



Title of Report:	Causeway Coast and Glens Labour Market Partnership Strategy & Action Plan 2022-23
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 June 2022
For Decision or For Information	For Information

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Local Economy
Outcome	The performance of the economy of the Borough has recovered to pre Covid 19 levels. Council contributes towards an improving median wage per employee within the NI norm
Lead Officer	Interim Head of Prosperity and Place

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	N/A – 100% funded by DfC
Included in Current Year Estimates	Yes
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	Not applicable
Staffing Costs	Yes

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed	No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the 2022-23 Causeway Coast and Glens Labour Market Partnership Strategy & Action Plan.

2.0 Background

Action 29 of the Causeway Community Plan aims to:

‘Support in developing of the Causeway Workforce Development Forum supporting educational and skills initiatives within the Causeway Coast and Glens Area’.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic the Causeway Coast and Glen’s labour market had been recording strong growth and improvement across a range of indicators. Since the beginning of lockdown restrictions in March 2020, the economy has suffered significant impacts. Today, Causeway Coast and Glens records the fourth highest rate of economic inactivity in NI at 30% of the working age population. This is also 3% higher than the NI average.

Employability NI is DfC’s new approach to providing support services for unemployed individuals seeking to get back into to work. Rather than a stand-alone programme, it is a series of interventions that will evolve over time, as legacy programmes (such as Steps to Success and Access to Work) end. It has been designed in order to:

- Deliver a reduction in economic inactivity and long-term unemployment to bring NI closer in line with UK rates;
- Provide increased support for those with health conditions (esp. mental health) and disabilities; and
- Create a mechanism for government to collaborate with Councils and other Departments to offer local solutions.

One of the key elements of the programme design was the proposal to create “Local Labour Market Partnerships” in each council area. They intend to:

- Provide leadership and lead on the integration of services;
- Develop local area plans including setting targets for performance;
- Manage devolved funding and its delivery; and
- Manage arrangements for the evaluation of local interventions.

3.0 Proposal

As lead authority for Causeway Coast and Glen’s economic growth, it is important that we play a convening role which brings partners together and drives a LMP with purpose. The delivery of the LMP is 100% funded by DfC (i.e. £466k); with the Department for the Economy providing a contribution of £50k. This will cover the cost of 2.5 staff i.e. LMP Manager; LMP Officer; and part-time Business Support staff for this financial year.

In light of this fast changing labour market support context, the purpose of this LMP Action Plan will be to support NI initiatives; ensure that local knowledge and insights are ‘surfaced’; and develop solutions based on local context.

The three key strategic priorities of our LMP this year are:

1. **To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area** - Development and effective delivery of the local LMP Action Plan to meet priority needs, by reviewing available statistical information and engaging key stakeholders.

2. **To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally**
- Programmes to be developed and delivered providing employability support for the following: -
 - The economically inactive/long term unemployed.
 - Those recently made redundant caused by the covid pandemic; and
 - Skills deficit identified across all sectors.
3. **To support delivery of Employability NI** - promotion of regional projects/initiatives and building confidence through locality-based engagement

Further detail within each respective strategic priority can be found in **Annex A**. Further update reports will be brought to Leisure and Development Committee at key milestones.

CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS

Labour Market Partnership
Working Together



Causeway Coast & Glens Labour Market Partnership

Action Plan 2022-23



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Executive Summary

A new era of employability support...

Employability NI is the Department for Community's new approach to providing support services for unemployed individuals seeking to get back into to work. Rather than a stand-alone programme, it is a series of interventions that will evolve over time, as legacy programmes (such as Steps to Success and Access to Work) end.

One of the key elements of the Employability NI programme design was the proposal to create "Local Labour Market Partnerships" in each council area. They intend to:

- Create a partnership to enable collaboration between key partners and services within the employability/skills ecosystem
- Develop local Action Plans including setting targets for performance
- Manage devolved funding and its delivery
- Manage arrangements for the development, delivery and evaluation of local interventions focussed towards improving employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally.

In exceptional times...

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic the Northern Ireland (and Causeway Coast and Glens) labour market had been recording strong growth and improvement across a range of indicators. Since the beginning of lockdown restriction in March 2020, the economy has suffered significant impacts. Monthly claimant numbers show the damage inflicted by Covid-19, with claimants in the Borough increasing from 2,540 in March 2020 to a peak of 5,225 in May 2020. Some improvement has been registered since then, but claimant numbers are 2,990 in Jan 2022, still 450 more than the pre-pandemic level. Further, economic inactivity rates have been a long-standing issue. The economic inactivity rate across the council area is one of the highest within Northern Ireland at 29.9%, compared to the NI average of 26.2%.

Labour Market Partnership is an opportunity for agility...

A key element of any LMP will be the involvement of local stakeholders to ensure local issues are surfacing. That involvement was an essential part of developing this LMP Plan.

In considering the role of the Labour Market Partnership, consultees suggested the following:

- The LMP offers an opportunity to be more agile.
- Create a partnership with a primary focus on employability supports for the economically inactive and (in the near term) the newly unemployed.
- The LMP is a conduit through which local labour market intelligence is passed to ensure skills demand and supply are matched. Intelligence is therefore key, resulting in a need to maintain comprehensive labour market intelligence that will drive the work of the partners, particularly the linkages between employment/unemployment and barriers to accessing a job (e.g. childcare, skills).
- Engage employers/sector bodies to understand likely demand and to develop targeted interventions, focusing particularly on LTU/economically inactive
- Explore how partner (e.g., Council) interventions can add value to the DfC offer
- Co-design interventions that can help move people back into work as quickly as possible – this will be particularly important for the "newly unemployed"
- Review the progress of specific interventions regularly to understand what is working and to share insights with partners.

It is within this context that the LMP action plan for the next 12 months is proposed.

Labour Market Partnership Plan 2022/2023...

An optimal role for the Labour Market Partnership will be to leverage resources towards achieving strategic objectives. As lead authority for Causeway Coast and Glens economic growth, it is important that Causeway Coast and Glens LMP play a convening role which brings partners together and drives a LMP with purpose.

The following actions are proposed over the 2022-2023 period. These actions are consistent with the labour market activation proposals in the Borough's economic development strategy.

Strategic Priority 1	To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area															
Theme	Establish a Labour Market Partnership															
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-Monthly meetings of the LMP • Training and support provided to partnership members • Undertake research to ensure programmes developed are aimed as needed. • Co-design of LMP programme 															
Strategic Priority 2	To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally															
Theme	Deliver comprehensive labour market intelligence and job matching															
Key activities	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>SP2.1</td> <td>Work Ready: Develop and provide a support programme for the LTU and EI.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SP2.2</td> <td>Business Start-up Support and Seed Fund: To support and empower individuals enabling their progress into employment.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SP2.3</td> <td>Pathways for the Disadvantaged: Develop a programme to target the most disadvantaged areas in the Borough</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SP2.4</td> <td>Retrain Plus: Support the newly unemployed with the opportunity to retrain and learn new skills</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SP2.5</td> <td>Sustaining Lifelong Learning: Promotion of and engagement in lifelong learning within local communities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SP2.6</td> <td>Priority Sectors Personal Learning Account: Enabling upskilling within priority sectors.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SP2.7</td> <td>Apprenticeship Alert: Increase awareness of apprenticeships within the Borough.</td> </tr> </table>		SP2.1	Work Ready: Develop and provide a support programme for the LTU and EI.	SP2.2	Business Start-up Support and Seed Fund: To support and empower individuals enabling their progress into employment.	SP2.3	Pathways for the Disadvantaged: Develop a programme to target the most disadvantaged areas in the Borough	SP2.4	Retrain Plus: Support the newly unemployed with the opportunity to retrain and learn new skills	SP2.5	Sustaining Lifelong Learning: Promotion of and engagement in lifelong learning within local communities	SP2.6	Priority Sectors Personal Learning Account: Enabling upskilling within priority sectors.	SP2.7	Apprenticeship Alert: Increase awareness of apprenticeships within the Borough.
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SP2.7	Apprenticeship Alert: Increase awareness of apprenticeships within the Borough.															
Strategic Priority 3	To support delivery of Employability NI															
Theme	Increase awareness of employability and skills programmes															
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP3.1: To ensure communication across the Borough of the Employability NI initiatives 															



1. Introduction

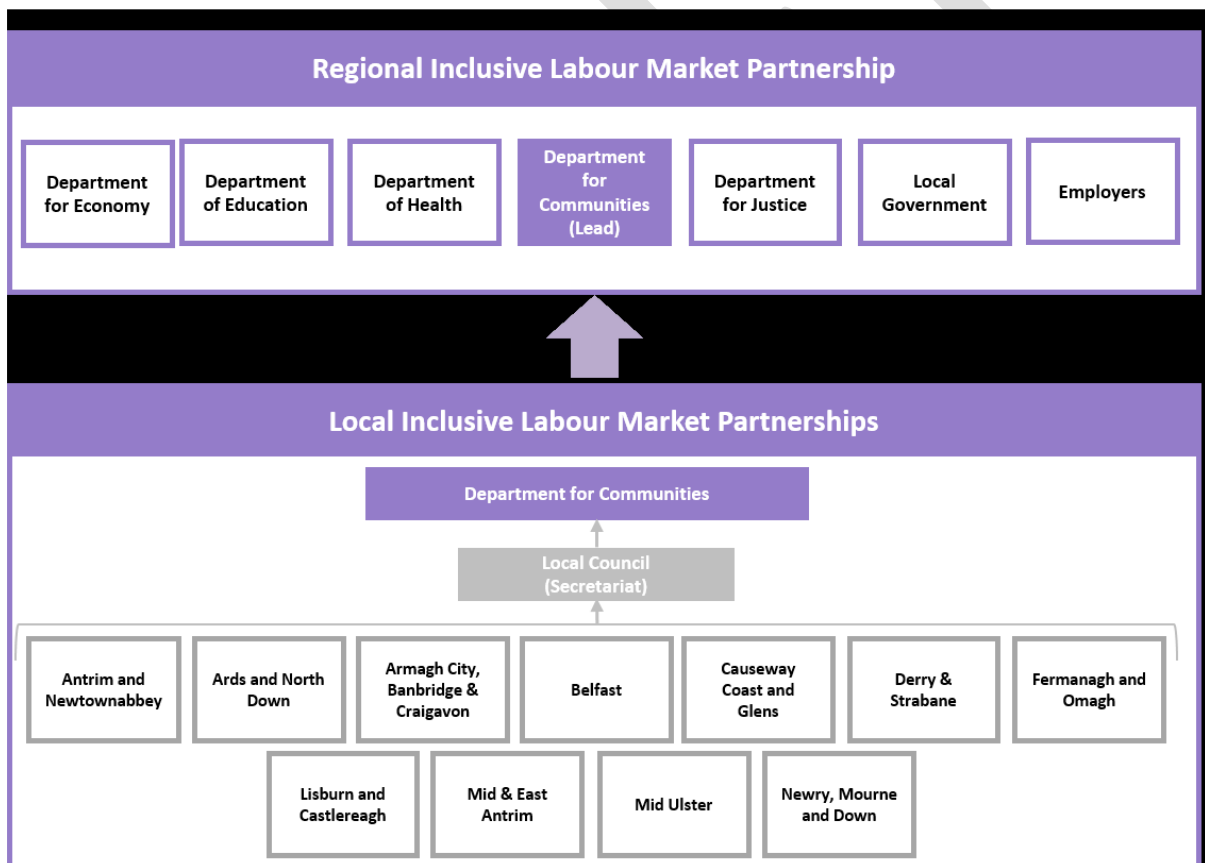
1.1 Introduction

Employability NI is the Department for Community’s new approach to design and develop a new suite of support services for unemployed and under-employed individuals seeking to get back into to work or improve their current job status. Rather than a stand-alone programme, it is a series of interventions that will evolve over time, as legacy programmes (such as Steps to Success and Access to Work) end. It is intended to be a cross Departmental and partnership approach to co-designing and co-commissioning (including with local government and other key stakeholders potentially) a sustainable future strategic employment offer which provides a tailored level of support proportionate to need.

