

**Causeway Coast and Glens  
Borough Council**

**COUNCIL  
STRATEGY  
2015 – 2019**

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## 1. Introduction

Welcome to the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Strategy for 2015-2019. This is the first Council Strategy for the newly formed Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council which came into existence on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 as part of the reform to local government in Northern Ireland which saw the number of Councils reduced from 26 to 11.

We have much to be proud of in terms of the legacy we have inherited from the four predecessor Councils: Coleraine Borough Council, Ballymoney Borough Council, Limavady Borough Council and Moyle District Council, and from the functions that transferred from central government. The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has sought to build upon the values and ideals which shaped these Councils while setting out a new vision and direction as a collective organisation.

We start on our journey as Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council with a sense of pride, belief and ambition. We are committed to help shape the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council as a dynamic, progressive Council and as an exemplar of best practice across all areas of service. We also seek to work for the benefit of our residents and continue to develop the reputation of our unique geographical location.

Our area prides itself on being a great place to live, work and visit. Very few areas can boast the richness and diversity of the landscape our new Council has to offer: a coastline which stretches over 140 km along the Atlantic Coast from Lough Foyle to the Glens of Antrim, as well as three areas of outstanding natural beauty encompassing Binevenagh, the Causeway Coast and the Glens of Antrim. Our area attracts thousands of tourists every year as it is home to prestigious events such as the North West 200, the Northern Ireland International Airshow and the Milk Cup as well as festivals such as the Ould Lammas Fair and Danny Boy.

This Strategy, through 5 cross cutting strategic themes, sets out the priorities of the Council between 2015 and 2019. We will work to provide effective and sustainable local services, develop our economy and create jobs, enhance our people's health and wellbeing, empower our local people to take ownership of projects in their community, promote our tourist offer locally as well as internationally, and protect the environment in which we live.

While we have established our aims and objectives for the area the Council will continue to listen and engage with its citizens to identify changing needs and ensure that resources are available to deliver services which meets these needs. Community Planning will provide the ideal process to further engage citizens and other statutory agencies, thereby ensuring we best shape our area for the maximum benefit of our people.

We look forward to working with our residents and local organisations to successfully implement this Strategy over the next 4 years.

## **2. Your Local Councillors**

Name, Party and photo of each Councillor

### **3. Why We Have a Council Strategy**

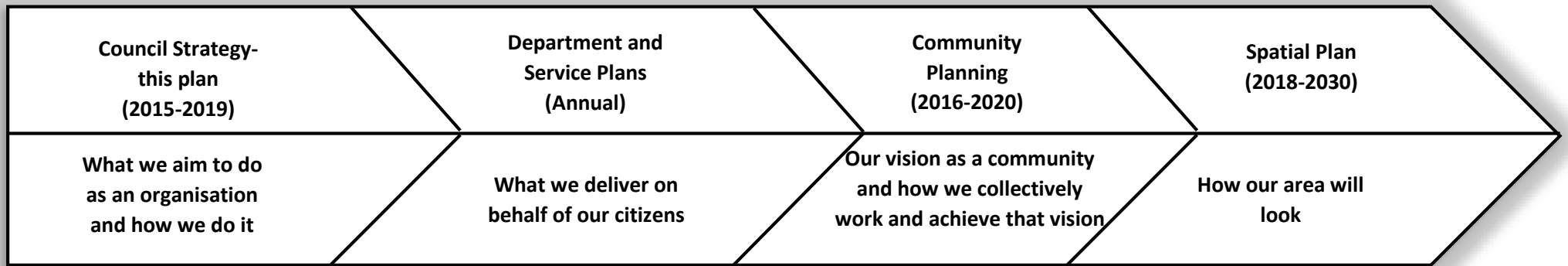
This document sets out the 2015-2019 Strategy for the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

The key purpose of the 2015-2019 Council Strategy is to establish the direction, style and standards for the new Council. Specifically it will provide a framework to:

- Ensure all people representing the Council are working towards a shared and agreed direction; and
- Establish the strategic priorities for the organisation and its customers (ratepayers, citizens of the Council area and visitors to it).

