

Causeway Coast & Glens District Council

# **Prosperity & Regeneration**

**Economic Strategy and  
Action Plan – 2015-2018**

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

Council will adopt six strategic themes to guide the Economic Strategy and Action Plan 2015 -2018.

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:

Key Strategies such as:

Council’s Corporate Plan

The Programme for Government

Rebalancing the Economy

Investment Strategy

Rural Development Programme for Northern Ireland

Key Partners:

Local Businesses

The Assembly

Communities (Social Enterprise)

Local Enterprise Agencies

Chambers of Trade

Invest Northern Ireland

Schools, Colleges and Universities, where relevant

## 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

...21% have a degree or higher qualification...

...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

around 5,500 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses

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 0.7million 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

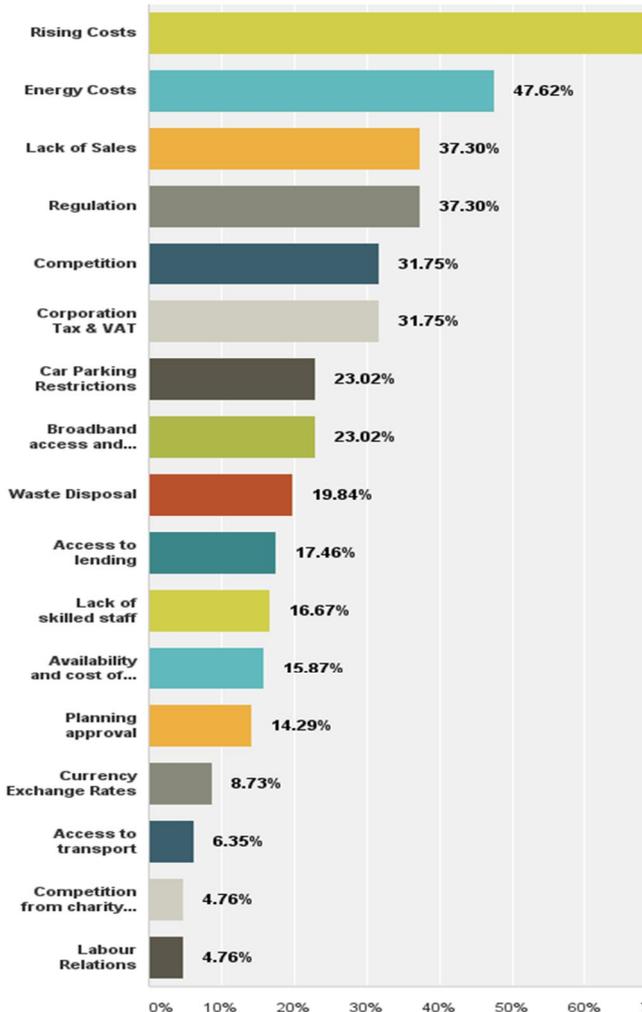
More and better marketing and promotion of both businesses and the area

60% of respondents to consultations a turnover of less than £250,000

Infrastructure – roads, transport, broadband

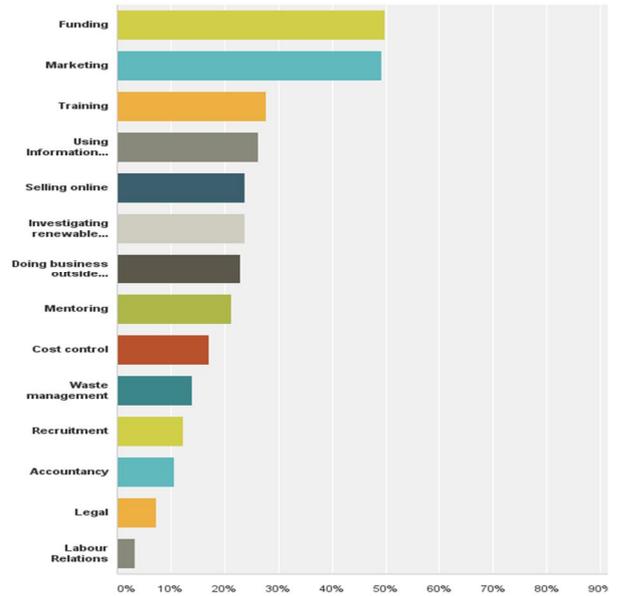
Q7 Tell us about the issues which affecting your business?

Answered: 126 Skipped: 17



Q9 What type of support would your business benefit from?

Answered: 122 Skipped: 21



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

## 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

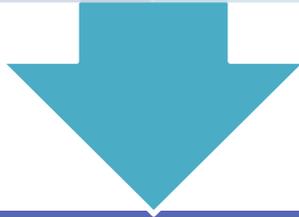
Partners:

Invest Northern Ireland  
Chambers of Trade  
Enterprise Agencies  
Community Groups

# Collaborative Causeway

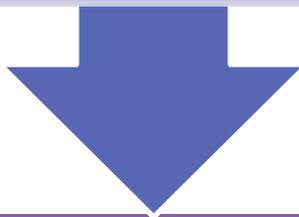
Employability and Skills  
Development

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 European policy and  
funding

Maximise uptake of funds for our development  
priorities

## 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

## Connected Causeway - Developing the Infrastructure

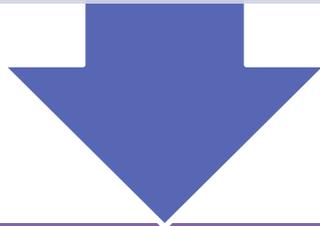
To provide the opportunity for additional workspace/lands to meet the expansion needs of local businesses;

To ensure widespread access to broadband throughout the Borough;



To 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.



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

## ACTIONS

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

Partners:

Invest Northern Ireland

Chambers and external organizations

Rural Development Programme

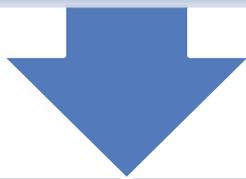
# Tourism Development

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.**

To attract local and foreign investment to the new Council area.

To assist local graduates and young people to benefit from the opportunities arising from these new Industry Sectors.

To ensure the Enterprise Zone maximises its full potential..

To assist local businesses to exploit opportunities arising from the Enterprise Zone.

To assist local businesses to exploit and benefit from opportunities arising from the Renewable Energy Sector and the circular economy.

To assist local businesses to exploit and benefit from opportunities arising from National Policy, Devolved Corporation Tax etc

To assist local companies to exploit opportunities arising from the Life and Health Sciences Sector.

To work with the Universities and Regional Colleges to identify opportunities arising from the Life and Health Sciences sector..

To work with the Universities and Regional Colleges to identify opportunities arising from the Life and Health Sciences sector.

To support local companies to exploit opportunities arising from the 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

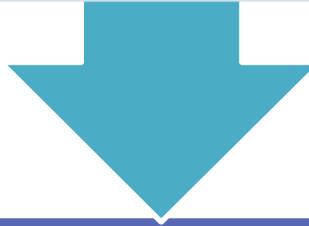
Regional Colleges

Invest Northern Ireland

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# Rural Development

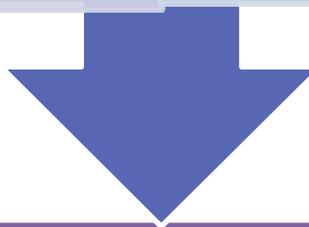
- To administer the Rural Development Programme on behalf of the LAG
- To stimulate and support Village Renewal / Enhancement



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.



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.

## 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. (*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.