One of the key elements of the Employability NI programme design was the proposal to create “Local Labour Market Partnerships” in each council area. They intend to:

- Create a partnership to enable collaboration between key partners and services within the employability/skills ecosystem
- Develop local Action Plans including setting targets for performance
- Manage devolved funding and its delivery
- Manage arrangements for the development, delivery and evaluation of local interventions focussed towards improving employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally.

The proposed composition of the partnership model is set out below:



Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (CC&GBC) are in the process of establishing a Labour Market Partnership (LMP) and the Workforce Development Forum are acting as the Labour Market Partnership. The following are members of the Workforce Development Forum:

Member Organisations

- Enterprise Causeway;
- Causeway Chamber;
- North West Regional College;
- Northern Regional College;
- Causeway Area Learning Partnership;
- DAERA;
- DfC;
- Invest NI;
- Ulster University;
- Community Planning Officer (CC&GBC); and
- Tourism Manager (CC&GBC).

1.2 Process for Developing a LMP Plan

Causeway LMP wishes to develop a fair and inclusive Action Plan which reflects the diverse nature of the Borough. The plan has been developed by undertaking the following process:

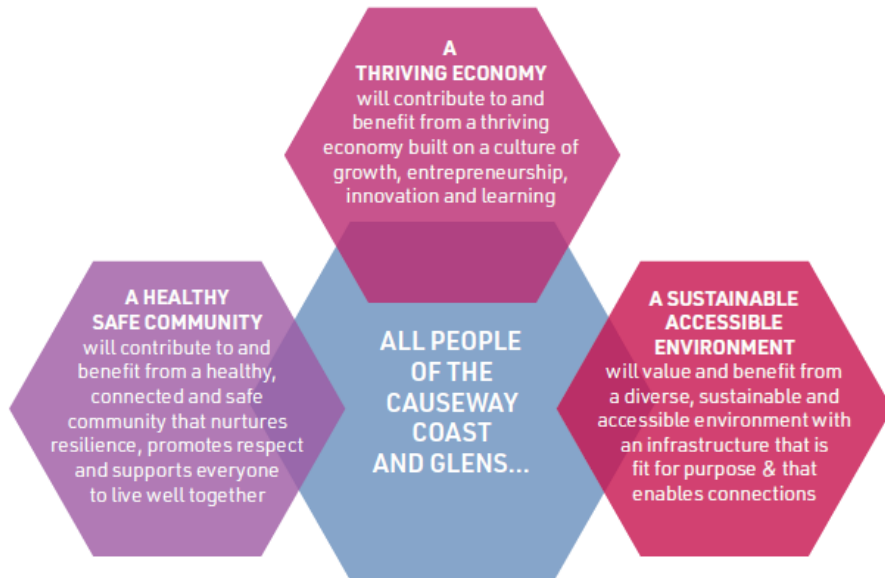
- Undertaking a statistical review of the borough's labour market and employment supports. The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's Economic Strategy was accompanied by a comprehensive socio-economic assessment and data repository. The labour market module of this data repository has been updated to reflect current labour market performance and an assessment of current provision in employment supports has been undertaken.
- Engaging with labour market stakeholders from across the voluntary, business, education and government sector to seek views on what an LMP Plan should include.

The Action Plan that follows the statistical assessment will direct the work of the LMP for the first year, in conjunction with the overall Regional Partnership. The objectives for the Plan are to:

- Promote joint working and better co-ordination of services to unemployed people, employees, and employers.
- Support targeted employability interventions to help people find employment.
- Provide active outreach to engage unemployed people and increase access to services in disadvantaged areas; and
- Maximise employment and training outputs from major regeneration and development schemes in the region (e.g., social clauses).

The CC&GBC have completed an extensive process of engagement and consultation with citizens, organisations and businesses leading to the development of a Community Plan which outlines the long-term vision for the Causeway Coast and Glens area and all its citizens based on thorough analysis of needs, priorities and opportunities to address them.

The key outcomes contained within the Community Plan 'A Better Future Together' 2017 - 2030 identified three overarching long-term strategic Population Outcomes in-line with the proposed Programme for Government 3 as outlined below:



Within the theme A Thriving Economy, the 12 key actions were developed, and the following selected action points cut across/link with the Labour Market Action Plan, and these will help focus delivery in the Council area.

Action 23 Provide a post covid-19 recover programme

Action 29 Provide Support in Developing the Workforce Development forum

Action 31 Increase the level of entrepreneurship and indigenous business growth

Action 32 Enhance and Develop Economic Opportunities

Action 33 Develop a co-ordinated plan to increase skills

The delivery and outcomes from the Action Plan (AP) will feed into the outcomes for the Community Plan which in turn will feed into the outcomes for the Programme for Government (PfG). The current relevant outcomes for the PfG are as follows:

- Outcome 3: 'We have a more equal society'
- Outcome 6: 'We have more people working in better jobs'
- Outcome 8: 'We care for others and help those in need'

Progress on these outcomes will be measured through a number of indicators:

- Indicator 17: Economic inactivity rates excluding students
- Indicator 19: % of population living in absolute and relative poverty
- Indicator 32: Employment rate of 16–64-year-olds by deprivation quintile
- Indicator 33: % of people working part-time who would like to work more hours



2. Findings from the consultations

A key element of any LMP will be the involvement of local stakeholders to ensure local issues are surfacing. That involvement was an essential part of developing this LMP Plan.

A list of consultees is presented as an appendix. The consultations produced a consistency of views on key issues and what a LMP can usefully do and provided additional insight to the labour market profile.

Labour Market Context

- There is significant seasonal employment due to the reliance on the tourism and Agri sectors in the borough.
- There was a consistent ambition to see the borough evolve the tourism product to a 'year-round' level. This will have implications for skills shortages so there a need to focus on addressing skills pipelines for priority sectors.
- Accessibility challenges are well known (e.g., childcare access, peripherality/lack of transport etc.) but one area that cannot be overlooked is 'confidence'.
- Returning to a place of learning after many years away can be daunting so the suggestion was to deliver more lifelong learning and employability programming in local community hubs.
- There is a lack of awareness of career paths and opportunities, particularly among the school age population. This point was made several times, but a specific example captures the sentiment. One consultee noted that there are hundreds of different job roles in hospitality, but awareness of this diversity is low. The proposal was for more 'taster sessions' and careers guidance.
- While the focus of an LMP is employability, the labour market context in the borough suggests a new cohort of unemployed people is emerging via Covid-19 impacts on jobs. The needs of these newly unemployed might be different from long-term unemployed and must be considered.

Role for the LMP

The role of a LMP, and potential activities over the first 12 months of operation, was discussed with consultees. Key points emerging from conversation included:

- The initial role for the LMP should be to become established and build credibility amongst stakeholders as a purposeful entity
- The LMP offers an opportunity to be more agile.
- The partnership should have a primary focus on employability supports for the economically inactive and (in the near term) the newly unemployed. Initially it should observe and support the various initiatives coming forward from DfC, then it should quickly evolve to co-design and delivery of programmes with local insights at the core of their design
- Intelligence is key to addressing local need. There is a need to maintain comprehensive labour market intelligence that will drive the work of the partners, particularly the linkages between employment/unemployment and barriers to accessing a job (e.g., childcare, skills). Collating this information could be centralised across/for local authorities but will require local insights.
- Engage employers/sector bodies to understand likely demand and to develop targeted interventions, focusing particularly on LTU/economically inactive.
- Partnership is crucial. There is no need to overlap with other provision. Explore how local interventions can add value to the DfC offer.
- Co-design interventions that can help move people back into work as quickly as possible – this will be particularly important for the “newly unemployed”.
- Review the progress of specific interventions regularly to understand what is working and to share insights with partners.

It is within this context that the LMP Action Plan for 2022-23 is proposed.



3. Findings from the statistical audit – The Causeway Coast and Glens Labour Market

3.1 Introduction

The rationale for labour market interventions always hinges upon the scale of need and the challenges within the labour market. A comprehensive assessment of the NI Labour Market context is presented in Appendix 2 and CC&G's labour market context is below. Key highlights from the labour market assessment are presented here.

In summary:

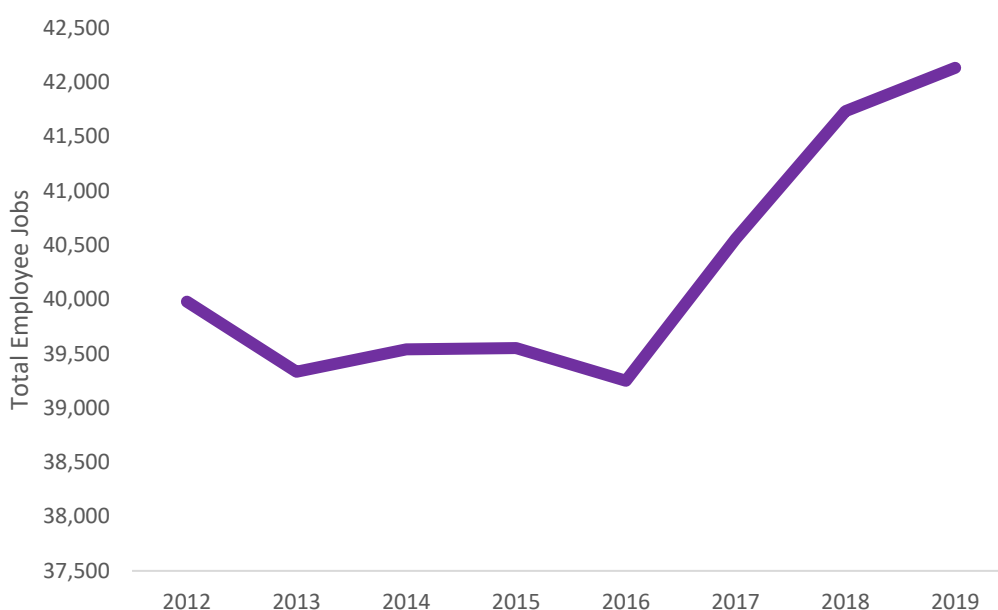
- There a total of 42,132 employee jobs located in the council area.
- The pace of employee job creation across the council area has been one of the highest of all the council areas in Northern Ireland, with growth being 7.3% between 2016 and 2019.
- Much of this growth can be attributed to the expansion the council area has seen in sectors such as Accommodation & Food Services which grew by 11.6% between 2016 and 2019, as well as 'high value sectors' such as Professional, Scientific & Technical and ICT with both of these sectors growing by between 12.8% and 15%.
- Monthly claimant numbers show the damage inflicted by Covid-19, with claimants increasing from 2,540 in March 2020 to a peak of 5,225 in May 2020. Some improvement has been registered since then, but claimant numbers are 2,990 in Jan 2022, still 450 more than the pre-pandemic level.
- The economic inactivity rate (2020 NISRA) across the council area is one of the highest within Northern Ireland at 30.6%, compared to the NI average of 26.2%.
- The Borough does have the highest proportion of working age people with no qualifications in NI,
- In terms of the council areas earning profile for full-time employees, on average residents within the council area earn £24,035 per annum, which is more than £4,000 per annum lower than the Northern Ireland average (£28,324).

3.2 Labour Market Context – Causeway Coast & Glens

Current Outlook

Similar to the Northern Ireland labour market the Causeway Coast & Glens council area's labour market had seen significant growth prior to the pandemic. Currently, there a total of 42,132 employee jobs located in the council area. The council area has seen significant bounce back from the recession with 2,153 net total employee jobs added in the council area since 2012. Figure 3.1 below shows the trend in total employee jobs across the council area since 2012.

