



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Causeway Speciality Market 20 Years Update on Celebration Plans</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	Leisure & Development Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 March 2026
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	For Information
<b>To be discussed In Committee</b>	<b>NO</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021 -2025)</b>	
Strategic Theme	A Thriving Economy
Outcome	Council facilitates towns and villages in the borough to continue to provide quality environments which evolve to meet the needs of their citizens, businesses, and visitors to them
Lead Officer	Head of Prosperity & Place/ Town & Village Manager

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	TBC
Included in Current Year Estimates	Yes and 2026-27 financial year
Capital/Revenue	Capital/revenue
Code	Various
Staffing Costs	N/A

<b>Legal Considerations</b>	
Input of Legal Services Required	<b>NO</b>
Legal Opinion Obtained	<b>N/A</b>

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

## 1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the celebrations planned to mark 20 years of the Causeway Speciality Market (CSM) in Coleraine.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Causeway Speciality Market (CSM) is a well-established speciality food and craft market located around Coleraine Town Hall in the town centre. Operating since April 2006, it has grown from an initial 12 monthly stalls to the largest regular outdoor market in Northern Ireland. Since 2023, the market has operated twice per month, hosting up to 47 stalls at each event.
- 2.2 The market consistently attracts significant visitor numbers from across Northern Ireland. Footfall data shows an average increase of 3,000–5,000 visitors (approximately 8%) on market days, based on typical Saturday footfall levels of 38,000–45,000 in Coleraine town centre.
- 2.3 Eighty traders from within the Borough are currently registered to participate, with a further 230 traders from across Northern Ireland listed on the market database as interested in taking part.

## 3.0 Next Steps

- 3.1 For this unique milestone the Town & Village Management (TVM) team are incorporating five approaches to this yearlong celebration:
- 1) Host a series of celebration events;
  - 2) Show gratitude to all stakeholders involved in making the CSM such a success;
  - 3) Share the story of the Causeway Speciality Market;
  - 4) Create new lasting memories and archive achievements; and
  - 5) Plan for the Future.
- 3.2 TVM will work in partnership with several key stakeholders (both internal and external) to ensure this celebration programme a success. This will include:
- Council PR
  - Estates Team
  - Operations Team
  - Environmental Health Team
  - Tourism Events Team
  - Tourism and Visit Causeway Teams
  - Causeway Museum Service
  - Arts & Culture Team
  - Coleraine BID
  - Coleraine Town Team
  - Coleraine Future Town Fund
  - Community Development
  - Causeway Speciality Market Traders
  - Elected Members
  - Corporate Services
- 3.3 A draft schedule of planned activities is outlined below; with further details to be confirmed as the yearlong celebration progresses. See **Annex A** for further details.

### **Themed Celebration Markets.**

There will be three celebration markets on the following dates 11<sup>th</sup> April 11<sup>th</sup> July and 8<sup>th</sup> August i.e.

- **11 April:** The Mayor will officially launch the 20th-anniversary celebrations. A road closure will facilitate an expanded market layout across Church Street, Queen Street, and Bridge Street, along with an exhibition marquee for food and craft demonstrations from 10am–3pm. Additional family entertainment will be provided throughout the town. The full event programme will be published once all participants are confirmed.
- **11 July & 8 August:** Both markets will feature a demonstration marquee showcasing local chefs and artisan crafters.

### **Celebration Gala Dinner and Awards Evening – January 2027.**

A formal event will be held to recognise long-serving traders and the operational staff who support the market. The evening will also highlight achievements from both cohorts of the Journey to Market Programme. All traders aim to achieve JAM accreditation during the 2026–27 year.

### **Sharing the Story of the Market – April 2026 – March 2027.**

The Council will work with local historians to document the history and development of the market. Outputs will include storyboards, a digital archive, and exhibition materials. A structured PR schedule will support the celebration year, incorporating a video library of traders, social and traditional media features, and broadcast opportunities where available. Collaboration with Translink will help promote the market across Northern Ireland.

### **Create New Lasting Memories - April 2026-March 2027.**

A digital library capturing the current market will be developed, supported by refreshed branding and updated promotional materials. Market equipment and marquees will also be rebranded.

### **Planning for the Future**

The Journey to Market Programme has been relaunched to ensure a sustainable pipeline of new traders. The first cohort of ten borough-based artisan producers will trade at the 11 April celebration market after receiving one-to-one mentoring and participating in a series of workshops over three months. Due to high demand, a second cohort will commence in September 2026.

## **4.0 Summary**

- 4.1 Elected Members will receive regular updates as the 20th Anniversary CSM plans progress throughout 2026/27. An invitation will also be issued to all Members to attend the first themed market on Saturday, 11 April 2026.

## Annex A – Overview of CSM 20yrs Celebration Activities

Month	Activity	Detail to Date
Jan 26 - Mar 26	<b>Journey to Market Programme Cohort 1</b>	<p>The Journey to Market Programme will include the following key activities and outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and support 10 local food and craft producers to prepare their products to the public via the Causeway Speciality Market.</li> <li>Compile a comprehensive database of potential market traders drawn from existing food and craft producers in the Borough.</li> <li>Conduct individual business assessments and develop tailored strategies for a minimum of 10 participants.</li> <li>Create at least 10 bespoke action plans for participating businesses. Deliver an average of three days of one-to-one mentoring per business, with a minimum of one day allocated to each to assess their specific needs.</li> <li>Organise and facilitate a minimum of three business seminars for the 10 selected participants, covering topics such as 'added value product development'</li> </ul>
Jan - Mar 26	<b>Digital library of traders and celebration events</b>	Collection of short bio-videos of each of the CSM traders. 38 videos captured to date. Video library to be augmented throughout the year.
Feb-26	<b>Sharing the Story</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialists 'Perry Heslip' appointed to collate the history of the market and create a useable and accessible timeline and story behind Coleraine as a market town and the success of the current Causeway Speciality Market.</li> <li>New logo created and branded campaign collateral procured</li> </ul>
Mar-26	<b>PR &amp; Street Dressing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First release of 'Behind the Stalls' campaign. Short videos highlighting CSM traders.</li> <li>Installation of the street dressing lighting column banners, bunting in Coleraine town centre and council billboards across the borough where possible.</li> <li>Council Elected members to be invited to attend the celebration market event on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2026</li> </ul>

