CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT:

The new Causeway Coast and Glens District 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, will commence operation on 1st April 2015.

As part of the convergence agenda the new Causeway Coast and Glens 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 existing four Councils, and the strategic issues emerging from the research and consultation carried out in developing the strategy.

The Economic Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2018 was developed through extensive research relating to the national and regional policy context and to compile socio-economic data for the Council area. There was also a comprehensive consultation exercise, public meetings and workshops were held with Councillors, Council staff, Regional Colleges, the local business community (including Chambers of Commerce, and local traders organisations). Invest NI worked alongside the Council staff and consultants to develop the Strategy. 143 local businesses completed an online survey specifying the issues and needs affecting their companies.


These are:

Competitive Causeway
Connected Causeway
Collaborative Causeway
Tourism Development
Rural Development
Investment in new Industry Sectors
The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (2002) provides the legislative framework to guide council-led local economic development activity 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.

**The new Prosperity and Place unit will:**
- Create an environment for successful business and economic development in the Borough by lobbying and advocating on strategic issues.
- Create greater integration and co-ordination of economic support services for businesses in the Borough.
- Facilitate economic development opportunities for local and foreign direct investment in the Causeway Coast and Glens.

It will link with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strategies such as:</th>
<th>Key Partners:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council’s Corporate Plan</td>
<td>Local Businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Programme for Government</td>
<td>The Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebalancing the Economy</td>
<td>Communities (Social Enterprise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Strategy</td>
<td>Local Enterprise Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Development Programme for Northern Ireland</td>
<td>Chambers of Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invest Northern Ireland</td>
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<td>Schools, Colleges and Universities, where relevant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL:

- Provide accountable, civic leadership
- Deliver high quality, sustainable services
- Protect and enhance our environment
- Establish the new Causeway Coast and Glens District 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

Building on what has gone before, what will the new Prosperity and Regeneration (Economic Development) Section do?

Facilitate the creation of new businesses – working with a range of partners to create an enterprising environment

Help develop existing businesses – taking advantage of programmes and funding to help them succeed

Encourage educational partners to promote self-employment, innovation and creativity

Regenerate town and village centres – using existing networks and working in partnership with local communities helping them to help themselves

Promote the new area, equitably and transparently, as place to visit and work
141,000 people

Agriculture, Construction and Retail continue to play an important role in District life.

Long term unemployment is a problem for around half of those who are claimants...

...while around 43% have low or no qualifications.

Monthly Wages across the new Council area are low in comparison to Northern Ireland average – around £430

Over 5000 jobs have been lost to manufacturing and construction in the period 2006-2012

In 2013, 1.63 million people visited the new Council area, accounting for 0.7 million bed nights with an estimated spend of £110 million to the local economy.

Emerging sectors such as Agrifoods, Renewable Energy and the Knowledge Economy will be important players on the economic landscape in coming years.
Exporting and online selling is still very low among respondents. 60% of respondents to consultations have a turnover of less than £250,000.

More and better marketing and promotion of both businesses and the area.

Infrastructure - roads, transport, broadband.

More joint working is needed from the agencies involved in business development.

The Quality of life is key in selling the area.

Businesses are predominantly small, with 75% employing less than 10 people.
The vision for the economic strategy for the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council is:

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

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 Agri-Food Sector.
- To ensure that local infrastructure meets business needs.

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.

The Council’s Vision for economic development will be delivered through six strategic themes:

1. Competitive Causeway - Business Development
2. Connected Causeway - Developing the Infrastructure
3. Collaborative Causeway
4. Tourism Development
5. Rural Development
6. Investment in new Industry Sectors
OUR THEMES

Competitive Causeway - Business Development

To create an enterprise culture
To stimulate and support business start-ups
To support local businesses to exploit ICT
To stimulate and support social enterprise in the local Council area.

To assist local businesses to grow by becoming more competitive and innovative

To develop the evening economy and speciality markets in the town and villages in the CCG area.
To work with the retail sector to improve customer service in the CCG area.
To assist local businesses to attract graduates and skilled labour.
To support local Chambers and Trade organisations to develop and sustain the retail sector.

To assist local companies to Export.

To develop and promote the local Agri-Food Sector to compete and reach export markets.
Match skills development with job opportunities.

