

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2025**

<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary of Key Recommendations</b>	<b>Estimated Timescale for completion</b>
1.	Apologies	<b>Councillors Huggins and McGlinchey</b>	<b>n/a</b>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<b>None</b>	<b>n/a</b>
3.	Minutes of Finance Committee meeting held Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	<b>Confirmed as a correct record</b>	<b>n/a</b>
4.	Management Accounts Period 11	<b>Noted</b>	<b>-</b>
5.	APP Forecast	<b>Noted</b>	<b>-</b>
6.	Prompt Payments	<b>Noted</b>	<b>-</b>
7.	Scheme of Allowances 2025/26	<b>Noted</b>	<b>-</b>
8.	Treasury Management Annual Review	<b>Noted</b>	<b>-</b>
9.	Correspondence		
9.1	LG Director to CEO's update on the Review of the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors March 2025	<b>Noted (Items 9.1-9.4 inclusive)</b>	<b>-</b>
9.2	Circular LG 12 2025 – Consolidated Councillor Allowances		
9.3	Circular LG 04 2025 – Rate Statistics 2025 26 – Covering Letter		
9.4	Circular LG 04 2025 Rates Statistics 2025 26		

	<b><i>In Committee (Items 10-12 inclusive)</i></b>		
<b>10</b>	Debt Management	<b><i>Noted</i></b>	<b>-</b>
<b>11.</b>	Minutes of FMT meeting Tuesday 3 March 2025	<b><i>Noted</i></b>	<b>-</b>
<b>12.</b>	Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12 (0))	<b><i>None</i></b>	<b><i>n/a</i></b>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE,  
ON THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2025 AT 7.00PM**

**In the Chair:** Councillor Wisener (C)

**Members Present:** Alderman Knight-McQuillan (R), Scott (R)  
Councillors Holmes (R), Kane (C), Kyle (R), Mairs (C),  
McQuillan (C), Peacock (R), Nicholl (R), Schenning (R),  
Wilson (R)

**Officers Present:** D Wright, Chief Finance Officer (C)  
L Clyde, Financial Accountant (C)  
I Owens, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)  
A Lennox, ICT Officer (C)

**In attendance:** Press 1 no. (R)

**Key:** (R) Attended Remotely  
(C) Attended in the Chamber

The Chief Finance Officer undertook a roll call.

The Chair advised Committee of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were recorded for Councillors Huggins and McGlinchey.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

**3. MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup>  
MARCH 2025**

Copy previously circulated.

**AGREED** –the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

#### 4. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS PERIOD 11

Report, previously circulated presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

##### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to present the current management accounts to Council for information and analysis.

##### **Background**

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (CC&GBC) consists of 4 legacy councils that merged on 1 April 2015 into 1 council. The council is currently made up of 3 directorates (Leisure and Development, Environmental Services, Corporate Policy and Resources) and includes a Planning, Finance and Legal department, that are reported separately in this report. The Annual Budgeted Spend for 2024/25 controlled by the Directorates is £82.410m (excludes depreciation, actuarial adjustments, provisions, accumulated absences, and it is these figures that change the figures in the Audited Accounts). Gross Income is budgeted at £81.978m the difference being a budgeted applied balance of £0.432m for the year.

##### **Financial Overview by Directorate**

The table below details a summary of the financial position at period 11 (up to and including 28 February 2025):

Leisure And Development Directorate

Environmental Services Directorate

Corporate Services

Chief Executive

Finance, Investment Income, Interest and Rates

Capital Expenditure

The Chief Finance Officer advised he was happy with the favourable current financial position against budget and referred the Committee to the explanations contained within the report for each Directorate.

The Chief Finance Officer also referred Elected Members to expenditure commitments in the coming years and reminded Elected Members that the superb position mostly due to income would not be repeated and concluded that at this time the Council financial position was strong and healthy.

Finance Committee NOTED the report.

## 5. ACTUAL PENNY PRODUCT FORECAST

For information report, previously circulated presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the latest Actual Penny Product (APP) forecast supplied by Land and Property Services (LPS).

### Background

LPS has issued to Councils the latest informal monthly forecast as at 28 February 2025. The forecast for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has been based on in year assumptions for both formal and interim forecasts as detailed below:

### Monthly Analysis

Month	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Forecast	£558	£625	£647	£718	£780	£710	£744	£823	£781

All figures £'000

### Additional analysis

The figures indicate a significant projected finalisation in terms of rates income for Council however whilst there still remains a level of uncertainty on these figures as we approach year end there can be an increased confidence that it will require something of major significance to materially impact them. It is however an excellent position to be in at this point in the year and does give optimism that there is some growth in the rates base giving Council somewhat of a buffer should negative market forces arise.