Month	Activity	Detail to Date
Apr-26	<b>Themed Market 11th April 9am - 4pm</b>	<p>Launch of the celebration year for Causeway Speciality Market Road Closure from 9am to allow for additional marquees, exhibition kitchen and AV equipment and expanded Stall layout. Mayor to attend. Cake cutting ceremony 10am Demonstration theatre opens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10am -10.45am Artisan food producers demonstration</li> <li>• 11am – 11.45am Artisan Crafters Demonstration</li> <li>• 12noon – 2pm Local Chef cookery demonstration using market produce</li> <li>• 2pm – 2.45pm Artisan crafter demonstration</li> <li>• 3pm – 3.45pm Trader Stories presentation</li> </ul> <p>Associated PR – Press, Social media, Radio &amp; TV [tbc] Street Dressing – Lighting column banners, Billboards, bunting to be erected all CSM 20 themed</p>
Apr-26	<b>PR &amp; Sharing the Story</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of PR campaign behind the stalls. CSM editorial article within Citizen’s newsletter.</li> <li>• Launch of story boards in connection with the history of the market and collation of the digital collateral.</li> <li>• 25th April 2nd monthly market - advertorials submitted for inclusion in local press and regional press.</li> </ul>
May-26	<b>'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translink promotion starts - story board information to be erected at local train and bus station - potential to continue through the rest of the year.</li> <li>• Monthly Markets – 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May 2026.</li> <li>• Market Place Europe to visit Coleraine at end of May (dates TBC)</li> </ul>
June-26	<b>Installation of Themed Flowerbeds &amp; Sharing the Story</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly markets 10th &amp; 27th June.</li> <li>• Working with parks team to install a flower bed with Asters [flower to commemorate 20years] in Coleraine Town Centre</li> <li>• Exhibition in Coleraine highlighting the story of markets in Coleraine [tbc in conjunction with Causeway Museums service and or Translink]</li> </ul>
July-26	<b>Themed Market 11th July 9am - 4pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibition/demonstration marquee with special guest traders’ demonstrations of artisan produce. Local chefs and potential for Radio coverage [tbc]</li> <li>• Monthly Market 25th July.</li> <li>• Ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign.</li> </ul>

Month	Activity	Detail to Date
August-26	<b>Themed Market 8th August 9am - 4pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibition/demonstration marquee with special guest traders' demonstrations of artisan produce. Local chefs and potential for Radio coverage [tbc].</li> <li>• Ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign</li> </ul>
Sep-26	<b>Journey to Market Programme</b>	<p>Second cohort of Journey to Market Programme commences. The Journey to Market Programme will include the following key activities and outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit and support 10 local food and craft producers to prepare their products to the public via the Causeway Speciality Market.</li> <li>• Compile a comprehensive database of potential market traders drawn from existing food and craft producers in the Borough. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct individual business assessments and develop tailored strategies for a minimum of 10 participants.</li> <li>• Create at least 10 bespoke action plans for participating businesses.</li> <li>• Deliver an average of three (3) days of one-to-one mentoring per business, with a minimum of one (1) day allocated to each to assess their specific needs.</li> <li>• Organise and facilitate a minimum of three (3) business seminars for the 10 selected participants, covering topics such as 'added value product development'</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Monthly markets 12th &amp; 26th September.</li> <li>• Ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign &amp; Story telling about the Market</li> </ul>
Oct-26	<b>PR &amp; Sharing the Story</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly markets 10th &amp; 24th October 2026.</li> <li>• Ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign &amp; Story telling about the Market.</li> <li>• Christmas campaign released hard copy, socials and local billboards.</li> <li>• Exhibition in Coleraine highlighting the story of markets in Coleraine [tbc in conjunction with Causeway Museums service and or Translink]</li> </ul>
Nov-26	<b>PR &amp; Monthly Markets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly markets 14th &amp; 28th November.</li> <li>• Ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign &amp; Story telling about the Market.</li> <li>• Additional Press releases in the run up to Christmas.</li> </ul>
Dec-26	<b>Christmas Markets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas Markets 12th &amp; 19th December.</li> </ul>

Month	Activity	Detail to Date
Jan-27		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best Christmas stall holder award for best dressed stall /visual merchandising awarded.</li> <li>• ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign &amp; Story telling about the Market</li> </ul>
	<b>CSM market celebration dinner and awards night</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details and date to be confirmed. Opportunity to celebrate the market traders, operations staff and any awards, Journey to Market participants.</li> <li>• Submission for an award at the National Market Traders Federation conference.</li> <li>• Ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign &amp; Story telling about the Market</li> </ul>
Feb-27	<b>PR &amp; Monthly Markets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of a new market year on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2026.</li> <li>• Ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign &amp; Story telling about the Market</li> </ul>
Mar-27	<b>Market &amp; PR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collation of all digital material collected over the celebration year.</li> <li>• ongoing release of 'Behind the Stalls' social media campaign &amp; Story telling about the Market.</li> </ul>