

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2015 to 2018

April 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Vision for the Causeway Coast and Glens

The Vision for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is based on an improved quality of life and building a *strong economy that's safe and healthy, dynamic, culturally vibrant and exciting*:

“Our Vision is of a high value-added, skilled, innovative and enterprising economy.”

Introduction

The Economic Strategy will assist the Council to lead the borough in achieving its full potential to deliver sustainable wealth and well-being for all its citizens. The borough aspires to be a strong and fulfilling employment hub attracting creative and dynamic people and businesses. Efforts to ensure business and life in general within a low-carbon economy where individuals flourish and are notable for their enterprise, ambition, creativity and pride in the borough.

Characterised by its beautiful beach resorts, it is home to world renowned heritage sites such as the Giants Causeway and globally recognized golf destinations such as Royal Portrush. It presents a strong arts and cultural offering with established cultural activities, festivals and globally renowned sporting events such as the Milk Cup and the North West 200. It offers a superior quality of living to its residents and is an attractive tourist destination. The existence of the University of Ulster at Coleraine and its student population further contributes to quality of life and diversity of the area.

This distinctiveness gives the Causeway Coast and Glens a competitive economic edge.

The Economic Strategy 2015 - 2018 has been led by the four legacy Councils, involving extensive consultation with public, private and voluntary sector partners. It builds on the achievements of the legacy Councils, whilst recognising that there will be new strategic issues facing the Council in a substantially larger area with a wider rural and urban business community.

The aggregated economic data for the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area highlights significant issues facing the new Council in developing its Economic Strategy and Action Plan. Appendix 2 gives a full picture of the socio economic profile and Appendix 1 gives a full picture of the Policy and Strategic Context that has guided the strategy.

The Borough has significant hurdles to overcome in realizing the economic transformation needed and the priorities of the Strategy have emerged from interpreting and responding to the vision. The priorities where action and change are imperative will take the borough to where it aspires to be in 2018.

Priorities

The priorities identified to help realise the vision are:

- Assist local businesses to grow and become more competitive and innovative
- Strategically position Causeway Coast and Glens as a place to do business
- Expand and develop the tourism sector in the area
- Develop business opportunities arising from the Renewable Energy sector, Digital Causeway, the Knowledge Industry and Agrifood Sector.
- Ensure that local infrastructure meets business needs.

These are aligned to the Causeway Coast and Glens Corporate Plan priorities:-

People

Move up the 'Value Chain' and have the Causeway Coast create better business with international connections that will see such become more specialised, innovative and productive with greater access to opportunities for all citizens for vibrant employment through innovation, skills and creativity.

Prosperity for all

Economic growth that will benefit all our citizens; be the best for our young, create a culture of Lifelong Learning and build sustainable communities and local regeneration.

Place

An excellent economic environment relies upon aligning the business, physical, cultural and social environments to ensure improved innovation and growth. The Causeway Coast strives to be the top NI tourist destination and a place that nurtures people and talent in a low carbon economy with ample green opportunities.

From Strategy to Action

The Strategy represents a significant step change for the Causeway Coast and has been developed through an active partnership involving the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Economic Development sections, Invest NI, DSD, the Causeway Chamber of Commerce and many other leading bodies charged with overseeing economic regeneration and development in the borough.

The Strategy is the culmination of a rigorous process which has sought to understand the borough's economy, establish a shared vision of the key economic characteristics that the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council would like to see achieved by 2018. The strategy sets out the means by which the vision can be achieved.

Sectors for Economic Growth

The ambition for this strategy is to see a significant step change in the sector specific industries - focusing on Digital, Renewable Energy and Agrifood which is leading on the existing key strengths and differentiators of the borough being:

- Project Kelvin
- The Enterprise Zone
- University of Ulster at Coleraine
- Digital Causeway
- SMART Grid Proposition / Tidal Energy

The Strategy recognized that at this time of continuing high unemployment, it is critically important that the economic potential of the borough is maximised and that we build on the borough's particular strengths and natural environment and assets to provide a competitive environment that stimulates entrepreneurship and attracts investment, both indigenous and foreign. See table below for method and approach to implementation.

	Focus
1. Step Change Sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewables • Life Sciences • Digital
2. Already Important & Growing Sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Tourism • Culture
3. Static Sector - Sustain & Develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail • Manufacturing • Engineering

Councils Role

The Council's role in delivering this Vision will be to act as a "pump-primer" and a facilitator of economic development. Creating the environment to do business in the Borough by lobbying and advocating on strategic issues; and creating the opportunities for greater integration and co-ordination of economic development in the Borough.

Themes

The Council's Vision will be delivered through four strategic themes:

1. Competitive Causeway - Business Development (Tourism & new Industry Sectors)
2. Connected Causeway - Developing the Infrastructure
3. Collaborative Causeway
4. Rural Development

These themes were identified and developed from the vision and priorities to provide clear action planning that are being driven within Council either as major 'big ticket' items within the strategy such as the Smart Grid as well as being supported and actioned directly as operational action plans for delivery.

The concept of step change is very important for the Strategy, a change which moves the Causeway Coast from its current position to one where the borough can fully realise the vision in partnership with all stakeholders. This strategy reflects the distinctive strengths and some of the most important opportunities being offered by effective partnering and change as the reform of local government embeds itself in the borough.

This strategy provides for an Improved Economy for All as it will provide opportunities for, all citizens, regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, nationality or religious faith;

The strategy will draw upon transferring powers and budgets as well as seek to involve new and innovative funding to deliver actions required to meet the Strategy's vision.

The strategy recognizes that closer partnerships with private sector funders will be necessary for big ticket items such as the Smart Grid, Project Kelvin and the Enterprise Zone recognise it will be vital to lever more funding to support future economic development.

Measuring Success

The Strategy states that a measurement framework will be developed to enable an ongoing review of progress of strategy implementation.

Council's ambition for this strategy is to see a significant step change in the sector specific industries - Digital, Renewable Energy and Agrifood. It also expects a significant increase in bolstering already growing and static businesses with the roll out of the various Action Plans. Our success will be assessed through measuring outputs, outcomes and impacts related directly to key enablers recognized in our Action Plans. The review process will be supported by an annual economic analysis of the economy and labour market. A comprehensive progress review will be undertaken at the end of the three years, while interim reviews will provide corrective action if required.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The new Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, developed as part of the reform of local government in Northern Ireland, and comprising the former Council areas of Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle commenced operation on 1st April 2015. As part of the convergence agenda the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has developed its first Economic Strategy and Action Plan for the three-year period 2015 - 2018. This strategy builds on the achievements of the four legacy Councils, whilst recognising that there will be new strategic issues facing the Council in a substantially larger area with a wider rural and urban business community. The new economic strategy also needs to reflect the very different natures of the four legacy Council areas.
- 1.2 All four Councils: Ballymoney, Coleraine; Limavady; and Moyle have been engaged in promoting economic development since the introduction of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1992, which was supplemented by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (2002) and provides the current legislative framework within which council-led local economic development activity is undertaken in Northern Ireland. The legislation permits local government to incur expenditure “for the purpose of taking such steps, as the council considers appropriate, for promoting economic development of its district” and to acquire, hold and develop land for economic development purposes”.
- 1.3 The Economic Strategy and Action Plan for the three-year period (2015-2018) has been developed as part of the next round of EU Structural and Cohesion Funds 2014/20. The EU Structural and Cohesion Funds 2014/2020 – Jobs and Growth Programme funded through the European Development Fund (ERDF) will focus on three priority areas:
- Strengthening Research, Technical development and Innovation;
 - Enhancing the Competitiveness of SMEs (including through improved access to finance measures and Tourism Development);
 - Supporting the shift towards a Low-Carbon Economy.
- 1.4 The strategy has also been developed to take cognisance of a range of regional and local strategies, including the interim Corporate Plan developed by the Causeway Coast and Glens Council. The development process for the new economic strategy has also closely involved Invest NI, which has worked alongside the economic

development staff of the four Councils to ensure a fully integrated approach, and to ensure that local business needs are met. The implementation process for the economic strategy will involve the University of Ulster and the local Further Education Colleges, the Northern Regional College and the North Western Regional College.

- 1.5 The aggregated economic data for the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council area has significant implications for the strategic issues facing the new Council in developing its Economic Strategy and Action Plan 2015 -18. Some of the key data included:
- 5.59% of the population were unemployed, with 45.58% of this figure classified as long-term unemployed.
 - 42.93% of the population had no or low-level qualifications;
 - Average wages in the Council area are lower than the Northern Ireland level;
 - VAT registrations are falling in the Council area, with a decrease of 8.1% in registrations over the period 2013/14. This figure mirrors the Northern Ireland average.
 - Causeway Coast and Glens Council area is characterised as a small business economy, with the main employer sectors registered as agriculture, forestry and fishing, construction and retail.
 - In relation to multiple deprivation figures for Northern Ireland based on aggregates of the NIMDM 2010 statistics, the new Causeway Coast and Glens LGD (2014) has an overall rank of 11%, which means that 11% of the population of the area is living in the top 10% most deprived Super Output Areas. The LGD also scores 3rd highest in terms of the percentage of the working age population experiencing employment deprivation. The LGD also scores 3rd highest in terms of the percentage of the working age population experiencing employment deprivation. The Employment Domain measures employment deprivation defined as involuntary exclusion of the working age population from work. Therefore 13% of the population in the area is excluded from work because of factors outside their control such as availability of jobs
- 1.6 There is a range of strategic issues facing the Causeway Coast and Glens Council as it develops its first Economic Strategy. These issues were identified through research and consultation conducted as part of the development process, including: an online business survey; workshops and one to one meetings with key stakeholders; and a series of public meetings across the new Council area.

The strategic issues needing to be addressed as part of the new Plan include:

- Need to provide more jobs, and higher paid, greater value added jobs;
- Need to assist businesses to grow through innovation, exports and competing effectively.
- Benefit from the opportunities arising from the Enterprise Zone, including the Digital Causeway project.
- Exploit and seek to benefit from the economic potential of new industries such as: the Smart Grid project; marine energy; the circular economy opportunities emerging from waste management; and the Agrifood sector.
- Need to develop and rejuvenate the town centres and the rural towns and villages throughout the Council area.
- Infrastructure needs to be developed across the Council area to create the environment to do business and attract inward investment. Infrastructure improvements are needed on roads, transport and broadband.
- There is a need to improve the level of skills across the Council area, match skills with job opportunities and assist local businesses to attract and retain graduates.
- Work alongside the tourism staff to assist tourism businesses to grow through innovating and competing more effectively.

These strategic issues are explored in detail in section 2 of this report.

1.7 Four strategic themes have been developed to address the strategic issues identified through the research and development process for the Economic Strategy. These themes are developed in detail in section 5 of this report and are summarised below:

- (i) Competitive Causeway - Business Development
- (ii) Connected Causeway - Developing the infrastructure.
- (iii) Collaborative Causeway
- (iv) Rural Development

1.8 Over the period 2015 to 2018 the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council will deliver a series of projects and actions under each of the themes listed in section 1.7 above, which will address the issues and needs identified across the area as part of the research and development for the Economic strategy. These projects are detailed in section 4 of this report.

SECTION 2: STRATEGIC ISSUES EMERGING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A range of issues emerged from the research and consultation undertaken as part of the development process for the Economic Strategy. The research undertaken involved desk research and a widespread consultation exercise with Councillors, Council staff, local stakeholders, local business groups and local businesses. This consultation exercise comprised one to one meetings, public meetings and workshops. In addition a comprehensive survey of businesses operating in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area was undertaken to identify needs and priorities. The strategic issues, which emerged from this research exercise are summarised below.

2.2 ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE RESEARCH

The socio-economic data for the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council area highlights a number of issues, which need to be considered in the development of the Economic Strategy 2015 to 2018. These include:

- Unemployment rates in Ballymoney (5.7%), Moyle (5.9%) and Limavady (6.9%) are higher than the Northern Ireland average of 5.4%, with Limavady amongst the highest in Northern Ireland. Coleraine has an unemployment rate below the Northern Ireland average at 5.0%. These figures indicate the need for additional jobs across the Council area.
- The average wage in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area is substantially lower than the Northern Ireland average of £429.10, (Coleraine: £394.10, Limavady: £362.50, Ballymoney £414.10) These figures reflect the structure of the local labour market, which is providing lower paid jobs, and indicate the need to develop sectors such as manufacturing, information and communications, and Agrifood within the local economy, which should provide greater value added jobs (better paid) for the area. Average wages in Moyle are slightly higher at £431.10, which reflects significant numbers travelling outside the area for work.
- Given the range of educational institutions in the Council area at higher and further education level, the figure of 42.93% of the population with no or low level qualifications, seems very high and should be addressed with partner agencies as part of the Economic Strategy 2015/18.
- The private sector in Causeway Coast and Glens is characterised by a micro business sector, with 90.9% of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses, employing less than 10 employees. These figures demonstrate the need to further develop the

indigenous business sector across the Council area, assisting businesses to grow through competing and innovating.

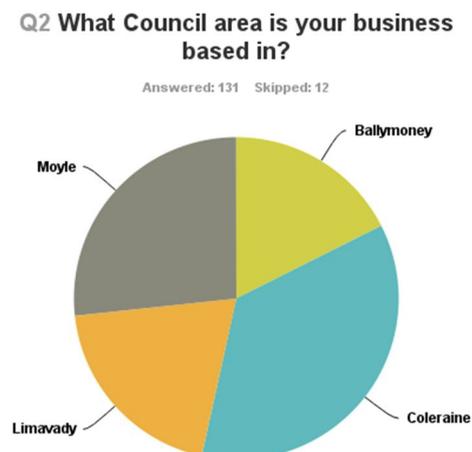
- Causeway Coast and Glens LGD scores 3rd highest in terms of the percentage of the working age population experiencing employment deprivation. The Employment Domain measures employment deprivation defined as involuntary exclusion of the working age population from work. Therefore 13% of the population in the area is excluded from work because of factors outside their control such as availability of jobs. This demonstrates the need to create new, greater value added jobs in the area.

2.3 ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE BUSINESS SURVEY

In total 143 people responded to the Business Survey. 131 of the respondents indicated their Council area, the responses may be broken down across the four Council areas as follows:

- Ballymoney – 17.56%
- Coleraine – 35.88%
- Limavady – 19.85%
- Moyle - 26.72%

Chart 1: Businesses by Council Area



- 108 (75.5%) of the respondents indicated that they employed less than 10 employees on a full or part-time basis, only 6 respondents indicated that they employed more than 50 people on a full or part-time basis.
- 65% of the respondents indicated that their business is turning over less than £250,000 per annum, whereas 18.6% of respondents indicated that their business turns over more than £1million per annum.

From the responses provided through the Business Survey we are able to conclude that in the main, the respondents are running small businesses, this also mirrors the business data for the area provided in Appendix 2 section 2.6 Table 6 of this report.

Table 1: Annual Turnover Reported through Business Survey

What is your annual turnover?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Up to £49,000	31.8%	41
£50,000 - £99,000	11.6%	15
£100,000 - £249,000	21.7%	28
£250,000 - £499,000	7.0%	9
£500,000 - £999,000	9.3%	12
£1,000,000 - £4,999,000	10.9%	14
£5,000,000	7.8%	10
	<i>answered question</i>	129
	<i>skipped question</i>	14

- 33.59% of the survey respondents indicated that their business was a limited company and 58.02% indicated they traded as a sole trader or partnership.
- 129 respondents provided information on their sales, of these 68.1% were not selling online and yet 75.6% of the respondents had a website. This would indicate that these businesses require training and support to use their website in a more effective way, which enables them to generate online sales.

