

Title of Report:	Update on activities and funding request for Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 December 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities Protecting and enhancing our environment and assets
Outcome	Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health Our natural assets will be carefully managed to generate economic and social returns without compromising their sustainability for future generations.
Lead Officer	Head of Tourism and Recreation Coast and Countryside Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£35,000
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	

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

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an update on the work of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) for the financial period 2020 - 2021 and to outline options for potential funding for the current financial year up until 31 March 2022. This report was deferred from November Leisure and Development to allow an opportunity for CCGHT Officials to present at the December Leisure and Development Committee meeting.

2.0 Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council funded Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) for the period of 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021. The total amount of funding awarded was £35,000. This was awarded subject to the delivery of four key activity areas:

- Delivering opportunities to experience the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area's unique outdoor and heritage through public events.
- Administration of AONB Management Plans for the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB, Binevenagh AONB and Causeway Coast AONB.
- Administration of the Giant's Causeway & Causeway Coast World Heritage Site Steering Group and Action Plan.
- Support Council with the delivery and promotion of biodiversity related projects, engagement with landowners and establishing a volunteer programme.

The outputs from the 2020/21 work plan were reviewed by the Coast and Countryside Team and the Funding Unit. It has been confirmed that these outputs have been completed as agreed, except for one activity that relates to a review of the Causeway Coast Way Walking Experience. Officers would recommend that, subject to approval, this will be carried over as work that requires completion into the 2021/22 Agreement. **Annex A** details the work delivered by the CCGHT, as agreed by Council, for the period 1/4/2020 to 31/3/2021.

The focus of CCGHT continues to be based around the development and implementation of environmental and landscape management plans including the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); Binevenagh, the Causeway Coast and the Antrim Coast and Glens. CCGHT also has a role working on a regional basis to develop awareness of environmental management and to promote sustainable tourism.

Council's Coast and Countryside remit continues to be complimented by the activities provided by CCGHT. In addition, any financial transaction will be based on a single tender action for services that only the CCGHT can provide as specialists in this area of work. These services include the following.

- Developing sustainable and effective partnerships such as the World Heritage Site Steering Group and implementation of the new World Heritage Site plan for Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast WHS.
- Key partner in the £4.5 million EU LIFE Rathlin project which focuses on natural heritage and community.
- Delivering protected area management provision through action plans for Antrim Coast & Glens, Binevenagh and Causeway Coast AONBs. New 10-year action plan for the Antrim Coast & Glens launched in September 2021.
- Ensuring best practice in sustainable development principles delivered through the AONB action plans and assessing the development potential of a Co. Antrim Geopark.

- Undertaken accessibility audits at nine key outdoor sites to better facilitate a variety of mobility and access needs for residents and visitors.
- Deliver sustainable, efficient, and effective core activity/management for CCGHT.
- Facilitating the delivery of a range of projects through the Binevenagh & Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme £3.4 million investment in the project area.
- Undertaking community engagement as part of the Binevenagh & Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership, with respect to outdoor recreation and heritage.

Council's financial support continues to play a vital role in sustaining CCGHT. Council's commitment will be subject to funding made available from NIEA, Tourism NI and Mid and East Antrim, who have all made an allowance for financial contribution for agreed services as in previous years.

3.0 Update on proposals

Council officers, in consultation with CCGHT, have developed a proposed activity plan for Elected Members consideration which identifies outputs for the current financial year 2021/2022 provided in **Annex B**. This builds on the existing work identified by Council and CCGHT, ongoing activity that is necessary with respect to AONB and World Heritage Site planning, and also reflects work identified within CCGHT's operational plan.

In addition, the work plan reflects new activity which is considered appropriate to landscape management and the development of further outdoor recreation product contributing to the visitor experience.

This activity plan continues to set the direction of travel for further activity by CCGHT that will deliver landscape management and further compliment the Coast & Countryside and wider Tourism & Recreation remit.

An additional action has now been identified for inclusion to undertake a review of the wider walking product with the Borough. This is in response to the increased level of interest in outdoor recreation in the past 12 – 18 months, especially walking.

The CCGHT have requested to present to the Leisure and Development Committee, at some point in the near future, to update on achievements of the AONB management plans and to outline a strategic approach to its operational delivery for the next 10 year period.