Figure 3.1: Total Employee Jobs, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council, 2012-2019



Source: NISRA (BRES) & Grant Thornton Analysis

The pace of employee job creation across the council area has been one of the highest of all the council areas in Northern Ireland, with growth being 7.3% between 2016 and 2019. In comparison, over the same period, employee job creation in Northern Ireland as a whole only grew by 6.3%. Much of this growth can be attributed to the expansion the council area has seen in sectors such as Accommodation & Food Services which grew by 11.6% between 2016 and 2019, as well as ‘high value sectors’ such as Professional, Scientific & Technical and ICT with both of these sectors growing by between 12.8% and 15%. This shift in sectoral growth highlights the increased demand and need for higher value skills across the council area.

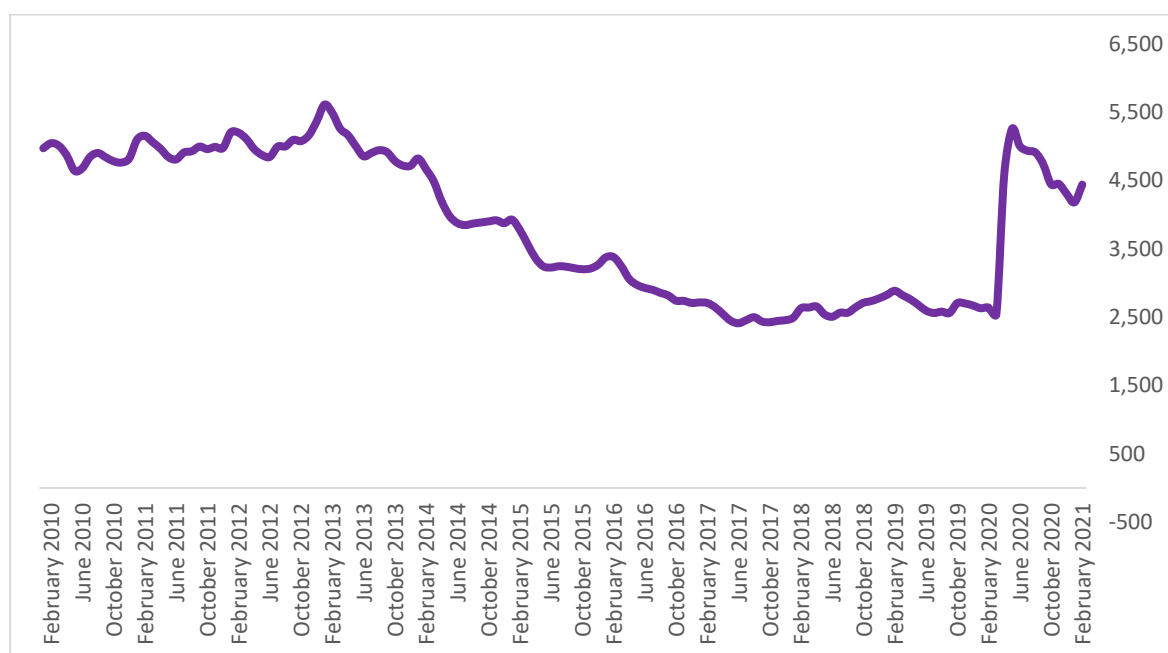
Table 3.1: Employee Jobs Growth (%); Northern Ireland Council Areas; 2016-2019

Employee Job Growth (%)	
	2016-19
Antrim and Newtownabbey	2.0%
Ards and North Down	3.5%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	6.8%
Belfast	5.6%
Causeway Coast and Glens	7.3%
Derry City and Strabane	10.0%
Fermanagh and Omagh	6.6%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	8.1%
Mid and East Antrim	2.8%
Mid Ulster	11.5%
Newry, Mourne and Down	6.3%
NI	6.3%

Source: NISRA (BRES) & Grant Thornton Analysis

The level of employee job expansion has an impact upon of claimants within the council area. Prior to the Covid pandemic the claimant rate had fallen from 3.3% in 2016 to 3.0% in 2019, almost 300 people moving off the register.

Figure 3.2: Claimant Count, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council, 2010-2021



Source: NISRA & Grant Thornton Analysis

Monthly claimant numbers show the damage inflicted by Covid-19, with claimants increasing from 2,540 in March 2020 to a peak of 5,225 in May 2020. Some improvement has been registered since then but claimant numbers are 2,990 in Jan 2020, still 450 more than the pre-pandemic level.

The employment rate across the council area in 2019 stood at 67.6%, which was a record level for the council area. Whilst this is a record level for the council area, the overall level is below that of the Northern Ireland average of 71.9%. However, it should be considered the impact of Covid-19 will have an impact on the level of employment within the council area, as highlighted in Section 2.2 the overall employment rate level for Northern Ireland has fallen from 72.5% to 70.6%. It can be assumed that as a result of Causeway Coast & Glen's employment rate will also fall due to Covid-19 and the lockdown. In terms of resident employment¹, Causeway Coast & Glens currently has a total employment level for those aged 16-64 of 55,400, which is below the previous peak of 56,100 in 2011.

The economic inactivity rate across the council area is one of the highest within Northern Ireland at 29.9%, with only Derry City & Strabane, Belfast and Fermanagh and Omagh having higher levels of economic inactivity. Much like the trend in unemployment the level of economic inactivity across the council has improved, a likely response to job-rich recovery both Northern Ireland and the council area experienced following the recession. The economic inactivity rate has fallen from 32.1% in 2009 to 29.9% a decade later. While this has been a positive response to the recession, the overall economic inactivity rate in Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council remains above the Northern Ireland average, which currently stands at 26.2% for 2019. The Borough does have the highest proportion of working age people with no qualifications in NI, which will act as a drag on economic activity rates.

¹ It should be noted this figure includes residents who work in other council areas as well as those that live and work in Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Table 3.2: Economic Inactivity Rates (%); Northern Ireland Council Areas; 2016-2020

	Economic Inactivity Rate (%)				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Antrim and Newtownabbey	19.5%	19.5%	19.9%	20.6%	23.7%
Ards and North Down	22.5%	22.0%	25.5%	25.3%	26.5%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	25.4%	24.9%	22.9%	25.7%	25.9%
Belfast	26.1%	30.6%	32.7%	30.5%	30.1%
Causeway Coast and Glens	34.0%	33.8%	29.3%	29.9%	30.6%
Derry City and Strabane	37.6%	36.9%	34.1%	30.4%	36.0%
Fermanagh and Omagh	29.7%	30.1%	27.0%	33.1%	30.8%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	20.2%	22.3%	21.1%	17.4%	19.4%
Mid and East Antrim	23.9%	26.2%	25.5%	23.9%	25.6%
Mid Ulster	23.9%	23.2%	23.5%	22.4%	23.4%
Newry, Mourne and Down	24.3%	31.5%	31.0%	24.4%	22.9%
NI	26.0%	27.6%	27.2%	26.2%	27.0%

Source: NISRA (Local Area Database) & Grant Thornton Analysis

In terms of the council areas earning profile for full-time employees, on average residents within the council area earn £24,035 per annum, which is more than £4,000 per annum lower than the Northern Ireland average (£28,324). A similar result presents when examining the workplace earnings for those that work within the council area on average, they can expect to earn £23,150, which is more than £5,000 per annum less than the Northern Ireland average. When comparing Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council against the other council areas in Northern Ireland, as can be seen in Table 3.3, the council area ranks bottom for both earning potential for both residents and workplace.

Table 3.3: Resident & Workplace Earning Annual Gross Full-Time; Northern Ireland Council Areas; 2020

	Gross Annual Wage (£)	
	Residents	Workplace
Lisburn and Castlereagh	£30,789	£27,099
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	£29,202	£27,979
Antrim and Newtownabbey	£28,396	£28,849
Belfast	£28,326	£31,406
NI	£28,324	£28,324
Ards and North Down	£28,068	£25,171
Mid and East Antrim	£26,812	£25,146
Newry, Mourne and Down	£26,802	£26,884
Fermanagh and Omagh	£26,707	£26,332
Mid Ulster	£26,482	£26,473
Derry City and Strabane	£25,994	£26,191
Causeway Coast and Glens	£24,025	£23,150

Source: NISRA (ASHE) & Grant Thornton Analysis

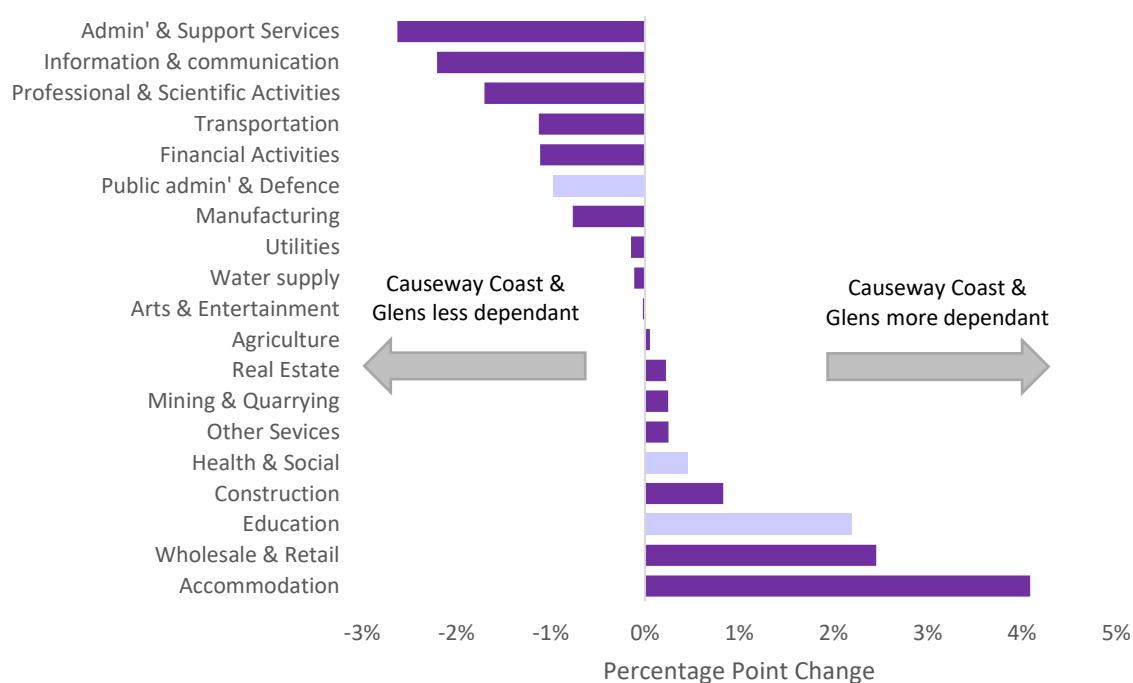
The lower level of earning potential can be explained in two parts, the potential for workplace earnings is highly interlinked with the current sectoral composition. Figure 3.6 below shows the sectoral composition of the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council relative to the Northern Ireland average.

It can be seen that the council area has a higher concentration of lower earning sectors such as Wholesale & Retail and Accommodation & Food Services, with both of these sectors accounting for 30.3% of total employee jobs in 2019 compared to 23.7% in Northern Ireland.

Employment concentrations in higher wage sectors such as ICT and Professional Services are relatively lower in the Borough. These sectors accounting for 3.7% of jobs in the borough compared with 7.6% of jobs in NI.

