



Title of Report:	Correspondence Report
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	18 March 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
For discussion In Committee	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Healthy and Engaged Communities
Outcome	
Lead Officer	Director of Leisure & Development

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	N/A

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

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	N/A

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	N/A
Legal Opinion Obtained	N/A

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

The purpose of this report is to present Correspondence for Members consideration.

2.0 The following items are listed:

2.1 Correspondence from the Harry Gregg Foundation via email (27 February 2026).

Following the presentation to the Leisure and Development Committee, The Harry Gregg Foundation are formally requesting that Council engages with the Executive Office to explore the potential for the Urban Villages Programme to be extended to include Coleraine.

3.0 Recommendation

The Leisure & Development Committee are asked to consider the request contained within the attached correspondence.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, February 27, 2026 4:38 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Harry Gregg Foundation - Urban Villages Request

Dear David and Pat,

Following the recent presentation delivered by the Harry Gregg Foundation to the Leisure and Development Committee — and noting the positive and constructive response from Members — we now wish to formally request that Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council take the next strategic step in progressing this opportunity.

Specifically, we ask that the Council formally engage with The Executive Office at Stormont to explore the potential for the Urban Villages Programme to be extended to include Coleraine, with particular focus on Coleraine Central and Cross Glebe.

Both areas meet the spirit and substance of the qualifying criteria underpinning the Urban Villages Programme. They are communities experiencing sustained socio-economic deprivation, entrenched disadvantage, and periodic social unrest — challenges that mirror those which informed programme designation in parts of Belfast and Londonderry. The need for structured, long-term, place-based intervention is both clear and evidenced.

The Harry Gregg Foundation's proposal aligns directly with the core objectives of Urban Villages:

- Promoting good relations
- Supporting shared space
- Addressing inequality
- Investing in sustainable community infrastructure
- Creating pathways linking sport, education and social development

The presentation to the Committee demonstrated that a credible, deliverable and community-supported framework is already in place. What is now required is strategic leadership at Council level to open formal dialogue with The Executive Office regarding designation or pilot inclusion.

We believe this is not simply a funding conversation, but a strategic policy opportunity. The scale of deprivation indicators within Coleraine Central and Cross Glebe, coupled with the absence of comparable structured regeneration intervention, makes a compelling case for inclusion. Furthermore, the Council's support in initiating engagement would signal clear institutional backing and strengthen the legitimacy of the request.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that the Council:

1. Formally initiate discussions with The Executive Office regarding Urban Villages designation or extension to Coleraine.
2. Assess deprivation, good relations and regeneration data to support the case for inclusion.
3. Consider working collaboratively with the Harry Gregg Foundation to position Coleraine as a strong candidate for programme adoption.

We stand ready to support this engagement process in any way required, including providing supporting documentation, socio-economic data analysis, or participation in exploratory discussions, I have attached the summary business case as reference.

The opportunity to secure Urban Villages status for Coleraine would represent a transformative step for some of the Borough's most disadvantaged communities. We believe the time is right to pursue it with clarity and ambition.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Bobby Farren MSc, BA (Hons)

On behalf of the Harry Gregg Foundation

Strategic Outline Case Summary HARRY GREGG FOUNDATION



Harry Gregg
FOUNDATION

“*Inspire those that have dreams*”

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1. Introduction

The Harry Gregg Foundation (HGF) proposes to deliver a £5 million Sports and Community Facility at The Crescent, Coleraine – a transformative project designed to unite sport, learning, and community regeneration within one inclusive, shared campus.

The new facility will provide high-quality indoor and outdoor sports spaces, a children’s soft play and family recreation zone, a dedicated boxing club, and a hospitality education centre developed in partnership with the Northern Regional College (NRC). Together, these elements will create an all-weather hub that supports physical health, youth development, skills training, and social cohesion for the Coleraine community.

Located between the Cross Glebe and Coleraine Central Super Output Areas—among the most deprived in Northern Ireland—the project directly targets communities most in need of opportunity and investment. It will deliver measurable outcomes in health, education, employability, and good relations, aligning fully with the Urban Villages Initiative under the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy.

Once complete, the HGF Sports and Community Facility will stand as a flagship shared-space development—a welcoming environment where sport and learning come together to inspire inclusion, build local capacity, and foster lasting community pride in Coleraine.

2. Strategic Context

Project Vision

To deliver a high-impact, inclusive, and sustainable Community Sports & Skills Hub at The Crescent, Coleraine – integrating indoor sport, family recreation, youth diversion, and hospitality education within a single, accessible campus operated by the Harry Gregg Foundation (HGF).