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is a complex organisation; it manages a budget of almost £50 million annually, it employs 722 people providing a range of public services across 70 Council owned buildings, sites and facilities. The Council Strategy is a high level strategic plan which aims to ensure that all of the Council's team across all of its services and sites are moving in the same direction and meeting the expectation of Council citizens and visitors at a consistent and high level.

The Council Strategy provides the framework for the development of the Council Directorates and service delivery plans in addition to confirming the Vision and Mission for the Council and how it relates to other public sector organisations. The Strategy's relationship with a range of other plans relevant to the Council area and the Council is set out in the following diagram:

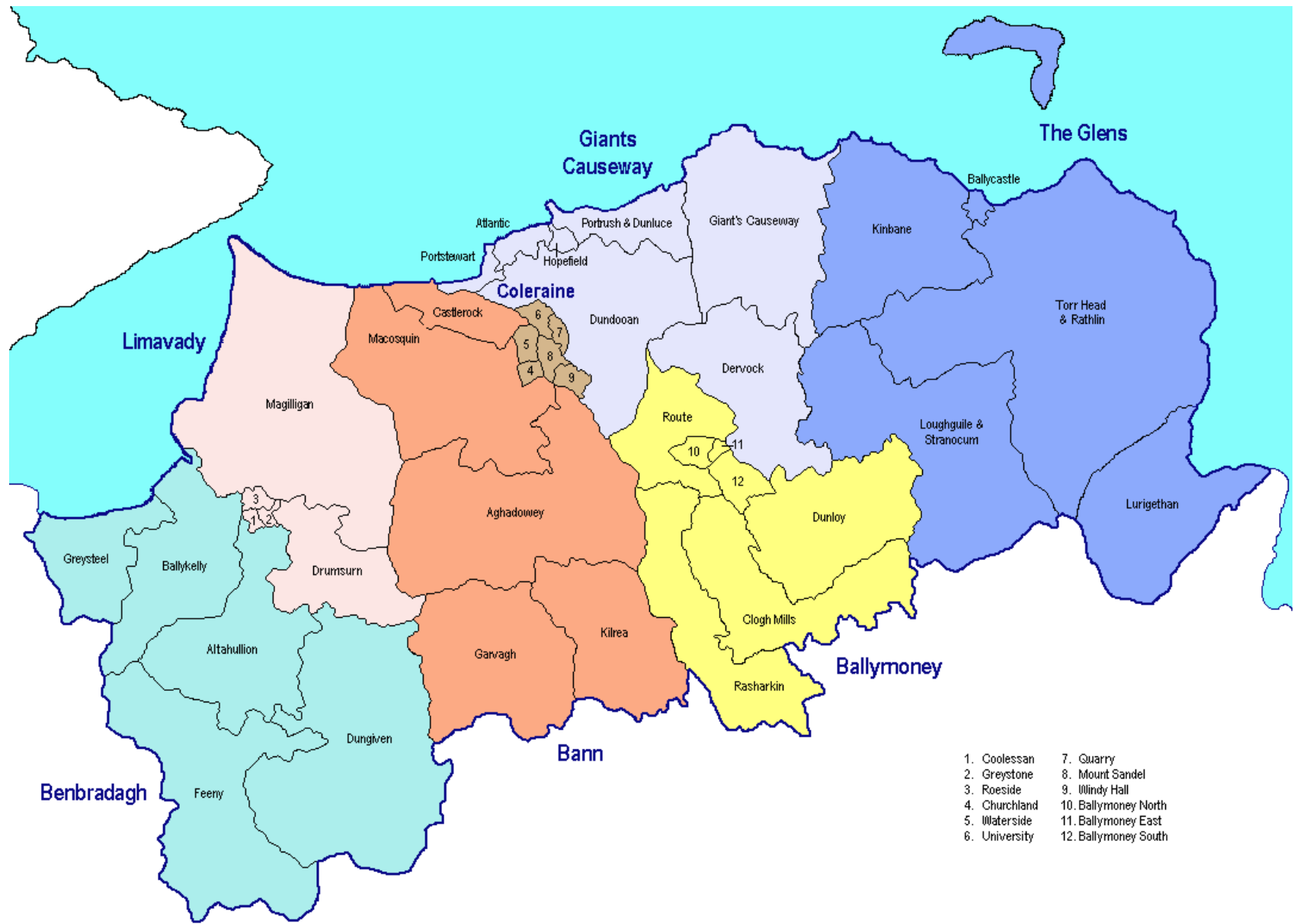


## **4. Understanding the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough**

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council represents 140,000 plus people and has a geographical area of some 2000km<sup>2</sup>. The following map shows the new Council area; the 7 District Electoral areas are colour coded and the 40 Electoral Wards are named:







- 1. Coolestan
- 2. Greystone
- 3. Roeside
- 4. Churchland
- 5. Waterside
- 6. University
- 7. Quarry
- 8. Mount Sandel
- 9. Windy Hall
- 10. Ballymoney North
- 11. Ballymoney East
- 12. Ballymoney South

In order to develop a Strategy for the Council it is useful to understand the context within which the Council will operate and serve:

### *Who Uses Our Services....?*

The Council area is where 140,877 people live, rest and play. We have a diverse population with the following characteristics:

- The resident population of the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council at the 2011 Census was 140,877 representing 7.78% of Northern Ireland's total population;
- This population resides in 53,722 households throughout the Council area;
- The number of people living in the Council area has increased by 7.08% since the 2011 Census which indicates a growing population;