ACTIONS

Pre-enterprise Support
Business Development
Alchemy
Regional Start Initiative
Working with Chambers and Trade Associations
Social Enterprise
Specialist Business Programmes
Town Centre Management

Partners:
Invest Northern Ireland
Chambers of Trade
Enterprise Agencies
Community Groups
To maintain a focus on European policy and funding
Maximise uptake of funds for our development priorities

Collaborative Causeway

Employability and Skills Development
To assist local businesses to attract graduates and skilled labour. Match skills development with job opportunities.

To maintain a focus on National policy and funding
Maximise uptake of funds for our development priorities

To maintain a focus on National policy and funding

ACTIONS
Maintaining a focus on National and EU Policy

Assisting local employers to attract skilled labour and graduates
Matching skills with jobs

Partners:
CC&GDC Funding Unit
University
Regional Colleges
To promote balanced Town and Village Centre development

To lobby central government to ensure better access and additional provision of car parking in the village and town centres;

To improve rural transport

To ensure widespread access to broadband throughout the Borough;

To lobby the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure that proposed upgrades to the roads network meet economic and social need;
To lobby the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure that transport links are fit for purpose.

To ensure planning decisions facilitate the needs of businesses: land and industrial zoning; the Enterprise Zone; the Digital Causeway Project; and the Renewable Energy Sector.

To lobby the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure that proposed upgrades to the roads network meet economic and social need;
To lobby the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure that transport links are fit for purpose.

Develop the business case and continue to lobby for the expansion of the “Enterprise Zone”

Masterplanning

Lobbying for improved transportation

Communicating with our customers

Lobbying for improved broadband

Connected Causeway - Developing the Infrastructure

To provide the opportunity for additional workspace/lands to meet the expansion needs of local businesses;

To ensure widespread access to broadband throughout the Borough;

To lobby the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure that proposed upgrades to the roads network meet economic and social need;
To lobby the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure that transport links are fit for purpose.

To promote balanced Town and Village Centre development

To lobby central government to ensure better access and additional provision of car parking in the village and town centres;

To improve rural transport

Partners:
Invest Northern Ireland
Chambers and external organizations
Rural Development Programme
Tourism Development

To assist local tourism businesses to grow by becoming more competitive and innovative.

To develop a Compelling Business Offer in the towns and villages, which attracts tourists and tourist spend.

To stimulate and support business start-ups in the tourism sector.

To work in partnership to develop projects and initiatives to extend the tourist season.

Improve customer service in the CCG area.  Enhance the evening economy.

To ensure improved business and place management is a key driver to increase tourism in the new Council area.

ACTIONS

Stimulate & support business start-ups in the tourism sector

Assist local tourism businesses to grow by becoming more competitive & innovative

Work in partnership to develop projects & initiatives to extend the tourist season.

Develop a business offer which includes the Causeway Speciality Market, customer service improvement programme, and developing the evening economy

Partners

Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

DETI

Chambers of Commerce

Enterprise Agencies
**Investment in New Industry Sectors**

| Renewable Energies | Digital Causeway | Knowledge Industry |

**ACTIONS**

- Maximising benefit and return from the Renewables Sector for local businesses
- Identifying opportunities arising from the Life & Health Sciences sector and the Knowledge Economy.
- Assisting local companies to exploit opportunities arising from the Life & Health Sciences sector and the Knowledge Economy.
- Promoting Digital Causeway
- Significant lobbying

**Partners:**
- Elected Members
- University
- Regional Colleges
- Invest Northern Ireland
To improve and increase Rural Basic Services – Community Facilities & Infrastructure

To support local Chambers and Trade organisations to develop and sustain the retail sector.

To develop the evening economy and speciality markets in the town and village centres throughout the CCG area.

To develop a Compelling Business Offer in rural towns and villages

To stimulate and support business start-ups in Rural Areas.
To assist rural businesses to grow by becoming more competitive and innovative.
To work with the retail sector to improve customer service in the CCG area.

Rural Development

• To administer the Rural Development Programme on behalf of the LAG
• To stimulate and support Village Renewal / Enhancement
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. (Wikipedia) “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 start up 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.

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 agri-food 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 agri-food 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.