Table 2: Analysis of Sales

Tell us about your sales:			
Answer Options	Yes	No	Response Count
Do you Export?	24	85	109
Do you sell online?	37	79	116
Do you have a website?	96	31	127
		<i>answered question</i>	129
		<i>skipped question</i>	14

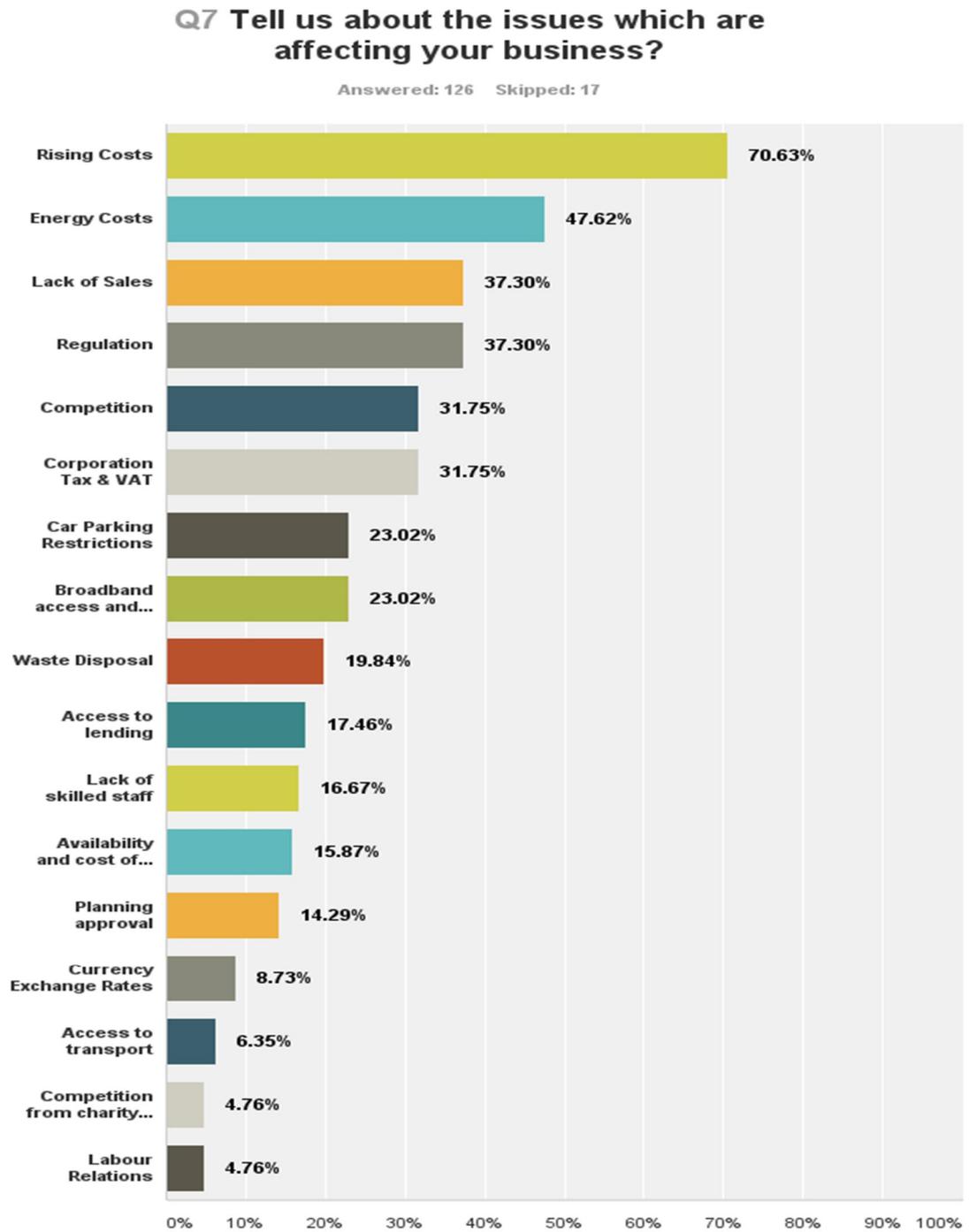
78% of respondents indicated that they were not currently exporting. This figure would reflect that in the main, businesses in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area are smaller, and also consistent with the structure and type of broad industry groups in the area (retail, wholesale, accommodation and food services). The main industry group in the area, however, is agriculture, fishing and forestry, representing 1,840 businesses. The Agrifood industry in Northern Ireland is currently enjoying highly successful exports, therefore it would be important that the Economic Strategy

seeks to assist companies in this sector to take advantage of potential external markets.

Respondents were asked about the issues, which were affecting their businesses.

The chart below provides a breakdown of these issues by order of importance.

Chart 2: Analysis of Business Issues

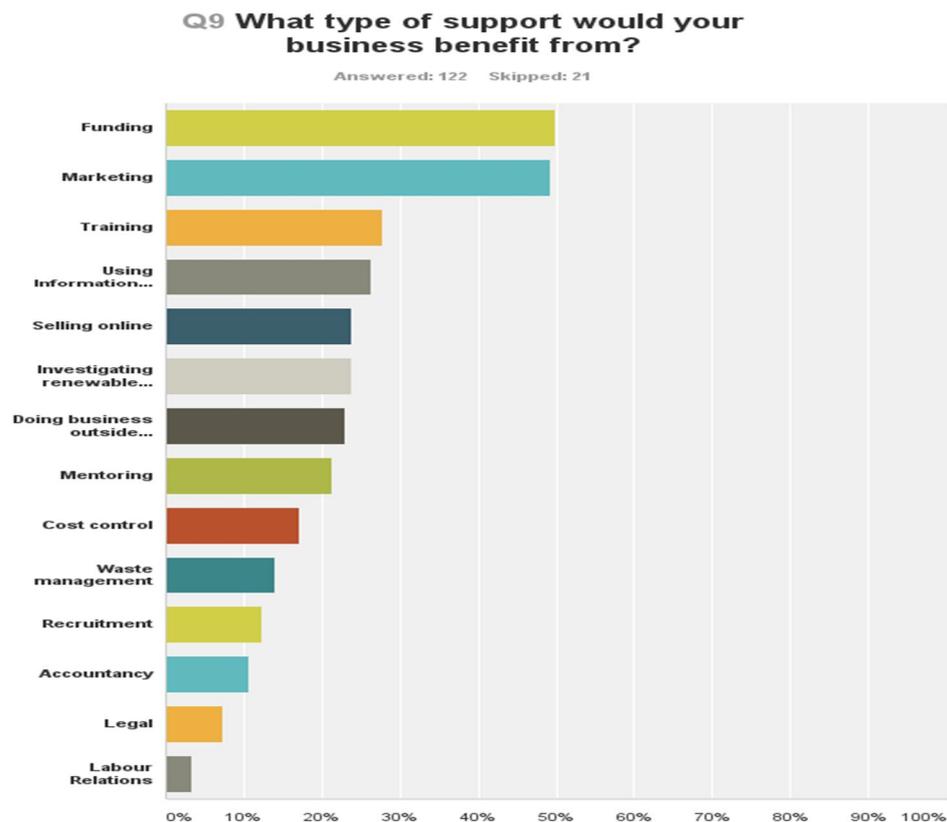


Rising costs, energy costs, lack of sales, regulation, competition, corporation tax & VAT are the most important issues affecting businesses operating in the Causeway Coast and Glens. The Economic Strategy for the Causeway Coast and Glens Council should seek to assist local businesses of all sizes to compete, innovate and grow. Some of the issues listed above are outside the remit of the new Council, nonetheless the Council should assume the role of lobbying and advocating on these issues to assist businesses to sustain employment and pursue opportunities for growth.

Businesses were asked to indicate what type of support they would benefit from, the chart below summarises these by order of importance:

The types of support required included: funding; marketing; training; using information technology; selling online; investigating renewable energy sources; and doing business outside Northern Ireland. These issues will be considered further in the development of programmes and projects for inclusion in the Action Plan section of the Strategy.

Chart 3: Business Support Required



2.4 ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE CONSULATION

A widespread consultation exercise was undertaken as part of the development process for the Economic Strategy and Action Plan 2015 to 2018. This consultation exercise comprised a mix of one to one meetings with key stakeholders; workshops with Councillors, meetings with Chambers of Trade and Traders organisations, and public meetings in each of the areas of Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle. A range of issues emerged through this consultation exercise, which need to be addressed through the Economic Strategy, these issues can be summarised under the following headings: Business Development; Tourism Development; Rural Development; Town Centre; Skills Development and Infrastructure issues.

Business Development:

- There is a need for an integrated approach from a range of agencies to developing indigenous businesses.
- The agencies in the area need to work together to develop an integrated approach to supporting start-ups and growing existing businesses, thereby creating new jobs and sustaining existing jobs.
- Development opportunities have been identified in the Renewable Energy sector; in the Health and Life Sciences sector; and through the Enterprise Zone and the Digital Causeway project.
- Need to develop business opportunities in the Agrifood sector. There is a lack of voice for farming & Agrifood businesses in the area.

Tourism Development

- There should be more integrated marketing & promotion of business, tourism, recreation, retail etc.
- More efforts to attract tourists and keep them in the area, and work to extend the tourist season in the Council area;
- Marketing of the towns and villages should promote the individual character of each of the towns and villages;
- There is a need to further develop the tourism sector in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area to create more valued added to the sector as a whole, and to assist existing businesses to innovate and grow.
- There is further potential to develop activity and events based tourism.
- There is also a need to extend the tourist season to create more jobs and generate income for the area.

Rural Development

There is a need to reinvigorate town and village centres throughout the new Council area. Currently towns and villages are suffering from dereliction and empty shop units caused by decreasing footfall.

- Some of the towns and villages were concerned that their needs would be ignored within a larger Council area. The consultation identified a range of measures, which could be developed to address the current decline:
 - Development of the Evening Economy & Farmers/Craft Market;
 - There is a need to improve customer service throughout the towns and villages of the Causeway Coast and Glens;
 - Rural transport needs improving;
 - Car Parking, Transport & Access need to be assessed and measures put in place to ensure better movement of traffic and people.

Town Centres

- The Chambers across the area have been collaborating in recent months, and would benefit from a dedicated resource to assist them in their ongoing work.
- Business Rates are considered expensive and a barrier to developing businesses in town and village centres;
- There are areas across the Causeway Coast and Glens, where Wifi & Broadband speed are slow and prohibiting businesses growing and developing;
- Businesses recognise the benefits of using social media and require assistance to take opportunities arising from this.

Infrastructure – Roads, Transport, Broadband.

Roads and transport links need to be improved throughout the new Causeway Coast and Glens area, the quality and speed of broadband across the area also needs to be addressed to ensure that there is equity of access and consistent speed. Whilst there was recognition that the new Council will not have a direct remit for infrastructure issues, Council will have planning powers and could lobby and advocate to ensure infrastructure is improved and that the environment is right for business.

Investment in new Industry Sectors

- Development opportunities have been identified in the Renewable Energy sector; in the Health and Life Sciences sector; and through the Enterprise Zone and the Digital Causeway project.
- Need to promote the quality of life of Causeway Coast and Glens in attracting FDI.
- Businesses have identified a lack of land for future development and expansion.
- Need for more and greater value added jobs for the new Council area.

Skills Development

- Skills Drain – Young people are leaving the area due to lack of employment opportunities.
- There is a need to match skills with job opportunities.

2.5 SWOT ANALYSIS

The strategic issues emerging through the consultation exercise, the results of the business survey and the socio economic data for the area are summarised in a SWOT analysis as follows:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Tourism Sector – accommodation, must-see destinations, events and potential for further development • Designated Enterprise Zone in Coleraine • New Borough is an attractive proposition in terms of a holistic offer – as a place to work and live. • Assets include Project Kelvin, University of Ulster, former Shackleton barracks site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited “value added” jobs in the CCG area • CCG area ranks 3rd highest in terms of employment deprivation • Businesses are not taking advantage of opportunities to sell online • The Business Survey indicated that businesses are not exporting • Declining footfall is causing dereliction and empty shop units in towns and villages. • Low manufacturing base in the CCG area • Unemployment in the CCG area is higher than the Northern Ireland average • Earnings in CCG area are lower than NI average • Large proportion of population with no or low-level qualifications
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy in CCG area is characterised by micro-enterprises, there is potential to grow the indigenous business sector • The range of educational institutions in the area makes CCG a good proposition for FDI • Opportunities have been identified in the ICT sector, Agrifood and the Renewable Energy sector • New Council could lobby and advocate on a range of issues affecting the economic infrastructure and environment. • Opportunities arising from the new Rural Dev Programme and transfer of powers for Regeneration from DSD • Spin-off opportunities from relocation of DARD. • Opportunities arising from the redevelopment of the former Shackleton Barracks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road, transport and broadband infrastructure need improving • Continued decline in VAT/PAYE registered businesses across CCG area • Reliance on public sector and potential for redundancies due to current budget cuts • Skills drain – need to match skills with job opportunities • Potential negative environmental impacts caused through development of alternative energy sources.

2.6 SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS FROM PREVIOUS ECONOMIC PLANS ACROSS THE FOUR COUNCILS

The Economic Action Plan will also build on the successes of previous Economic Action Plans implemented across the four Council areas of: Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle. Successful projects implemented in previous Economic Action Plans include:



2.6.1 Research into the establishment of a Micro Electricity Grid (SMART Grid) for the Council area.

Industry in Northern Ireland suffers simultaneously from the second highest electricity prices in Europe and excessive grid connection costs, which place Northern Ireland at an economic disadvantage relative to the competing regions of Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.¹ This is particularly relevant with high energy use in industries such as ICT/data centres, which require low energy costs to compete in an international market place. On the supply side, the growth of the renewable energy sector in Northern Ireland, especially wind, is causing occasional imbalances between supply and demand affecting the grid and forcing the curtailment of supply from wind farms.

Coleraine Borough Council has commissioned B9 Energy Solutions Ltd to scope the potential to develop a microgrid and support it through the development of a Coleraine Microgrid Strategy. The Microgrid solution proposed consists of a 7 mile long underground district heating system combined with a high voltage power cable installation which links most of Coleraine's housing estates, industrial estates and commercial/public sector sites. Microgrids of this scale use intelligent control systems and energy storage devices to capture and store intermittent renewable energy regeneration from sources such as solar, wind and tidal at times when the energy is not needed and prices are low. The stored energy is later delivered to customers at times when they do need the power and at prices, which are lower than are normally paid. If the load associated with these energy storage devices is applied at the right moment and curtailment of distant wind farms is reduced or avoided, then the so called "load on demand" becomes a valuable service to wind farm owners and a valuable additional local income to the microgrid.

Microgrids provide alternative grid connections that increase security of supply to customers and can also be configured to operate autonomously. Energy storage forms the heart of the microgrid solution by smoothing the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources and time-shifting heat and power supply and demand.

2.6.2 Research into the potential of Marine and Tidal Energies

The Northern Ireland Executive is committed to develop and support marine energy technology and services with a range of UK and international partners. Furthermore

¹ Coleraine Microgrid Strategy, B9: 2014.

Northern Ireland has demonstrated that it has a number of suitable sites for offshore testing, particularly in Strangford Lough, Torr Head and Fair Head. Invest NI is currently funding collaborative research projects to further stimulate research and development in the sector. The Centre for Advanced Sustainable Energy (CASE) and The Northern Ireland Advanced Composites and Engineering Centre (NIACE) have been set up to facilitate industry-led research and development.

Invest NI has also published the Northern Ireland Marine Energy Capability Directory, which showcases the range of work and companies involved in marine energy, across the sectors of: technology development; applied research; innovation and testing; consultancy services and engineering.

The Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG), which is a joint collaboration between the Irish Wind Energy Association and RenewableUK, supports Northern Ireland's ambitious energy targets. NIRIG represents the views of the large and small scale renewable electricity industry in Northern Ireland, providing a conduit for knowledge exchange, policy development support and consensus on best practice between all stakeholders in renewable energy. NIRIG has a dedicated Marine sub-group, comprising developers, manufacturers, researchers and legal services, among others, who collaborate to ensure that the ocean energy industry in Northern Ireland has a voice to support positive strategy and policy development.