### APP analysis

The tables below set out the analysis of the APP forecast for the current financial year in terms of both domestic and non-domestic properties.

### Revaluations

There are still a number of outstanding revaluation challenge cases and whilst they could impact on our APP for 2024/25 most of the significant challenges have by now been dealt with.

### Recommendation

**It is recommended that** Council note the report.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that only a fairly fundamental and significant set of circumstances would adversely affect the current good position reported.

Finance Committee NOTED the report.

## 6. PROMPT PAYMENTS

For information report, previously circulated presented by the Financial Accountant.

### **Background**

Department for communities (DfC) requires Council to record and publish statistics regarding the payment of supplier invoices with specific reference to two distinct measures namely invoices paid within 10 working days and invoices paid within 30 calendar days.

### **Detail**

These figures are published on a quarterly basis by DfC with Councils required to do likewise. The purpose of the statistics is to encourage Councils to support businesses especially those local and/or small businesses for whom cash flow is of vital importance to their continued survival. In addition, as part of Council's performance improvement plan for this year the payment of our suppliers has been identified as one of the performance improvement objectives with a target of 90% of suppliers being paid within 30 calendar days. The tables below detail Council's performance since April 2022 the latest data being for quarter 4 of 24/25 year, up to and including end of March 2025.

### **Analysis**

The statistics will be continually monitored to ensure the performance levels are maintained and where possible improved. Council's self-imposed target remains at 90% of invoices being paid within 30 days. During March 91.17% (February 90.51%) of invoices were paid within 30 days, for the entirety of the current year we are showing 91.27%. This does represent a marked improvement in performance from 2023/24 which was 87.32% for the entire year but we can't let performance slip as we move into the new financial year if we are to maintain this level.



Councillor Peacock said that the 91% achievement was fantastic given that new systems had been implemented recently.

Finance Committee NOTED the report.

- \* **Councillor Holmes joined the meeting remotely at 7.08 pm.**

## **7. SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES 2025/26**

For information report, previously circulated presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

### **Purpose of Report**

This report provides an update to members regarding changes to the Scheme of Allowances in light of updated Department Guidance, LG12/2025 issued in April 2025.

### **Background**

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council must establish a scheme of allowances payable to Members annually. The scheme provides for the payment of allowances to Councillors on the basis that:

- 1 – The maximum level of basic allowance as determined by the Department for Communities (DfC) is paid
- 2 – The maximum level of carers allowances as determined by the DfC are paid
- 3 – The maximum level of mileage rates as determined by the DfC are paid
- 4 – Councillors' payments are made on the third last banking day of each month

### **Detail**

The scheme of allowances for 2025/26 v2, a copy of which has been included with this report, considers a number of factors:

- 1 – basic allowance – increases to £18,329 – increase has been budgeted for in the 2025/26 estimates
- 2 – mileage rates
- 3 – rates for dependant carer's allowance
- 4 – Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)

The four items are in keeping with the normal periodic update of the scheme of allowances.

### **Amendments**

Circular LG 12/2025 (attached as an appendix) from DfC dated April 2025 sets out the revised consolidated Councillor's Allowances guidance, as our scheme is predicated on the inclusion of the maximum rates allowable under departmental guidance any updates to rates of basic allowance will be automatically applied Council having agreed



this following the March 2025 Finance Committee. The update will be effective from 1 April 2025.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that as recorded at the last Finance Committee meeting in March the new version of Scheme of Allowances will replace the former version which Elected Members had agreed the Chief Finance Officer could authorise accordingly.

### **Recommendations**

Finance Committee NOTED the report.

## **8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

### **Background**

Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.

### **Detail**

Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. In addition, the Department for Communities (DfC) issued *Guidance on Local Authority Investments* in November 2019 that requires the Authority to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011* to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the DfC Guidance.

### **Review**

The purpose of this report is to provide a review of what has taken place in terms of Treasury Management within the Council during the 2024/25 financial year following on from the mid-year review of 2024/25 presented to Council in October 2024.

### **Borrowing**

Council borrowing is used to fund various capital projects as approved by Council and as a result of this activity Council has an extensive portfolio of current loans. The table, previously circulated, shows a breakdown of these loans at the end of each of the last 4 quarters:

Council continues to hold significant cash reserves therefore no new loans were borrowed during the year to date, Council instead utilizing those reserves in the short term to finance capital expenditure thus avoiding incurring interest on loans. With interest rates now rising officers have assessed whether or not a change of strategy would be prudent to potentially draw down some of the longer terms loans, the advice is currently still to utilize cash reserves and only borrow if necessary for the short term to avoid locking in potentially higher interest over the life of a longer-term loan.

