



Title of Report:	Development Opportunities Causeway Coastal Route
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 May 2024
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee	No

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets Promote our tourism offer locally and internationally Prosperity, Health and Wellbeing and Cohesive Community
Outcome	Improved access to our natural environment. Development of visitor economy and health and well-being opportunities.
Lead Officer	Head of Tourism and Recreation

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	n/a
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES
Capital/Revenue	n/a
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	To be confirmed
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

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:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to provide Elected Members with information on an opportunity to enhance the visitor experience along the Causeway Coastal Route and achieve better connectivity with the Wild Atlantic Way touring route, in the Republic of Ireland. The project proposal is being facilitated by Tourism Northern Ireland (TNI), Tourism Ireland (TI) and Fáilte Ireland (FI), through the Shared Island initiative.

2.0 Background

Council Officers from the Destination Management Team have been approached by the Head of Regions from TNI outlining an opportunity for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council to participate and benefit from an allocation of Shared Island funding with regard to brand collaboration, marketing and project development works. The concept is to create greater connectivity and brand alignment between the Causeway Coastal Route and the Wild Atlantic Way. This project is based on an all-island tourism partnership that is being developed and implemented by Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland (TI) and Fáilte Ireland (FI).

Local authorities are being asked to participate in this programme where benefit can be achieved for their respective visitor economies and experiences. A stakeholder group has been planned with representatives from each of the local authorities, TNI, TI and FI.

3.0 Project Aims

The aim of this project is to bring the Causeway Coastal Route and the Wild Atlantic Way together to improve the overall performance of tourism to Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and to create stand out in international markets. The project also aims to bring benefits to areas that are in the hinterland of these two routes bringing new opportunities to these areas to create lasting economic benefits. This is a project of scale aimed at raising the international profile of the island of Ireland and increasing the number of international visitors and associated revenues, balanced with sensitive development and recognition of the need to protect the natural environment.

4.0 Geographical Area

The project will focus on counties Sligo, Leitrim & Donegal, Derry/ Londonderry, and Antrim. Key stakeholders will include local councils (Donegal CoCo, Sligo CoCo, Derry City & Strabane DC, Mid & East Antrim BC, Causeway Coast & Glens BC, and Antrim & Newtownabbey BC), and the tourism industry.

5.0 Proposals

5.1 Destination Development – Brand Collaboration

The first step will be for the agencies to work together to develop an appropriate proposition and brand management for the region. This will involve scoping of amalgamation of the brands and delivery of messaging in the domestic and overseas markets, with the creation of and roll out of digital content and assets and a dedicated marketing campaign. A test market will be completed in yr1.

5.2 Experience Development

A small grant scheme for both the private sector and the LA's will be provided with the aim on enhancing the visitor offering across the region as well as fostering collaboration and cross promotion.

5.3 Creation of Common Industry Supports

High quality content will be critical to the implementation of a digital strategy. New content will need to be developed in line with the brand collaboration and cross promotion of the experience within the region. The content will focus on common themes, visitor experiences, cross promotional opportunities. Strategy development

will consider how the sites particularly Ireland.com interact with individual businesses booking engines, OTA's and other sales partners.

5.4 Support Discovery Point Development

An audit of the CCR to develop Discovery Points and implementation will ensure consistency of the Visitor experience between the CCR & WAW.

5.5 Creation of Cross Promotional Content and a Common Digital Strategy

The creation of an on online hub and bespoke toolkits with new content will be developed for business as well as cross promotion networking events and workshops for industry partners.

6.0 Next Steps

Council Officers from the Tourism and Recreation department will engage with representatives from Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland to establish best fit and opportunities for development for the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area, and report back to Council on any suggested initiatives for advancement. The total allocated funding for this programme is €7.6 million.