Within the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area, there are a number of companies investigating the potential of marine and tidal energy. The area offshore of Torr Head is one of five zones highlighted by the Strategic Environmental Assessment of Offshore Wind and Marine Renewable Energy in Northern Ireland. Substantial development potential has also been investigated off Fair Head. Furthermore the potential to install turbines between Northern Ireland and Scotland, is currently under investigation, these marine turbines would provide substantial additional energy supply to the Northern Ireland market and would most likely require an additional micro grid.

2.6.3 Establishment of an Enterprise Zone and a Digital Data Centre

The establishment of Project Kelvin off the coast of Portrush has contributed significantly to the context for developing an Enterprise Zone and Digital Data Centre in Coleraine. Project Kelvin is an extensive submarine and terrestrial cable deployment that directly connects Northern Ireland to North America. It is a joint project between Department for Enterprise Trade and Investment in Northern Ireland

and the Irish Department of Communications and Natural Resources (DCENR) to deploy “Project Kelvin”, who appointed Hibernia Networks to establish an industry leading fiber optic submarine cable, bringing it ashore at Portrush, Northern Ireland. The Project Kelvin cable build has added much needed capacity to Northern Ireland, but in particular the Coleraine area, where it will further support both local and global companies. Local companies are attracted to the high capacity, extremely secure and reliable network. Businesses can now increase their communications and next-generation Internet service offerings, as well as increase their access to a larger marketplace of available service providers. The new network will also be attractive to global companies, such as leading financial houses, exchange markets, service providers and media companies, who require fast, low latency bandwidth that avoids traditionally congested routes.

March 2014 saw the announcement of the creation of Northern Ireland’s first Enterprise Zone. Situated adjacent to the University of Ulster campus in Coleraine, this zone offers Enhanced Capital Allowances that permit 100% first year write-off for qualifying plant and machinery expenditure.

The Enterprise Zone has already attracted its first client with the company “5 Nines” planning to build a Digital Data centre on land belonging to the University and adjacent to Coleraine Borough Council, the digital capital centre will be Northern Ireland’s first commercial carrier neutral data centre.

SECTION 3: FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

Informed by the research, analysis and consultation, the following section sets out the proposed Vision, Strategic Themes and Objectives to guide the Council's economic development activities.

3.1 VISION

The vision for the economic strategy for the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council is based on an improved quality of life:

“Our Vision is of a high value-added, skilled, innovative and enterprising economy.”

3.2 STRATEGIC AIMS

This Vision will be supported by a series of strategic aims as follows:

- To assist local businesses to grow and become more competitive and innovative
- To strategically position Causeway Coast and Glens as a place to do business
- To expand and develop the tourism sector in the area
- To develop business opportunities arising from the Renewable Energy sector, Digital Causeway, the Knowledge Industry and Agrifood Sector.
- To ensure that local infrastructure meets business needs.

3.3 COUNCIL'S ROLE

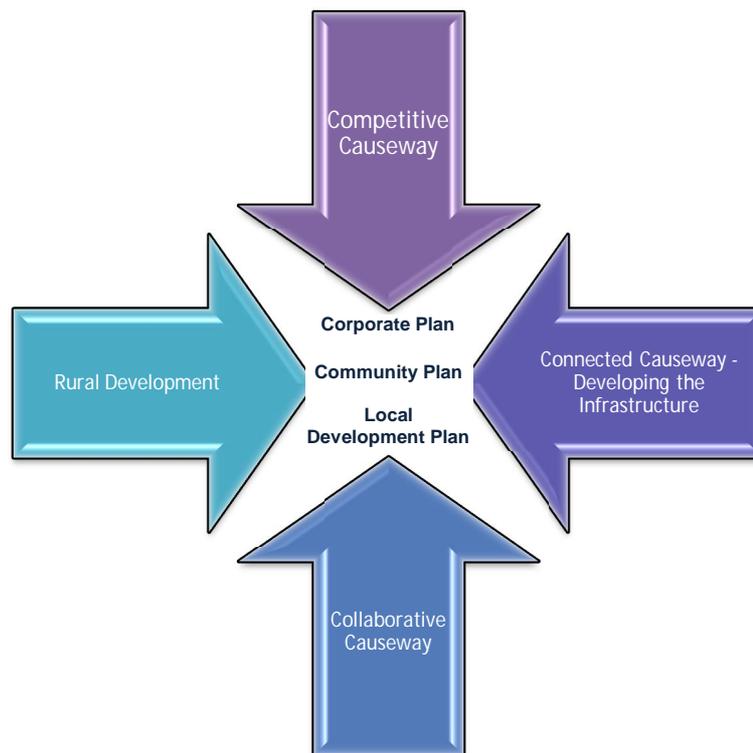
The Council's role in delivering this Vision will be:

- to act as a “pump-primer”
- a facilitator of economic development,
- to create the environment to do business in the Borough by lobbying and advocating on strategic issues; and
- to create the opportunities for greater integration and co-ordination of economic development in the Borough.

3.4 THEMES

The Council's Vision for economic development will be delivered through four strategic themes:

1. Competitive Causeway - Business Development (Tourism & new Industry Sectors)
2. Connected Causeway - Developing the Infrastructure
3. Collaborative Causeway
4. Rural Development



These strategic objectives and four themes will be delivered through a series of partnerships with a range of organisations, including: Invest NI; the Local Enterprise Agencies; Chambers of Trade; Chambers of Commerce; the Causeway Local Action Group of the Rural Development Programme; University of Ulster; the North West Regional College; the Northern Regional College; the roles of these organisations are illustrated in more detail in the action plan section 4. The priority actions will focus on developing indigenous businesses to assist them to compete and grow; working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders to maximise employment opportunities in the local economy, particularly for young people and to retain graduates and their skills in the local economy; working alongside a range of stakeholders to create the environment and infrastructure to maximise and attract local and foreign direct investment.

A priority focus for the future given the certainty of high spend tourism with the Golf Open in 2019 can help the Causeway Coast bring job creation, new business development, urban and coastal regeneration, improved quality of hotel / restaurant provision and improved image as tourism destination. The strategy also needs to take cognizance of the recent announcement of 2016 being the Year of Food. This will have very positive inroads to our existing planned efforts for Agrifood and importantly efforts can be made to tie this to the longer term efforts to collaborate with tourism/golf in the area in the lead into 2019 and beyond.

The context for focusing on these priority actions is to work with businesses to further develop and create greater value added to an already diverse economy across the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area. Agriculture remains a key sector, alongside manufacturing – including engineering, food and medical products, tourism related accommodation, and food and entertainment jobs are also very significant sources of employment. Whilst the prospects in the local economy provide significant incentives to attracting investment, the quality of life in the Council area adds to this offering. The area boasts a range of top-class education facilities, two further and higher education colleges and the University of Ulster, which is headquartered in Coleraine. The area buzzes with year round activity and prestigious tourism events, attracting local and world wide audiences, the area is also renowned for its dining and entertainment with great pubs and restaurants and festivals.

3.5 MEASURING PROGRESS

An effective framework for measuring progress and impact of the strategy must be aligned to our vision and priority themes. The indicators and aspirations of this strategy reflect the strategy and action plans of other key central and local government policies which Council are now responsible for delivering upon. The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's ambition for this strategy is to see a significant step change in the sector specific industries we are focusing on such as Digital, Renewable Energy and Agrifood. Council also expect a significant increase in bolstering already growing and static businesses with the roll out of the various Action Plans. Our success will be assessed through measuring outputs, outcomes and impacts related directly to key enablers recognized in our Action Plans.

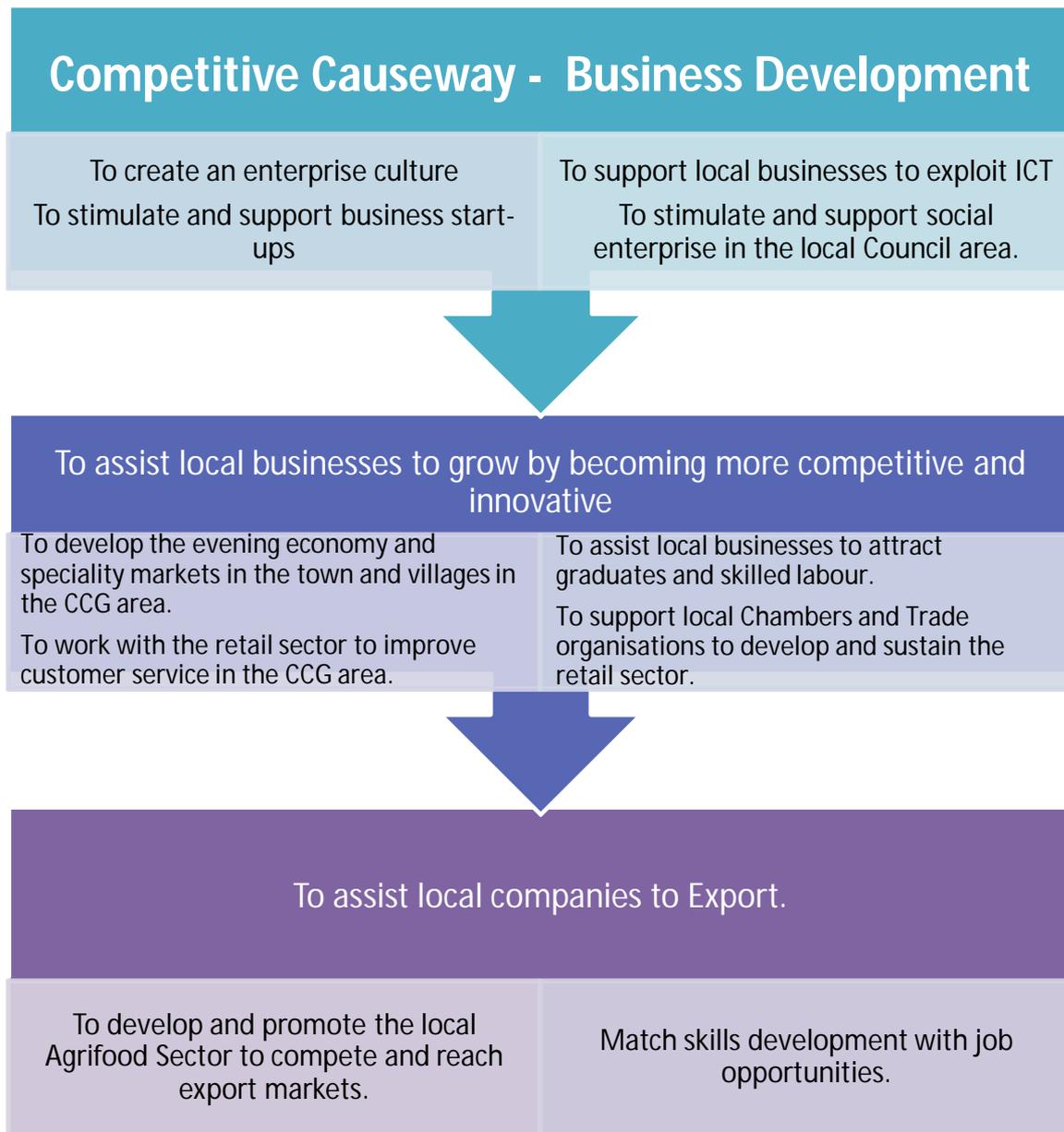
- Outputs will assess “what happened” for example: numbers of businesses participating; number of business starts and number of businesses sustained.
- Outcomes will assess “what changed”, measured in change taking place from established baselines, for example: increase in turnover from baseline figures; increase in profitability from baseline figures; increase in employment levels from baseline figures.
- Impact will assess “what’s left” behind or the legacy created by the Action Plan. Impact will most likely be measured one year to eighteen months after the delivery of the Action Plan as the Council and businesses continue to see results emerging.

The Performance Indicators set out in the Action Plan (Section 4) provide an indication of how the detailed actions will be measured.

3.6 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

These strategic themes will be underpinned by a series of Strategic Objectives as follows.

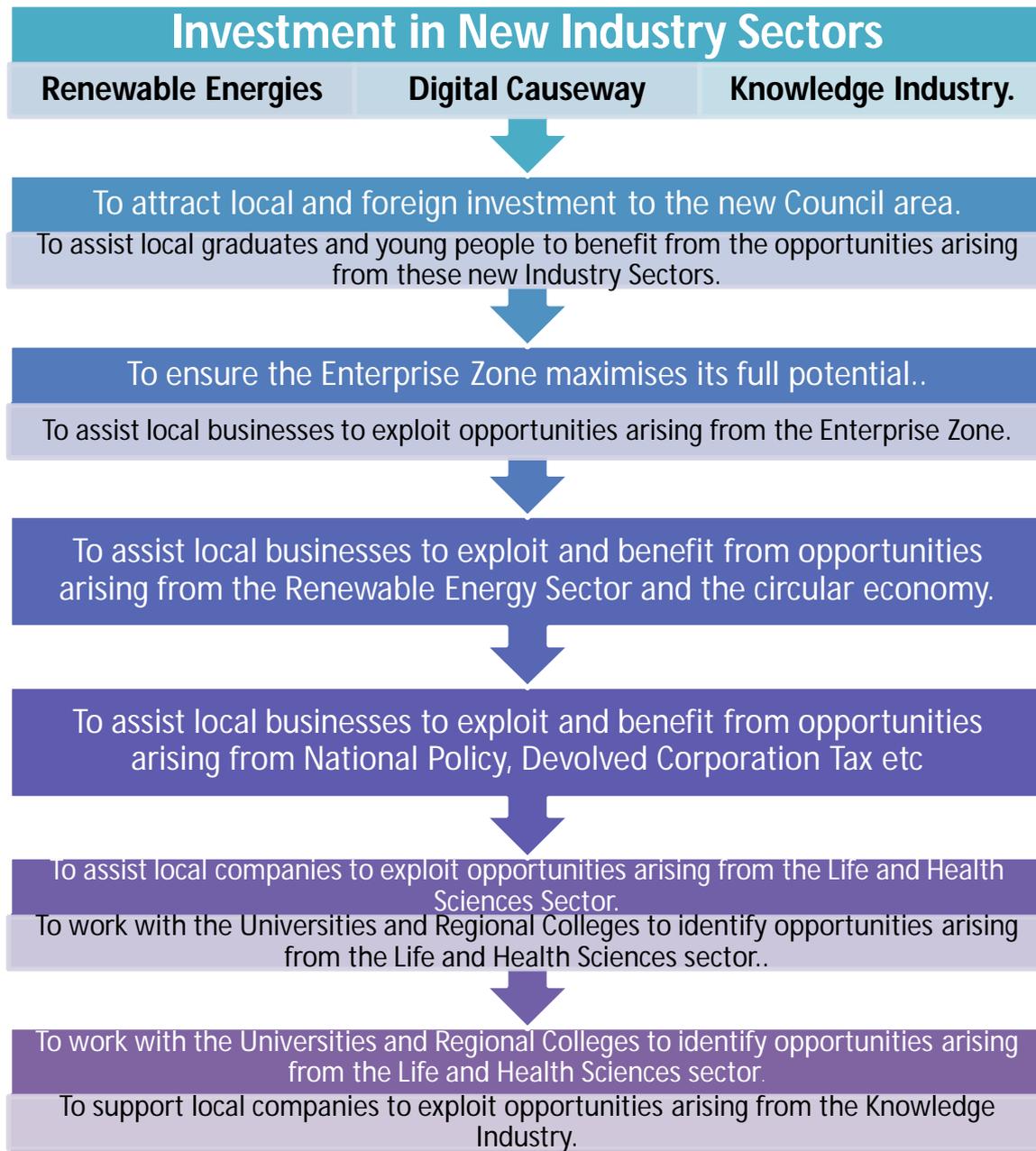
3.6.1 Competitive Causeway - Business Development