In addition, analysis conducted by the UUEPC² found that the relative skills for those in the North³ were lower in comparison to the Northern Ireland average. Using data from the 2011 Census, they estimate that the North generally has more workers with no qualifications (17%) compared to Northern Ireland (14%), as well as having a lower level of workers with tertiary education (30%) compared to Northern Ireland (34%). Which potentially reflects the skills needs and the overall sectoral composition for the area.

Figure 3.3: Relative Employment Concentrations, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council & Northern Ireland, 2019



Source: NISRA (BRES) & Grant Thornton Analysis

As for resident's earnings potential this is likely to be impacted by the skills level within the council area. The UUEPC as part of their research estimated the skills needs within the North compared to its resident population, from which they estimated that there is a mismatch between residents and workplace skills generating barriers to labour market entry. As outlined above they estimate that 30% of workplace employment have education at tertiary level, when examining this at a resident level they note that only 22% of residents are educated to this level⁴, resulting in a skills deficit which needs addressing to satisfy future need either through skills importing or skills aimed employability programmes for residents.

² North Region: Future Skills Needs Draft Findings; Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (2019)

³ This area encapsulates the council areas Derry City & Strabane and Causeway Coast & Glens

⁴ Similarly, the UUEPC estimate that current employment with no qualifications account for 17% of employment in the North compared to 26% of residents within the North.

Skills Needs & Future Demand

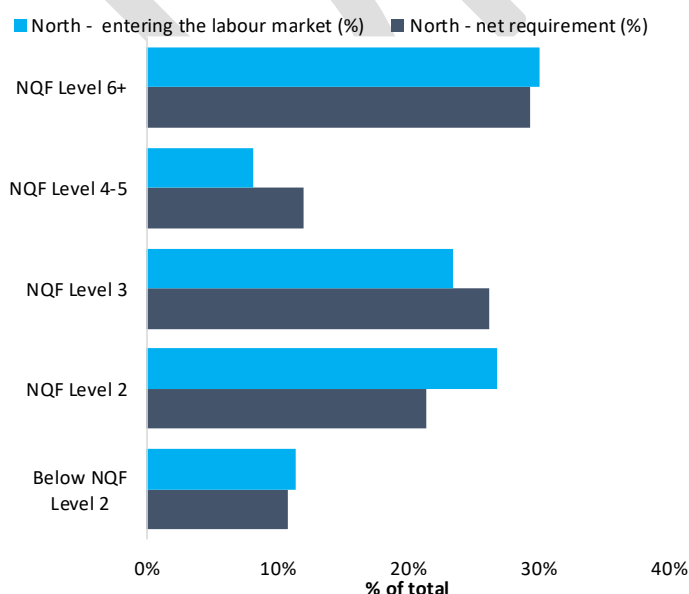
To assess the impact of future skills needs and future sectoral demands within the North, the UUEPC conducted research into the Future Skills Needs of the North Region of Northern Ireland (which comprises Causeway Coast and Glens and Derry City and Strabane District Council). This analysis was undertaken prior to the Covid-19 pandemic but does provide important insight, nonetheless. The UUEPC research suggests that the North region will see employment growth all sectors with the exception of Agriculture. In particular, the UUEPC forecast that the Health & Social Care as well as Wholesale & Retail will see the biggest growth in employment between 2017 and 2027. Both of these sectors are expected to require the highest level of gross demand over the next 10 years, with between 14 and 15% of gross demand required for both sectors. Skills demand in these sectors are mainly driven by replacement demand (80%) in comparison to expansion demand (20%).

Sectors such as ICT, while not one of the largest employment sectors (0.8% of total employees), will see the largest growth and thus will require a substantial expansion demand (66%). To satisfy this level of expansion the North region is required to produce around 950 graduates per annum, with this accounting for 29% of their overall net requirement.

When considering future skill needs, the UUEPC calculate that the North will require 29% of current employment stock to have and NQF Level 6 or above, which compares to only 22% in 2016. This shift to a more skills intensive labour market is further reflected by the reduction in need of people with NQF 2 or below qualifications, from 11% from 2016 levels which accounting for 25% of current stock. Both of these findings highlight the current skills profile will not satisfy future need and the need to correct this, interventions will be required.

Similarly, the UUEPC estimated the likely supply of qualifications residents are forecast to gain over the next 10 years. They estimate that across the North region (which comprises Causeway Coast and Glens and Derry City and Strabane District Councils) 14,200 residents will gain qualifications with 7,430 of these entering the labour market. When comparing the future skills needs against the future qualifications supply, as can be seen in Figure 3.6 below, generally the need for high skills (NQF level 6+) are met, but the subject matter maybe an issue i.e., skills vs subject conundrum. Likewise, the lower skills the UUEPC estimate that the North will have an oversupply of lower skills compared to the future demand for these skills. However, the UUEPC have forecast that the North will suffer from a lack of mid-level qualifications (NQF Level 3-5), with many of these qualifiers preferring to proceed to educate at NQF Level 6+ rather than enter the labour market.

Figure 3.4: Net requirement vs qualification profile (NQF) of labour market entrants, North, 2014-2027



Source: UUEPC

Source: UUEPC North Region: Future Skills Needs Draft Findings

Future skills demand presents a challenge for the Causeway Coast and Glens area, based on qualification levels of the working age population. The borough has almost one in five people with no qualifications, one of the highest rates in NI and 4 percentage points lower than the NI average.

Table 3.4: Qualification achievements among the working age population, 2019

	Qualification Achievements		
	NVQ Level 4 and above	Below NVQ Level	No Qualifications
Antrim and Newtownabbey	37.5%	52.9%	9.6%
Ards and North Down	40.6%	51.0%	8.4%
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	33.4%	54.6%	12.1%
Belfast	35.6%	46.2%	18.2%
Causeway Coast and Glens	35.1%	47.0%	17.9%
Derry City and Strabane	34.0%	48.4%	17.6%
Fermanagh and Omagh	29.8%	51.4%	18.8%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	51.4%	43.5%	5.2%
Mid and East Antrim	41.0%	49.2%	9.8%
Mid Ulster	34.1%	48.9%	17.0%
Newry, Mourne and Down	34.0%	53.0%	13.0%
NI	36.7%	49.5%	13.8%

Source: Nisra

Destinations of School Leavers

Data on the destination of school leavers provides some insight into the immediate and future labour market in the borough. Of 1,525 school leavers resident in the borough in 2019/20, 38% went onto higher education (the lowest ranking council) while 45% went onto Further Education, the highest-ranking NI council for this path. 4.6% of leavers are not in education, employment or training (NEETS). This is broadly similar to the rate for NI (4.7%).

3.3 Labour Market Supports

Causeway Coast and Glens Council area is well served by existing employment supports, delivered across a broad cohort of providers.

The following employment supports that are available⁵. Awareness of, and access to these supports is via channels such as referrals from Jobs and Benefits Offices, word of mouth and some advertising.

- Careers Service
- Assured Skills Programme
- Bridge to Employment
- Essential Skills
- Training for Success
- Apprenticeships NI
- Employability NI/Work Ready Employability Service
- Skills for Life and Work programme
- European Social Fund Employability Programmes (ESF)

⁵ While this section endeavours to be a comprehensive overview of the main elements of support available (based on desk research and consultations), it does not claim to be a directory or audit of every programme available.

The following ESF projects are currently on offer in Causeway Coast and Glens Council area in priority 1 (access to employment) and priority 2 (social inclusion) are:

Organisation Name	Project Title	Investment Priority
Customized Training Services	Community Family Support Programme	Community Family Support
ACCEPTABLE ENTERPRISES LTD	HOT PROGRAMME	Disability
Action Mental Health	AMH 'Working It Out' Project	Disability
Action on Hearing Loss	Specialist Employment Programme	Disability
Compass Advocacy Network	WE CAN (2)	Disability
Disability Action	Job Match	Disability
Greenlight Gateway	The L.E.A.P. Project (Learn/Educate/Achieve/Progress)	Disability
Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI)	LCDI ESF Programme – People with a Disability	Disability
Mencap	EmployAbility2	Disability
Orchardville Society Ltd	Ignite2	Disability
RNIB Northern Ireland	Eye Work Too (2018)	Disability
Specialisterne NI C.I.C	Recruit++	Disability
The Cedar Foundation	Inclusion Works	Disability
Triangle Housing Association Ltd	Progression to Employment Service 2022	Disability
Ulster Supported Employment Limited	STRIDE	Disability
Include Youth	Give and Take Scheme	Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETS)
Network Personnel	Up for Work (UfW)	NEETS
South West College	College Connect	NEETS
The Prince's Trust	Journey to Success	NEETS
Youth Action Northern Ireland	GET SET for work	NEETS
Enterprise Northern Ireland Ltd	Exploring Enterprise Programme (EEP)	Unemployed/Economically Inactive
Network Personnel Ltd.	Jobmatch	Unemployed/Economically Inactive
NIACRO	Working Well	Unemployed/Economically Inactive

Roe Valley Community Education Forum Ltd	Causeway Learn to Earn	Unemployed/Economically Inactive
Specialisterne NI C.I.C	Recruit+	Unemployed/Economically Inactive
The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)	Training for Employment	Unemployed/Economically Inactive
The Prince's Trust	Reaching Further	Unemployed/Economically Inactive

Source: Department for the Economy

3.4 Conclusion

Prior to the pandemic, the labour market had demonstrated strong growth, but challenges remained, with relatively higher economic inactivity rates, and a significant proportion of working age people with no qualifications. Reflecting the scale of labour market challenge, there are a broad range of supports available which seek to address economic inactivity. Many of these schemes are reaching the end of their funding cycle and so it is timely that employability NI is emerging, and a local perspective, via a LMP, is sought.

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4. Strategic Context

4.1 Introduction

It is important that the LMP Plan is developed in full cognisance of the national and local policy context. This section will outline the aims and objectives of a broad spectrum of policy documents, all of which aim to deliver better economic outcomes, a shared aim with a Labour Market Partnership.

4.2 National context

Strategy	Aim & Objectives										
<p>Programme for Government (PFG): Draft Outcomes Framework Consultation Document</p>	<p>This document sets out the potential future direction for the next Programme for Government (PFG). The new PFG will take an outcomes-based approach, seeking to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Create and develop of better jobs, through improved job security, wages, etc.</i> • <i>Address underachievement & skills shortages through the alignment of FE & HE colleges to the Labour Market demand/needs.</i> • <i>Create varied, fulfilling & quality employment opportunities, supporting skills attraction and retention of workers.</i> 										
<p>A 10x economy: Northern Ireland's decade of innovation</p>	<p>The ambition set out in NI's economic vision is for a '10x Economy'. Northern Ireland's decade of innovation will encourage greater collaboration and innovation to deliver a ten times better economy with benefits for all our people. This ambition will be realised by focussing on innovation in areas where we have real strengths and making sure these gains mean something to all businesses, people and places in Northern Ireland. Five steps to success have been identified to realise the ambition of the 10x economy. These are summarised in the diagram below.</p> <div data-bbox="456 1106 1222 1626" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Our Vision for a Decade of Innovation will deliver a ten times better economy with benefits for all our people</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Technologies and Clusters</th> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Talent</th> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Diffusion</th> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Funding</th> <th style="background-color: #003366; color: white;">Place</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="background-color: #e6f2ff;">Focusing on priority clusters where NI can be a global leader, building on existing strengths and capitalising on windows of opportunity.</td> <td style="background-color: #e6f2ff;">Inspiring and preparing a future generation of workers that can respond flexibly to future skills requirements. Ensuring everyone across NI has opportunities to thrive.</td> <td style="background-color: #e6f2ff;">Ensuring that innovation provides opportunities across all sectors, not just those at the cutting edge, and disperses economic and societal benefits to all.</td> <td style="background-color: #e6f2ff;">Taking a new approach to funding interventions including Challenge Funds, better participation in funding programmes and applying conditionalities to offer of Government support.</td> <td style="background-color: #e6f2ff;">Building on our successes in attracting visitors to our world class attractions, experiences and events, energising our ecosystem for innovation and developing our innovation infrastructure through the City and Growth Deals Programme.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Five steps to Developing Interventions to Deliver our Vision</p> </div>	Technologies and Clusters	Talent	Diffusion	Funding	Place	Focusing on priority clusters where NI can be a global leader, building on existing strengths and capitalising on windows of opportunity.	Inspiring and preparing a future generation of workers that can respond flexibly to future skills requirements. Ensuring everyone across NI has opportunities to thrive.	Ensuring that innovation provides opportunities across all sectors, not just those at the cutting edge, and disperses economic and societal benefits to all.	Taking a new approach to funding interventions including Challenge Funds, better participation in funding programmes and applying conditionalities to offer of Government support.	Building on our successes in attracting visitors to our world class attractions, experiences and events, energising our ecosystem for innovation and developing our innovation infrastructure through the City and Growth Deals Programme.
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<p>Skills for a 10x Economy (consultation)</p>	<p>Delivering 'a 10x Economy' - an economy that is 10x stronger, 10x more prosperous, 10x more resilient - will require transformation in our skills system. That is the opening thought in the Department for the Economy's Skills for a 10x economy consultation. The draft consultation document identifies three major policy objectives and three underpinning policy enablers. These align to the principles set out in the economic vision; addressing skills imbalances, providing opportunities for all and placing collaboration and co-design at the centre of our strategy, to support key strategic clusters while delivering meaningful change for everyone.</p>										