- 50.54% of the population is female while 49.46% are male;
- 20.41% of the population are aged under-16 which is similar to the Northern Ireland average (20.95%). However the number of young people in the Council area has declined by 3.16% since the 2001 Census;
- There is a larger proportion of people aged 65 and over living in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough (15.40%) compared to the Northern Ireland average (14.56%). This indicates that there is an ageing population in the Council area;
- 54.79% of the people living in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council are Protestant while 40.21% are Catholic; and
- 20.17% of residents have a long term health problem or disability which is 0.52% lower than the Northern Ireland average.

### *What do these population figures tell us...?*

- The population in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is growing;
- The proportion of young people living in the area is declining;
- There is a growing number of older people residing in the Council area;
- The Council area will be represented by both main traditions in Northern Ireland;
- The general health of the population is better than the rest of Northern Ireland.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is the place where 140,877 people live. If we compare our population to the rest of Northern Ireland we can define ourselves as follows:

- The new Council area stretches west to east from Lough Foyle to the Glens of Antrim, and south from the Atlantic coast and Rathlin Island. The Borough includes landmarks such as the Giants Causeway world heritage site and Carrick-a-Rede rope-bridge;
- The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council also enjoys 31 historic parks and gardens, 15 national nature reserves, and 4 areas of outstanding natural beauty;
- The size of the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is 1,968 square kilometres. This is 14.0% of Northern Ireland's total land mass;
- The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council borders 3 other Council areas: Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, Mid Ulster District Council, and Derry City and Strabane District Council.