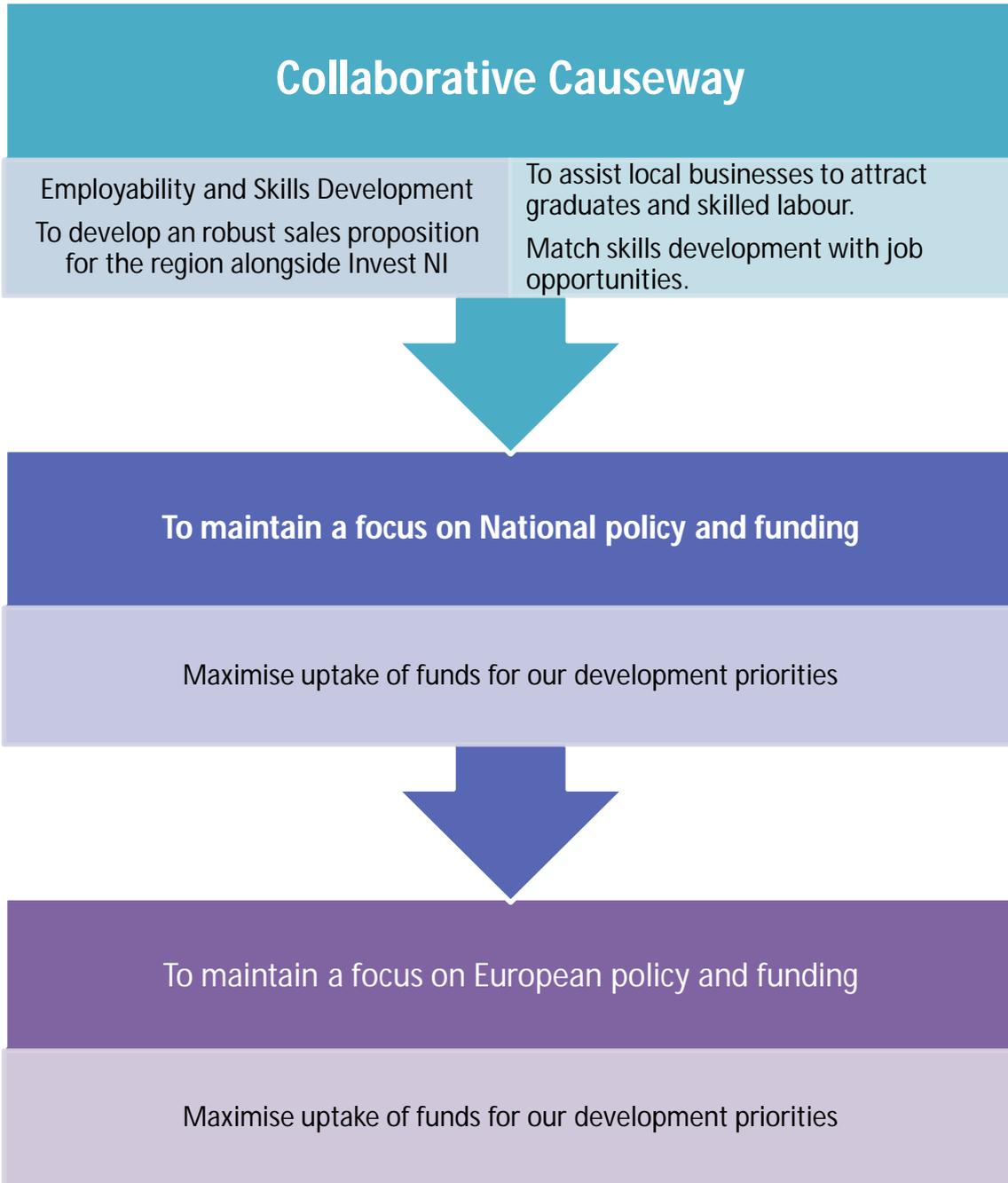
3.6.2 Competitive Causeway – Tourism Development



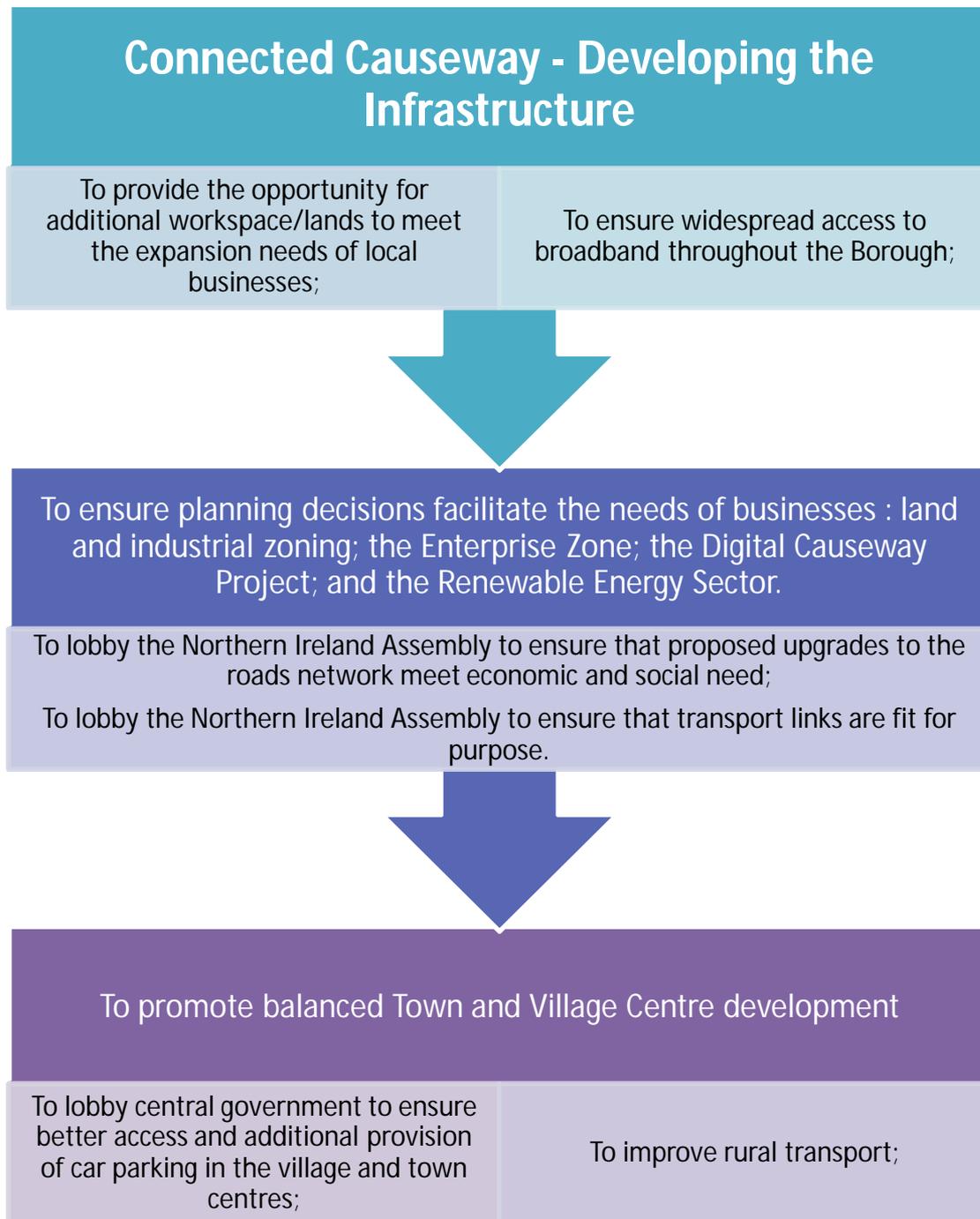
3.6.3 Competitive Causeway – Investment in New Industry Sectors



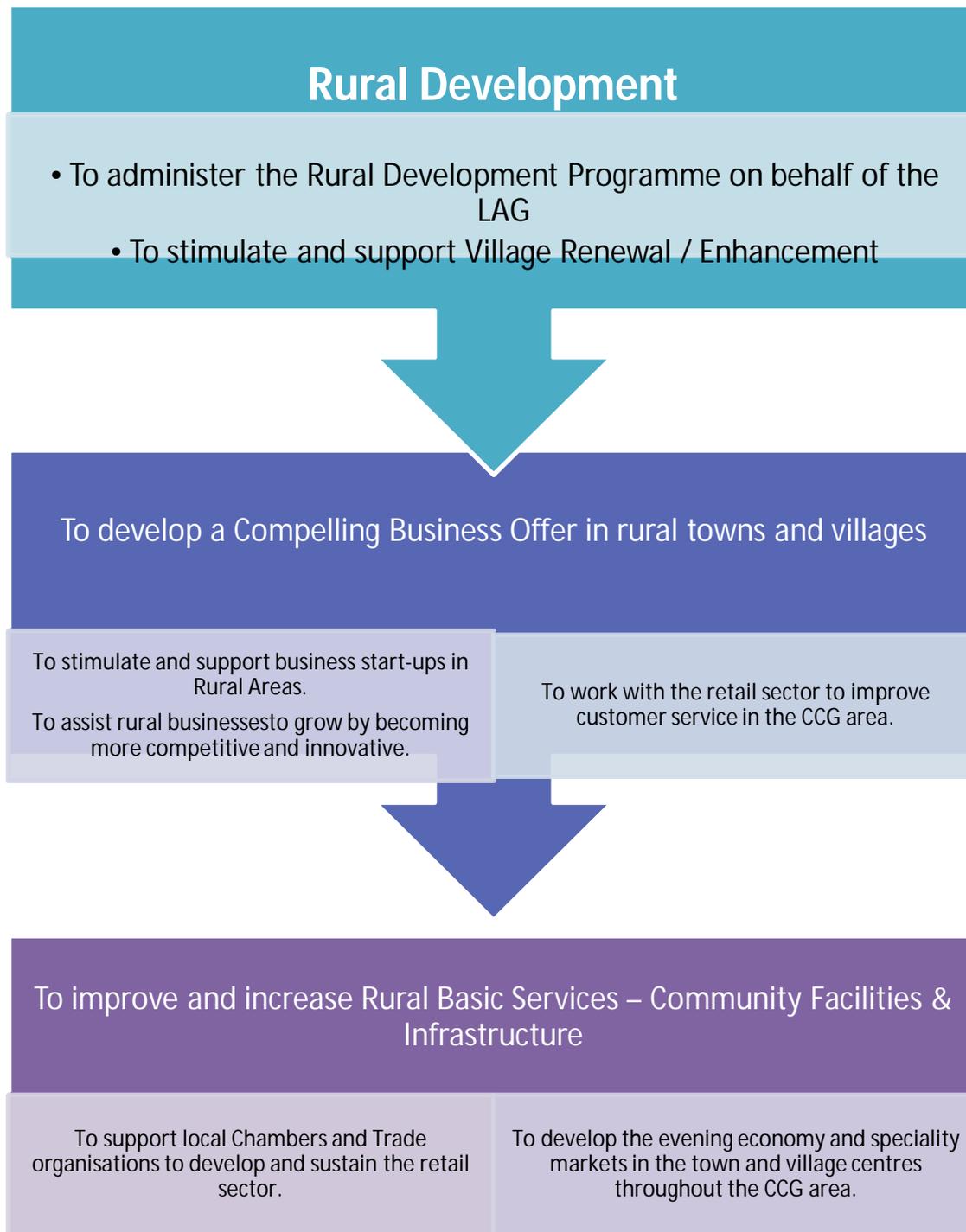
3.6.4 Collaborative Causeway



3.6.5 Connected Causeway – Developing the Infrastructure



3.6.6 Rural Development



These strategic themes will be implemented through the Economic Action Plan 2015 to 2018, which is provided in section 4 overleaf. The Economic Action Plan 2015 to 2018 will provide an implementation framework, which ensures that the strategic objectives outlined in section 3.6 above are SMART.

3.7 INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTION PLAN

The Economic Development Action Plan detailed overleaf builds on the success of these projects and seeks to address the strategic objectives identified in section 5 above. A summary of the four themes, associated budgets and performance indicators is provided as follows:

Theme	Budget £	Performance Indicator
Competitive Causeway - Business Development - Tourism Development - Investment in new Industry Sectors	969,707	20 Initiatives supported 5 Business starts 175 Businesses supported 120 Businesses sustained 100 jobs sustained 294 jobs promoted 234 Business Plans 5% increase in turnover 1% increase in profitability above baseline 30 Social Enterprises supported 9 Social Enterprises established
Collaborative Causeway	Staff Resource £3,000	Plan of action developed and being implemented. R&D completed and development opportunities identified. Plan of support developed to assist local businesses. Further development to enhance and guide the work of the network. Plan of action developed in conjunction with Universities & Regional Colleges.
Connected Causeway	£53,000	Business case developed & Lobbying/Advocacy document developed & implemented. Review of all Masterplans conducted & achievable actions identified. Research completed and Action Plan in place to address gaps. Business case developed, lobby and advocacy document developed and implemented. Communication plan developed, clear milestones identified and implemented. Evaluator appointed, monitoring and evaluation conducted to measure success against agreed targets.
Sub total	1,025,707	
Rural Development	Application to be submitted to Rural Development Programme	To be determined as per local Strategy within the parameters of RDP priorities. Businesses supported. Increase in turnover. Increase in profitability.

Section 4: CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS ECONOMIC STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2015 -2018

THEME ONE: COMPETITIVE CAUSEWAY - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT						
– supporting start-ups & growing existing businesses						
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget Per Annum £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
1.1a: To stimulate and support business start-ups (via PRE-ENTERPRISE – SEE ALSO 1.1b and 1.1c)	<p>Need to provide more, higher paid, greater value-added jobs – from Strategy Consultation</p> <p>Continue to contribute to “rising levels of employment by supporting the promotion of” new jobs under the NI Programme for Government</p> <p>Invest NI Corporate Plan Priority - Encouraging Business Growth</p> <p>Business Start is a transferring function</p>	<p>Pre-Enterprise Programme including a focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural • Women • Youth • Disadvantaged Areas/Groups 	£25,000	Councils, Invest NI, LEAs, Alchemy.	2015-18	<p>Number of initiatives supported</p> <p>Number of business starts</p> <p>Number of businesses supported</p> <p>Number of jobs sustained</p>
<p>1.2a: To assist local businesses to grow by becoming more competitive and innovative (via BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME – see also 1.2b and 1.2c)</p> <p>1.2c: To assist local companies to export</p>	<p>Need to assist businesses to grow through innovation, exports and competing effectively – from Strategy Consultation</p> <p>EU Structural and Cohesion Funds thematic objective – Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs</p>	<p>Business Support Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development Workshops - Generic Business Workshops 	£50,000	Councils, Invest NI, LEAs, Alchemy.	2015 - 18	

THEME ONE: COMPETITIVE CAUSEWAY - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT						
– supporting start-ups & growing existing businesses						
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget Per Annum £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
1.1b: To stimulate and support business start-ups (via REGIONAL START INITIATIVE – see also 1.1a and 1.1c)	The Regional Start Initiative is a transferring function. It is the gateway for all emerging businesses	Regional Start Initiative including a focus on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural • Women • Youth • Disadvantaged Areas/Groups 	£246,265	Invest NI – year 1 CCG Council & Delivery agent (to be appointed year 2/3)	2015-18	Number of Business Plans. Number of Jobs Promoted. Number of businesses supported.
1.2b: To assist local businesses to grow by becoming more competitive and innovative (via ALCHEMY & BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICE – see also 1.2a and 1.2c)	Need to assist businesses to grow through innovation, exports and competing effectively – from Strategy Consultation EU Structural and Cohesion Funds thematic objective – Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs Continue to contribute to “rising levels of employment by supporting the promotion of” new jobs under the NI Programme for Government Invest NI Corporate Plan Priority - Encouraging Business Growth Northern Ireland Economic Strategy goals include “increase the level of exports and external sales as a	Alchemy (one to one support) Business Support Service – Grantfinder & Policy Finder Legacy Projects (2007-2014 EU Funding); Alchemy Bus Stop Family Business Journey to Market Smart Grid Think BIG Think Creative	£145,000 £7,275 Funding required only in 15/16: £106,167	CCG Council ERDF Invest NI CCG Staff Resource	2015-18 2015-18 2015-16	Number of businesses sustained. Increase in business turnover above baseline. Increase in profitability above baseline.

