

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

To: Environmental Services Committee

CASTLEROCK RAILWAY STATION FOOTBRIDGE

6 October 2015

For Decision

1.0 Reporting to Committee

Linkage to Corporate Plan	
Strategic Priority	
Objective	Review of Council Assets & Liabilities
Lead Officer	G Doyle
Cost: (If applicable)	As per the Options contained within the report

1.1 Background

In 1996 Council entered into a 10,000 year lease with NI Transport Holding Co. (NITHC) for the upkeep of the footbridge at Castlerock Railway Station. Terms of the lease put the onus on Council to restore the bridge, continue to maintain it throughout the lease, indemnify NITHC against claims for damage or injury and pay any NITHC costs incurred by them related to work carried out on the bridge. The bridge was restored by Council in 1998 but since then has had minimal planned maintenance and is now showing signs of significant deterioration. A report carried out in 2012 concluded that *“the long term use of this bridge will prove difficult and expensive with time, only adding to the Council’s financial liability to keep the structure fit for purpose. At some stage Council should explore the implications of the removal of this footbridge or its replacement with a new construction designed for the coastal exposure”*.

1.2 Detail

The condition of the bridge has deteriorated to an extent that it is difficult to put an estimate against its repair cost without detailed investigation. The on-going deterioration of the materials used in its construction (wrought and cast iron) may be difficult to repair and may be prohibitively expensive. To provide assurance that any repairs have been effective, it will require an ongoing maintenance programme including load testing and regular inspections. Under the terms of the lease these costs will be the responsibility of Council. Maintenance may increase with time to a point when the bridge will have to be removed or replaced.

It should be noted that Translink are currently undertaking work on the Belfast/Londonderry route which will make the current Platform 2 redundant. Translink will be removing this platform and in turn, will make the need for any footbridge link between the two platforms redundant.

1.3 Options

Members are asked to consider the following options:-

Option A – Carry out repair works to the footbridge in situ.

This option has the benefit of leaving the bridge in place. However, repairs will be difficult to complete due to access restrictions and will have to be completed during line closures. The full extent of the repairs necessary will not be quantifiable until grit blasting of the footbridge takes place. This means that accurate costing of the repairs is impossible. Once repaired, in situ load testing will be required. Substantial annual planned maintenance will be essential following the repair works. Estimated repair cost - Unknown. Annual Maintenance – Approximately £5,000.

Option B – Remove the central span of the footbridge and complete detailed condition report. Subject to line closures the main span could be removed (approx. £5k) for analysis/testing (approx. £5k) and a report prepared which may be able to advise Council on the following:

- a) The viability of repairing the bridge.
- b) Indicative costs of repair.
- c) Indicative remaining lifespan.

Option C – Permanently remove the bridge.

Due to the future removal of Platform 2 there is no requirement for the footbridge to access between platforms. However, the historic relevance of the bridge must also be considered. Estimated cost - £10,000 for removal complete bridge structure.

1.4 Recommendation

It is recommended that Council consider the options above in 1.3.