### *What do these geographical figures tell us.....?*

- The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is one of the largest Councils in Northern Ireland in terms of land mass;
- The Council area contains some of Northern Ireland's most prominent visitor attractions and therefore tourism will be a major contributor to the local economy;
- The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will advocate for and provide services across one of the best natural environments in Western Europe;
- There are almost 120 designations across the council area which merit special status, including Natural Nature Reserves, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Blue Flag Beaches
- We enjoy many natural attractions such as coastlines, beaches, hills, mountains, water and islands

### *An Area with Reasons to Visit and Things to Experience....*

Our World Heritage Site, environments and blue flag beaches have always provided reasons to visit. These are complimented by events and activities which are internationally recognised, respected and supported:

- The North West 200 International road race attracts over 100,000 spectators annually to the Council area;
- Many of the next generation of football stars emerge at the annual Northern Ireland Milk Cup tournament;
- The Borough has become a focal point for golf on the world stage. It encompasses 12 golf courses, including some of the world's best known. The Royal Portrush Golf Course successfully hosted the 2012 Irish Open and is on the roster for the future Open Championship, arguably the biggest Major golf tournament in the world.

### *A Place Where People Work, Create and Earn ...*

The economy of the Council area is defined by our business structure and the number of our people actually engaged in work. The characteristics of the Council's economy are as follows:

- 36.36% of the population in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is economically inactive which is higher than the Northern Ireland average (33.78%);
- The number of people in paid employment is 2.99% lower than the Northern Ireland average (54.62% versus 57.61%);
- The percentage of the population who are unemployed is higher than for Northern Ireland as a whole (5.59% versus 4.96%);
- 13% of the working age population is employment deprived which ranks the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council third in the deprivation rankings in relation to this indicator;

- In 2012 Invest NI provided £3.84 million of assistance to businesses in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council which was the lowest in comparison to the other Council areas in Northern Ireland;
- 148 businesses were started in the Council area in 2012 through Invest NI's Regional Start Initiative which was the 5<sup>th</sup> largest increase in Northern Ireland.

### *What do these economic figures tell us.....?*

- Unemployment is a greater issue across the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council than across NI as a whole;
- The number of job opportunities in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area are limited;
- There are not enough well-paid jobs being created within the Council area on a consistent basis;
- A large number of the businesses located in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council are not availing of support from Invest NI;
- Entrepreneurship is prominent in the Council area with a healthy rate of businesses being started. The challenge is to convert more of these indigenous start-ups to growth enterprises, underpinned by Research and Development, export sales, and increased employment.

### *A Place to Learn and Develop Skills ....*

Formative learning and skills development is essential to the prosperity of the Borough. The area has some advantages, including a University Campus and 2 regional colleges but some of the challenges are as follows:

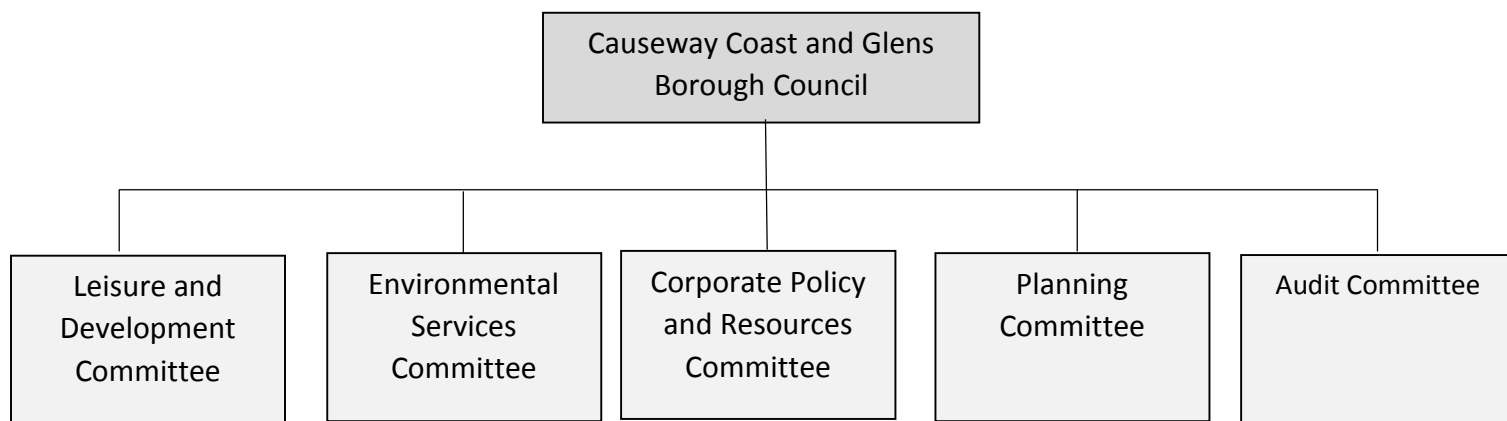
- Of those who left school in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council in 2012-2013 80.2% achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grade C and above which is higher than the Northern Ireland average (78.5%);
- 21.33% of the people living in the Council area have gained a degree or higher qualification. This is slightly lower than for Northern Ireland as a whole (23.65%);
- The percentage of the population with no or low levels of qualifications in the Council area is higher than the Northern Ireland average (42.93% versus 40.63%).

