



**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 20 JANUARY 2026**

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations	Estimated Timescale for completion
1.	Apologies	Councillor McShane	N/A
2.	Declarations of Interest	Funding Unit Manager	N/A
3.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 16 th December 2025	Confirmed as a correct record	N/A
4.	Presentation from the Funding Unit Manager	Received	N/A
5.	Digital Strategy Action Plan	To recommend that Council note the progress made since the original strategy and the significant improvements in digital infrastructure and capability and approve the revised Causeway Coast & Glens Digital Strategy & Action Plan (December 2025) as the framework for future digital development	-
	CHANGE ORDER OF BUSINESS		

6.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)		
6.1	2026 Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann (Councillor McCully)	Noted	
	In Committee (Items 7– 11 inclusive)		
7.	Funding Unit Organisational Design	To recommend to Council Option B: The proposed new structure of 17 staff as illustrated at Section 10 and the table below. This includes moving the existing Business Support Officer directly into the Funding Unit structure	July 2026
8.	RNLI Beach Lifeguard Provision	To recommend that Council agrees to Option 2, to extend the contract for services with RNLI for the provision of beach lifeguarding services at seven identified Council managed beaches, from 2026 to 2031. The agreement for services will allow for a 2% annual uplift added to any required CPI uplift	-
9.	Benone HALP Essential Maintenance	To recommend that Council approve the expenditure for required maintenance works at Benone at an estimated cost of £58K	March 2026

10.	Motorbikes for Joey Dunlop Museum	<p style="text-align: center;">To recommend that Council:- Purchase of the Honda 125cc motorbike currently being offered for sale, for inclusion in the proposed permanent Joey Dunlop Museum; Seek the opportunity to engage in the purchase of a second motorcycle subject to a ceiling value based on a valuation exercise.</p>	-
11.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)		
11.1	Ballycastle Shared Education Campus (Councillor McCully)	Noted	

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND VIA MS
TEAMS ON
TUESDAY 20 JANUARY 2026 AT 7.00PM**

In the Chair: Councillor Anderson (C)

Members Present: Alderman Callan (C), McAuley (C), Stewart (C);
Councillors N Archibald (C), Bateson (R), Elder (R),
Holmes (C), Kennedy (R), Kyle (R), McCully (C), McGurk
(R), Schenning (R), Watson (R), Wisener (C)

Officers Present: P Mulvenna, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
W McCullough, Head of Sport and Wellbeing (R)
P Thompson, Head of Tourism and Recreation (C)
J Welsh, Head of Community and Culture (C)
N McGurk, Head of Prosperity and Place (C)
R Gillan, Coast and Countryside Manager (R)
I Owens, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

In Attendance: L Boyd, ICT Operations Officer (C)
C McTaggart, ICT Operations Officer (C)

Press 1 no. (R)

Public 1 no (R)

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

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

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for Councillor McShane.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Elected Members.

The Funding Unit Manager declared an interest in Item 7 – Funding Unit Organisational Design, as a staff member in the Unit. The Funding Unit Manager said she would vacate the room should discussions around her role arise.

3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 16th DECEMBER 2025

Summary, previously circulated.

Proposed by Alderman Callan

Seconded by Councillor Holmes and

AGREED – that the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 16th December 2025 are confirmed as a correct record.

4. PRESENTATION FROM FUNDING UNIT MANAGER

The Chair invited the Funding Unit Manager to present to Committee.

The Funding Unit Manager advised she would be updating Elected Members on funding unit objectives, how they are being achieved and progress over last six months.

The Funding Unit Manager said that the Unit was established in 2015 when four legacy Councils merged and referred to the four strategic objectives:-

- Securing funding
- Business support for funding programmes
- External engagement
- Management and administration of Council's grant funding

In 2025 additionally:-

- Management and administration of PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.

The Funding Unit Manager via power point presented the following information to Elected Members:-

- Current Funding Unit Structure
- Funding Unit Summary of Achievements 2015-2025
- Grant Management and Administration 2016-2025
- Grant Management – Grants Awarded 2016-2025
- Securing Funding 2015-2025
- External Funding for Council's Strategic Projects
- Funding Unit 6 Month Progress update
- Grants Awarded 2025/26
- Grants Awarded 2016/17 – present
- PEACEPLUS Implementation Update
- PEACEPLUS Overview
- PEACEPLUS Live Projects
- PEACEPLUS Capital Projects

- Funding Unit 2026/2027 Priorities

The Funding Unit Manager invited questions from Elected Members.

The Chair welcomed the figures outlined in the presentation and spoke of the background work undertaken by the Funding Unit which goes unnoticed and referred to the increased pressure which comes with the processing of more applications.

