 1,748 people visited the Loughshore Caravan Park generating income of £82.5k. • Sustainable Tourism Programme (eco-tourism charter) - 1st of its kind in NI with nine accommodation providers involved.
Regeneration of towns and villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Public realm scheme – Crumlin (£500k) commenced. • Toome Village Masterplan completed. • Village Plans commenced for Templepatrick and Parkgate.



Corporate Theme - Environment

Priorities	Comment
Waste Management / Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retained ISO 14001 Environmental Management System status in Environmental Services Department, now being rolled out Council-wide. Our year on year increasing recycling means that we won't incur heavy European fines (Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS)). Will meet NILAS target with 30%-35% spare capacity, therefore no fines. Food waste collection service rolled out to entire Borough (additional 4,500 properties). Recycling rate has plateaued at approximately 50% pending implementation of Residual Waste Treatment (RWT) contract. Continue our education programme on recycling with local businesses.
Improved Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plan to embed a strong and visible safety culture was effectively implemented in partnership with managers and employees - this included an new Inspection and Audit Schedule (40 audits from June – December 2010) and supervisors have also been carrying out random audits. New electronic Risk Management System introduced and all Risk Assessments have been inputted to the system from manual records. Reduction in reported accidents from 168 in 2009 to 150 in 2010. Safety Audit of all parks equipment completed. The Management Plan for Control of Contractors implemented. Risk based programmes of inspection (food, health and safety at work) supported by education initiatives and law enforcement including litigation. Food Hygiene Rating System for business has been introduced and ratings made public (Scores on Doors).
Improved Health & Well-being (internal/external)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absenteeism reduced to 7.2 average days per employee (target was 8.5 days per employee – was 12.9 average days per employee in 2009). Comprehensive Well-being Programme delivered including monthly initiatives and the introduction of an Occupational Health Nurse service (to support reduction in absenteeism). Best Practice Event on 29 September 2010 for local businesses in the Borough to showcase various case studies in health and well-being. (Opened by Minister for Finance). Council Carbon emissions CO2 down 15% in 2010 / 2011.

Corporate Theme - Environment

Priorities	Comment
<p>Capital Projects: Antrim Forum, Castle Gardens, Play Areas, Court House, Environmental Improve Schemes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 projects managed in last year (Total value £28m): • £4m projects completed. • £7m at construction stage. • £17m at inception / planning stage. • Muckamore and Stiles Way Play Areas completed (£900k). • John Street Play Area completed (£450k). • Crumlin Environmental Improvement Scheme substantially complete (£526k). • Antrim Castle Gardens commenced (£5.8m). • Antrim Forum Health Suite commenced (£650k). • Hamlet signage commenced (£12k). • Crumlin and Allen Park developments – planning stage commenced (£10m). • Courthouse completed and first year of operation almost complete – bringing the town centre to life both during the day and at night through increased visitors to our shop, café and theatre.
<p>Meeting Legislative requirements & adding value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality monitoring and improvements achieved. • Assessment of business and issue of pollution prevention and control permits where appropriate. • Leading multi-agency teams with respect to licensing large outdoor events. • Conducting legal cases successfully (noise, licensing). • Inspection targets achieved re high risk food premises. • Building Control team extended their data collection work with Land and Property Services (LPS) during the last year to include extensions & alterations and providing up-to-date information on commercial properties to support and improve Council's financial standing.



Corporate Theme - Excellence

Priorities	Comment
<p>High Quality Services (joined up working)</p>	<p>Collaborative Procurement exercises undertaken to ensure better value for money (vfm) e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arc21 (various contracts) • Legal Services • Print • Insurance <p>Collaborative Service Delivery e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Partnership for Physical Activity • Active Communities Programme (£1m) • Rural Development • Shared HR service delivery • Direct involvement in HR Collaborative Working Groups & Local Government People Strategy in line with Improvement, Collaboration & Efficiency (ICE) Programme • Provided essential data to Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency (NISRA) for collection of Census data • Building control extended data collection work with LPS • Peace II Partnership
<p>Improved Business Performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserves restored following previous Land & Property Services (LPS) funding errors. • Low Rate increase of 1.45% for 2011/12 as a result of recent annual efficiency measures. • Implementation of new performance management model. • Made a number of presentations to public/private sector on Council performance improvements. • Building Control 'turnaround' times for plan assessments have improved on previous year by between 5-20% - Introduction of on-line applications. • Introduction of mobile working. • Collaborative Procurements: Significant savings on insurance and legal costs.



Corporate Theme - Excellence

Priorities	Comment
Business Efficiency Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Standards Retained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairtrade ISO 14001 & 9001 Employer of Choice Quest Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Recycling Rate Technology/efficiency improvements (e.g. mobile working, business continuity planning). Internal collaboration e.g. Fire Risk assessments for the Council from year 2011/2012 to be undertaken internally and provision of an auditing service by Building Control for accessibility.
Business Continuity for front line services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Operational Services Depot (OSD) prepared as a back-up facility for all Council Services.
Customer Focused Services & Customer Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 99%+ bins collected on scheduled day and services delivered during severe weather. Dealing with 75% more requests for service during severe weather period. Bulky collections reduced from average of 3 weeks to 2 days. Active Communities Programme exceeding 12 month targets in 10 months.
Engagement & Feedback	<p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific consultations on projects/issues undertaken at Playgrounds. Customer Satisfaction Surveys undertaken – Building Control, Environmental Health and Administration – feedback excellent. Antrim Community Excellence Awards took place in June and were shortlisted for a CIPR 'Pride' Award. <p>Internal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Improvement Surveys e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Health & Well-being Survey conducted February 2011. Diversity & Equality Survey completed 2010. Employer of Choice Group continues to meet monthly. Corporate Services introduced Internal Customer Satisfaction Surveys - results consistently very good. The Chief Executive's 'Making A Difference' Awards were presented at the Antrim Community Excellence Awards when a number of staff were recognised for their outstanding contribution to achieving corporate objectives. Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eleven issues of staff newsletter 'Talkabout' produced. Staff suggestion/feedback scheme 'Talkback' continued.

Corporate Theme - Excellence

Priorities	Comment
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of online Building Notice, Regularisation & Property Certificate applications, through Council website. • Increased further the number of services delivered at the first point of contact. • SMS Texting service introduced.
Fully trained and motivated workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91% staff covered by personal performance targets. • 90% attendance across three Learning Weeks. • Extensive programme of Health & Safety Work Equipment Training delivered. • Building Control staff using similar skill sets are to undertake fire risk assessments & access auditing, broadening the range of their technical expertise. • Ongoing implementation of Health & Well-being Programme.
Identifying opportunities for staff recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making A Difference Awards – highest number of nominations since the awards were introduced. • Staff newsletter 'Talkabout' – regular section regarding 'living out' the values and behaviours and this highlights praise for staff contribution.
Positive can do, innovative culture (values & behaviours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values & Behaviours Project completed during 2010 e.g. incorporated values into performance management, coaching, communications in rest rooms, Talkabout, Learning Weeks and on to meeting agendas. • Introduction of innovative exercise programmes (Forum new programmes, intervention programmes and Sports Development). • Severe weather responses excellent - parks, cleansing, CSA teams. • Bulky collections reduced from average of 3 weeks to 2 days.
Transactional Services	<p>Movement towards more electronic transactional services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line recruitment introduced with over 70% of applications being received on-line. • Caravan Park bookings. • Forum on-line booking & payments. • On-line Building Control applications. • EU services directive. • Old Courthouse bookings on-line.