### *What do these skills and education figures tell us...?*

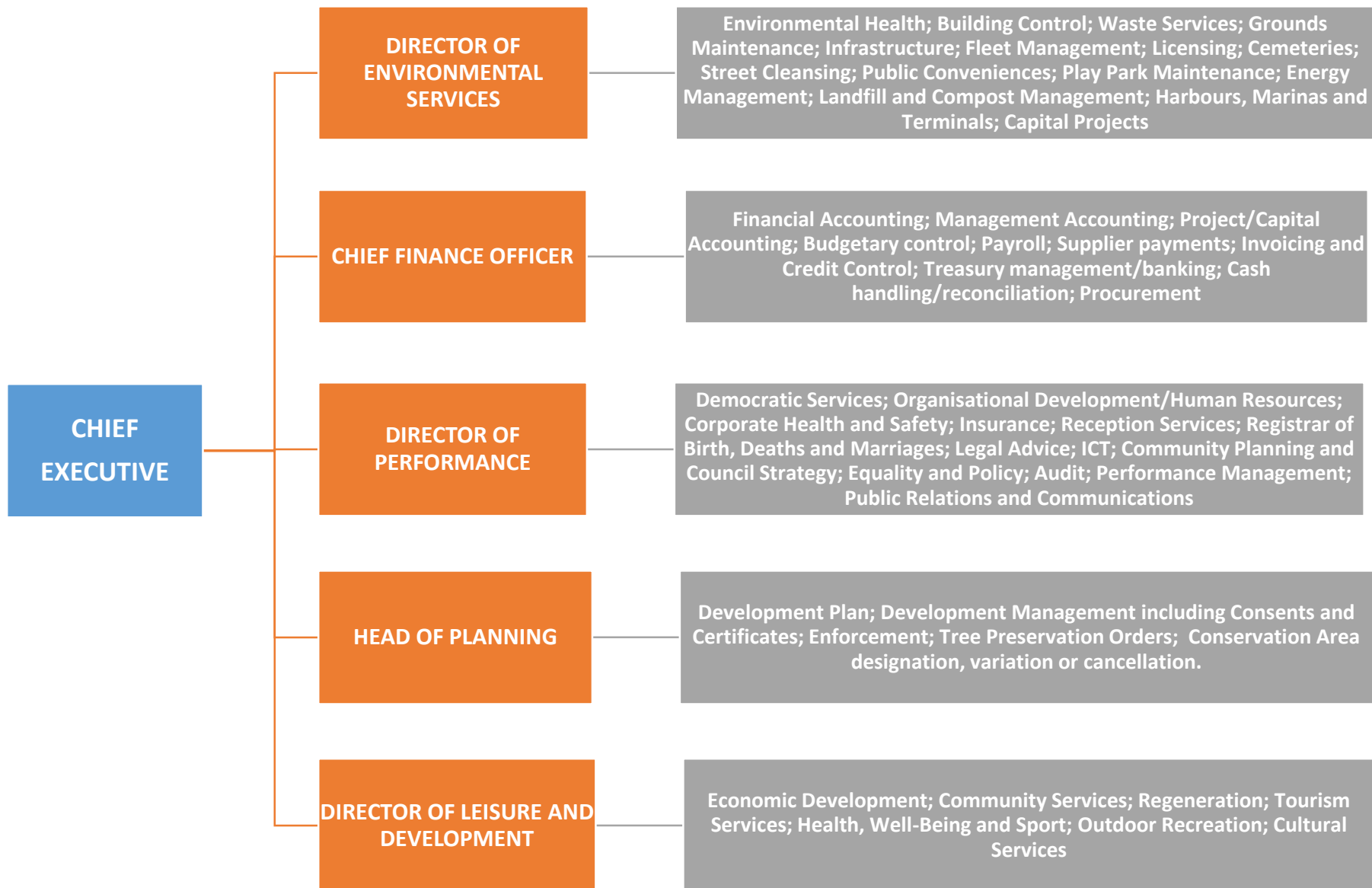
- The educational attainment within secondary schools across the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is higher than the norm for Northern Ireland;
- Based on figures educational achievement is lower in further and higher education throughout the Council area;
- The skills base of the total population of the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is slightly lower compared to other areas of Northern Ireland.