THEME ONE: COMPETITIVE CAUSEWAY - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT						
– supporting start-ups & growing existing businesses						
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget Per Annum £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
	proportion of NI output”					
1.3a: To support local Chambers & Trade organisations to develop & sustain the retail sector (see also 1.3b) Julienne, Joanne, Una	Retail continues to play an important part in economic life within the new Borough – Chambers and Trade organisations need to improve their capacity for their stakeholders Capacity weakness and strategic direction is recognised as an area of need	Development Programme - Work with Chambers to develop Action Plan (yr 1)	£5,000	CCG Council Local Chambers	2015-18	Number of businesses supported Increase in footfall (target to be identified as part of Chamber Action Plan) Number of Social Enterprises supported
1.4: To stimulate & support social enterprise in the local Council area. Paul	The Social Enterprise Programme is a transferring function from Invest Northern Ireland	Social Enterprise Programme	£35,000	Invest NI & CCG Council	2015-18	Increase in turnover Increase in profitability
1.5: To develop and promote the local Agri-food sector to compete and reach export markets	Agriculture is a significant sector within the new Borough; while the Rural Development Programme will play an important part in developing the sector, these programmes will continue from the legacy councils	Journey to Market Agrifood Programme	£30,000	CCG Council & delivery agent (to be appointed)	2015-18	Number of jobs promoted
		Agri-food Tourism Network	£5,000	Causeway Food Tourism Network	2015-18	
		Agri-food Business Development Programme (one to one support).	£40,000	CCG Council & delivery agent (to be appointed)	2015–18	Town Centre Action Plan facilitated by Town Centre teams
1.3b: To develop a Town Centre Management	The legacy councils have an extensive history of development in the main	Town Centre Management Programme	£50,000	CCG Council & local businesses	2015-18	Health Check

THEME ONE: COMPETITIVE CAUSEWAY - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT						
– supporting start-ups & growing existing businesses						
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget Per Annum £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
Programme across the new Council area (see also 1.3a) Julienne, Joanne	town centres across the new Borough. This will continue in conjunction with stakeholders such as the DSD and DRD.	Town Centre Signage	£5,000	CCG Council	2015-18	Reports
			£25,000	CCG Council	2015-18	Detailed targets identified as part of Action Plan
		Causeway Speciality Market				

THEME ONE:	COMPETITIVE CAUSEWAY - TOURISM DEVELOPMENT					
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget Per Annum £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
<p>1.1c: To stimulate & support business start-ups in the tourism sector Paul</p> <p>1.2c: To assist local tourism businesses to grow by becoming more competitive & innovative Tracy, Martin,</p>	<p>Links in with the CC&G Borough Council Tourism Strategy</p> <p>Builds upon the existing tourism offer by developing new business opportunities</p>	<p>Pre- Enterprise Programme</p> <p>Business Support Programme</p>	<p>Provided under Pre-Enterprise & Business Support Budget Progs. (page 56)</p>	<p>Councils, Invest NI, LEAs, Alchemy/Chambers of Commerce /Chambers of Trade</p>	<p>2015 - 18</p>	<p>Number of businesses supported.</p> <p>Number of businesses sustained.</p> <p>Increase in business turnover above baseline.</p>
<p>1.6a: To work in partnership to develop projects & initiatives to extend tourist season. Joanne/others?</p> <p>1.6b: To develop a business offer in the towns and villages, which attracts tourists and tourist spend. Joanne/others?</p> <p>1.6c: To assist local businesses to benefit from opportunities arising from events, such as British Open, North West 200, Air Show etc. Joanne/others?</p>	<p>As above, but working in partnership with Chambers, Town Team, Trade Organisations and the opportunities offered by Rural Development's Village Renewal programme</p>	<p>Business Support Initiatives including Customer Service, Evening Economy & Causeway Speciality Market.</p>	<p>£45,000</p>	<p>Councils, Invest NI, LEAs, Alchemy/Chambers of Commerce /Chambers of Trade</p>	<p>2015 - 18</p>	<p>Increase in profitability above baseline.</p>

THEME: COMPETITIVE CAUSEWAY - INVESTMENT IN NEW INDUSTRY SECTORS						
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget Per Annum £	Enablers/ Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
1.7: To assist local businesses to exploit & benefit from opportunities arising from the Renewable Energy Sector	Strategy link – “Industry in NI suffers simultaneously from the second highest electricity prices in Europe and excessive grid connection costs	Lobby on issues related to the renewable energy sector to ensure the CCG Council area benefits from emerging business opportunities such as Smart Grid and Marine Energy	Not Applicable	CCG Elected Members CCG Staff Resource	2015 -2018	Meetings conducted with regional government Reports completed
	The continuation of Council's involvement in these sectors, reflects legacy work undertaken to develop a micro grid and alternative sources of energy	Continue to support R&D related to renewable energy sector leading to Economic Appraisal – Smart Grid, Identification of opportunities from Marine Energy & Waste Management.	£120,000	CCG staff University	2015 – 16	Economic Appraisal Completed – opportunities identified.
1.8: To assist local businesses to exploit opportunities arising from the Enterprise Zone	Project Kelvin remains at 10% of capacity usage; the Enterprise Zone is in place, but not yet at full fruition	Continue to lobby & advocate on behalf of the Enterprise Zone, in particular for the implementation of the Digital Causeway Project. Identify the potential to extend the Enterprise Zone throughout the entire CCG Council area, through lobbying and R&D. Update the Digital Causeway website, redefine the offer, position Council as a key facilitator in developing the Zone.	£30,000 -(year1) Staff Resource required to ensure opportunities are researched and implemented.	CCG Elected Members CCG Staff Resource	2015 - 18	Continue to work with project to ensure its implementation in CCG area. R&D completed and implementation plan in place.
1.9: To assist local graduates & young people to benefit from opportunities arising from new Industry sectors	4,620 students were enrolled in Higher Education Institutions in the CCG Council area (2012/13). 9,320 students were enrolled at Higher Education Institutions (2012/13).	Work with Colleges & Universities to ensure graduates & young people benefit from job opportunities emerging from renewables sector	Staff Resource required to ensure opportunities are researched and implemented.	CCG staff University Regional Colleges	2015 -18	Plan of action developed in conjunction with Universities & Colleges

THEME TWO:	COLLABORATIVE CAUSEWAY – NEW INVESTMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES					
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget £	Delivery Option	Timescale	Performance Indicators
2.1: To develop a robust sales proposition for the region	CCG Council will work with Invest NI to maximise the potential for inward investment	Develop a plan detailing the compelling offer that the CCG area has to offer investors. InvestNI will use this plan in their worldwide sales of the region	Staff Resource £3,000 printing	CCG Council Invest NI	2015	Sales Plan developed Increase in inward investment supported by INI by 2018
2.2a: To work with the Universities & Regional Colleges to identify opportunities arising from the Life & Health Sciences sector and the Knowledge Economy.	CCG Council will work with the University & Regional Colleges to maximise spin-off opportunities, and opportunities for graduates, arising from research and development in Life & Health Sciences & Knowledge Economy.	Develop joint plan of action to identify and exploit opportunities arising from the Life & Health Sciences sector and the Knowledge Economy.	Staff Resource	CCG Council Universities Northern Regional College North West Regional College	2015	Plan of action developed and being implemented R&D completed and development opportunities identified.
2.2b: To assist local companies to exploit opportunities arising from the Life & Health Sciences sector and the Knowledge Economy.	CCG Council will work with the University and local businesses to maximise opportunities arising from research and development in Life & Health Sciences & Knowledge Economy.	R&D to investigate opportunities arising from the Life & Health Sciences & Knowledge Economy sectors. Assist local businesses to benefit from opportunities arising from the Life & Health Sciences sector & the Knowledge Economy. Work with Regional Colleges to assist local businesses to take advantage of their product development support.	Staff Resource	CCG Council Universities Northern Regional College North West Regional College	2016 -18	Plan of support developed to assist local businesses .

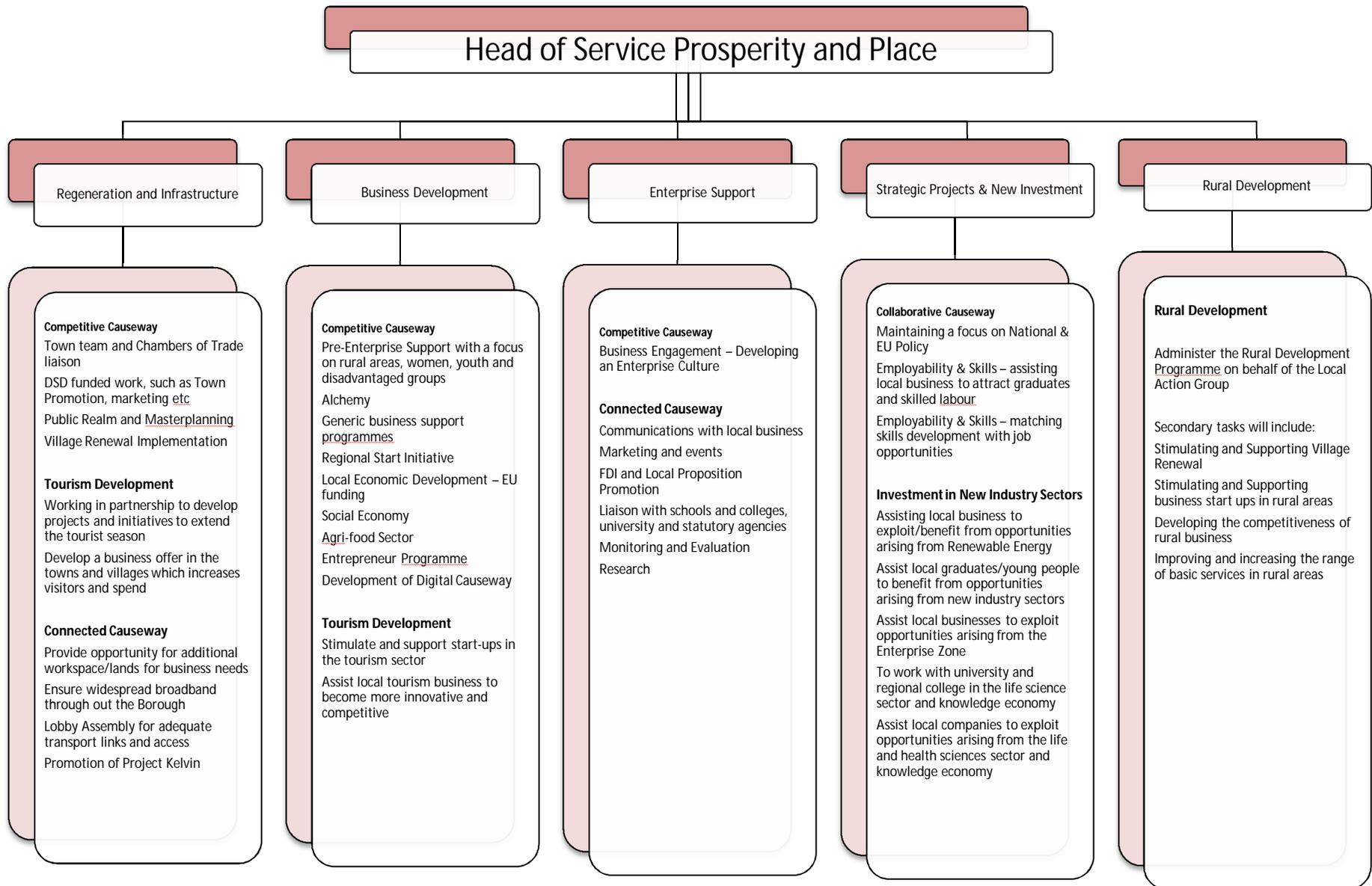
THEME TWO:	COLLABORATIVE CAUSEWAY –Skills / Education					
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
2.3a: Employability and Skills To assist local businesses to attract graduates & skilled labour	4,620 students are enrolled in Higher Education Institutions in the CCG Council area. Consultation with businesses as part of the Strategy development process identified that businesses wanted assistance to retain and attract these graduates.	Conduct a Skills Analysis Report in conjunction with the Universities and Regional Colleges.	Support & Engage with the Collaborative Network	Council/University/ Regional Colleges/ Invest NI/ LEAs/ DEL/Chambers of Commerce /Chambers of Trade	2015 - 18	Further development to enhance and guide the work of the network.
2.3b: Employability and Skills Match skills development with job opportunities	Through consultation with businesses as part of the Strategy development process businesses identified the need to develop skills in the local economy, which match job opportunities.	Establish a Collaborative Network to ensure that skills development match job opportunities	Staff Resource required to ensure opportunities are researched and implemented.	CCG Staff/University/ Regional Colleges/Invest NI/LEAs/ DEL/Chambers of Commerce /Chambers of Trade	2015 -18	Plan of action developed in conjunction with Universities & Regional Colleges

THEME THREE:	CONNECTED CAUSEWAY - DEVELOPING THE INFRASTRUCTURE					
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
3.1: To provide the opportunity for additional workspace/lands to meet the expansion needs of local businesses (see also 1.8).	Identified as a weakness in the SWOT analysis undertaken in the development of the Strategy Links to Enterprise Zone activity (see 1.8)	Develop the business case and continue to lobby for the expansion of the "Enterprise Zone"	£20,000 Staff Resource	CCG Council & Invest NI	2015	Business case developed & Lobbying/Advocacy document developed & implemented.
3.2: To promote balanced Town & Village Centre Development	The need to promote balance town and village development was identified through the consultation exercise undertaken as part of the strategy development process.	Development Opportunities arising out of Masterplans identified for towns & villages in CCGDC	Staff Resource	CCG staff & external organisations (to be identified as per action)	2015-2018	Review of all Masterplans conducted & achievable actions identified.
3.3: To improve connectivity across the Borough – widening out to 3G, 4G provision. 3.4: To encourage & support local businesses to take advantage of the digital infrastructure.	Broadband infrastructure has been highlighted as a weakness in consultation and anecdotally. The Borough is also blighted with many not-spots. This activity will link to longer term actions from both DETI and the Rural Development Programme	Conduct research to identify the extent of connectivity and the gaps in provision across the Borough. Action Plan developed to address the gaps – both domestic and business. Facilitate & enable the implementation of the Broadband Connections Voucher Scheme	£5,000 plus Staff Resource £8,000 plus Staff Resource	CCG Council DETI Rural Dev. Programme (for rural areas) Chambers of Trade & Commerce Belfast City Council & CCG staff	2015-16 2015-16	Research completed and action plan in place to address gaps. Businesses applying for vouchers.
3.5: To lobby NI Assembly to ensure Transport links & Access meet economic and social need	Links to CC&G consultation, The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, and elements of Rebalancing the Northern Ireland Economy	Develop the business case and continue to lobby for the enhancement of transport links and access	Not Applicable	CCG Staff & external organisation (to be identified)	2015-18	Business case developed & Lobbying/Advocacy document developed & implemented.

THEME THREE: CONNECTED CAUSEWAY - DEVELOPING THE INFRASTRUCTURE						
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
3.6: To communicate the successes of the Economic Strategy (see also 1.6c, 1.8, 2.2a and 2.2b)	This is an underlying support mechanism which will enhance the Prosperity and Place communication with a wider audience – this is directly aimed at rebalancing the disconnect between Council and its business rate payers.	Communications budget	£15,000	CCG Staff & external organisation (to be identified)	2015 - 18	Communication plan developed, clear milestones identified and implemented.
3.7: To measure the success of the Economic Strategy in achieving its strategic objectives and established targets	Every activity will be measured against budget and output successes.	Evaluation Budget	£5,000	CCG Staff & external organisation (to be identified)	2015 -18	Evaluator appointed, monitoring and evaluation conducted to measure success against agreed targets.

