

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

To: Leisure & Development Committee

RNLI Beach Lifeguard Service

8th December 2015

For Decision

Report to Committee

Linkage to Interim Corporate Plan	
Strategic Themes	Transition and Transformation Prosperity Health & Wellbeing
Lead Officer	Peter Thompson – Head of Tourism and Recreation
Cost: (If applicable)	£128,408.00

The purpose of this report is to:

- **Outline what has been provided by RNLI by way of provision of a beach lifeguard service for Council managed beaches.**
- **Present recommendations for future provision of service by RNLI.**

Background

Since 2010 the following recreational beaches have benefited from a beach lifeguard service provided by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).

- Benone Strand
- Downhill Strand
- Castlerock
- Portrush West
- Portrush East
- Whiterocks

This agreement for services between RNLI and the legacy Councils of Coleraine and Limavady expires on the 31st December 2015.

The cost to Council for the delivery of this service for the 2015 season was £113,714.60. This figure covered all associated costs for maintaining a quality service at the above beaches.

When RNLI was initially engaged to deliver the beach lifeguard service for Coleraine Borough Council and Limavady Borough Council in 2010, this replaced the service which had previously been delivered in house by both Councils. This had involved the recruitment and selection of candidates, training, supervision and all equipment supplied by Council. RNLI had already developed and delivered a beach lifeguard programme in England and Wales and after a cost analysis exercise and assessment of service delivery, it was agreed that their services would offer a better and more efficient service for our coastal resort beaches.

Service

As part of the agreement RNLI has been responsible for the following elements;

- Recruitment, selection and training of lifeguards.
- Provision of beach lifeguard units.
- Provision of all surf rescue equipment including vehicles and watercraft.
- Undertaking of beach risk assessments for lifeguard service provision.

In addition the service also provided;

- Advice and support to Council with respect to beach and coastal events, beach safety signage and public rescue equipment.
- Delivery of the 'Hit the Surf' education programme to a range of primary schools.

The service is operational during

- Easter (Portrush - West, East, Whiterocks & Benone).
- Weekends and Bank Holidays in May and June (All above named beaches).
- Daily from late June – early September (All above named beaches).

At the request of Council officers, RNLI has been monitoring other sites along the Causeway Coast to assess priority beaches where further lifeguard service provision may be appropriate. After consideration, officers believe that there is sufficient usage and visitor numbers at Ballycastle to warrant an extension of service to include the seafront beach.

A new agreement is now recommended between Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and RNLI, assuming the Council wishes to continue with the provision of Lifeguard provision at selected beaches across our Borough. This would need to be on the basis of a single tender action based on the premise that they are the only known provider for this type of service.

Recommendations:

Council approval is sought to issue a new agreement and contract for services whereby RNLI are engaged for the provision of beach lifeguarding at the beaches outlined above for a 5 year period up until December 2020.

Members are also asked to provide approval to extend the RNLI beach lifeguard service to Ballycastle during July and August for the same contracted period at a cost of £12,176.40.

Total costs for the service in 2016 is anticipated to be £128,408.00 subject to contract agreement. (Including Ballycastle)

In the previous 5 year contract, the annual increase in Council's contribution was based on a figure of a 2 % increase. Annual increases are to be agreed yearly and capped at no more than 2% up to the end of the contract for services in 2020.