Policy Alignment

- Programme for Government Outcome 4: “We enjoy long, healthy, active lives.”
- Urban Villages / Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC): Fostering positive identities, building capacity, and improving shared places.
- DfE Skills Strategy 2022–2030: Developing vocational and hospitality talent.
- Causeway Coast & Glens Regeneration Plan: Tackling deprivation in Cross Glebe and Central Coleraine SOAs.

3. The Case for Change

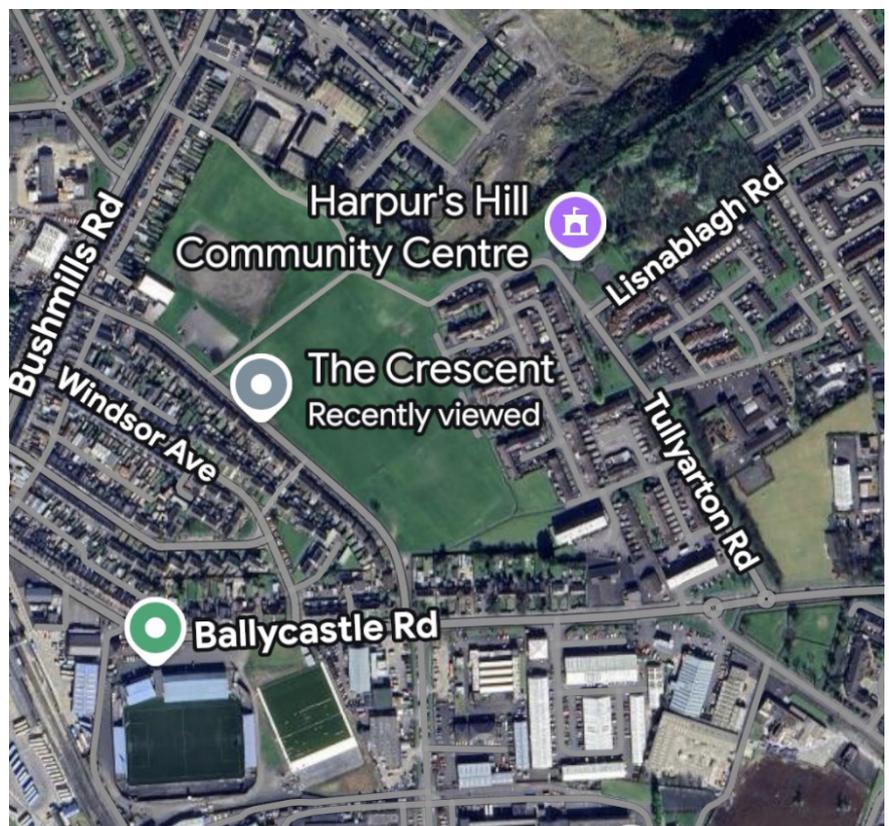
Need for Investment

The Study identified:

- Outdated and fragmented sports infrastructure.
- Limited indoor capacity and winter provision.
- Lack of accessible child play and family facilities.
- Absence of vocational training in hospitality despite industry demand.

Deprivation Context

Cross Glebe and Coleraine Central rank among Northern Ireland’s most deprived SOAs (NIMDM 2017). Targeted investment at The Crescent will directly address social need and youth inequality.



4. Economic Case

Table 1: Proposed Facilities (approx. 3,000–3,500 m² indoor + outdoor works)

Component	Function
Indoor Sports Pavilion	60 m × 35 m 3G pitch for community, walking and disability football; 4 changing rooms to Sport NI/IFA spec; officials/first-aid suites
Boxing Club	Dedicated training and conditioning space supporting local clubs and youth diversion programmes.
Children’s Soft Play & Café	Early-years recreation encouraging inter-generational use and passive surveillance of the hub.
Hospitality Education Centre	Teaching kitchen, demo suite, and IT-enabled classroom delivered with Northern Regional College (NRC) to pipeline traineeships and Level 2–3 qualifications in professional cookery and hospitality
Outdoor Pitches & Lighting	Two upgraded grass pitches with LED floodlights and drainage; new small-sided synthetic pitch for leagues, girls’ football and disability formats.
Public Realm & Access	Landscaping, EV-ready parking, cycle facilities, safe routes, and green amenity links to the town centre

Indicative Benefits

- Over 200,000 annual sport and recreation uses once operational.
- 250 learners enrolled each year in hospitality training with 120+ certifications.
- 60+ volunteers and 30+ coaching qualifications awarded annually.
- Measured good-relations impact through cross-community participation and attitudinal surveys.



5. Commercial Case

Delivery Model

- Lead Client: Harry Gregg Foundation.
- Funding Partner: The Executive Office (TEO) through the Urban Villages programme.
- Education Partner: Northern Regional College for curriculum design and accreditation.
- Council Partnership: Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council for land transfer and maintenance collaboration.