THEME FOUR: RURAL DEVELOPMENT						
Strategic Objective	Need/Rationale/Linkage to Strategy Content	Action	Budget £	Enablers/Partners	Timescale	Performance Indicators
4.1: To administer the Rural Development Programme on behalf of the LAG	<p>This programme will be delivered by the Local Action Group, with administration undertaken by Council.</p> <p>As part of the ongoing consultation, Council will have an opportunity to influence direction as a stakeholder, and to be an applicant to the programme.</p>	Joint Working Strategy Animation/Promotion Call for Application Assessment & Awards Monitoring & Evaluation	Overall budget - £9.6m Administration budget - £2.11m	Council & RDP Local Action Group	2015 -18	<p>To be determined as per local Strategy within the parameters of RDP priorities</p> <p>Businesses supported</p> <p>Increase in turnover</p>

<p>4.2: To develop the economy & speciality markets in the town & village centres throughout the CCG area.</p>	<p>As part of the ongoing consultation, Council will have an opportunity to influence direction as a stakeholder, and to be an applicant to the programme.</p>	<p>Town & Villages Development Programme</p>	<p>Application to be submitted under Rural Development Programme and others.</p>	<p>CCG Council Rural Development Programme (RDP)</p>	<p>2015 -18</p>	<p>Increase in profitability</p>
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Appendix 1

POLICY AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

1.1 The EU Structural and Cohesion Funds 2014/2020 – Jobs and Growth

Programme funded through the European Development Fund (ERDF) will focus on three priority areas:

- Strengthening Research, Technical development and Innovation;
- Enhancing the Competitiveness of SMEs (including through improved access to finance measures and Tourism Development);
- Supporting the shift towards a Low-Carbon Economy.

The current EU Structural and Cohesion Fund 2014-2020 funded by ERDF, which is aimed at supporting regional economic growth, will represent a reduction of approximately 25% from the previous programme, 2007/2013. The EU contribution of 2.74 million Euro with a national contribution of 1.83 million Euro still provides significant opportunity to augment national resources and to lever private investment to deliver economic growth. The programme will be delivered in Northern Ireland by DETI, Invest NI, Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Local Councils.

The three priority areas will be supported by four thematic objectives:

- i. Strengthening Research, Technological Development and Innovation;
- ii. Enhancing access to and use and quality of ICT;
- iii. Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs;
- iv. Supporting the shift towards a Low-Carbon Economy in all sectors.

These thematic objectives will be delivered with a commitment to two crosscutting themes: Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development.

1.2 Horizon 2020 – The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

Horizon 2020 Programme is the EU Framework Programme for Research and Information. Horizon 2020 is the biggest ever EU Research and Innovation Programme with nearly 80 billion Euro of funding available over 7 years, 2014-2020, in addition to the private investment that this fund will attract. Horizon 2020 is seen as a means to drive economic growth and create jobs and will be delivered through focusing on excellent service, industrial leadership and tackling societal challenges.

The overarching goal of Horizon 2020 is to ensure Europe produces world-class science, remove barriers to innovation and facilitate private and public sectors working together to deliver innovation.

The Programme sections are:

- 1) Excellent Science;
- 2) Industrial Leadership;
- 3) Societal Change;
- 4) Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation;
- 5) Science with and for Society;
- 6) European Institute of Innovation and Technology; and
- 7) Euratom

The Programmes with the most relevance to the Causeway Coast and Glens Economic Strategy would be Industrial Leadership, Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation, and Science with and for Society. Considering each of these in turn:

Industrial Leadership

Industrial leadership aims to speed up development of the technologies and innovations that will underpin tomorrow's businesses and help innovative European SMEs to grow into world leading companies. The Programme contains three specific objectives:

- Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies;
This will provide dedicated support for research, development and demonstration and, where appropriate, for standardisation and certification, on information and communications technology (ICT), nanotechnology, advanced materials, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing and processing and space. Emphasis will be placed on interactions and convergence across and between the different technologies and their relations to societal challenges. User needs will be taken into account in all these fields.
- Innovation in SMEs
Innovation in SMEs" will provide SME-tailored support to stimulate all forms of innovation in SMEs, targeting those with the potential to grow and internationalise across the single market and beyond.
- Access to Risk Finance

Access to risk finance" will aim to overcome deficits in the availability of debt and equity finance for R&D and innovation-driven companies and projects at all stages of development. Together with the equity instrument of the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (COSME) (2014-2020) it will support the development of Union-level venture capital.

Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

This sub-programme aims to measure investment in research and innovation to enable the European Research Area to function in a more streamlined and homogenous way, allowing individual strengths of member states to be maximised. This measure is targeted at low-performing Member States in terms of research and innovation, and will be implemented by Member States most in need of the EU Cohesion Programme.

Science with and for Society

The aim of this sub-programme is to build effective co-operation between science and society, to recruit new talent for science and to pair scientific excellence with social awareness and responsibility. The Science with and for Society Programme will be instrumental in addressing the European Societal challenges tackled by Horizon 2020 and building capacities and developing innovative ways of connecting science to society. It will make science more attractive, particularly to young people, increase society's appetite for innovation and open up further research and innovation activities.

1.3 The Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020

The European Commission has agreed a fourth Rural Development Programme for Northern Ireland for the period 2014 to 2020. The aim of this Rural Development Programme is "to assist in the development of rural economies and create jobs." The programme will reinforce previous efforts to develop and strengthen the rural economy and tourism development measures. The budget for the overall Rural Development Programme for Northern Ireland is £68.66 million, which is a very significant fund at Northern Ireland level. For the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council area the budget allocation is £9.6 million, this will be delivered through Priority 6 of the Rural Development Programme: Promoting Social Inclusion, Poverty Reduction and Economic Development in Rural Areas. There will be six sub themes within Priority 6, with indicative budgets at Northern Ireland level as follows:

(1) Village Renewal - £8 million

This budget will be directed towards:

- Development or Updating of integrated village plans
- Village investments emanating from the integrated village plan, including capital projects such as: derelict and vacant site enhancement; environmental improvements; shop frontage improvements; conservation and upgrading of rural culture and heritage; recreational infrastructure.

(2) Rural Broadband - £2 million

- Creation of new broadband infrastructure and upgrading of existing broad band;
- Creation of e-governance solutions, IT applications.

(3) Rural Basic Services - £15 million

- Developing facilities to provide services for rural communities;
- Demonstration or pilot projects to enhance existing service provision;
- Recreational, cultural and leisure activities.

(4) Rural Tourism - £10 million

- Signposting of tourism sites;
- Construction and modernisation of tourism information centres, visitor information and guidance;
- Construction of shelters and safety facilities;
- Establishing of e-booking systems for tourism facilities;
- Conservation of small scale built heritage;
- Development & conservation of cultural and natural heritage.

(5) Rural Business Investment - £27 million

- Business creation and development supported by a business plan, including:
 - Bespoke training and marketing;
 - Tourism businesses;
 - Construction, reconstruction or establishment of workshops, factories, plants, premises and facilities.
 - Craft and handicraft activities;
 - IT activities;

- Architectural and engineering, accounting, book keeping and auditing services, technical services, industrial cleaning, veterinary services.

(6) All-Island Co-operation Scheme - £4 million

- The all-island scheme can involve a partner from RoI and or include a partner from Scotland.

The Rural Development Programme will be delivered at Council level through a Local Action Group (LAG). Work is currently underway to form the LAG, which will most likely comprise 15 members, made up of elected representatives and local stakeholder groups and individuals from a broad range of interest groups that are consistent with the sectors identified as part of the formation process. This Local Action Group will also be responsible for developing a strategy at local level, which addresses the needs of the rural economic and social infrastructure.

1.4 Northern Ireland Programme for Government 2011-15

The five priorities of the Northern Ireland Programme for Government are:

1. Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future;
2. Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Well Being.
3. Protecting our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities;
4. Building a Stronger and Shared Community;
5. Delivering High Quality and Efficient Public Services.

Priority 1 Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future is particularly relevant to the operating context for the development and implementation of the Causeway Coast and Glens Economic Strategy. A range of key commitments was made under Priority 1, many of which have been achieved. Those commitments with particular relevance to the Causeway Coast and Glens Economic Strategy include:

- Contributing to rising levels of employment by supporting the promotion of over 25,000 new jobs (DETI). This target has already been achieved and provides the scope for Invest NI to target other areas, for example contribute to the Northern Ireland Skills agenda, working with DEL, Further and Higher Education Institutions and employer bodies.
- Press for the devolution of Corporation Tax to reduce it levels (DFP, OfMDfM, DETI).

-
- Achieve £1 billion of investment in the NI economy;
 - Increase the value of manufacturing exports by 20% (DETI);
 - Support £300 million investment by business in R&D with at least 20% coming from SMEs (DETI);
 - Increase visitor numbers to 4.2million and tourist revenue to £676m by December 2014, this target has been achieved and provides NITB with the opportunity to develop other aspects of tourism as economic drivers;
 - Aid liquidity of SMEs through a £50m loan fund (DETI);
 - Ensure 90% of large-scale investment planning decisions are made within 6 months and applications with job creation potential are given additional weight;
 - Introduce extension of Small Business Rate Relief Scheme to 2015 (DFP)
 - Invest in social enterprise growth to increase sustainability in the broad community sector (DETI);
 - Encourage achievement of 20% of electricity consumption from renewable sources and 4% renewable heat by 2015 (DETI);
 - Support 200 projects through the Creative Industries Innovation Fund (DCAL);
 - Progress the upgrade of key road projects and improve the overall road network to ensure that by March 2015 journey times on key transport corridors reduce by 2.5% - against the 2003 baseline (DRD);
 - Increase uptake in economically relevant Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) places (DEL);
 - Increase the overall proportion of young people who achieve at least 5 GCSEs at A* - C or equivalent including GCSEs in Maths and English by the time they leave school. (DE);
 - Increase the proportion of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who achieve at least 5 GCSEs at A*- C or equivalent including GCSEs in Maths and English (DE);
 - Develop a strategic plan for the Agrifood sector (DARD/DETI) ;
 - Upskill the working age population by delivering over 200,000 qualifications (DEL)
*includes 2011/12 (Figures rounded);
 - Facilitate delivery of the Executive's 20% target for increased drawdown of competitive EU funds (OFMDFM) (Covers the following European thematic priorities: Competitiveness and employment; Innovation and technology; Climate change and energy; and Social cohesion);
*2012/13 milestone includes 2011/12 figures.

- Develop and implement a Strategy to reduce economic inactivity through skills, training, incentives and job creation (DEL / DETI);

1.5 **Community Planning**

Under local government reform, Councils will take forward community planning from April 2015. Community planning is an integral part of the local government reform package that will also see 26 councils reduce to 11 and a number of functions transfer from central to local government. Councils will work with their local communities, and statutory bodies and agencies, to promote the well-being of their area and improve the quality of life of its citizens.

The guidance contained within the Northern Ireland Community Planning Foundation Programme (Oct 2013) provides the necessary building blocks to help councils prepare for this new duty – a duty that will ensure that citizens' needs are at the heart of decision-making on local services.

Community planning is a key component of councils' expanding role. There is a legislative duty on government and its agencies to work together in developing and delivering the community planning process. Through community planning, councils will have the opportunity to sit around the table with community and voluntary groups, service providers, budget holders and citizens. Problems can be addressed in an inclusive and holistic manner, allowing for better coordination and use of resources. The Review of Public Administration states a requirement for a council "to consult all its constituents about issues that affect their lives and The Review of Public Administration states a requirement for a council "to consult all its constituents about issues that affect their lives and allow people to have a say in the way in which their areas are developed". A community plan will be published that will assess how well the council and others are delivering on commitments.

Decreasing the number of councils will mean that there is a substantially larger population within the boundary of each new council area. This, coupled with the expansion in responsibilities, means that the onus is on the local councils to ensure they utilise the community planning facility to ensure the effective provision of services for all citizens.

Community Planning should:

- Provide structures for representation,
- Develop local area partnerships, cross boundary and cross border,
- Implement the power of well-being;
- Improve local governance through local authorities working closely with statutory agency partners and communities,
- Link the agendas of social inclusion, community participation, better service delivery and modernisation of local government,
- Build on the good practice and experience in the fields of community development and community involvement that exist in Northern Ireland,
- Take the opportunity to develop a fresh perspective on how to achieve genuine community participation.

Councils will lead the community planning process and work with a wide range of partners, including representatives from the statutory, business, higher education, community and voluntary sectors, to develop a long-term plan to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area.

Community planning is linked to other transferring powers, such as planning and urban regeneration and community development (urban regeneration and community development powers will transfer in April 2016). Economic Development functions will form an integral party of the delivery of Community Planning.

Councils will be addressing social issues, spatial planning and place shaping as part of these duties to improve the wellbeing of residents throughout the new council area in April 2015.

As the lead organisation in the community planning process Councils will be required, by law, to produce a community plan every four years from April 2015.

1.6 Northern Ireland Economic Strategy - "Priorities for Sustainable Growth and Prosperity".

The Economic Strategy for Northern Ireland was published in March 2012 and set out an Economic Vision for 2030 as:

'An economy characterised by a sustainable and growing private sector, where a greater number of firms compete in global markets and there is growing employment and prosperity for all'

The vision is long term in nature and reflects the reality that it will take some time to rebalance the Northern Ireland economy and build a stronger private sector. The vision is supported by a series of economic goals, as follows:

- increase the level of exports and external sales as a proportion of NI output;
- increase the proportion of the working age population in employment;
- NI private sector output growth to exceed the UK average; and
- NI's economic competitiveness to improve relative to other developed economies.

The Economic Strategy for Northern Ireland also outlines a number of economic priorities aimed at rebalancing the economy to improve the wealth, employment and living standards of everyone in NI. Alongside this, the Strategy outlines a number of immediate and complementary actions aimed at rebuilding the economy to address the impact of the global economic downturn, particularly on employment.

1.6.1 Rebalancing the Northern Ireland Economy

The Strategy recognises that there has been an overdependence on the public sector in Northern Ireland and in turn a need to develop the private sector in order to rebalance the economy. The priorities identified to rebalance the economy in Northern Ireland are:

- stimulate innovation, R&D and creativity so that we widen and deepen our export base;
- improve the skills and employability of the entire workforce so that people can progress up the skills ladder, thereby delivering higher productivity and increased social inclusion;
- compete effectively within the global economy and be internationally regarded as a good place to live and do business;
- encourage business growth and increase the potential of our local companies, including within the social and rural economies; and
- develop a modern and sustainable economic infrastructure that supports economic growth.

The priority "Encourage Business Growth" best reflects the aims and objectives of the Causeway and Glens Strategy and Action Plan. The detail of this priority includes the following:

- Promote £400m of investment and 6,300 jobs in locally owned companies (with 50% paying salaries above the Private Sector Median) and a further 6,500 new jobs in new start-up businesses

- Increase visitor numbers and revenue to 4.2m and £676m respectively by December 2014
- Support projects that improve competitiveness, encourage diversification of the rural economy, improve quality of life in rural areas and that protect and enhance the environment, including through the introduction of National Parks
- Reform planning by introducing spatial Local Development Plans; a marine spatial plan and deliver faster and more predictable processing of planning applications
- Invest in social enterprise growth to increase sustainability in the voluntary and community sector

These priorities are totally consistent with the aims and objectives outlined in the Causeway Coast and Glens Strategy and Action Plan. The priorities outlined above will be underpinned by a commitment, following the Independent Review of Economic Policy (IREP), to work to support the entire business base to help drive forward the priorities of innovation, R&D and exports. The Economic Strategy identifies a number of potential markets, which Invest NI will seek to further exploit, these are:

- Telecommunications & ICT
- Life & Health Sciences
- Agrifood
- Advanced Materials
- Advanced Engineering

1.6.2 Rebuilding the Northern Ireland Economy

A number of priorities have been identified to boost business activity and rebuild the economy as a direct response to the global downturn and its impact on the local labour force. These are:

- To promote accessible employment opportunities particularly in areas of economic disadvantage; and
- To provide training and re-skilling to those who are unemployed or inactive because of the downturn and address wider barriers to employment so that people do not become detached from the labour market.