	 <p>The diagram illustrates the Skills Strategy framework. At the center is a dark blue triangle labeled 'Skills Strategy'. To its left, under the heading 'Objectives', are three blue boxes: 'Addressing skills imbalances, Driving economic growth', 'Creating a culture of life long learning', and 'Enhancing digital skills, Developing a Digital Spine'. To its right, under the heading 'Enablers', are three blue boxes: 'Enhancing Policy Cohesion', 'Building Strong Relationships', and 'Investment in the Skills System'. Arrows point from the objectives and enablers towards the central strategy triangle.</p>
<p>New Decade New Approach</p>	<p>This document represents the deal in which both the UK and Irish Governments have put forward in order to restore the NI Executive, addressing issues such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Invest strategically in ensuring NI has the right skills for a thriving economy.</i> • <i>Develop an enhanced approach to career advice, such as apprenticeships;</i> • <i>Tackling deprivation and improving opportunity.</i>
<p>Economic Recovery Action Plan</p>	<p>This document produced by the Department for the Economy sets out the economic recovery roadmap for Northern Ireland following the Covid-19 pandemic. This document sets out aims to improve skills, exports, promote a green economy and R&D/Innovation. The overall objectives of the document are to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Support a highly skilled and agile workforce.</i> • <i>Stimulate Research & Development and innovation.</i> • <i>Promote investment, Trade and Exports; and</i> • <i>Building a Green Economy.</i> <p>Of particular relevance to the LMP are the aims of the 'Supporting a Highly Skilled and Agile Workforce' with these being;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Making Apprenticeships available for all ages, increasing the supply of skills;</i> • <i>Develop a digital careers platform that will provide advice and guidance on current/future skills needs;</i> • <i>Develop a Women STEM Action Plan;</i> • <i>The Launch of a 'Flexible Skills Fund' which will allow Government to be fast moving/acting in sectors at risk of automation, etc.;</i> • <i>Develop a Capability and Skills Enhancement Programme which will provide training to the Tourism Sector, helping to fill skills gaps/capabilities;</i> • <i>Work with sector/industry stakeholders to identify skills solutions at a regional, sectoral and local level; and</i> • <i>Identify areas of opportunity to enhance productivity for businesses and ensure businesses have appropriate skills to grasp these opportunities.</i>
<p>Pathways to Success (NEET)</p>	<p>This document set out the aim of helping those aged 16-24 who are considered NEET re-engage and improve their overall prospects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Raise standards and improving outcomes in literacy and numeracy</i> • <i>Overcome barriers to learning; and</i> • <i>Tackle barriers associated with health and social well-being.</i>
<p>Success through Skills – Transforming Futures</p>	<p>This document aimed to help re-engage people within the economy, in order to facilitate a dynamic and innovative economy, with skills forming a key element;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Raising the skills level of the whole workforce;</i> • <i>Raising productivity; and increasing level of social inclusion by enhancing employability of those currently excluded from the labour market.</i>
<p>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Skills Strategy Northern Ireland</p>	<p>This document provided tailored findings and recommendations on Northern Ireland skills performance. This process will help shape future skills strategies within Northern Ireland, with recommendations including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reducing Skills imbalances;</i> • <i>Creating a culture of lifelong learning;</i> • <i>Transforming workplaces to make better use of skills; and</i> • <i>Strengthening the governance of skills policies.</i>

4.3 Causeway Coast and Glens context

Strategy	Aim & Objectives
Causeway Coast & Glens Community Plan 2017-2030	<p>This document sets out the new vision and direction for the region, such as Action 32: Enhance and develop economic opportunities for individuals and businesses located within the Causeway Coast & Glens and Action 33: Develop a co-ordinated plan to increase skills within the Causeway Coast & Glens area targeting actions to meet the local industry needs. The document also outlines the need to support the work of the Causeway Workforce Development Forum which supports education and skills initiatives as set out in Action 29. The key outcomes for each of these actions are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All people of the Causeway Coast and Glens will be knowledgeable and skilled;</i> • <i>All people of the Causeway Coast & Glens will contribute to and benefit from a thriving economy built on a culture of growth, entrepreneurship, innovation and learning; and</i> • <i>The population of the Causeway Coast & Glens area will be knowledgeable and suitably skilled.</i>
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council: Council Strategy 2015-2019	<p>This document set out the vision of newly formed Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council for the period 2015 to 2019. With the key vision of the strategy being to <i>“Maximise the benefits of our unique location and landscape by providing ambitious, accessible and efficient services which fulfil customer expectations”</i>. In addition, the strategy set out the 5 key visions for the council over the 2015 to 2019 period, with these including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>provide effective and sustainable local services;</i> • <i>develop our economy and create jobs;</i> • <i>enhance our people’s health and wellbeing; and</i> • <i>empower our local people to take ownership of projects in their community.</i>
Causeway Workforce Development Forum	<p>The development of the Causeway Workforce Development Forum aims to ensure/see more people working in better and more sustainable jobs with less inequality and deprivation within the council. As such the key actions of the Forum are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establishing better connections between employability programmes delivered (both private and publicly) through referrals, etc,</i> • <i>Develop a holistic approach to employability and skills aligned to both national and local strategies;</i> • <i>Create a pipeline of residents with the appropriate skills/vocational qualifications to avail of employment opportunities;</i> • <i>Establish sector specific employability approach for economically inactive who are then supported throughout the process;</i> • <i>Provide expertise, guidance, etc. in the development of overarching skills/employability strategies;</i> • <i>Promote and contribute to the achievement of inclusive growth;</i> • <i>Develop new employer/intelligence led approaches to tackle employability and skills issues; and</i> • <i>Enable a consistent supply and demand conditions across the skills spectrum providing an equal supply and demand of skills.</i>
Causeway Coast & Glens: Digital Strategy – Summary Report	<p>This document was developed to help support the social and economic development of the Causeway Coast & Glens. With the aim of the strategy to address the inter-linkages between digital skills, infrastructure and the digital sector. This digital strategy forms a key input to the overall Causeway Coast & Glens City Growth deal. The key aims of the strategy aim to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development of basic digital skills, to allow everyone to participate in an increasingly digital economy/society;</i> • <i>Development of sector-specific digital skills, to ensure businesses who are more reliant on digital technologies, businesses are able to source the appropriate skills; and</i> • <i>Adequately support the move to remote working and the overall digital transformation.</i>
Causeway Coast and Glens Economic Strategy	<p>The economic strategy for the Borough presents 6 growth themes as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour Market Activation • Business start/survival • Business evolution • Connected Borough • Green Borough • Renewed Place

Under the Labour Market Activation theme, the strategy notes several areas of potential intervention.			
Labour Market activation			
Sub theme	Issue	Implication	Causeway Coast and Glens Call to Action
Job search support	A significant proportion of the Borough's employees are on Furlough and there is a heightened risk of significant levels of unemployment	Sudden and significant numbers of people becoming unemployed can lead to economic depression, erode the skills base of the labour force and have significant mental health and wider health impacts if short term unemployment becomes ingrained/long term.	Council can act as a key enabler in providing labour market activation programmes (training, interview support) and community employment programmes as well as providing a rapid response 'one front door' for job matching across the borough.
Job matching	Redundancy announcements across NI are increasing and projected to increase further.		
Assured skills	The Skills Barometer from Ulster University shows a mismatch between supply of skills and demand. Consultations bear skills challenges out	For companies that wish to grow, the inability to recruit staff is a key barrier, which can lead to delayed growth or companies locating elsewhere.	An assured skills programme would alleviate skills shortages
Anchor institution social clauses	Anchor institutions in the borough can have a significant influence on labour demand either directly or through annual procurement expenditure.	Anchor institutions can be utilised to support the creating job opportunities for residents in the Borough	Devise a procurement strategy that promotes local delivery and promotes social clauses that provide opportunity for unemployed residents.

4.4 The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Skills Strategy

As a recent comprehensive update to the skills and employability policy discourse, it is particularly pertinent to highlight the OECD Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland and the relevant issues for LMPs that the strategy raises.

Launched in October 2020, a key facet of the OECD's work centred around how Skills imbalances can negatively affect economic growth through their consequences on increased labour costs; lower labour productivity growth; and slower adoption of new technologies. Additionally, OECD notes that skills mismatches can increase unemployment and reduce a government's tax revenues. Businesses that suffer from longer-term skills shortages may be constrained in their productivity, innovation, competitiveness, and growth, and may also result in increased hiring costs and higher staff turnover. At

the individual level, skills mismatches can cause people to experience higher risk of unemployment relative to well-matched workers, lower wages, lower levels of job satisfaction and the attrition of their skills over time. Reducing skills imbalances could, therefore, help Northern Ireland to enjoy significant economic and social benefits. Within this context, the OECD identify the reduction of economic inactivity as a key opportunity to minimise skills shortages. In light of Northern Ireland's comparatively high levels of economic inactivity, consideration will need to be given to the most effective means of (re)activating those who are inactive in the labour market, as well as preventing them from becoming inactive in the first place.

The OECD report confirm that the “economically inactive” are a heterogeneous group with a range of differing barriers to skills activation and employment, which require separate consideration. This recognition of different barriers and complex needs should be a key feature in LMP's thinking. The OECD Skills Strategy proposes opportunities for Northern Ireland across a range of areas. These are noted below, with those opportunities which OECD identified as being an area for Local Council involvement highlighted in bold.

- **Reducing skills imbalances in Northern Ireland**
 - Opportunity 1: Improving individual career choice through the provision of enhanced career guidance
 - **Opportunity 2: Strengthening the responsiveness and flexibility of the tertiary education and vocational education and training systems**
 - **Opportunity 3: Reducing economic inactivity to minimise skills shortages**
 - **Opportunity 4: Improving labour mobility to meet skills demand**
- **Creating a culture of lifelong learning in Northern Ireland**
 - Opportunity 1: Starting the development of a culture of lifelong learning early in life
 - **Opportunity 2: Increasing adults' motivation to learn**
 - Opportunity 3: Removing barriers for individuals and employers to adult learning opportunities
- **Transforming workplaces to make better use of skills in Northern Ireland**
 - **Opportunity 1: Strengthening management and leadership capabilities**
 - **Opportunity 2: Developing engaging and empowering workplaces**
 - **Opportunity 3: Strengthening support structures for businesses**
- **Strengthening the governance of skills policies in Northern Ireland**
 - Opportunity 1: Making sustainable funding arrangements and committing to an overarching strategy for Northern Ireland's skills system
 - **Opportunity 2: Increasing co-ordination and information distribution across the whole of government**
 - **Opportunity 3: Improving employer engagement in the governance of skills policies**

Evidently, there is a broad selection of areas where councils are recommended to be involved. A key point from the OECD Skills Strategy is partnership working. Hence, a LMP can serve as an important vehicle in driving the employability and skills agenda.