At the request of Councillor McCully the Funding Unit Manager advised that progression was in alignment with all seven capital grant projects; all projects were being progressed and authorised with the checks and balances undertaken, letters of offer issued, returned and signed off. The Funding Unit Manager spoke of due diligence undertaken and said that some projects were subject to planning permission and progression to tender in the next few months; all requirements had been satisfied and currently applications for 2025/26 capital projects are being assessed with a report expected to Council in April/May.

Alderman Callan thanked the team for the fantastic work and development of Funding Unit in the last ten years.

Alderman Callan asked the Funding Unit Manager to explain the process used by Officers to source external funding. The Funding Unit Manager advised that there was a mixture of methods; Funding Unit only apply for funds aligned to strategic and Capital Projects list for relevant service area and Officers are always scanning for suitable funds and then the relevant Director/Head of Service is approached as a next step prior to making an application. Opportunities are also grasped for in-year opportunities as they arise.

The Funding Unit Manager said there was a requirement for continuity when processing applications and spoke of the flexibility required by Officers to ensure applications progress satisfactorily.

The Funding Unit Manager said that often external funding is utilised to reduce planned Council spend and gave examples, saying the aim of the Funding Unit was to save Council and ultimately the ratepayer money.

Alderman Callan asked about staff efficiencies going forward and the Funding Unit Manager advised that clarity in this regard would be provided 'in committee' during discussion of Item 7 - Funding Unit Organisational Design.

At the request of Alderman Callan the Funding Unit Manager confirmed that PEACEPLUS posts were 100% funded filled mostly by agency staff.

The Funding Unit Manager said that staff in effect become all-rounders via training and development enabling them to obtain transferable skills and expertise and be able to process claims, learn about groups, processes and governance.

The Funding Unit Manager said that Officers often mentor staff in other Councils to help them achieve outcomes which Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council have achieved.

The Funding Unit Manager said that there would always be a form of PEACE type funding for administering.

* **IT Officers left the meeting at 7.25pm during consideration of the item.**

5. DIGITAL STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Prosperity and Place.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the review and revision of the Causeway Coast & Glens Digital Strategy & Action Plan, outline key changes since the original strategy (2020), and seek approval for the updated strategy (2025) as a guiding framework for digital development across the Borough.

Further information was provided in the report under the following headings:

- Background
- Key Changes
- On-demand Recording

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the progress made since the original strategy and the significant improvements in digital infrastructure and capability and approve the revised Causeway Coast & Glens Digital Strategy & Action Plan (December 2025) as the framework for future digital development.

The Chair encouraged Elected Members to view the training video which outlines the strategy referred to by the Head of Prosperity and Place. Councillor McGurk advised of issues navigating the link and the Head of Prosperity and Place agreed to send the link to all Elected Members.

Councillor McGurk welcomed the report and said she had spoken with consultants as part of the consultation and would welcome further engagement.

The Head of Prosperity and Place confirmed that an all Elected Member Gigabyte Workshop would take place on 4th February at 2 pm and said this was a really important information session for Elected Members.

At the request of Councillor Elder the Head of Prosperity and Place advised that there were some AI chat bot type initiatives which were in the early stages and referred to the Digital Barrier Task Force for which he was the

Champion. The Head of Prosperity and Place advised Elected Members that there would be proposals coming through to address specifics relating to our borough.

Alderman Callan asked about the extent of engagement with stakeholders including external bodies in key sectors. The Head of Prosperity and Place said there was a Sub Group being developed through the Local Economic Partnership and good conversations around AI Collaboration Centre via the Growth Deal.

In response to Alderman Callan the Head of Prosperity and Place advised that round table communications with the four main operators would be led by the Department for the Economy.

Alderman Callan referred to a piece of work undertaken by NILGA in relation to development of digital infrastructure.

Proposed by Councillor McCully
Seconded by Councillor Archibald and

AGREED – To recommend that Council note the progress made since the original strategy and the significant improvements in digital infrastructure and capability and approve the revised Causeway Coast & Glens Digital Strategy & Action Plan (December 2025) as the framework for future digital development.

CHANGE ORDER OF BUSINESS

*The Chair advised that Agenda Item 5 – Portballintrae Air Force Memorial and Agenda Item 7 – Prosperity and Place Organisational Design had been withdrawn from the Agenda, and at the request of Councillor Kyle, explained that in relation to Item 5, further information had become available since the Agenda was issued.

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

6.1 2026 Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann (Councillor McCully)

With Belfast hosting in August 2026, what plans exist to maximise this opportunity for our Borough's tourism sector?

Councillor McCully spoke of the predicted 700k coming to Belfast for this event and enquired what was in place to encourage visitors to extend their stay to embrace the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area.