### **Investments**

Council carried significant cash reserves into 2024/25 and despite the recent cut to interest rates there are still some decent returns to be gained with investment or lending. The table, previously circulated, details the cash held by Council at the end of each of the last 4 quarters up to the end of March 2025.

The table, previously circulated, details actual investments made by Council maturing during the current year and the returns associated with those investments, the figures above do not include these investments where the maturity date straddles a quarter end.

### **Treasury Management Strategy**

In line with Council's Treasury Management Strategy and despite the recent cut to interest rates Council will seek to continue making investments like those detailed in 1.5 above during the 2025/26 financial year where there are now sufficient returns to justify the action and whilst those returns are still likely to be modest they will still none the less provide an income stream to Council and assist to offset a little of the financial pressures currently being faced. The 2025/26 budget has included an estimated income from investments amounting to £600,000. In addition to those listed above Council has a number of investments maturing during 2025/26 yielding a combined total of £271,197.26.

Councillor Peacock said the figures were interesting and welcomed the decreasing debt figure which had come in above anticipated target and could offset income. Councillor Peacock congratulated the Finance team.

Councillor Schenning concurred with Councillor Peacock saying this was the result of clever accounting management.

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **9.1 LG Director to CEO's update on the Review of the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors March 2025**

Correspondence, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

### **9.2 Circular LG 12 2025 – Consolidated Councillor Allowances**

Correspondence, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

### **9.3 Circular LG 04 2025 – Rate Statistics 2025 26 – Covering Letter**

Correspondence, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

### **9.4 Circular LG 04 2025 Rates Statistics 2025 26**

Correspondence, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

#### ***MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'***

Proposed by Councillor McQuillan  
Seconded by Councillor Kane and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Finance Committee move *'In Committee'*.

\* **Press left the meeting at 7.20 pm.**

***The information contained in the following items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.***

The Chair reminded Committee of the audio recordings procedure.

## **10. DEBT MANAGEMENT**

### **Purpose of Report**

This report informs members of the current position surrounding debt owed to the Council by its customers.

### **Background**

Council implemented a revised Debt Management Policy in July 2023.

The tables below set out the total debt position as at 31 March 2025 and compares this to the position at 31 March 2024.

### **Detail – Aged Debt Analysis**

As at 31 March 2025, previously circulated.

As at 31 March 2024, previously circulated.

Movement and comparison between last year and this year (31 March 2025 and 31 March 2024), previously circulated.

With regards the 90 days and over figures there are customers who have entered administration totalling £254.32, in due course we will be informed if Council will receive any settlement from these companies following which any debts requiring written off will be informed to this committee or if required authority to write off will be sought. There are also balances amounting to £4,863 relating to customers who pay by direct debit therefore these are not of any immediate concern to Council. A further £20,714 included within the 90 days and over figure relates to invoices which are not Council debt but are invoices issued and collected on an agency contract for a third party under relevant legislative direction.

### **Over 90 Days analysis**

The table, previously circulated, details the status of any debt which was over 90 days in excess of £10 currently (excluding third party invoices and direct debit accounts):

The table, previously circulated, sets out such debts that have been cleared since the last report in February.

### **Options**

#### **Debt write-off under £1,000**

In accordance with our debt management policy I am required to report to Council any debts under £1,000 which the Chief Finance Officer has the authority to write-off. There are no such debts this month as detailed below:

#### **Debt Write-off over £1,000**

In accordance with our debt management policy, Council approval is sought in order to write off any debts in excess of £1,000. There are no such debts this month.

#### **Car Parking Penalty Notices Write-off**

In accordance with audit requirements, I am required to report periodically to Council any write-offs relating to car parking revenue. For the 6 months to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 a total of 533 (September 666) notices were written off on appeal which equates to £23,985 (September £29,970) at £45 per notice. The total number of notices issued during this period was 2,595 (September 3,491) meaning 20.54% (September 19.08%) of issued notices were cancelled. As these are individually below £1,000 the delegated authority to the Chief Finance Officer enables these to be written off.

At the request of Elected Members the Chief Finance Officer provided clarity on the rationale for writing off car parking penalty notices which have been appealed.

As some Elected Members felt the figure for writing off car parking penalty notices was quite high at 20% the Chief Finance Officer agreed to refer to the Director of Environmental Services for consideration and feedback to Elected Members.

## 11. MINUTES OF FMT MEETING TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2025

Finance Management Team Meeting minutes, previously circulated, were presented by the Chief Finance Officer who advised these were tabled for information only.

## 12. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS (NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12 (O))

There were no items of Any Other Relevant Business.

### ***MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'***

Proposed by Councillor Kane

Seconded by Councillor McQuillan and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Finance Committee move *'In Public'*.

This being all the business, the Chair thanked Elected Members for their attendance and the meeting closed at 7.25pm.

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Chair