

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT AND TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME MANAGER	21 February 2017
CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE For Decision	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Innovation and Transformation
Outcome	
Lead Officer	Head of Corporate Performance and Compliance
Cost: (If applicable)	

1.0 Background

1.1 The Corporate Performance and Compliance section encapsulates a range of Council functions. These functions are as follows:

- Corporate Performance Improvement
- Performance Management
- Transformational Change
- Facilities Management
- Estates Strategy
- Corporate Health and Safety
- Corporate Risk Management
- Audit Services
- Insurance Services
- Legal Services
- Sustainable Development
- Land and Property Services

1.2 The Head of Service was appointed in August 2017. As yet a formal staff structure has not been in place to manage the various functions and a substantial amount of work has been delivered by staff assisting in a temporary capacity alongside legacy Council staff who fulfilled similar duties associated with their previous post and also via the Legal Services, Service Level Agreement.

1.3 A number of the functions within the Corporate Performance and Compliance section are new to the Council particularly the legislative requirement in relation to the Performance Improvement Duty as set out in Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (The Act).

- 1.4 There is currently work being undertaken to develop a staff structure for the Corporate Performance and Compliance section along with associated job descriptions. It is anticipated that the structure will be presented to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in April.
- 1.5 The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (the Council) is now in year two of meeting its obligations under the Performance Duty with the Act. Year one was deemed a light touch approach from the Department for Communities and from the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO). The audit carried out was in fact very detailed and clearly established a need for a full time committed staff resource to manage the performance improvement process.
- 1.6 According to the Legislation, each Council is required annually to publish an Improvement Plan with performance objectives framed along seven prescribed aspects of improvement namely; Strategic effectiveness, Service quality, Service availability, Fairness, Sustainability, Efficiency and Innovation. Each of these is defined within the Act. The plan should be published by the end of June each year. The performance objectives should develop from the Community Plan or in its absence the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 1.7 The Act places a substantial level of emphasis on audit processes in relation to the Performance Improvement Plan. The Plan will be subject to a forward looking assessment carried out in each Council in June/July/August of that financial year and a retrospective assessment the following September. The forward looking assessment involves an audit of the Performance Improvement Plan and an assessment of whether the Auditor feels the Council is likely to comply with the statutory duty to make arrangements for continuous improvement during that financial year. The retrospective assessment, the following September, will involve the Auditor assessing two aspects of performance. Firstly the Auditor will track improvement over time and secondly the audit will assess the Council's discharge of its duties under section 92 (1) to (5) of the Act.
- 1.8 In addition to the Performance Duty under the Act, the Council will also require a staff resource to identify and project manage other performance improvement initiatives particularly in relation to efficiency planning.
- 1.9 Long term efficiency planning and cost reduction will require a review of the Council's business processes and the strategy and approach for this will be set out in the context of a long term transformational plan. Transformational planning is inextricably linked to performance.

2.0 Detail

- 2.1 The Council urgently requires a staff resource to manage the processes required to ensure it meets the statutory obligations that are set out in the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. Each year the Council is required to both manage the in-year performance improvement plan and to develop a plan for the next financial year. The first year of the process was deemed to be a light approach

in that performance improvement was a new function and required a bedding in period for the Council, the Department for Communities and the NIAO. However even with this approach a huge amount of work was required to satisfy the Local Government Auditor that the Council had adequate plans and processes in place to meet its statutory obligations. Currently the Council must begin the process of developing the performance improvement plan for 2017/2018 and also prepare for two audits. The first audit will relate to the 2016/2017 performance improvement plan outcomes and the second, a forward looking audit relating to an assessment as to whether the 2017/2018 plan is likely to meet next year`s statutory obligations.

- 2.2 To address the resourcing issue it is proposed to create the new post of Corporate Performance Improvement and Transformation Programme Manager. The post will include three key function areas within the section, Corporate Performance Improvement, Performance Management and Transformational Change. It is anticipated that initially this post will have the capacity to manage all three functions but this will be reviewed over time.
- 2.3 There is now an urgency to have a full time staff resource in place. If agreed the post will be evaluated and recruitment procedures initiated. Amalgamating the three functions into one post will substantially reduce cost and also provide operational benefits given the synergies between them. The post will form part of a wider structure within the Corporate Performance and Compliance section which will reflect the functions set out in point 1.1 of this report.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council agree to the post of Corporate Performance Improvement and Transformation Programme Manager.