The Director of Leisure and Development provided an update received from the Head of Tourism and Recreation as follows:

‘Council’s Destination Management Strategy recognises the significance of cultural tourism and its potential economic benefits. Council-led events, such as Atlantic Sessions (Portrush & Portstewart) and the proposed adjustment to the Rathlin Sound Festival, will prominently feature music, celebrating our cultural roots and traditions. The Tourism and Recreation Team will actively promote our Borough as a cultural destination in partnership with key stakeholders, including Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland (TNI), in the lead-up to Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. This promotion will highlight the diverse cultural and musical assets within the Borough, including the County Antrim Fleadh, scheduled for Dunloy, 18–24 May 2026. The Destination Manager has also requested an information session with Belfast City Council to share with local tourism and hospitality businesses the opportunities arising from Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann coming to Belfast this year.’

Councillor Watson said that off the back of such an esteemed event like Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann coming to Belfast, her colleague Cllr Cara Mc Shane has been active and initiating meetings with the Ballycastle Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann alongside the Events Team to try and secure the possibility of hosting Fleadh Cheoil Uladh in Ballycastle in 2027/28. This is off the back of two successful years of hosting Fleadh Cheoil Chondae Aontromain Ballycastle.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN COMMITTEE’

Proposed by Councillor McCully
Seconded by Councillor Holmes and

AGREED – to recommend that Council move ‘*In Committee*’.

* **Press and Public left the meeting at 8 pm.**

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

7. FUNDING UNIT ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) was previously circulated and presented by the Funding Unit Manager.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend a new organisational structure for Council’s Funding Unit aligned to increased service area responsibilities and agreed principles of organisational design.

Further information was provided in the report.

Options

Option A: Maintain the existing structure of 13 staff (includes 5 permanent staff, 3 x agency posts as well as 5 x PEACEPLUS temporary staff, plus Business Support Officer (sits external to formal structure).

Option B: The proposed new structure of 17 staff as illustrated at Section 10 and the table below. This includes moving the existing Business Support Officer directly into the Funding Unit structure.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to recommend Option B to Council for the Funding Unit service area to be aligned to agreed principles and organisational design.

The Chair thanked the Funding Unit Manager for the comprehensive report.

At the request of Councillor Holmes the Funding Unit Manager confirmed that PEACEPLUS posts were fixed-term positions following which redeployment opportunities may arise and if not, SEUPB fully fund the cost associated with redundancies.

At the request of Councillor Holmes the Funding Unit Manager said that it was realistic to commercialise the Grants Information System and gave an overview of the platform previously used by an external provider which was no longer available. The Funding Unit Manager said that Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Funding Unit were pro-active in development of a bespoke Grants Information System based on their system which put them in a more favourable position than some other Councils. The Funding Unit Manager said that the Funding Unit regularly take enquiries from other Councils in this regard by way of mentoring Officers.

The Funding Unit Manager said that following implementation of their Grants Information System, they are now able to process offers out, upload applications, record communications and record grants issued. While this system had a few glitches there were no major issues and had the potential to be rolled out commercially.

Councillor Holmes spoke of the Funding Unit performing way above target in last few years.

The Funding Unit Manager provided clarity to Alderman McAuley on the costings of the proposal and function of the Capital Investment Manager. This role oversees providing a means of saving money and on balance will see significant

savings to Council, with the main purpose being to capitalise on opportunities and work on applications for external funding. This will see an increase in aligning funds to Council's own strategies, priorities and related projects.

Alderman McAuley felt strongly that if the Funding Unit are mentoring other Councils this provision should attract a fee and if not charging this should be considered as an option.

Councillor Schenning sought clarity on administration fees which were applicable to applications for funding and the Funding Unit Manager said it would depend on the size of the pot as small funding amounts would not attract an administrative fee, whereas 100% funded programmes involving staff-intensive applications attract an administrative fee.

At the request of Councillor Schenning the Funding Unit Manager said there was currently no policy in place but a system which determines the level of administration fee to charge. Councillor Schenning suggested development of a policy could be explored.

At the request of Councillor Schenning the Funding Unit Manager said that the second Funding Development Officer's role would include sourcing new funds and helping to administer some grant projects. This would include developing guidelines, dealing with queries, facilitation of grant assessment panels, taking notes at panels, feedback to applicants, facilitating appeal panels

Proposed by Councillor Holmes
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED - To recommend to Council Option B: The proposed new structure of 17 staff as illustrated at Section 10 and the table below. This includes moving the existing Business Support Officer directly into the Funding Unit structure.

***The Head of Prosperity and Place left the Chamber at 8.35 pm**

8. RNLI BEACH LIFEGUARD PROVISION

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) was previously circulated and presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to extend the contract for services with RNLI for the provision of beach lifeguarding services at seven Council managed beaches from 2026/27 to 2030/31.

Further information was provided in the report.

Options

Option 1 – Council does not enter into a new agreement with RNLI for beach lifeguard provision. Council would have to withdraw the service or source alternative means to resource.