4.5 Conclusion

The analysis and strategic context outlined in this section highlight the challenging circumstances of the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council's labour market. Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council labour market has long standing issues that need addressed, such as high levels of economic inactivity, unemployment and a lower level of employment rates relative to Northern Ireland and other council areas.

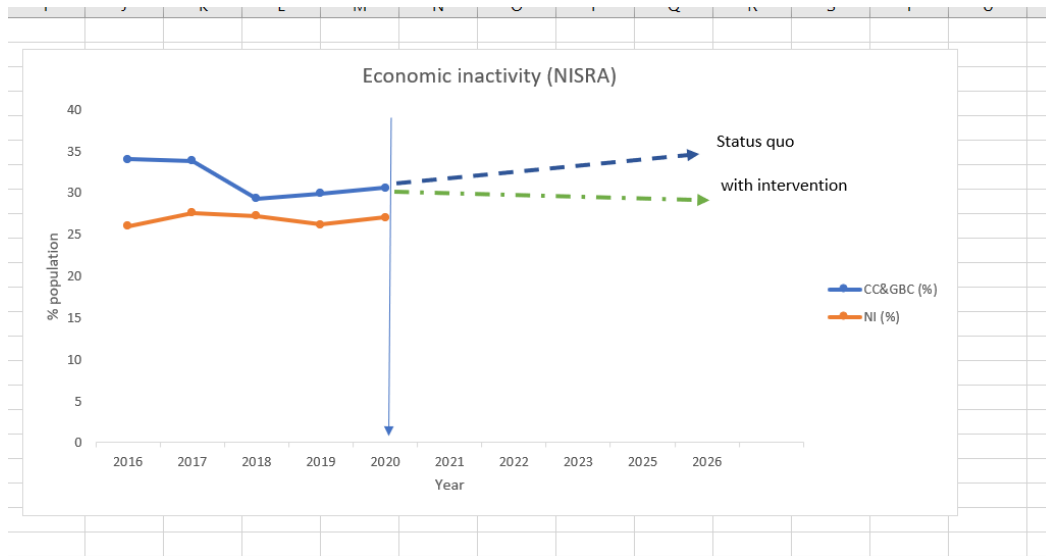
In turn, these issues impact upon earnings potential for both residents and workplace employees. It should also be considered, following the analysis conducted in Section 2.2, on how Covid-19 has already impacted the Northern Ireland labour market, similar impacts will be seen and felt in Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council further hindering an already lagging labour market. As such the

analysis in this section heightened the need for labour market interventions in the form of an LMP 'Action Plan'.

The review process has led to the following themes being identified as local priorities:

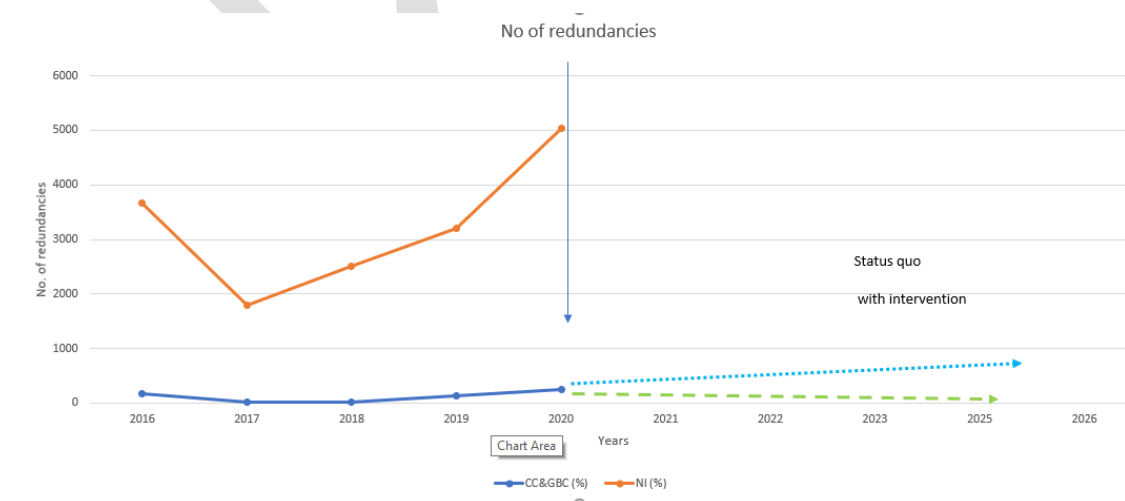
1. Employability supports for the economically inactive/long term unemployed.

The economic inactivity rate across the council area is one of the highest within Northern Ireland at 29.9%. The reasons why this group are inactive are varied, - sickness, caring for family/children etc. The LMP will seek to develop interventions which are tailored to support and empower individuals enabling their progress into employment.



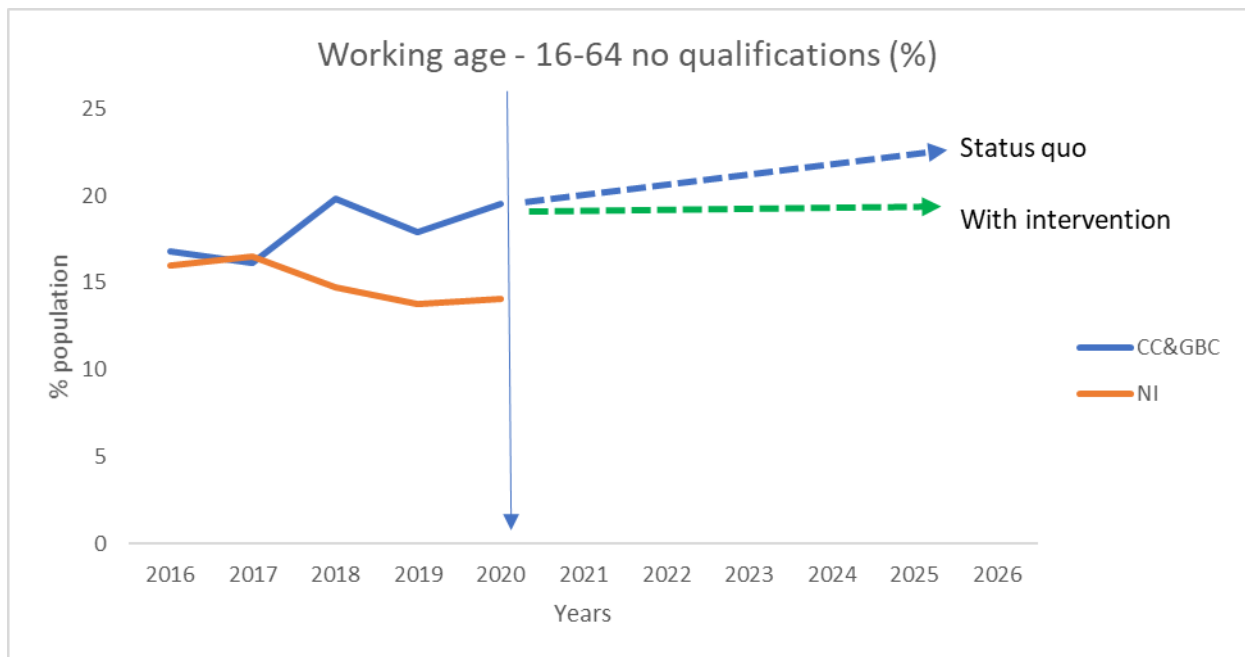
2. Programmes to be developed in response to the rise in claimant numbers, due to redundancies caused by the covid pandemic.

The LMP would seek to establish current intelligence on which sectors within the Borough are worst affected and therefore develop customised supports which would include addressing the barriers to re-entering the workplace.



3. Addressing the future skills deficit identified.

The Borough does have the highest proportion of working age people with no qualifications in NI, which will act as a drag on economic activity rates. The LMP would seek to develop additional supports/interventions avoiding duplication with central government schemes. The Borough also has an undersupply of mid-level qualifications (NQF Level 3-5) so supports to improve these levels are also required.



In conclusion, the Causeway LMP Strategy & Action Plan is considered a living document, one that is to be reviewed and updated in response to emerging opportunities and changes within the employment and skills environment.



5. LMP Action Plan

5.1 Action Plan

The following actions are proposed over the 2022-2023 period. These actions are consistent with the labour market activation proposals in the Borough's economic development strategy and reflect the key findings from the preceding statistical and consultative process, namely that the analysis and strategic context highlights the challenging circumstances of the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council's labour market which is impacted by long standing issues such as high levels of economic inactivity, unemployment and a lower level of employment rates relative to Northern Ireland and other council areas.

In turn, these issues impact upon earnings potential for both residents and workplace employees. It should also be considered how Covid-19 has, and will, impact the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council labour market, further hindering progress. Reflecting on the analysis, the Strategic Priorities proposed are:

- SP1: To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area
- SP2: To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally
- SP3: To support delivery of Employability NI

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Strategic Priorities	Indicators to which Local LMP makes a contribution (Source)	2021/22 Baseline																																																																								
<p>Strategic Priority 1:</p> <p>To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area</p>	<p>SP.1 Delivery of LMP in 2022/23</p> <p>Development and effective delivery of local LMP Action Plan to meet priority needs, by reviewing available statistical information and engaging key stakeholders</p> <p>Indicator No of meetings facilitated Satisfaction levels of LMP members – LMP member survey</p>	<p>100% of partnership formed with relevant stakeholders</p> <p>No current baseline 80% of Stakeholders Satisfied with their development</p>																																																																								
<p>Strategic Priority 2:</p> <p>To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally</p>	<p>Employability supports for the economically inactive/long term unemployed</p> <p>% Economic Inactivity (NISRA)</p> <p>Programmes to be developed in response to the rise in claimant numbers, due to redundancies caused by the COVID pandemic</p> <p>% Redundancies (NISRA)</p> <p>Addressing the future skills deficit identified</p> <p>% No Qualifications (NISRA)</p>	<p>Yearly statistics available as follows (NISRA) :</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Economic Inactivity Rates (%)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>year</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>CC&GBC</td> <td>34.00%</td> <td>33.80%</td> <td>29.30%</td> <td>29.90%</td> <td>30.60%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NI</td> <td>26.00%</td> <td>27.60%</td> <td>27.20%</td> <td>26.20%</td> <td>27.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">% Redundancies</th> </tr> <tr> <th>year</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>CC&GBC</td> <td>20</td> <td>20</td> <td>130</td> <td>240</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NI total</td> <td>1790</td> <td>2500</td> <td>3200</td> <td>5030</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="6">Working Age:16 - 64 No Qualifications (%)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>year</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>CC&GBC</td> <td>16.8</td> <td>16.10</td> <td>19.80</td> <td>17.9</td> <td>19.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NI average</td> <td>16.0</td> <td>16.50</td> <td>14.70</td> <td>13.8</td> <td>14.1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Economic Inactivity Rates (%)						year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	CC&GBC	34.00%	33.80%	29.30%	29.90%	30.60%	NI	26.00%	27.60%	27.20%	26.20%	27.00%	% Redundancies						year	2017	2018	2019	2020		CC&GBC	20	20	130	240		NI total	1790	2500	3200	5030		Working Age:16 - 64 No Qualifications (%)						year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	CC&GBC	16.8	16.10	19.80	17.9	19.5	NI average	16.0	16.50	14.70	13.8	14.1
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Strategic Priority 3:

No current baseline – new initiative

**To support delivery of
Employability NI**

Promotion of regional projects/initiatives and building confidence through locality-based engagement

500+ views on social media and increased awareness of support available

500+ visitors to online website section

Indicators

views on social media

visitors to website

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Strategic Priority 1: To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area

Indicators % Partnership formed with relevant stakeholders
% of stakeholders satisfied with their development

Theme	Aims & Description	Key Activities
Establish a Labour Market Partnership	Aim: Establish a Labour Market Partnership	Identify and convene social partners for LMP board. Appoint LMP Chair.
	Description: LMP will operate under a defined term of reference. Membership will include a broad range of social partners providing local expertise. Integrated approach will elicit strong attendance at regular meetings, ensuring streamlined approach to LMP objectives.	Produce defined term of reference to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Framework • Programme design and commissioning practices • Monitoring and Evaluation process • Bi-Monthly meetings of the LMP
	Aim: Ensure key objectives within Action Plan are fit for purpose	Undertake research to ensure programmes developed are aimed as needed. Co-Design of LMP Programme – 3-year Strategic Plan commissioned enabling annual Action Plans to be developed
	Description; Research to be undertaken to guarantee interventions are targeted at most in need.	
	Aim: Determine needs of LMP social partners	Induction training to be provided to all social partners.
	Description: Optimise understanding of objectives LMP, to ensure commitment and effective participation through relevant training and support.	Needs assessment of social partners to be conducted. Training and support to be provided if weakness identified i.e., action planning.