## **5. The Responsibility of the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council**

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council delivers services across seven District Electoral Area which are represented by 40 Councillors. The Council has adopted a traditional committee system of governance which is illustrated below:



From the management and service delivery perspectives the organisation the Council is structured as shown below:



## 6. Our Council... Our Vision

Vision in the context of the Council's Strategy is about establishing the ambition and direction for the Council.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council vision over the 2015-2019 timeframe is to:

Maximise the benefits of our unique location and landscape by providing ambitious, accessible, innovative and efficient services which fulfil customer expectations

## 7. Our Mission ... Confirming the Purpose of the Council

The 'mission' establishes the purpose of the Council; the reason we exist and the role that we will undertake servicing our citizens.

The mission of the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for 2015 - 2019 is to:

Improve the quality of life and well-being for all of our citizens and visitors by:

- Providing effective and sustainable local public services;
- Accelerating our economy and improving economic prosperity;
- Placing local communities at the heart of decision making;
- Protecting and enhancing our unique natural environment and assets; and
- Advocating for the area and our citizens in both local and international arenas.



## 8. Our Values ... Defining the Type of Council We Aspire To

Values define the type of organisation that the Council will strive to be ... it recognises that not only will we focus on providing a range of public services across the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough but we will do so to a set of standards which define the organisation's culture.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will deliver its services and meet its responsibilities to ratepayers and communities across the Council area by adhering to the following values:

<b>Our Values</b>	<b>We Will Make These Meaningful for Our People By...</b>
<b><i>Fairness</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• treating everyone fairly and with respect;</li> <li>• making decisions based on evidence, need and equality.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Excellence</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• achieving the highest standards in our service delivery;</li> <li>• ensure that our natural assets are managed to their maximum effect;</li> <li>• fulfilling the expectations of our citizens.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Sustainability and Efficiency</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• taking informed decisions which ensure the sustainability of the Causeway Coast and Glens as the Local Authority;</li> <li>• using our resources as efficiently as possible to deliver value for money for our ratepayers.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Empowerment</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting our people to reach their full potential in their role within Council;</li> <li>• supporting and facilitating communities to provide services and activities in their local areas.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Innovation</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create an environment that encourages everyone to think about better ways to deliver Council services;</li> <li>• developing partnerships to improve the quality of life for our residents.</li> </ul>

## 9. Our Strategic Themes... Bringing Focus to the Work of the Council

The Council's Strategy sets the direction and standards for the Council to take.

In order to provide a structure to achieve the Council's Vision, a series of key corporate themes have been developed. Outcomes have been established for each of these five themes which will form the central context of our work over the 2015-2019 timeframe. A number of outcomes have been developed for each of the five themes. These outcomes define what we would like to achieve at a high level against each area across the 4 year timeframe of this Strategy.