Option 2 – Council agrees to enter into a agreement with RNLI for the provision of beach lifeguarding services at seven Council managed beaches from 2026 to 2031.

- With a 2% annual uplift added to a percentage CPI uplift.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Leisure & Development Committee recommends that Council agrees to Option 2, to extend the contract for services with RNLI for the provision of beach lifeguarding services at seven identified Council managed beaches, from 2026 to 2031. The agreement for services will allow for a 2% annual uplift added to any required CPI uplift.

At the request of Councillor Holmes the Head of Tourism and Recreation provided clarity on the contractual elements of the proposal and alignment with CPI increases. Councillor Holmes felt that there could be an element of negotiation with RNLI.

Alderman McAuley spoke of the importance of beach safety and the provision to beachgoers and felt there was no rationale for revisiting the proposal.

Proposed by Alderman McAuley

Seconded by Alderman Callan and

AGREED – To recommend that Council agrees to Option 2, to extend the contract for services with RNLI for the provision of beach lifeguarding services at seven identified Council managed beaches, from 2026 to 2031. The agreement for services will allow for a 2% annual uplift added to any required CPI uplift.

9. BENONE HALP ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) was previously circulated and presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with detail on priority maintenance / repair works at Council's Holiday and Leisure Parks (HALP) at Benone.

Further information was provided in the report.

Recommendation

That the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council approval of the expenditure for required maintenance works at Benone at an estimated cost of £58K.

Alderman Callan said that these works were long overdue and Councillor Schenning concurred saying this was well needed. Councillor McGurk said this was much needed and asked for details of the outworkings from discussions at a workshop held a few months ago for Benbradagh and Limavady DEA Elected Members.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation referred to a report taken to the Leisure and Development Committee in January when Elected Members agreed an approach for a short, medium and long term plan for Benone including provision of facilities for DDA and Changing Places. The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that a blueprint could be expected in this regard early in Quarter One of 2026, prior to which Benbradagh and Limavady Elected Members could meet to refine or make adjustments accordingly.

Councillor McGurk applauded the enormous work by the Head of Tourism and Recreation and his team.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED – To recommend that Council approve the expenditure for required maintenance works at Benone at an estimated cost of £58K.

10. MOTORBIKES FOR THE JOEY DUNLOP MUSEUM

Confidential report by virtue of paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 was presented by the Head of Community and Culture on behalf of the Lead Officer, Head of Performance.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Elected Members approval to purchase a minimum of two relevant motorbikes for the new Joey Dunlop Museum. An immediate opportunity has arisen to purchase a historically significant motorcycle for the Joey Dunlop exhibition and potentially a second opportunity within the coming months.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommend to Council the purchase of the Honda 125cc motorbike currently being offered for sale, for inclusion in the proposed permanent Joey Dunlop Museum.

It is further recommended that Council staff seek the opportunity to engage in the purchase of a second motorcycle subject to a ceiling value based on a valuation exercise.

The Head of Community and Culture spoke of the imminent time sensitivity of this proposal and the rationale for the proposal which underpins the long term success of the museum.

Alderman McAuley spoke of the great opportunity and referred to the success of the Joey 2025 event which won Irish Motorcycle event of year recently and applauded the Council team involved. Alderman McAuley said that a museum without a motorbike is pointless. Alderman Callan concurred with Alderman McAuley's remarks and spoke of the appetite evident for Joey Dunlop memorabilia and of what the Dunlop family have done for motor racing in the borough.

Councillor Kennedy said this proposal was great for borough and town and referred to the potential for a museum. The Head of Community and Culture explained the rationale for the motorbike purchase and said what was special about the 125 was that it proved he was more than a racer; he was a mechanic and engineer and supported his brother. The Head of Community and Culture said that the 250 motorbike was rode by Joey himself.

Proposed by Alderman McAuley
Seconded by Alderman Callan and

AGREED – To recommend that Council:-

Purchase of the Honda 125cc motorbike currently being offered for sale, for inclusion in the proposed permanent Joey Dunlop Museum;

Seek the opportunity to engage in the purchase of a second motorcycle subject to a ceiling value based on a valuation exercise.

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

11.1 Ballycastle Shared Education Campus (*Councillor McCully*)

To ask for an update on Ballycastle Shared Education Campus.

The Director of Leisure and Development provided a verbal update to Elected Members.

Councillor McCully referred to speculation and the requirement for Elected Members to be kept up to date.

The Director of Leisure and Development spoke of the sensitivities around the matter and advised Elected Members of the current situation and confirmed that Elected Members would be provided with an update when available.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘*IN PUBLIC*’

Proposed by Councillor Archibald

Seconded by Wisener and

AGREED – to recommend that Council move ‘*In Public*’.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 9.10 pm.

Chair