Strategic Priority 2: To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally

Indicators
 % Economic Inactivity (NISRA)
 % Redundancies
 % No Qualifications

Theme	Aims & Description	Key Activities
Employability supports for the economically inactive (EI) /long term unemployed	<p>SP2.1: Work Ready</p> <p>Aim: Develop and provide a support programme for the LTU and EI.</p> <p>Description: Research and identify the issues affecting the LTU and EI. Develop a programme to engage specifically with these groups, delivering a pathway to health, skills and training.</p>	<p>External technical resource procured to carryout research and co-design with LMP</p> <p>Two x 12-week programme targeting LTU and EI, delivered: Summer/Autumn Autumn/Winter</p> <p>Combination of group and 1-2-1 mentoring.</p> <p>Programme will deliver 160x6 1-2-1 sessions @ £50/day.</p> <p>Participants have potential to gain Level 1 qualification and develop key life skills i.e., coping mechanisms, increased confidence</p>
Employability supports for the economically inactive/long term unemployed	<p>SP2.2: Business Start-up Support and Seed Fund</p> <p>Aim: To support and empower individuals enabling their progress into employment.</p> <p>Description: LTU (i.e., unemployed for 1yr+) who are looking to establish their own business to receive business support (how to write business plan, basics of financial planning etc.). Upon successful</p>	<p>Assistance from Alchemy Programme Manager to co-design business support course.</p> <p>Bespoke Level 1 qualification in Business Planning to be developed.</p> <p>3 x 8-week programme.</p> <p>Combination of group and 1-2-1 mentoring.</p> <p>Participants have potential to gain Level 1 qualification in Business Planning.</p> <p>Funding Unit to provide guidance and support in developing Business Start-up Seed Grant criteria.</p> <p>Participants have potential CPD in submitting funding applications.</p>

completion of business support course, participants will have opportunity to apply for a business start-up seed grant.

Grant applications will be managed by Council's Funding Unit.

Employability supports for the economically inactive/long term unemployed

SP2.3: Pathways for the Disadvantaged

Aim: Develop a programme to target the most disadvantaged areas in the Borough

Description: Provide flexible learning opportunities on accredited courses for those not immediately ready for work.

Identify and target areas experiencing greatest deprivation within the Borough.

Using the research from SP1 to design & develop a specific programme/ intervention for the most disadvantaged areas, ensuring collaboration/input from all relevant stakeholders, i.e. Multi Agency Support Hub, Environmental Health, Sure Start, Neighbourhood Renewal etc.

3x12 week training programmes delivering targeted training and support interventions to address needs. Including but not limited to employability skills, self-confidence, team building, accredited qualifications, job search skills etc.

Target of 40 most disadvantaged residents supported across the Borough.

<p>Programmes to be delivered in response to the rise in claimant numbers, due to redundancies caused by the COVID pandemic.</p>	<p>SP2.4: Retrain Plus</p> <p>Aim: Support the newly unemployed with the opportunity to retrain and learn new skills</p> <p>Description: To meet current labour market demands in key sectors:</p> <p>HGV Driver Social Care Hospitality</p>	<p>Engage with local employers to determine gaps,</p> <p>Identify retraining opportunities to enable the newly unemployed to re-enter workforce.</p> <p>Developing ToR for training providers to respond with accredited programmes of delivery.</p> <p>Delivery programmes must address barriers to entry (i.e. training apprehension, reasonable adjustments etc.)</p> <p>Call-off lists of training providers established.</p> <p>Programmes identified to be delivered:</p> <p>HGV training academy/ voucher scheme, to include guaranteed interview – 16 weeks</p> <p>Hospitality academy (front of house and kitchen service) – 16 weeks</p> <p>Social Care academy (skills requirement to provide appropriate care and personal well-being) – 12 weeks</p>
<p>Addressing the future skills deficit identified</p>	<p>SP2.5: Sustaining Lifelong Learning</p> <p>Aim: Supporting communities, in the areas of most need, based on high deprivation, by developing formal and informal opportunities to encourage return to workforce.</p> <p>Description: Promotion of and engagement in lifelong learning within local communities, by developing in person and virtual learning opportunities which create a safe learning environment for those with apprehension about returning to learning.</p>	<p>External resource procured to consult with DE/EA/FE partners and local community groups and education providers to determine barriers to and opportunities within lifelong learning and ensuring no duplication of regional provision.</p> <p>Bespoke intervention package to be designed and delivered targeting outcomes of consultation, including the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Numeracy • ICT • Job searching • Interview skills • CV writing <p>Targeting 100 participants throughout the Borough.</p> <p>Provision for the purchase of educational materials to support lifelong learning.</p>

<p>Addressing the future skills deficit identified</p>	<p>SP2.6: Priority Sectors Personal Learning Account (PLA)</p> <p>Aim: Enabling upskilling within priority sectors.</p> <p>Description: Participants can get new skills and qualifications that local employers need to help them progress in their current career.</p> <p>Maximum grant of £500 towards course within priority sectors which demonstrates upskilling of employee.</p>	<p>ToR produced by LMP outlining eligibility criteria and administration of personal learning account.</p> <p>External technical resource procured to design and develop personal learning account platform.</p> <p>FE Colleges engaged to ensure accredited course can be accessed via a personal learning account (i.e. upskilling training only within priority sectors)</p> <p>Funding Unit to administer part-funding grant associated with the personal learning account. (open to the unemployed and under-employed) upskilled through completion of accredited course.</p>
<p>Addressing the future skills deficit identified</p>	<p>SP2.7: Apprenticeship Alert</p> <p>Aim: Increase awareness of apprenticeships within the Borough</p> <p>Description: Develop a virtual apprenticeship alert platform to promote opportunities and raise awareness of vocational training.</p> <p>This will act as a one-stop-shop for people out of employment looking to identify retraining opportunities across the borough and alternates to traditional academia.</p>	<p>External technical resource procured to design, develop and host virtual apprenticeship alert board.</p> <p>Engagement with recruitment agencies; local employers; Job Centre NI Online; etc. to raise awareness of platform.</p> <p>Advertising campaign to promote platform to LUE/EI and school leavers.</p>

Strategic Priority 3: To support delivery of Employability NI

Indicators # views on social media
visitors to website

Theme	Aims & Description	Key Activities
<p>Increase awareness of employability and skills programmes</p>	<p>Aim: To ensure communication across the Borough of the regional employability initiatives.</p> <p>Description: Actively promote the regional and local LMP programmes through the various communication methods and in partnership with other local community and business networks.</p>	<p>Establish a dedicated section within Council website containing accurate information and guidance on actions/ programmes of LMP and regional programmes.</p> <p>Engage with business and community networks to raise awareness and engagement with LMP.</p> <p>Deliver a comms/ digital and social media campaign to all stakeholders and public.</p> <p>Facilitate schools' careers fairs and jobs fairs, ensuring engagement by those business support through LMP.</p> <p>Promote upskilling/ retraining opportunities with STEM priority sectors</p>

Appendix 1 – Consultees

- Invest NI
- NWRC
- NRC
- DfC
- University of Ulster
- JBO
- DAERA
- Causeway Coasts and Glens Council Officers
- Roe Valley Community Education Forum Ltd
- BCW Training Ltd
- Roe Valley Learning Community
- Cafre (College of agri,food and rural enterprise)
- The Springboard Charity & Springboard UK Ltd

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Appendix 2 – Statistical Assessment

Various labour market data sources have been assessed and presented in an accompanying spreadsheet covering:

- Number of Employee Jobs by District Council Area
- Number of Employee Jobs by District Council Area and Industry Section
- Labour Market Structure:
 - Total 16+population ('000s)
 - Total 16 – 64 population ('000s)
 - Economically active (16+) ('000s)
 - In employment (16+) ('000s)
 - In full-time employment (16+) ('000s)
 - In part-time employment (16+) ('000s)
 - Economically inactive (16+) ('000s)
 - Economic activity rate (16+)
 - Economic activity rate (16 - 64)
 - Employment rate (16+)
 - Employment rate (16 - 64)
 - Achieved NVQ level 4 and above (16 - 64)
 - Achieved below NVQ level 4 (16 - 64)
 - No qualifications (16 - 64)
- Claimant Count data by Local Government District area
- Youth Unemployment
- Long Term unemployment
- Confirmed redundancies by Local Government District area
- Average Annual Salaries
- Furlough Scheme uptake by Local Government District area

The accompanying spreadsheet has been provided to Council as an Excel file.

Labour Market Context – Northern Ireland

Current Outlook

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic the Northern Ireland labour market had been recording strong growth and improvement across a range of indicators, despite the economy operating in an environment of heightened uncertainty. Brexit, a lower growth global environment and falling/stagnant labour productivity were driving slower economic growth rates⁶.

Despite this lower growth environment the Northern Ireland and UK Labour Market has seen substantial recovery with Northern Ireland having created 101,955 jobs since 2012 – the beginning of the recovery. Almost 2 jobs have been created for every 1 job lost during the recession⁷. This exceptional level of recovery also impacted upon other labour market indicators, with Northern Ireland seeing a continual setting of employment rate records, with the employment rate even reaching unprecedented highs of 72.5% in December 2019 to February 2020. In comparison, during the recession (June 2009 to August 2009) the employment rate fell to 64.1%. To put this in perspective, the change in employment rate reflects 107,000 additional people finding employment

Similarly, Northern Ireland's unemployment rate also reaped the benefit of this rapid job creation with the unemployment rate falling to 2.3% in August-October 2019⁸, having reached highs of 8.1% (October 2010-December 2010) during the recession, with as many as 47,000 people moving from being classed as unemployed into another category. Unlike employment and unemployment rates, the level of economically inactive has remained relatively stable in Northern Ireland, with current levels being 27% (September 2020-November 2020). Northern Ireland's economic inactivity rates are consistently above the UK average⁹, ranging from 25% to 32% since the 1980's.