The measures developed to rebuild the economy in Northern Ireland are summarised below:

1. Promote £225m of investment and 6,300 jobs with 4,000 to be created by March 2014 under the Jobs Fund;
2. Develop and implement a strategy to reduce economic inactivity through skills, training, incentives and job creation;
3. Help the construction industry by delivering key road and rail projects and approximately 8,000 social and affordable homes over the budget period;
4. Deliver 6,000 work experience and training opportunities for young people by 2015 in priority sectors;
5. Stimulate 1,150 new employment opportunities in rural areas under the Rural Development Programme by 2015;
6. Develop and start to implement a Childcare Strategy with key actions to provide integrated and affordable childcare;
7. Implement the Social Investment Fund to improve pathways to employment, tackle systemic issues linked to deprivation, increase community services and address dereliction;
8. Increase the number of working age customers in receipt of work-focussed benefits to support them to move into work;
9. Move 114,000 working age benefit clients into employment by March 2015;
10. Provide an Employer Subsidy for businesses to recruit individuals who have been unemployed or economically inactive for a period of more than 13 weeks;
11. Offer a period of supported self-employment for those interested in running their own business;
12. Explore options to further address graduate unemployment, with a particular focus on ensuring that actions assist with the longer term rebalancing agenda.

A series of cross cutting principles will guide the Economic Strategy in rebalancing and rebuilding the Northern Ireland economy. These are:

- Promoting Balanced Sub Regional growth;
- A commitment to Equality of opportunity;
- Promoting Sustainability.

1.7 The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland

The Investment Strategy for NI (ISNI) sets out the investment programme of over £5 billion that will be injected into the local economy over the current PfG period and

which directly assists the construction and related sectors of the NI economy. The Investment Strategy identifies the priority areas for investment. They are:

- Networks: Roads, Public Transport, Gateways, Telecoms & Energy;
- Skills: Schools, FE & HE, Youth Services, Libraries;
- Health: Primary Care, Public Safety & Technology, Hospitals, Fire & Rescue, Modernisation;
- Social: Regeneration, Social Housing, Culture, Arts, Sports & Inland Waterways;
- Environment: Water & Waste Water, Waste Management, Flood Risk Management, Climate Change;
- Productive: Enterprise & Innovation, Tourism, Rural Development & Primary Industries, Public Sector Reform; and
- Justice: Police, Prison, Forensic Services.

The total investment envisaged over the period of the Strategy is £13.334 billion. Of this total, £7 billion relates to roads (£4.1 billion) and hospitals (£2.9 billion). The Investment Strategy will be an important driver of the provision of the physical infrastructure needed to underpin the economic vision for Causeway Coast and Glens.

Many of the key messages of central government policy will resonate well with Causeway Coast and Glens future ambitions. For example, key priorities such as development of the green sector, support for creative industries and encouragement of the digital sector all sit well within the strategic themes identified as part of the development process for the Economic Strategy 2015/2018.

1.8 Invest NI Corporate Plan 2011-2015

In line with the Northern Ireland Programme for Government and the Economic Strategy for Northern Ireland, Invest NI launched its Corporate Plan for the period 2011 to 2015 with the aim of rebalancing and rebuilding the Northern Ireland economy. The Corporate Plan will increase the overall standard of living in Northern Ireland through driving productivity growth and increasing employment. The vision outlined in the Corporate Plan is:

“We will champion the growth of innovation and exports to build a local economy that competes globally. We will be a world leading business development agency”.

The Corporate Plan sets out a range of priorities aimed at Rebalancing and Rebuilding the economy, a summary of these priorities with their budget allocation is summarised as follows:

Table 1: Invest NI Corporate Plan Priorities, Source: Invest NI Corporate Plan 2011 - 2015

REBALANCING PRIORITIES			
Priority	Budget Allocation	Focus of Expenditure	
Stimulating Innovation and Creativity	£166.6m	R&D Competence Centres, Tech Transfers, Design, Capability Transfer, Efficiency, Intellectual Property	£300m investment 500 Companies engaged in R&D for first time
Improving Employability and the relevance and use of skills	£36m	Management & Leadership, SME Support, Assured Skills, BITP.	£110m investment 180 participants on Management & Leadership
Competing in the Global Economy	£42.1m	Inward Investment, Global Starts, Trade, SME Exports.	£375m investment £145m pa additional wages & salaries 5,900 jobs
Encouraging Business Growth	£79m	Local Co Growth, Scaling, Business Start, Social Economy.	£400m investment £120m pa in additional wages & salaries 12,800 jobs
Developing Economic Infrastructure	£44.4m	Land and Property	100 acres of serviced land available for business growth
REBUILDING PRIORITIES			
Priority	Budget Allocation	Focus of Expenditure	
Promoting Employment & Employability	£19 m	The Jobs Fund	£225m investment 6,300 jobs

To achieve these targets Invest NI will stimulate innovation and creativity amongst the Northern Ireland business base, drive business growth and internationalise the economy. Achieving sustainable growth will take into account the needs of businesses that trade internationally, those currently serving local markets but with the potential to internationalise, and those that will continue to serve local demand. Invest NI will achieve these targets through working in partnership with a range of businesses and stakeholder organisations.

The new Local Councils will have a central role in helping Invest NI achieve these targets at a local level. In fact the Corporate Plan states Invest NI's commitment to working in partnership with Local Councils:

“Through our engagement with our wide network of stakeholders, including councils, sectoral and business bodies, community and social enterprises, we will work to deliver economic development in the most efficient and effective way at the point of delivery.”

Invest NI Corporate Plan 2011-2015

1.8.1 Social Enterprise Programme

Social enterprises are businesses that trade to address social problems, improve communities, people's quality of life, or the environment. Their social mission is at the heart of everything they do and all profits are reinvested towards achieving these goals.

Invest NI currently operates the Social Enterprise Programme in Northern Ireland, responsibility for implementing this programme will transfer to the new Councils, established as a result of the Review of Public Administration, in late 2015/early 2016. Currently the Social Enterprise Programme is delivered through a two-strand approach:

1. Lead-in Development, which focuses on pre-business support, including advice on business concept, researching the market and financing the business. This element of the programme is designed to assist groups without a business idea or with an idea but which needs further refinement.
2. Core Capability Support
This strand focuses on the production of a business plan, start up capability advice and aftercare during the first twelve months of trading.
There is also the potential of financial support either through a grant or loan, depending on eligibility.
3. The Social Enterprise Programme is delivered through Invest NI, responsibility for this programme will transfer to the 11 new Councils before the end of 2015, with the corresponding budget of approximately £343,000, transferring to the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council.

As well as the mainstream support available to all business start-ups there are some initiatives designed for social entrepreneurs, which the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council would need to take cognisance of, such as:

- Free advice and loans are available from the Ulster Community Investment Trust
- The NI Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) is a source of advice and signposts to other support bodies.

Help is also available from a range of networks, which offer the opportunity to share experiences, learn from others, and access information and training:

- The Community Action Network (CAN) provides mentoring and expert online advice through its Virtual Employee Extranet.
- Social Enterprise NI is a central meeting point for social enterprises in Northern Ireland where they can collaborate, share knowledge, information and best practice to create real social change.
- Social Enterprise Hubs
- NI Social Enterprise Hubs is a pilot project managed by the Department for Social Development (DSD), the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) and Invest NI.

The Social Enterprise hubs provide:

- potential shop front retail space
- hot desking facilities
- conference/meeting rooms
- training suites
- general workspace – from where social economy businesses can operate on a ‘test-trading’ basis

All potential social enterprises can avail of free workshops, training and mentoring one to one support. There are 11 hubs located over the 9 Social Investment Fund (SIF) zones in Northern Ireland. They are located in Enniskillen, Strabane, Derry~Londonderry, Ballymena, Lisburn, Downpatrick, Lurgan, North Belfast, South Belfast, East Belfast and West Belfast.

1.8.2 Regional Start Programme

The Regional Start Initiative offers a comprehensive package of advice, training and support to business start-ups in Northern Ireland, including:

- Expert guidance and mentoring.
- A one-to-one assessment meeting with a dedicated Business Advisor
- A finance and business planning workshop session.
- A one-to-one finance and business planning meeting.
- Tailored guidance to develop your business plan.

The Regional Start Programme in Northern Ireland is currently managed by Invest NI and delivered through Enterprise NI. This arrangement will continue until October 2015, after which responsibility for the Regional Start Programme will transfer to the new 11 new Councils. The budget to be transferred to the new Causeway Coast and Glens through the Regional Start Programme will be approximately £284,000.

1.9 Department for Social Development – Urban Regeneration

The Department for Social Development currently manages the Urban Regeneration Programme. Urban Regeneration's main responsibility is:

- The establishment of policy and strategy;
- The implementation of programmes reflecting targeting social need, by addressing the social, economic and physical regeneration of cities, towns and villages in Northern Ireland.

The main areas of the Urban Regeneration Programme are:

- Neighbourhood Renewal;
- Belfast Regeneration Office;
- North West Development Office;
- Regional Development Office.

All the assets that DSD owns for the purposes of urban regeneration and community development are planned to transfer to the new council area on 1 April 2016. This will include land that has been bought for regeneration. It includes buildings and equipment as well as current maintenance contracts.

The budget that DSD would have received from the Executive for urban regeneration and community development will also be transferred to councils. The budget is to cover the delivery of these new council functions as well as the staffing and administrative costs associated with the service.

Examples of Physical Development would be improvement of the fabric of buildings and public places to create attractive and welcoming spaces that people want to visit, shop and socialise in. This would include updating the appearance of town and city centres as well as grants to the private sector to develop properties and areas.

- Physical development programmes include:
- Strategic Regeneration Projects;
- City Centre Regeneration;
- Comprehensive Development;
- Public Realm and Revitalisation projects;
- Urban Development Grants.

Examples of Area Based Regeneration would be Neighbourhood Renewal and Areas at Risk Programmes. These programmes support a range of projects that address the specific needs of the most deprived areas, groups and individuals. The projects have helped to improve the quality of life and expand the opportunities for whole communities through tackling education, employment, health and other social problems. They have also transformed the environment and facilities in many areas; creating or modernising things for the community to use or enjoy – anything from making a pocket park in a city to build a multi-use games areas.

Existing Area Based Regeneration Programmes, include:

- Neighbourhood Renewal Programme – both capital and revenue;
- Areas at Risk;
- Small Pockets of Deprivation;
- Belfast Area Partnerships;
- Development of non-statutory Masterplans and Frameworks.

1.10 Department for Employment and Learning (DEL)

The aim of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is to promote learning and skills to prepare people for work and to support the economy. DEL provides a wide range of support to develop and underpin the economy at local level, assistance with:

- 1) Employing an Apprentice
- 2) Bridge to Employment
- 3) Customised Training
- 4) Essential Skills
- 5) INTRO Graduate Programme
- 6) Investors in People
- 7) Management & Leadership Development
- 8) Management Analysis & Planning (MAP) Programme
- 9) Redundancy Skills
- 10) Skills Solutions
- 11) Employer Subsidy
- 12) Youth Employment Scheme

Links between DEL and employers is provided through an Employer Contact Manager.

At local level DEL's strategic objectives are delivered through the North West College and the Northern Regional College.

1.10.1 North West Regional College

The strategic aims of the North West College over the period 2014/2017 are to:

- Support the aims and aspirations of the Programme for Government and the One Plan for the City region by developing and delivering a curriculum, which provides a comprehensive range of education and training opportunities to fulfil the needs of the entire student population, business, industry, and the community, including schools, whilst providing equality and cultural diversity opportunities to all.
- Provide a wide range of access to accredited programmes to support the enhancement of economic development by encouraging individuals to reach their full potential, using marketing and external networks to target under-represented groups for development within the College profile.

- Provide a range of support services to underpin the students' learning programme, promote progression on the skills escalator and enhance the student experience.
- Develop holistic quality improvement processes, in line with the ETI/QAA requirements, across all College curriculum and functional areas and to achieve the key targets set out in the Plan through a high quality of leadership and management.
- Create the working environment and culture, which will allow staff to deliver the best service within FE in the UK and Ireland.
- Maintain financial stability to support and achieve the College's strategic objectives.
- Ensure that the College Estate is aligned to current and future curriculum and organisational strategy and facilitates the delivery of the skills necessary for a 21st century economy.
- Develop and maintain progression routes with the university sector to create an escalator of skills to higher education including Foundation Degrees.

1.10.2 Northern Regional College

Northern Regional College's mission is: Aspire, Aim, Achieve. The 'College aspires to:

- Put the learner at the heart of all that we do;
- Be a responsive and indispensable resource for the community and the local economy;
- Develop and support a professional workforce which can deliver a high quality service and respond positively to new challenges;
- Achieve maximum efficiency in the delivery of all aspects of our business.

1.11 Causeway Coast and Glens Corporate Plan

The new Causeway Coast and Glens Council assumed full functions on 1st April 2015. To assist in the transition the new Council has developed an Interim Corporate Plan 2014-2015. The Vision outlined to guide its direction and activities is:

Making the most of our natural assets, we will provide inclusive, customer focused, innovative services, to shape our area for residents, workers and visitors.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council states its mission as to:

- Provide accountable, civic leadership
- Deliver high quality, sustainable services
- Protect and enhance our environment
- Establish the new Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
- To improve the well-being and quality of life for all.

Six strategic themes have been developed to implement the vision and mission, these are:

- Transition and Transformation
- Health and Wellbeing/People
- Sustainability
- Prosperity
- Equality
- Community

These strategic themes will be underpinned by a series of values and behaviours as follows:

- *Equality* - Evenly available, impartial and free of bias
- *Integrity* - Acting morally and honestly
- *Transparency* - Open and easily understood
- *Respect* - Having due regard for the needs of others
- *Accessibility* - Easily reached and obtained
- *Professionalism* - Meeting high standards of service and making a positive contribution
- *Positivity* - Being constructive and adopting a 'can do' approach
- *Innovation* - Being proactive about identifying new methods
- *Courage* - Being confident to take the right decision
- *Empowerment* - Pushing responsibility and accountability to the appropriate level.

1.12 Other Local Strategies

In the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council area there are a number of strategic research and development projects underway, which have the potential to make a significant impact on the development and implementation of the Economic Strategy

and Action Plan 2015 to 2018. These include the Future Search Process, championed by Coleraine Borough Council, Causeway Chamber of Commerce and a range of community partners; research and development into the establishment of a micro electricity grid in the Council area; research and development into the establishment of a digital causeway initiative in partnership with the University of Ulster; research and development into the potential of marine and tidal energies being championed at local level by NAMEG. Further details are provided below:

1.12.1 Local Economic Strategies 2009 to 2014

Each of the four local Councils: Ballymoney; Coleraine; Limavady and Moyle have successfully developed and delivered previous economic strategies and action plans. The most recent strategies covering the period to 2014 are coming to an end, many of the projects delivered as part of these plans could be successfully delivered within the enlarged Causeway Coast and Glens Council area.

1.12.2 Coleraine Future Search Process

Causeway Chamber of Commerce, Coleraine Borough Council and the University of Ulster collaborated to host Coleraine “Future Search” in May 2012. Previously the Future Search Planning Method had been used successfully around the world with highly successful strategic outcomes, in Coleraine it was attended by 90 participants representing a wide range of stakeholder interests. The Future Search planning session identified that participants wished the Coleraine area to be *“a world class region for all with strong local shared leadership, centered around a University town, with global digital connections, renowned medical research (knowledge), unique natural eco environmental and visitor/tourist destination”*.

Through the Future Search process a Vision was developed for the Coleraine area of:

“A world class University town with global Digital connections, an energetic vibrant community with a place for all to live, work, learn, visit.”

This Vision would be achieved through a commitment to achieving four strategic strands: Health and Well being; Digital Economy; Tourism; and Maximise local brands

The mission identified to support this vision and strategic strands was:

“To build a stronger, vibrant and sustainable economy, increasing prosperity and wellbeing for everyone. We will achieve this by working together to develop and

promote our strengths especially the digital economy, tourism and medical research and health/wellness/natural environment/lifestyle.”