4.0 Options

The following options are available to Council:

- Option 1
Do not procure any services from CCGHT for the 2021/2022 period.
- Option 2
Council agrees to procure the entire services as detailed in **Annex B**. The total cost for this work is £35,000 for the period 2021/22.
- Option 3
Council agrees to procure only a number of services detailed in **Annex B** for the period 2021/22. This will require a reduction in the number of projects delivered and therefore the cost to Council will be reduced proportionately.

Officers will pursue, with the CCGHT, the outstanding activity with regard to the review of the Causeway Coast Way walking experience.

5.0 Recommendation

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to consider the above options outlining the extent of a contract for services for delivery of activities that complement the Council's Tourism and Recreation remit and in line with Council's Destination Management Plan. The activities are outlined in **Annex B** of this report (agreement is subject to completion of outstanding activities from the 2020/21 year).

Annex A - CCGHT Activities in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area 2020/2021

Proposed service activities for Council

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed
Implementation of the World Heritage Site plan	Maintain UNESCO World Heritage Site status at a key landscape feature and visitor attraction Contributes to Causeway Coast Way, Ulster Way and International Appalachian Trail experience.	●	●	●	●	Implementation of targets from WHS plan Raise awareness of walking product linking key visitor sites 3x WHS Meetings per year	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£3,000	Complete
Administration of AONB Management Plans for the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB, Binevenagh AONB and Causeway Coast AONB	With partners, implement actions from reviewed AONB Management Plans	●	●	●	●	2x AONB meetings per year per AONB Combined AONB meeting with training element for all Complete monitoring and communication tasks for each AONB Review of membership and focus of the 3 AONBs	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£6,000	Complete

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed
Continue with the development of the potential Co. Antrim Geopark.	<p>Present findings of assessment to inform key partners of potential benefits of geopark status and resource implications required to deliver this. This report will include both positive and potentially negative impacts that might arise from the implementation of this status.</p> <p>Seminars and information sources will be required to share with key stakeholders regarding the geopark agenda.</p>		●	●	●	<p>Working Group establish - TOR 4 meetings per year</p> <p>Steering Group established – TOR</p> <p>Overall Activity Plan/Road map developed</p> <p>Raising awareness via WG and CCGHT media</p> <p>Initial general public raising awareness.</p> <p>Participation in UK and ROI Geopark meetings to gain experience/best practice</p>	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£5,000	Complete
<p>Causeway Coast Way (CCW) Walking Experience</p> <p>Identify best Practice for signposting to long distance walking trails from car tourism routes across Europe.</p> <p>Identify key locations along</p>	<p>This project is to raise awareness and mark the many access points to the CCW walking experience from the CCR touring route.</p> <p>Procure a design house for an integrated design to maximise the visual connection of the current CCW branding that fits with DfI requirements for trail signposting off</p>			●	●	<p>Provide report on best practice of long-distance trails.</p> <p>Report to cover local issues including land ownership, signage type, statutory requirements and costs for manufacture and installation.</p> <p>2 seminars to consult on</p>	<p>Access to the countryside through sustainable and healthy transportation.</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing/people Prosperity</p>	£8,000	Incomplete. To be included in 2021-2022 (subject to approval)

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed
the CCR whereby signposting can be provided to access points	the CCR.					benefits of improving the CCR for community and business sectors. Provide tender documentation for the appointment of design house for trail signage design and specification.	Driving the Visitor Economy		
Reduce Marine & Terrestrial Litter	Reduced litter and improved understanding of impacts of litter			●	●	3 beach clean events 1 marine litter event *May be impacted by COVID situation	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£2,000	Complete
Delivering opportunities to experience the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area's unique outdoor and heritage through public events.	Series of outdoor and heritage events to include mountain biking, walking, stargazing, angling, bird watching, wild flowers, geology, built heritage developed, promoted and delivered. New opportunities for providers to further develop outdoor and heritage activities in the future is developed through the process. Partners' events are promoted.			●	●	●	At least 15 events organised in line with government guidance and COVID 19 restrictions. Events can if necessary be online and virtual and a target of 400 participants has been set New partners approached and supported. Event programme to be published and promoted in	Health and Wellbeing/people Prosperity £5,000 from Council. Funding from other partners.	Complete

