Appendix 1

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Performance Improvement Policy

Version 6 – March 2026

1.0 Background

1.1 The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Performance Improvement Policy sets out the Council`s approach to performance improvement in accordance with Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, and the requirements and good practice set out by the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO).

1.2 Version 6 of this Policy is updated for March 2026 following Version 5 of February 2025.

1.3 Council is committed to reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

2.0 Aim of the Policy

2.1 The aim of the policy is to describe how the Council will implement its responsibilities under the Performance Duty as set out in Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (The Act) and how a performance improvement culture will be embedded across the Council.

3.0 Improvement Defined

3.1 "Improvement" in the context of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 means more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of the Council. Improvement for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council focusses on the issues that are important to our citizens and customers and means doing things that will enhance the sustainable quality of life and environment for our citizens, thereby helping us to create a better future for all.

4.0 Policy Statement

4.1 Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council aims to have a transparent performance improvement process and structure where Elected Members, Staff, Ratepayers and those interested in the Council will be made aware of, and can be involved in, performance improvement and the performance improvement process. The Council is committed to continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions and will undertake a range of actions to:

- Clearly identify priority areas for improvement
- Align improvement objectives with the Community Plan and Corporate Strategy.
- Identify wider performance indicators across Council services and where relevant implement benchmarking exercises
- Consult with Elected Members, Staff, Ratepayers and those interested in the area in relation to the improvement objectives and the associated projects
- Develop an annual Performance Improvement Plan in line with the Performance Duty within the Act

- Measure performance against targets and review progress across all Council Services.
- Present performance information to Council Committees to ensure monitoring and scrutiny over time
- Present and publicise an annual Self-Assessment of the performance and impacts associated with the performance improvement plan, statutory indicators and self-imposed targets.
- Assess the levels of improvement achieved and develop new actions and projects with a view to continuous improvement over time.

5.0 Policy Execution

The Council aims to ensure that performance is formally identified, assessed and managed in accordance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (Part 12). To this end the following is in place:

5.1 The process for monitoring, tracking and reporting on the progress of the Performance Improvement function is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Council's Performance Team, with significant input from nominated colleagues within each of the Directorates.

5.2 The Corporate Policy and Resources Committee assumes a scrutiny, monitoring and approval role for performance improvement and is presented with performance updates and performance information. This would normally be on at least a 6month reporting cycle.

5.3 The Corporate Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for agreeing and recommending the annual Performance Improvement Plan.

5.4 Council's Self-Assessment of Performance Report must be published by 30 September each year. As such, the Self-Assessment of Performance Report will be agreed and recommended for publication at a Special Council meeting in September. This is the established Special Council meeting at which Council approves the Annual Statement of Financial Accounts.

5.5 The Audit Committee will be responsible for receiving and accepting all Performance Improvement related NIAO reports and Internal Audit reports. Furthermore, the Audit Committee will receive progress updates against the recommendations set out in such Audit Reports.

5.6 When any concerns are raised by Committee with regards progress against the Performance Improvement Plan, then this will be reviewed as soon as possible by the Council`s Strategic Leadership Team and wider Management Team.

5.7 Each Directorate within Council has a specific responsibility for the following:

- To identify areas for improvement, and to develop and pursue actions that will help address said areas for improvement.
- When required, to assist and contribute to the development of corporate Performance Improvement Plans, Self-Assessment Reports, Performance Improvement Audits and National Benchmarking Networks.
- To develop and present an Annual Business Plan to their relevant Council oversight Committee, as close to the beginning of each financial business year as possible. Business Plans should always include significant SMART targets, identified areas for improvement, relevant statutory targets, and any agreed national benchmarking outcomes.

- To present mid-year and annual updates to their relevant Council oversight Committee against the targets and outcomes agreed in their current/previous annual Directorate Business Plans.

The above governance structures will ensure that:

- Performance Improvement is managed across all Council functions
- The performance improvement process is an integral part of Council operations and key drivers in the development and improvement of functions and services
- There will be transparency in relation to how the Council prioritises its improvement approach
- Elected Members, Staff, Ratepayers and those interested in the area will have the opportunity to input to and influence how Council prioritises its areas for improvement
- A Performance Improvement culture will become embedded in the daily operation of Council services which will assist in the delivery of continuous improvement and the realisation of opportunities for the Council going forward.

6.0 Council's General Duty to Improve

This Policy Note for Performance Improvement is set within a strategic hierarchy of key Plans, Strategies, Reports and structural mechanisms which provide a formal structure for the arrangements through which Council discharges its duty to improve. Please see below:

6.1 Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan

The purpose of community planning is to develop a long-term vision and plan for the Causeway Coast and Glens area and all its citizens based on thorough analysis of needs, priorities, and opportunities in order to address them. To achieve this vision, we have adopted an integrated view of the social, economic and environmental needs of our area. The Community Plan is the key over-arching framework for partnerships and initiatives in the Causeway Coast and Glens area.

