

CASTLEROCK RAILWAY STATION FOOTBRIDGE	5th April 2016
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE	
FOR DECISION	

Linkage to Corporate Plan	
Strategic Priority:	Leader & Champion
Objective	Provide civic leadership to our citizens, working to promote the Borough as an attractive place to live, work, invest and visit
Lead Officer	G Doyle
Cost: (If applicable)	£30,000

1.1 Background (refer ES committee minutes Oct 2015)

In 1996 Council entered into a 10,000 year lease with NI Transport Holding Co. (NITHC) for the upkeep of the footbridge at Castlerock Railway Station. Terms of the lease put the onus on Council to restore the bridge, continue to maintain it throughout the lease, indemnify NITHC against claims for damage or injury and pay any NITHC costs incurred by them related to work carried out on the bridge. The bridge was restored by Council in 1998 but since then has not had any managed plan of maintenance and is now showing signs of significant deterioration. A report carried out in 2012 concluded that *“the long term use of this bridge will prove difficult and expensive with time, only adding to the Council’s financial liability to keep the structure fit for purpose. At some stage Council should explore the implications of the removal of this footbridge or its replacement with a new construction designed for the coastal exposure”*.

1.2 Detail

Meetings have been held with the Castlerock Community Association who reinforced their wish that the bridge be retained and money be invested to ensure its longevity. Legal opinion confirms that, although Council lease the bridge, the 10,000 year period means Council effectively own it. Correspondence with the ‘former’ owners suggesting a transfer back to them or a contribution to the bridge’s upkeep have not been positive. It has also been confirmed that the bridge is a listed structure and NIEA would resist any attempts to have the bridge permanently removed or replaced. Further to the 2012 report a further visual inspection and report confirms that *“extensive remedial work will be necessary to restore the structural integrity of the bridge”* and adds *“the condition of the bridge will deteriorate rapidly due to the lack of protective paint present”*.

In summary, Council are faced with an immediate £30,000 (estimate) remedial contract and ongoing annual maintenance of approximately £2,000 per annum. This should ensure its future for 20 – 25 years before any more significant remedial work is required. Note that the work to the central span will need to be done off site and this could be done during a line closure later this year during upgrade work to the station.

1.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the remedial spend, proceed to tender the works and commit to ongoing future maintenance.