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed
	New or enhanced opportunities in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area to access and learn about the countryside.					digital format and promoted online (including social media). Events to be planned considering social distancing and COVID issues and individual events will be subject to change and alteration at short notice.			
Support conservation of designated sites in the CCGBC area - especially of natural beauty or amenities and wildlife, historic objects or natural phenomena through delivering and promoting training and events to share information on best practice, provide training on identification of species and habitats, measures to enhance biodiversity, practical skills, tackling invasive species etc.	Conservation of designated sites Biodiversity Enhancement Reducing invasive species			●	●	Best practice visit to Herbal-Lays pilot- structured event Training on identification and recording (working with CEDaR as they are appropriate body) Identify and encourage non-eco schools in CCAONB to join scheme via an environmental event Community GIS mapping event	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£1,500	Complete

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed
Support renewal of Local Biodiversity Action Plan	Improved biodiversity in the CCGBC area	X	X	X	X	Participation in biodiversity projects in the CCGBC area that contribute towards the intended outcomes of an emerging LBAP Support for the LIFE+ LifeRaft Project Undertaking feral goose management project on Rathlin Island	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£1,500	Complete
Investigate the requirement for sensitive interpretation at Cushendall Seafront; including 3 interpretation panels featuring geology of the area, linkages with the Scottish Islands and the biodiversity of the area	To improve the quality of the CCR and the visitor experience offering in Cushendall.		X			Provide design, graphics and copy of 3 A2 interpretative panels in consultation with Council officers	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£3,000 (this does not include manufacture and installation of the panels) – accrual from 2020-21 due to COVID restrictions	Complete. Final sign off required

ANNEX B CCGHT Activities in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area 2021/2022

Proposed service activities for Council

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed to date
Implementation of the World Heritage Site plan	<p>Maintain UNESCO World Heritage Site status at a key landscape feature and visitor attraction</p> <p>Contributes to Causeway Coast Way, Ulster Way and International Appalachian Trail experience.</p>	●	●	●	●	<p>Implementation of targets from WHS plan</p> <p>Raise awareness of walking product linking key visitor sites</p> <p>3x WHS Meetings per year</p>	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£3,000	<p>2 X WHS meetings held</p> <p>New action plan launched</p>
Administration of AONB Management Plans for the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB, Binevenagh AONB and Causeway Coast AONB	With partners, implement actions from reviewed AONB Management Plans	●	●	●	●	<p>2x AONB meetings per year per AONB</p> <p>Combined AONB meeting with training element for all</p> <p>Complete monitoring and communication tasks for each AONB</p> <p>Review of membership and focus of the 3 AONBs</p>	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£6,000	<p>Regular meetings held as per schedule.</p> <p>New 10 year action plan for Antrim Coast & Glens complete and</p>

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed to date
									launched.
Continue with the development of the potential Co. Antrim Geopark.	<p>Present findings of assessment to inform key partners of potential benefits of geopark status and resource implications required to deliver this. This report will include both positive and potentially negative impacts that might arise from the implementation of this status.</p> <p>Seminars and information sources will be required to share with key stakeholders regarding the geopark agenda.</p>		●	●	●	<p>Working Group establish - TOR 4 meetings per year</p> <p>Steering Group established – TOR</p> <p>Overall Activity Plan/Road map developed</p> <p>Raising awareness via WG and CCGHT media</p> <p>Initial general public raising awareness.</p> <p>Participation in UK and ROI Geopark meetings to gain experience/best practice</p>	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£5,000	On target
<p>Causeway Coast Way (CCW) Walking Experience</p> <p>Identify best Practice for signposting to long distance</p>	This project is to raise awareness and mark the many access points to the CCW walking experience from the CCR touring route.			●	●	<p>Provide report on best practice of long-distance trails.</p> <p>Report to cover local issues including land ownership,</p>	Access to the countryside through sustainable and healthy	£8,000 – accrual from 2020-21 due to late agreement of	To be completed (subject to approval)