6.2 Causeway Coast and Glens Council Corporate Strategy

Our Corporate Strategy is a high-level statement of the Council's commitment to the Borough over four years. It provides a focus and direction for the Council given the challenges that face us now and into the future. It is the foundation for our work and establishes the direction, style, and standards for the Council to 2026. A new forward looking Corporate Strategy for Causeway Coast and Glens will be agreed and published during 2026.

6.3 Council Directorate Business Plans

Directorate Business Plans are the key documents for each Council Directorate, set on an annual basis, which lay out the work and responsibilities of that specific Directorate, including their annual aims, targets, outcomes and budgets. Ideally, these Business Plans should be submitted to Committee by May.

6.4 Causeway Coast and Glens Performance Improvement Plan

Part 12 of The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 sets out that all Councils are under a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. It sets out a number of Council responsibilities under a performance framework. The Act requires councils to set one or more improvement objectives each financial year and to have in place appropriate arrangements to achieve those objectives. An Improvement Plan is designed to

demonstrate to citizens and other stakeholders how we will deliver on this duty and has to be agreed by Council by June.

6.5 National Performance Benchmarking Network

This is the National Performance Benchmarking Framework that is led and facilitated by APSE Performance Networks. Through membership of this network, Council is subject to and contributes data against over 100 Performance Indicators across 12 Services areas. Council is now able to extensively benchmark its performance against that of other Councils in Northern Ireland in order to comply with its statutory duties, identify areas for improvement, share good practice and increase accountability of its performance through public reporting. Council has two opportunities during the year to submit benchmarking data, in September and February.

6.6 Council's Performance Self-Assessment Report

This document is Council's annual statutory obligation to conduct a self-assessment exercise of its performance over the previous year against its own indicators and outcomes, as well as against the performance of other Local Authorities in Northern Ireland. This report must be agreed by Council on an annual basis by 30 September.

6.7 Performance Improvement Data Management Software

Council's Performance Team, working closely with Councils' own Digital Services Team, continue to develop and utilise new Performance Management Software for Council named "Perform". Perform is being used to assist in the monitoring, analysis and reporting of progress against Performance Improvement information and key performance indicators.

6.8 Audit

The arrangements the Council has put in place to secure continuous improvement are subject to an annual audit and assessment by the Northern Ireland Audit Office. Subject to the General Duty of Improvement being met, the Northern Ireland Audit Office will issue a Letter of Assurance to both the Council and Department for Communities by end November. This will then be reported to Council's Audit committee in December. The Performance Improvement function of Council is also part of the schedule of planned Internal audits conducted by Council.

7.0 Consulting on Improvement

7.1 The Act requires that a Council "Consult with ratepayers, services users and anyone who appears to have an interest in the district when deciding how to discharge its duty under section 84 and 85 of the Act". As such the Council will annually conduct a minimum 8 week, maximum 12 week, consultation period on our Performance Improvement Plan and Improvement Objectives.

7.2 It is recognised that the Council has a wide range of internal and external stakeholders that will require consultation with regard to performance improvement objectives. To address this annually, a consultation plan will be formulated to include a range of consultative techniques in an attempt to capture as many views as reasonably practicable.

8.0 Approval, Implementation and Review

8.1 This Performance Improvement Policy will be approved by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and Council. The Policy will be reviewed by the Head of Performance annually and any proposed changes subjected to the governance processes of the Council through the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

9. Annual Schedule of Performance Improvement milestones

The following table highlights some of the key Performance Improvement related milestones that Council is committed to delivering. This clarity at the beginning of the year is planned to assist Elected Members, officers, and citizens in terms of when to expect to see the delivery of specific elements of Council's Performance Improvement Framework.

Month	Milestones in 2026
January	Milestones and reporting cycle for the year ahead agreed
February	Performance Improvement Policy reviewed Benchmarking data submissions finalised Directorates developing Business Plans and Performance Improvement Objectives
March	Draft Improvement Objectives for upcoming year APSE Benchmarking year end Outcomes available from previous year Consultation on next year's Performance Improvement Plan and Objectives commences Directorates continuing to develop Business Plans and Performance Improvement Objectives
April	Performance Improvement Plan Update to Committee All Committees – Directorates submitting 2026/27 Annual Business Plans and Review of previous year's performance
May	Performance Improvement Update including update on development of upcoming Performance Improvement Plan
June	New Performance Improvement Plan for 2026/27 approved Directorates collating APSE benchmarking data
Summer recess	No committees July - Directorates submitting APSE benchmarking data Annual Performance Self-Assessment Report 2025/26 collated and developed
September	Annual Self-Assessment of Performance Report for 2025/26 Benchmarking data submitted for Core Indicators Annual NIAO s95 Performance Audit commences
October	Performance Improvement Update
November	All Directorates Mid-year progress reports – 2026/27 Performance Improvement Annual Audit process update
December	Section 95 Annual Audit report presented to Audit Committee

10 Section 75 Equality and Good Relations

10.1 Causeway Coast and Glens Council is fully committed to meeting its obligations in relation to Equality and Good Relations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. In this regard this policy will be screened using Section 75 guidelines and will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment if found necessary as a result of the screening process.