The four strategic strands: Health and Well being; Digital Economy; Tourism; and Maximise Local Brands, identified through the Future Search Process have substantial resonances with the issues and findings which emerged through the widespread consultation exercise undertaken as part of the development Economic Strategy and Action Plan 2015 -18.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF CAUSEWAY AND GLENS LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICT

The Reform of Local Government in Northern Ireland will reduce the number of Councils from the current 26 to 11 new Districts (LGD 2014). These 11 new Districts became operational in April 2015, and had been operating in Shadow form since the May 2014 elections. The socio-economic data for the new Districts (LGD 2014) provided in this section, is largely taken from the 2011 Census and is exact aggregates of information available at the Small Area level.

2.1 Usually Resident Population

On Census Day 2011 the usually resident population of Causeway Coast and Glens LGD 2014 was 140,877, accounting for 7.78% of the total Northern Ireland population. Of this figure the age categories were as follows:

Table 1: Usually Resident Population of Causeway Coast and Glens LGD, 2011, Source: NINIS

Age Band (Years)	2011	
	Usual Residents	%
0 -15	28,756	20.41
16 - 39	44,366	31.49
40 - 64	46,058	32.69
65 - 84	19,254	13.67
85+	2,443	1.73
Overall	140,877	100

In summary 20.41% were under 16 years of age, 15.4% were aged 65 and over, whilst 49.46% of the usually resident population was male and 50.54% female. Furthermore population estimates for Causeway Coast and Glens at 30th June 2013 provided by NINIS indicated a total population of 141,699 of which 70,116 (49.5%) were male and 71,583 (50.5%) were female. The average age of the population was 38 years. Over the period 2003 to 2013 the population of Causeway Coast and Glens Local Government District (2014) increased by 7,547 people or 5.6%, which was lower than the average population increase for Northern Ireland as a whole, which resulted in an increase of 7.3% over the same period.

This usual resident population is multiplied more than ten-fold during the summer months with the tourist population. The visitor numbers for Causeway Coast and Glens in 2013 were 1.63 million. Visitors accounted for 0.7million bed nights in 2012, with an estimated spend of £110 million.

2.2 Households

Table 2: Usual Residents and Households by Household Size, Census 2011, Source NINIS

Household Size	Usual Residents		Households	
	Number	%	Number	%
1	14,217	10.26	14,217	26.46
2	33,194	23.95	16,597	30.89
3	27,072	19.54	9,024	16.80
4	31,948	23.06	7,987	14.87
5+	32,141	23.19	5,897	10.98
Overall	138,572	100	53,722	100

2.3 Education and Skills

On Census Day 2011, of the population aged 16 years old and over in Causeway Coast and Glens LGD 2014, qualifications were as follows:

- 21.33% had a degree or higher qualification;
- 42.93% had no or low-level (level 1*) qualifications, this is slightly higher than the Northern Ireland average of 40.63% with no or low-level qualifications.

*Level 1 is 1-4 O Levels/CSE/GCSE (any grades) or equivalent.

In Causeway Coast and Glens (LGD 2014) there were 9,320 students enrolled at a Further Education Institution in 2012/13, of these 23.5% were full-time and 76.5% were part-time students. Of these 46.0% were female and 54.0% were male. Further Education is defined in this context as post-secondary education. For the same period there were 4,620 students enrolled at Higher Education Institutions. Of these, 77.2% were full-time and 22.8% were part-time, while 57.1% were female and 42.9% were male. Higher Education is defined in this context as education at a higher level than secondary school, usually provided in distinct institutions such as universities.

2.4 Labour Market

On Census day 2011 statistics for the Labour Market² for the Causeway Coast and Glens LGD 2014, identified the following:

- 63.64% of the population aged 16 to 74 years old were economically active, and 36.36% were economically inactive; these figures are lower than the Northern Ireland average, which registered 66.22% economically active and 33.78% economically inactive.
- 54.62% were in paid employment in the Causeway Coast & Glens LGD; which was lower than the Northern Ireland average of 57.6% of people in paid employment.
- 5.59% were unemployed, and of this figure 45.85% were long-term unemployed. The unemployment figure for Causeway Coast and Glens is significantly higher than the Northern Ireland average of 4.96%.

Further labour market statistics for the individual areas that make up the new Causeway Coast and Glens LGD for 2013 are summarised below, and provide greater insight into the structure of the labour market across the new Council area.

Table 3: Labour Market Statistics, Aggregated from Oxford Economics Stats, 2013.

	Employed	Unemployed	Economically Inactive	Fall in Employment since 2006
Ballymoney	69.6%	5.7%	24.7%	8.8%*
Coleraine	68%	5.0%	27%	12%
Limavady	59.7%	6.9%	33.4%	31%
Moyle	62%	5.9%	32.1%	17%

- Figure for 2007 to 2011

Job losses in Coleraine over the period 2006 to 2012 have occurred mainly in the construction (870), manufacturing (670), education (610) sectors. In Limavady 2,750 of the job losses have occurred in the manufacturing and construction sectors. In Moyle there were 1,020 job losses over the period with 420 lost in the agriculture and 280 lost in construction sectors alone, whereas in Ballymoney the job losses were mainly experienced in the construction (335) and manufacturing (243) sectors.

² Source: NINIS

2.5 Earnings Figures

Wages across the new Council area are low in comparison to Northern Ireland average (£429), and particularly in comparison to the highest Council area in Northern Ireland, Castlereagh with residence-based wages of £490.90 per week.

A breakdown of wages across the four areas of the new Council are summarised below:

Table 4: Mean Wages 2013, Source: ASHE

Residence Based Mean Wages (Weekly)		Workplace Based Mean Wages (Weekly)
Ballymoney	£414.10	£340.50
Coleraine	£394.10	£360.90
Limavady	£362.50	£302.90
Moyle	£431.10	*

* The statistics were too low to provide a reliable figure.

Earnings levels in Limavady are the lowest across the four areas, which make up the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council area, and second lowest of all the District Councils in Northern Ireland. This figure however, reflects the structure of employment in Limavady, where employment is mainly in wholesale and retail, which tend to be lower wage jobs.

2.6 Business Data for Causeway Coast and Glens LGD (2014)

The number and percentage of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in the new Council area in 2014 is shown below³:

Table 5: Number of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in the Causeway and Glens LGD, 2014: Source, Inter-Departmental Business Register

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRICT	NUMBER 2012	NUMBER 2013	NUMBER 2014	PERCENTAGE
Causeway Coast and Glens	*5,745	*5,580	5,490	8.1%
Northern Ireland Total	68,660	67,745	67,710	100%

*Figure compiled using aggregate numbers.

³ Inter- Departmental Business Register

Causeway Coast and Glens has seen a small decline (90 businesses) in the VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses over the period 2013/14, similarly the overall figure for Northern Ireland figure has demonstrated a small decline (35 businesses) in the VAT and/or PAYE businesses over the period 2013/14. This follows a decline of 165 business registrations across the new Council area in 2012/13 with an overall decline of 950 in registrations for Northern Ireland as a whole for the same period. These figures mirror a continual decline across the four Councils, which make up the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council area, and also a decline in the figures for Northern Ireland as a whole since 2008 onwards.

Causeway Coast and Glens LGD (2014) ranks sixth out of the eleven new Council areas in terms of the percentage of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in the area.

Considering VAT and/or PAYE businesses by current Council areas and by turnover size band:

Table 6: VAT and/or PAYE Businesses by Turnover, Source: IDBR 2014

Local Government District	Turnover Size Band (£ thousand)							TOTAL
	0 - 49	50 - 99	100 - 249	250 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 - 4,999	5,000+	
Ballymoney	390	260	345	165	85	75	25	1,345
Coleraine	530	390	545	280	155	140	35	2,075
Limavady	430	235	295	135	90	70	10	1,265
Moyle	310	155	190	105	45	35	-	840
TOTAL	1,660	1,040	1,375	685	375	320	70	5,525
Northern Ireland Total	19,130	12,375	16,645	8,045	5,060	4,815	1,640	67,710

Almost 74% of the businesses registered for VAT and/or PAYE and operating in the Causeway Coast and Glens LGD (2014) have a turnover, which is less than £250,000. This statistic would suggest that the new Council area is comprised in the main of small businesses, and is an important statistic in considering the needs of local businesses, and developing actions to address these needs.

79% of businesses in the Causeway Coast and Glens employ less than 5 people, whilst 90.9% employ less than 10 employees, enabling us to conclude that the local economy is characterised by micro-business sector. Only 0.5% of businesses employ

more than 100 employees. A detailed breakdown of employee size bands is provided for the Council area is provided overleaf:

Table 7: VAT and/or PAYE Business in new LGD, (2014) by Employee size band

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	CCG LGD (2014) Percentage	NI Percentage
0	0.2%	0.3%
1 - 4	79.0%	75.6%
5 - 9	11.7%	12.4%
10 - 19	5.5%	6.1%
20 - 49	7.5%	3.3%
50 - 99	0.7%	1.1%
100 - 249	0.4%	0.6%
250 - 499	0.1%	0.2%
500+	0	0.2%

The main industry sectors operating in the Causeway Coast and Glens LGD (2014) are: agriculture; construction; retail; and accommodation and food services. A detailed breakdown of businesses by broad industrial category is provided below:

Table 8: VAT and/or PAYE Business in new LGD, (2014) by Broad Industry Group, March 2014, Source: IDBR

Broad Industry Group	Number
Agriculture Forestry and Fishing	1,840
Production	295
Construction	840
Motor Trades	185
Wholesale	210
Retail	495
Transport & Storage (incl. postal)	140
Accommodation & Food Services	345
Information & Communication	65
Finance & Insurance	45
Property	130
Professional, Scientific & Technical	230
Business Administration & Support Services	170
Public Administration & Defence	*
Education	35
Health	170
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation & Other Services	295
TOTAL	5,490

2.7 Deprivation Statistics for Causeway Coast and Glens Local Government District (2014)

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 (NIMDM 2010) report was published in May 2010 and identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Northern Ireland. NIMDM 2010 Summary Measures have now been prepared for the new Council areas, the figures still relate to the original indicators and data provided in the original report (May 2010). The Extent Score,

Income Deprived Scale and Employed Sale for the new Causeway Coast and Glens LGD is presented in Table 8.

Table 9: Deprivation Rankings and Values for Causeway Coast & Glens LGD (2014), Source: NINIS

	LGD 2014 Causeway Coast & Glens Value	LGD 2014 Causeway Coast & Glens Value	NI Value
Population (2008)	138,100	-	-
Extent	11%	5	18%
Number of people income deprived	34,900	5	-
Percentage of population income deprived	25%	4	25%
Number of people employment deprived	10,800	5	-
Percentage of working age population employment deprived	13%	3	13%

The most deprived Local Government District is ranked 1, and as there are now 11 LGDs, the least deprived is ranked number 11. The Extent Score shows the percentage of an area's population living in the most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Northern Ireland. The new Causeway Coast and Glens LGD (2014) has an overall rank of 11%, which means that 11% of the population of the area is living in the top 10% most deprived Super Output Areas. This statistic also places Causeway Coast and Glens 5th out of a possible eleven Council areas in terms of people living in deprivation. The Local Government District also scores 4th in term of people living in income deprivation.

The Income Deprivation Domain identifies the proportion of the population experiencing income deprivation at a small area level. This proportion is calculated by obtaining a non-overlapping count of individuals living in households in receipt of income related benefits and tax credits.

The LGD also scores 3rd highest in terms of the percentage of the working age population experiencing employment deprivation. The Employment Domain measures employment deprivation defined as involuntary exclusion of the working age population from work. Therefore 13% of the population in the area is excluded from work because of factors outside their control such as availability of jobs.

These statistics are very significant in relation to the development of the Economic Strategy and Action Plan for the Causeway Coast and Glens area in that it will be

essential to establish priorities and actions aimed at increasing employment in the area, but also the profile of employment to ensure that jobs created are well paid.

2.8 Tourism Statistics for Causeway Coast and Glens

Northern Ireland Tourist Board Statistics (NITB) show that in 2010 tourism contributed £529 million⁴ to the Northern Ireland economy, which equates to 4.9% of Northern Ireland's GDP. This contribution was achieved by attracting 3.3 million visitors, with out of state visitors contributing a total of £337m to the Northern Ireland economy. The tourism sector sustained 40,000 jobs in Northern Ireland in 2010. NITB estimates that by 2020, tourism will be sustaining 50,000 jobs and contributing £1 billion to the Northern Ireland economy from 4.5 m tourists, with a £750 million injection being generated from "out of state" visitors. These figures were revised in DETI's Operating Plan for 2013/2014 to 4.1 million visitors and £637 million expenditure.

Most recent statistics for visitor numbers in Causeway Coast and Glens, for 2013, show that there were 1.63 million, who accounted for 0.7million bed nights with an estimated spend of £110 million to the local economy.

⁴ NITB, The Role of Tourism as an Economic Driver

APPENDIX 3

Glossary of Terms

Knowledge Economy

The knowledge economy is the use of knowledge to generate tangible and intangible values. Technology and in particular knowledge technology help to transform a part of human knowledge to machines. This knowledge can be used by decision support systems in various fields and generate economic values. Knowledge economy is also possible without technology.

Other than the agricultural-intensive economies and labor-intensive economies, the global economy is in transition to a "knowledge economy", as an extension of an "information society" in the Information Age led by innovation. The transition requires that the rules and practices that determined success in the industrial economy need rewriting in an interconnected, globalized economy where knowledge resources such as trade secrets and expertise are as critical as other economic resources. (*Wikipedia*)

The knowledge economy may be described as the part of the economy where organisations generate wealth by utilising a knowledge specialism in their workforce. This may include the knowledge to use a certain technology. "Economic success is increasingly based upon the effective utilisation of intangible assets such as knowledge, skills and innovative potential as the key resource for competitive advantage. The term 'knowledge economy' is used to describe this emerging economic structure" (ESRC, 2005)

There is no single way of defining what the 'knowledge economy' is, rather a number of separate definitions i.e. particular types of businesses or occupations associated with higher knowledge requirements and levels of skills.

Renewables

Energy from a source that is not depleted when used, such as wind or solar power

Life Sciences

The life sciences comprise the fields of science that involve the scientific study of living organisms – such as microorganisms, plants, animals, and human beings – as well as related considerations like bioethics. While biology remains the centerpiece of the life sciences, technological advances in molecular biology and biotechnology have led to a burgeoning of specializations and interdisciplinary fields.

Regional Start Initiative

The Invest NI Regional Start initiative is the national business startup programme for Northern Ireland. Regional Start provides the client with a range of guidance, support, training and business clinics and also ongoing support to help them develop and grow their business.

Pre Enterprise Support

Getting people ready to explore starting their own business, this stage may encompass working with individuals on the basic principles of business, but it may also work to address individual weaknesses in basic skills, confidence, and self-worth development.

Rural Development Programme

Representing £9.6m for the new Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Area, The new Rural Development Programme for Northern Ireland will run from 2014 – 2020. The draft Programme was submitted to the European Commission on 14th October 2014. It will be administered by Council but delivered strategically by a self-forming Local Action Group, which includes representation from the wider rural area.

Social Enterprise

Social enterprises are businesses that trade to tackle social problems, improve communities, people's life chances, or the environment. They make their money from selling goods and services in the open market, but they reinvest their profits back into the business or the local community. (Social Enterprise UK)

Social Economy

A social economy is a third sector among economies between the private (business) and public sectors (government). It includes organizations such as cooperatives, nonprofit organizations and charities. Social economy theory attempts to situate these organizations into a broader political economic context.

Alchemy

This is the name given to the programme which offers one to one support for small businesses in the area. Where before generic programmes had been offered on a group basis, this programme allocates specialist mentors to individual businesses. Alchemy will centralise business enquiries offering direct business support or link businesses to other relevant support programmes.

Agrifood

The Agrifood sector is of vital importance to the Northern Ireland economy, now and in the future. For many years it has been one of the primary drivers of our economy providing many jobs and contributing to the sustainability of the rural sector. The narrow definition of the Agrifood sector includes those enterprises engaged in agriculture and the processing of food and drink. A broader definition includes wholesale and retail activities associated with food.