However, given the current context and the changes the labour market has faced in light of the global pandemic, the level of expansion the Northern Ireland labour market experienced has been significantly impacted and reversed. To highlight the significant impact Covid-19 has had on the Northern Ireland economy, Figure 3.1 shows the vast change in the NI Composite Economic Indicator (NICEI) series over recent quarters. Since the beginning of the pandemic and lockdown in March 2020, the NICEI fell by a combined 15% across Q1 and Q2 2020. However, due to the easing of restrictions and the opening up of the economy in Q3 2020, the economy rebounded in part due to the reopening of non-essential shops and the increase in consumer confidence, with the economy growing by 15.4% between Q2 and Q3.

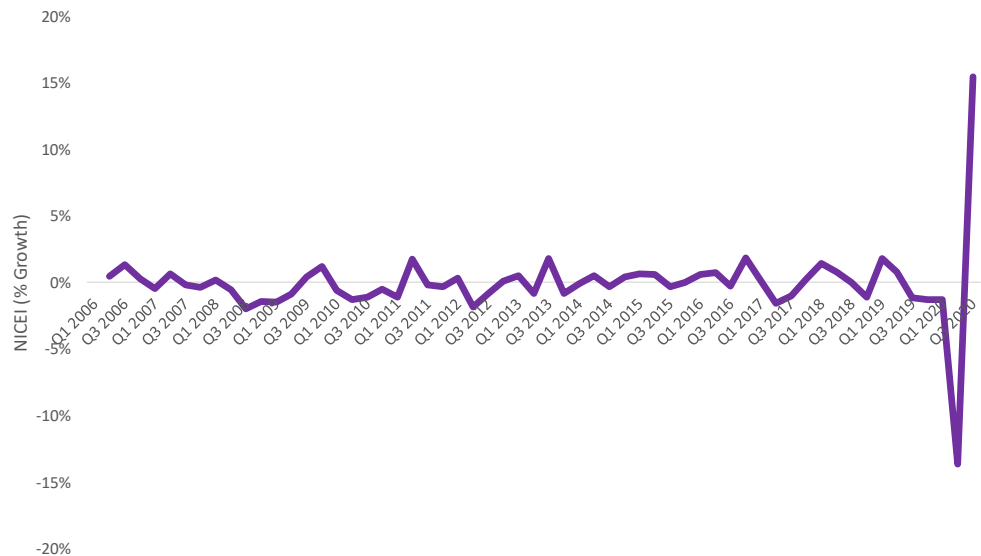
⁶ The Labour Market Story: The UK Following Recession; UK Commission for Employment and Skills (2014); https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/344439/The_Labour_Market_Story- The_UK_Following_Recession.pdf

⁷ In total between 2008 and 2012, Northern Ireland lost 59,699 jobs.

⁸ Labour Force Survey Time Series Data January 2021; NISRA (2021);

⁹ Current economic inactivity rates in the UK stand at 20.7% (September 2020-November 2020) [Northern Ireland Labour Market Report; NISRA (2021); <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/labour-market-report-january-2021.pdf>

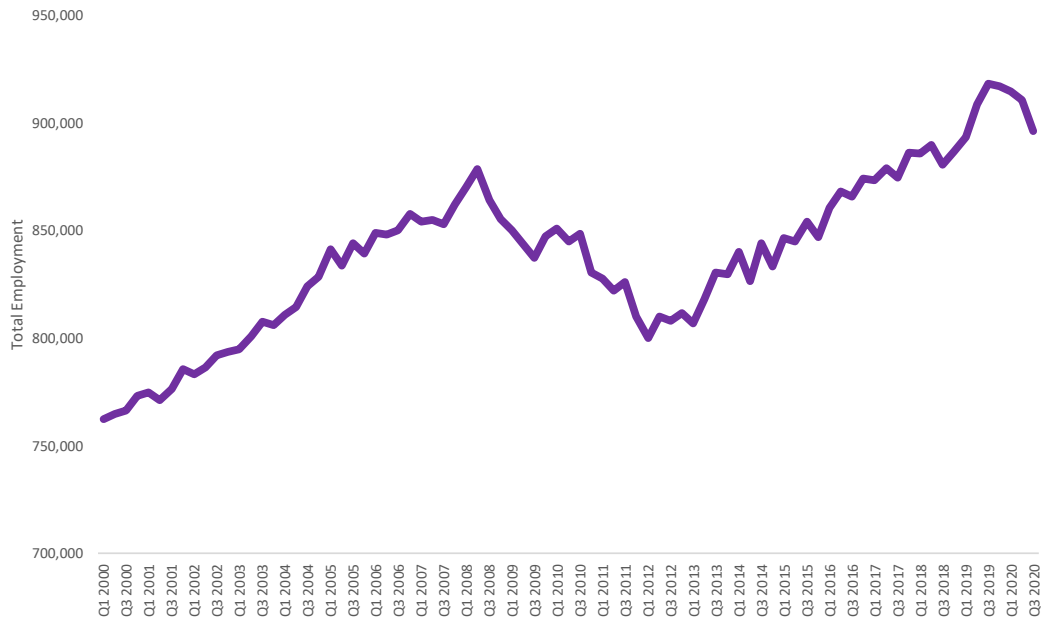
Figure A2.1: NICEI Economic Growth (%), Northern Ireland, Q1 2006-Q3 2020



Source: NISRA & Grant Thornton Analysis

Covid-19 has also impacted labour market performance dramatically. Northern Ireland has lost 20,618 jobs since Q4 2019. The trend in the level of total employment can be seen in Figure A2.2, with peak employment being reached just prior to the pandemic, and current employment levels are now akin to Q1 2019 levels.

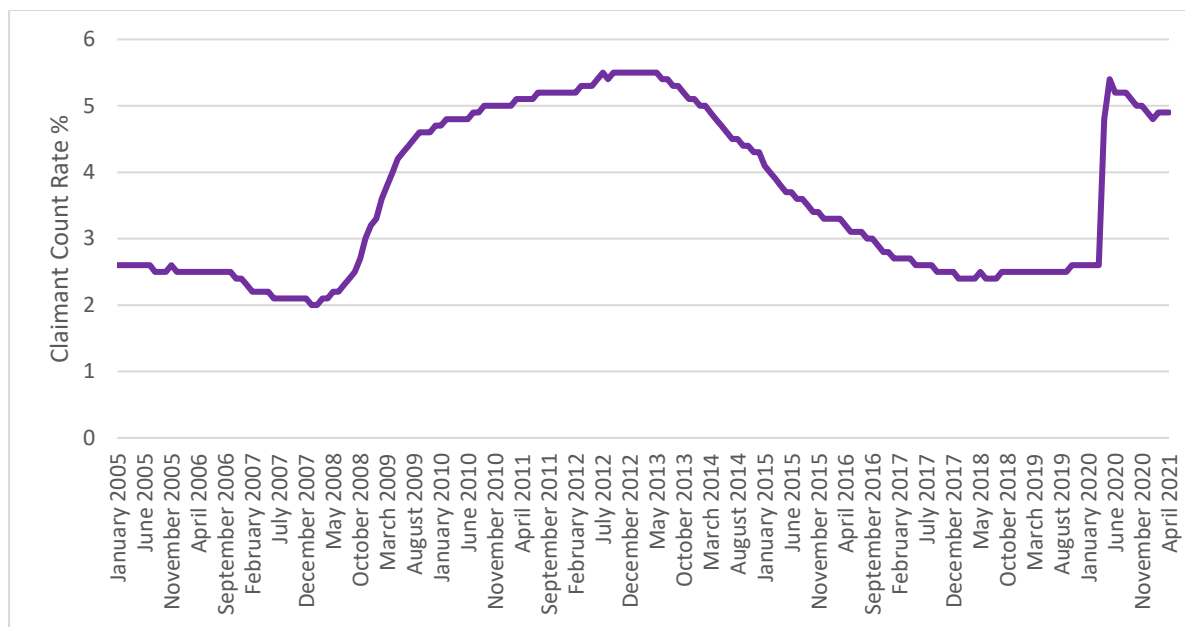
Figure A2.2: Total Employment, Northern Ireland, Q1 2000-Q3 2020



Source: NOMIS (Workforce Jobs) & Grant Thornton Analysis

The employment rate now stands at 70.6% (September-November 2020), which represents a 1.9% point fall from high of 72.5% in December 2019-February 2020. Similarly, as the employment rate has fallen, the level of unemployed has increased to 4.9% in April 2021, up from 2.6% in March 2020, which translates to 27,000 people being added to the unemployment register since the beginning of the pandemic. The impact could potentially have been worse without the interventions to protect jobs with these including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, better known as the furlough scheme. As of December 2020, there were 94,800 employees on furlough throughout Northern Ireland, with this representing a 12% take-up of the total employment eligible for furlough (791,000). The introduction of this scheme has gone some way to curtail and delay potential job losses that would have been lost as a result of the pandemic.

Figure A2.3: Claimant Count Rate (%), Northern Ireland, April 1997-April 2021



Source: NISRA & Grant Thornton Analysis

Those most affected by the pandemic has been young people, with much of the change in the number of claimants since March 2020 having been driven by those aged 16-24 (6,245) and 25-49 (15,455). The main reason for this is due to the high proportion of young people working in sectors that have been most impacted by lockdown restrictions (such as Hospitality and Retail). These two sectors were responsible for almost 50% of all furlough staff in December 2020. This assertion was backed up by research conducted by the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC), which found that during the lockdown 40% of those aged under 25 had been furloughed or laid-off compared to 25% of those aged 45 to 54¹⁰.

Skills Needs & Future Demand

The future outlook of the Northern Ireland labour market will be dependent upon how quickly the Covid-19 pandemic ends and responses to combat the main economic challenges which have presented themselves during the pandemic. There still have been shifts in the labour market which had begun prior to the pandemic, such as the increased need for programmers, data analytics, etc. To profile the future labour market needs in terms of skills and occupations, the

¹⁰ Labour Market Implications of Covid-19-19; Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (2020); https://www.ulster.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/578263/Covid-19-19-Worker-characteristics_08.06.2020.pdf

UUEPC conducted research to profile the future skills and needs of the Northern Ireland labour market as part of their Skills Barometer¹¹ research. Under their high-growth scenario the UUEPC estimate that there will be an additional 85,000 net new jobs created over the 2018-2028 period¹². Sectors such as ICT are experiencing the highest level of expansion, with the ICT sector forecast to grow by 50%. Similar expansions are expected in other 'high productivity' sectors such as Professional, Scientific & Technical Services. In terms of job roles and skills requirements in this occupation grouping, it encompasses accountants, marketers, lawyers, management consultants, architects etc. The skills profile here is typically degree level.

Manufacturing will also continue on its strong growth from the recession. However, this is likely to have been impacted due to lockdown measures and social distancing measures.

In terms of future occupation demand, higher skilled occupations such as Managers, Professionals and Associate Professionals will account for the majority of employment growth. With sectors such as the scientific and technological sector seeing the highest level of growth, with the sector forecast to grow by almost a third over the next 10 years. Whereas lower skilled occupations such as Retail, Agriculture, etc. will have a much more subdued outlook, with retail only expected to grow by 2,410 jobs. The move within the Northern Ireland labour market to an increased need for higher skilled workers will become more evident as the UUEPC expect that only 1 in 10 of future vacancies will be accessible for those with an NVQ level 2 or below. 1 in every 3 job vacancies advertised will require at least an undergraduate level degree. Skills and employability programme therefore have to reflect this emerging context.

This research highlighted the future shift of the labour market and the economy to a more skill based economy, however it should be noted that as the impacts of Covid-19 on skills and future skills demand are yet to be fully understood, Covid-19 could shift these requirements further in part due to the increased shift to remote working and increased need/preference for IT skills/infrastructure.

¹¹ Northern Ireland Skills Barometer: Summary Report; Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (2019); <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Skills-Barometer-2019-Summary-Report.pdf>

¹² However, it should be considered as this analysis was conducted prior to the pandemic it doesn't include the Covid-19 impacts.

