Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Title of Report:	**Finance Business Plan – Mid Year Review**
Committee Report Submitted To:	**Finance Committee**
Date of Meeting:	**12 November 2026**
For Decision or For Information	**For information**
To be discussed In Committee YES/NO	**No**

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Council has agreed policies and procedures and decision making is consistent with them.
Lead Officer	Chief Finance Officer

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	31 March 2027

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	**YES~~/NO~~**
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	**~~YES~~/NO**
Legal Opinion Obtained	**~~YES~~/NO**

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	~~Yes~~/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	~~Yes~~/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Council an update on the Finance department's Business Plan progress thus far for 2026/27.

2.0 Background

2.1 Each Council section is required annually to provide Council with a Business Plan for approval and a subsequent 6 month update on progress.

2.2 The Finance department Business Plan update is attached as an appendix to this report.

3.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Finance Committee note the progress of the Finance Department Business Plan as detailed in the appendix.

Strategic Objective				
1. Develop and support staff to maximise their potential performance within the organisation, leading to an efficient, effective and motivated team that is customer focused and service led.				
Link to Corporate Aims and Objectives • **Cohesive Leadership**				
Work Streams / Operational Actions / Outcomes	**Responsible Officer**	**Timescale**	**Performance Indicators / Measures of Success**	**Progress update**
Ensure Governance and Controls	Chief Finance Officer	Ongoing	Unqualified annual accounts ongoing as per previous years. Completion/implementation of audit recommendations within agreed timeframes and reducing NIAO priority 1 issues to 0. A full review of policies and procedures that are aligned to the new systems and signed off by management.	2025/26 Annual Accounts signed off within regulatory timeframes, unqualified. No priority 1 recommendations out of 9 received In progress, Procurement complete, Treasury Management complete
Departmental Structure	Chief Finance Officer	Mar 2027	Review structure of Finance department to ensure it is still fit for purpose and meeting organisational needs	Ongoing
Succession Planning	Chief Finance Officer	Mar 2027	In conjunction with Council's new performance management process develop the skills of current Finance staff in preparation for the inevitable loss of experienced staff given the department's staffing age profile	Succession planning embedded in new recruitment campaign, shadowing of incumbent staff where possible

Strategic Objective				
2. Efficient stakeholder management through delivering effective and engaged communications. Building confidence amongst our relevant stakeholders and improving financial performance through respectful and open dialogue.				
Link to Corporate Aims and Objectives • **Cohesive Leadership**				
Work Streams / Operational Actions / Outcomes	**Responsible Officer**	**Timescale**	**Performance Indicators / Measures of Success**	**Progress Update**
Identify Key Stakeholders and Communicate	Chief Finance Officer	Ongoing	Develop a stakeholder list that groups stakeholders into categories, and update list on a quarterly basis. Develop a stakeholder communications plan and review on an annual basis	Commenced Not yet commenced
Timely team updates and briefing sessions across the Finance Team	Chief Finance Officer	Ongoing	Monthly Questions & Answers sessions from a full finance team perspective. Weekly meetings with senior finance team leads to future planning and historical reflection, that will include recorded actions points to follow up on. Regular FMT meetings with key budget holders and directors.	Implemented Implemented Implemented

Strategic Objective				
3. Development of an effective procurement and commercial strategy that will increase income, reduce costs while maximizing the use of local suppliers to the benefit of council rate payers.				
Link to Corporate Aims • **Local Economy, Climate Change and Our Environment**				
Work Streams / Operational Actions / Outcomes	**Responsible Officer**	**Timescale**	**Performance Indicators / Measure of Success**	**Progress Update**
Procurement Controls	Procurement Officer	Ongoing	Develop the procurement function through exam based and networked, that will ensure 100% audit compliance and evidence costs savings.	CIPS enrolment to be approved
Procurement Add Value	Procurement Officer	Ongoing, with an annual review at Year End	Develop a procurement function that will make savings through procurement and contract management greater than the costs of its own resources.	In progress – review of overall Finance department to be carried out
ICT system integration	Procurement Officer	During 2026/27	Continue the development of an online contracts register within the newly installed Finance system, linking procurement to contracts to supplier payments adding improved rigour around procurement processes.	Linkage to Council Finance system to be implemented
Social Value Pilot Scheme	Procurement Officer	Sep 2026	Bring greater benefits to the borough through a financial contributions based system currently under development	Draft report presented to SMT September 2026

Strategic Objective				
4. Support the decision-making process across Council by way of providing accurate, timely relevant financial information				
Link to Corporate Aims and Objectives • **Improvement and Innovation**				
Work Streams / Operational Actions / Outcomes	**Responsible Officer**	**Timescale**	**Performance Indicators / Measures of Success**	**Progress Update**
Revision of the medium-term (4 year) financial plan	Chief Finance Officer	June 2026 draft to SMT, presentation to Council at next available Committee	Presentation of medium-term financial plan to SMT, Finance Committee and Council Annual refresh of medium-term financial plan within 5 months of the new financial year	Medium Term Financial plan presented to Finance Committee May 2026 Complete
Management accounts	Accountants	On-going On-going September 2026	Meet current deadlines when accounts produced or beat that deadline. Benchmark other councils and business to identify “best in class” deadlines to meet. Implementation of management information dashboards for all budget holders	Monthly accounts produced and presented monthly to Finance Committee Not yet commenced Draft dashboards presented to Management

Strategic Objective				
5. Maximize technology that improves efficiency and effectiveness				
Link to Corporate Aims • **Innovation and Transformation**				
Work Streams / Operational Actions / Outcomes	**Responsible Officer**	**Timescale**	**Performance Indicators / Measures of Success**	**Progress Update**
Integration of new Finance system with additional Council ICT systems automating the transfer of information between those systems	Chief Finance Officer	Sept 2026	An accounting system that interfaces with other functioning IT systems across the organisation and that reduces manual human intervention, reducing duplication of effort. Implementation of income integration with Legend leisure software	Work commenced on integration with Leisure management system
Integration of Payroll system with other HR systems	Chief Finance Officer	Sept 2026	Integration with HR systems to remove duplication of data entry regarding new starts and leavers	Work commenced on integration with HR system
Increased automation	Chief Finance Officer	Jun 2026 Mar 2027 Mar 2027 Sept 2026 Sept 2026	Automated bank reconciliation Increased usage of electronic time sheet input Increased usage of electronic expenses claim input Improve data entry through accounts payable system to allow capture of additional information such as units consumed as opposed to just a monetary value Reduction in number of email authorisations for supplier invoice payments	Awaiting file format from Bank X% users inputting electronically In development Early adopter of Invoice IQ functionality, API interface being developed for Agency staff, waste invoices and grant payments API interface being developed