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed to date
<p>walking trails from car tourism routes across Europe.</p> <p>Identify key locations along the CCR whereby signposting can be provided to access points</p>	<p>Procure a design house for an integrated design to maximise the visual connection of the current CCW branding that fits with DfI requirements for trail signposting off the CCR.</p>					<p>signage type, statutory requirements and costs for manufacture and installation.</p> <p>2 seminars to consult on benefits of improving the CCR for community and business sectors.</p> <p>Provide tender documentation for the appointment of design house for trail signage design and specification.</p>	<p>transportation.</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing/people Prosperity</p> <p>Driving the Visitor Economy</p>	2020-21 SLA.	
<p>Development of user friendly interfaces for access and the promotion of a range of walking experiences.</p>	<p>Working jointly with Council Officers this project will identify and prioritise, as per market demand, short, medium and longer walking opportunities within the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area. The CCGHT will be responsible for methodology, design templates, identification of platforms including social media and research market demand. In addition they will identify and provide route description, mapping and associated narrative for</p>					<p>Enhanced quality of visitor experience</p> <p>Provision of links from settlements/attractions to trails.</p> <p>Further promotion of opportunities for physical and mental well-being.</p> <p>Contribute to future blueprint</p>	<p>Access to the countryside through sustainable and healthy transportation.</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing/people Prosperity</p> <p>Driving the Visitor</p>	£8,000	To be completed

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed to date
	20 walks under 4 miles, 10 walks between 4 and 10 miles and 5 walks greater than 10 miles. CCGHT are also asked to develop an outline strategic approach to the development of community/core path networks to service resident and visitor alike.					for trail enhanced trail provision.	Economy		
Reduce Marine & Terrestrial Litter	Reduced litter and improved understanding of impacts of litter			●	●	3 beach clean events 3 marine litter event *May be impacted by COVID situation	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£2,000	Number of events complete
Delivering opportunities to experience the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area's unique outdoor and heritage through public events.	Series of outdoor and heritage events to include mountain biking, walking, stargazing, angling, bird watching, wild flowers, geology, built heritage developed, promoted and delivered. New opportunities for providers to further develop outdoor and heritage activities in the future is developed through the process.		●	●	●	At least 10 events organised in AC&G and Causeway Coast AONBs. At least 300 participants. New partners approached and supported. Event programme to be	Health and Wellbeing/people Prosperity	£5,000	In excess of 10 events held.

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed to date
	<p>Partners' events are promoted.</p> <p>New or enhanced opportunities in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area to access and learn about the countryside.</p>					<p>published and promoted in digital format and promoted online (including social media). Events to be planned considering social distancing and COVID issues and individual events will be subject to change and alteration at short notice.</p> <p>Events to be a combination of virtual and face-to-face</p>			
<p>Support conservation of designated sites in the CCGBC area - especially of natural beauty or amenities and wildlife, historic objects or natural phenomena through delivering and promoting training and events to share information on best practice, provide training on identification of species and habitats, measures to enhance biodiversity, practical skills,</p>	<p>Conservation of designated sites</p> <p>Biodiversity Enhancement</p> <p>Reducing invasive species</p>			<p>● ●</p>	<p>Training on identification and recording (working with CEDaR as they are appropriate body)</p> <p>Identify and encourage non-eco schools in CCAONB to join scheme via an environmental event</p> <p>Community GIS mapping event</p>	<p>Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets</p>	<p>£1,500</p>	<p>Some completion. Work on target.</p>	

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed to date
tackling invasive species etc.									
Support renewal of Local Biodiversity Action Plan	Improved biodiversity in the CCGBC area	X	X	X	X	Participation in biodiversity projects in the CCGBC area that contribute towards the intended outcomes of an emerging LBAP Support for the LIFE+ LifeRaft Project Undertaking feral goose management project on Rathlin Island	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£1,500	Work on target.
Investigate the requirement for sensitive interpretation at Cushendall Seafront; including 3 interpretation panels featuring geology of the area, linkages with the Scottish Islands and the biodiversity of the area	To improve the quality of the CCR and the visitor experience offering in Cushendall.		X			Provide design, graphics and copy of 3 A2 interpretative panels in consultation with Council officers	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets	£3,000 (this does not include manufacture and installation of the panels) – accrual from 2020-21 due	Work complete. Final sign off required.

CCGHT Activity	Expected outcomes to benefit Causeway Coast and Glens DC area	Quarter				Outputs	Contribution to strategic themes	Financial Implications	Activity completed to date
								to COVID restrictions	