Operating Model

- HGF to operate the facility with multi-stream income (pitch hires, soft play, café, training contracts).
- Commercial hires to support affordable community access.
- NRC delivery of qualifications via existing funded training programmes.

6. Financial Case

Table 2: Capital Cost Summary (£5 million circa)

Component	£ m
Indoor Pavilion (3G surface, M&E, soft-play fit-out)	3.10
Catering Education Centre	0.85
Boxing Provision	0.20
Outdoor Works & Floodlighting	0.60
Public Realm, Access, Fees & Contingency	0.25
Total Capital Estimate	£5.00 m

Funding Sources

- Primary ask: Urban Villages capital grant (TEO / T:BUC allocation of £175 m).
- Match funding: Coleraine Future Town Fund Council (Levelling Up Fund).
- In-kind: NRC training equipment and staff delivery inputs.

Revenue Sustainability

- Diversified income stream model with phased opening to minimise early-year risk.

7. Management Case

Governance

- Lead Client: Harry Gregg Foundation (HGF)
- Partners: The Executive Office (TEO), Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council (CCGBC), Northern Regional College (NRC)
- Programme Board: Representatives from HGF, TEO, Council and NRC to oversee governance, procurement, and delivery.
- Design & Delivery: Appointed design team under a public-sector-compliant NEC4 contract.

Key Dependencies

a) Land Transfer:

- Formal asset transfer from Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council to the Harry Gregg Foundation is required before planning submission.
- Heads of Terms agreed Q2 2026; legal completion targeted Q4 2026.

b) Urban Villages Designation:

- TEO designation of Coleraine as a potential Urban Village must precede capital approval.
- Expected confirmation Q3 2026 following submission of the Ministerial briefing and site review.

c) Planning & Consents:

- Pre-application discussions with the Council's Planning Service and Sport NI to begin immediately after designation.
- Full planning submission Q4 2026 with decision expected February 2027.

HARRY GREGG FOUNDATION
PROPOSED SPORTS AND COMMUNITY FACILITY AT THE CRESCENT

Table 3: Indicative Project Timeline

Stage	Key Actions / Outputs	Target Date
SOC Completion & Submission	Approval of Strategic Outline Case by HGF Board and submission to TEO for review	Dec 2025
TEO Urban Villages Designation Process	TEO assessment and designation of Coleraine as a candidate area	Jan – Jun 2026
Land Transfer Negotiations	Agree Heads of Terms with CCGBC; valuation and legal process	Apr – Sep 2026
Outline Business Case (OBC)	Prepare and submit to TEO including detailed cost plan and sustainability model	Jul – Sep 2026
Planning Submission & Approval	Pre-app consultation ☒ planning submission ☒ approval decision	Oct 2026 – Feb 2027
Land Transfer Completion	Execute legal transfer and title registration to HGF	Dec 2026
Procurement & Contract Award	Tender for design-build contract; award by Programme Board	Jan – Feb 2027
Construction Commencement	Site mobilisation and groundworks begin post-planning approval	March 2027
Construction Period	Main works (12 months approx.) including fit-out and commissioning	Mar 2027 – Mar 2028
Operational Handover & Opening	Practical completion and phased opening to public and training partners	June 2028

Narrative Summary

This updated programme provides a robust and deliverable sequence recognising statutory and policy dependencies:

- The Urban Villages designation is now the gating milestone for TEO capital approval.
- The land-transfer process is integrated to allow planning to run in parallel but finalised before contract award.
- Planning permission is expected by February 2027, enabling construction start in March 2027 with opening by mid-2028

8. Risk & Mitigation

Table 4: Risk and Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Planning/consents	Pre-application engagement and Sport NI/IFA compliance.
Revenue deficit risk	Multi-income streams and phased opening plan.
Facility Management	Training through TEO on Corporate Governance
Community buy-in	Co-design with residents and local clubs.
Education delivery	Formal MoU with NRC and DfE alignment.

9. Evaluation Framework

- Annual reporting on participation, education, volunteering and good-relations KPIs.
- Attitudinal surveys and cross-community mix analysis.
- Tracking of employment outcomes via NRC and Council labour-market data.

10. Conclusion & Next Steps

The Harry Gregg Foundation's £5 million Community Sports & Skills Hub represents a transformational investment for Coleraine – revitalising The Crescent, tackling deprivation, and creating a shared space for sport, learning and enterprise.

Immediate Actions

- a) TEO to designate Coleraine as an Urban Village target area.
- b) Formal submission of SOC for TEO review and endorsement.
- c) Prepare Outline Business Case (OBC) with updated design and lifecycle cost plan.

Harry Gregg

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