	<b>Strategic Theme</b>	<b>We will Achieve These Outcomes by 2019</b>
1	<b>Leader and Champion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Elected Members will provide civic leadership to our citizens, working to promote the Borough as an attractive place to live, work, invest and visit;</li> <li>• We will establish key relationships with Government, agencies and potential strategic partners in Northern Ireland and external to it which helps us to deliver our vision for this Council area.</li> </ul>
2	<b>Accelerating Our Economy and Contributing to Prosperity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will work with its partners to maximise business start-up opportunities and encourage existing enterprises to grow and prosper;</li> <li>• The Council will work with partners to maximise investment funding opportunities from external sources including: The Stormont Assembly, the European Union, the Rural Development Programme, and from private sector financing.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Innovation and Transformation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will continuously examine and introduce ways to provide services in more accessible and efficient ways;</li> <li>• The Council will embrace new technologies and processes where they can bring about better experiences for citizens and visitors.</li> </ul>
4	<b>Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council will work to support healthy lifestyle choices for all citizens;</li> <li>• Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health</li> <li>• Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough.</li> </ul>
5		

	<b>Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All environments in the area will benefit from pro-active decision making which protects the natural features, characteristics and integrity of the Borough;</li><li>• Our citizens will be given the maximum opportunity to enjoy our natural environments;</li><li>• Our natural assets will be carefully managed to generate economic and social returns without compromising their sustainability for future generations.</li></ul>
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## 10. Current Financial Profile

The Council has a current 2015 / 2016 budget of £49.92 million to deliver its present service portfolio. This expenditure makes up just under half of the overall rates paid by citizens and businesses in the area (the remainder pays for central government services). The following table provides an overview of how Council presently expends its resources on service delivery and this is the baseline budget that will be used to deliver the strategic priorities listed in the section 9:

Service	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost
Economic Development	3.70m	(1.64m)	2.06m
Community & Culture	2.72m	(0.80m)	1.92m
Leisure & Sport	6.88m	(2.60m)	4.28m
Tourism & Amenities	3.63m	(3.24m)	0.39m
Waste	13.12m	(1.04m)	12.08m
Regulatory	4.58m	(1.52m)	3.06m
Estates	5.57m	(0.23m)	5.34m
Infrastructure	0.35m	(0.91m)	(0.56m)
Central Services & Planning	9.37m	(1.42m)	7.95m
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>49.92m</b>	<b>13.40m</b>	<b>36.52m</b>

## 11. How Will We Do It?

The Council has started a two stage transformational change process:

- Transition - the process of integrating the four original Councils and transferred functions into the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council;
- Transformation - evolving our processes and approaches to service delivery in order to ensure we are effective at meeting customer's expectations while being efficient in doing so.

Innovation requires continuous improvement. The Council will deliver on the vision, mission, values and strategic priorities set out in this Council Strategy by clarifying its customers' needs and expectations, reviewing current service provision, analysing challenges, risks and prospects, developing improvement opportunities, taking action based on cost and benefits, and **continually** reviewing performance.

## 12. Performance Management

The Council will produce an Annual Performance Improvement Plan containing key objectives that relate to the Council Strategy. These objectives will have performance targets agreed annually by the Council. The Council will collate information to measure its performance against the targets set and will then publicise the results. In addition to self- imposed performance improvement targets, the Council has a duty, under the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (the Act), to set improvement targets in at least one of the following areas-

- (a) strategic effectiveness;
- (b) service quality;
- (c) service availability;
- (d) fairness;
- (e) sustainability;
- (f) efficiency; and
- (g) innovation.

Each year the Council will undertake a performance review before setting objectives for the next financial year. The Local Government Auditor will also carry out a detailed review of the Performance Improvement Plan and assess the extent to which the Council has met its obligations under the Act.



