

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Update on appointment of consultant(s) to undertake independent research on the new dwellings requirement for the Borough, to inform the preparation of the Local Development Plan</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> August 2024</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Decision</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)</b>	
<b>Strategic Theme</b>	<b>Cohesive Leadership</b>
<b>Outcome</b>	Our elected members work collaboratively and make decisions on an evidence led basis and in line with its policies.
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Principal Planning Officer

<b>Budgetary Considerations:</b> Not applicable in this case	
Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals. <b>Not applicable in this case.</b>		
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 To update Members on the outcome of the procurement exercise to appoint consultant(s) to undertake independent research on the new dwelling requirement for the Borough, to inform the preparation of the Local Development Plan (LDP).

## 2.0 Background

2.1 Members will be aware of the ongoing work by planning officers in the preparation of the Council's draft Plan Strategy (dPS). A chronology of events relating to this is set out at Table 1, below:

**Table 1: Chronology of events relating to dPS Preparation**

Date	Event
<b>24th August 2022</b>	<p>dPS publication document presented at Planning Committee.</p> <p>Members resolved to proceed to Full Council for dPS ratification prior to publication and public consultation.</p>
<b>1st November 2022</b>	<p>dPS publication presented at Full Council Meeting.</p> <p>Council resolved to defer for further consideration and discussion with Party Groups.</p>
<b>November/December 2022</b>	<p>Series of Party Group Meetings held.</p> <p>This resulted in some further evidence gathering and consequential updates to the Council's evidence base were also carried out.</p>
<b>August/September 2023</b>	<p>Further series of Party Group Meetings held following Local Government Elections.</p> <p>This resulted in some further evidence gathering and consequential updates to the Council's evidence base were also carried out.</p>
<b>7th December 2023</b>	<p>All-Member Workshop held.</p> <p>Agreed that an LDP Working Group should be set up and requested a paper on this to be brought before the Planning Committee for agreement.</p>
<b>24th January 2024</b>	<p>Paper presented to Planning Committee seeking agreement to set up a LDP Working Group.</p> <p>Members resolved to proceed to setting up a working group.</p>
<b>19th March 2024</b>	<p>LDP Working Group Meeting held.</p> <p>Members agreed to officers preparing a paper for CP&amp;R Committee to procure independent research to inform the LDP preparation.</p>
<b>24th March 2024</b>	<p>Paper presented to Planning Committee seeking agreement on revised LDP Timetable.</p> <p>Members resolved to agree revised timetable.</p>

<b>4<sup>th</sup> April 2024</b>	Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) consulted on revised LDP timetable.
<b>10<sup>th</sup> April 2024</b>	Response received from PAC on revised LDP Timetable.
<b>11<sup>th</sup> April 2024</b>	Member comment was sought on the procurement Terms of Reference (see Appendix 1) prior to presentation of the proposal at the 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2024 Corporate Policy and Resources (CP&R) Committee.
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024</b>	CP&R Committee resolved to accept the procurement to seek to appoint consultant/s.
<b>24<sup>th</sup> May 2024</b>	Tender advert issued.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024</b>	Revised LDP Timetable sent to the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) for agreement.
<b>10<sup>th</sup> July 2024</b>	Tender process closed.

- 2.2 The most recent piece of work undertaken, at Members' request, was a procurement exercise to appoint consultant/s to carry out independent research on the new dwelling requirement for the Borough, to inform the LDP preparation.
- 2.3 The tender advert issued on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and closed on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024. The Council received no submissions in response to the advert.

### 3.0 Implications

#### Draft Plan Strategy Preparation

- 3.1 Members requested the independent research to inform the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy Housing allocation and distribution. However, given that no submissions were received in response to the advertisement, we are now in a position where this research will not be forthcoming.
- 3.2 As such, officers now require direction from Members on how to proceed with the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy.

### 4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that Members note the contents of the Report and agree to a workshop to discuss the way forward for the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy.

## Appendix 1: Independent Housing Research Tender – Terms of Reference

## **Appendix 1 - TOR**

### **Appointment of Consultant(s) to undertake independent research on the New Dwellings Requirement for the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area to inform the preparation of the Local Development Plan.**

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council “the Council” seeks to appoint an independent consultant(s) to carry out independent research into the new dwellings requirement for the Borough during the Local Development Plan (LDP) period. This research aims to provide comprehensive insights to include local housing need, stress, trends, and projections, to inform the LDP housing allocation.

##### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Council area is located on Northern Ireland’s north coast and extends southwards to the Sperrin AONB, westwards to Lough Foyle, and eastwards to the North Channel between Northern Ireland and Scotland. The Borough covers an area of around 2,000 square kilometres and represents approximately 14% of the total land area of Northern Ireland.
- 2.2 The Borough has a rich and diverse built, natural, and cultural heritage, which is reflected in its strong tourism and visitor offer, the role of the hospitality sector in its local economy, and the proportion of the Borough that is internationally and nationally designated for its wide range of environmental qualities. The Borough includes the Giant’s Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage Site, Northern Ireland’s only UNESCO World Heritage Site, and Rathlin Island, its only inhabited island.
- 2.3 With a population of 141,746, the Borough is the 9th most populated Council area in Northern Ireland (based on the 2021 Census), containing 57,576 households. The NISRA Mid-Year Population Projections (to 2038) indicate that the Borough’s population in its ‘Young’ (0-14 Years) and ‘Working Age’ (15-64 Years) categories will represent 14.9% and 56.8% respectively. Those in the ‘65 Years and Over’ will represent 23.9% and those of ‘85 Years and Over’ will represent 4.3% of the Borough’s population.
- 2.4 The Borough comprises a range of settlements that fulfil different roles and functions for the Borough’s communities and visitors alike. Broadly, the Borough’s four hubs (Coleraine, Limavady, Ballycastle and Ballymoney) accommodate the largest proportion of the Borough’s existing population and associated housing stock at around 40%, with Towns and Villages at around 20% and 12% respectively.

- 2.5 The influence of second homes and short-term holiday lets in the composition of some towns and villages in the Borough has an impact in terms of the levels of population compared to housing stock.
- 2.6 Small settlements comprise around 3%. A significant component (at around 30%) of the Borough's existing population and housing stock lie in the countryside, outside of any defined settlement.

### **Regional Development Strategy 2035**

- 2.7 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 identifies Coleraine and Limavady as Main Hubs, with Ballycastle and Ballymoney identified as Local Hubs. Whilst consolidating their roles and functions within their settlement clusters, Coleraine, Limavady, Ballymoney and Ballycastle are identified as having the potential to cluster in the provision of services and facilities, due to their proximity.
- 2.8 The Strategic Framework Guidance set out in the RDS promotes economic development opportunities and population growth in the hubs and clusters. For the rural area outside of the main and local hubs, the strategic framework guidance is to sustain the rural communities living in smaller settlements (towns and villages) and the open countryside, and to improve accessibility for rural communities.
- 2.9 The RDS acknowledges that housing is a key driver of physical, economic, and social change and emphasises the importance of the relationship between the location of housing, jobs, facilities, services, and infrastructure. It sets out Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs) for the Borough.

### **Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)**

- 2.10 The main thrust of the SPPS, in terms of housing, is set out in paragraph 3.3, (bullet point 1); paragraph 3.5, 4.5, 4.14, 4.16, 6.72, 6.73, 6.133, 6.139, and paragraphs 6.136 to 6.147 (regarding the regional policy to be taken account of when planning for housing in the Borough).

### **Northern Area Plan 2016**

- 2.11 The current Area Plan guiding the development of the Borough is the Northern Area Plan (NAP) 2016<sup>1</sup>, adopted by the former Department of Environment (DOE) in September 2015.
- 2.12 Volume 1 sets out the background to the preparation of the Plan, defines its Aim, Objectives, and Plan Strategy, and, with reference to the Regional Policy

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<sup>1</sup> [https://wayback.archive-it.org/11112/20190702180439/https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/development\\_plans/devplans\\_az/northern\\_2016.htm](https://wayback.archive-it.org/11112/20190702180439/https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/development_plans/devplans_az/northern_2016.htm)

Context, sets out the Strategic Plan Framework comprising allocations, policies, and designations relating to the Plan Area as a whole.

- 2.13 NAP, at Volume 1, sets out the Borough's overall Housing Allocation (HOU 1). Housing, general, is set out at pages 24 -31. Social Housing Allocation (HOU 3) and local planning policy HOU 2 (pg.29) sets out the current local planning policy relating to the provision of Social and Supported Housing in the Borough.
- 2.14 Volume 2 translates the broad allocations, policies, and designations in Volume 1 into site specific zonings, designations, and proposals for each of the legacy Council areas respectively.

### **Local Development Plan 2038**

- 2.15 The requirements for the preparation of a Local Development Plan (LDP) are regulated by legislation and must take account of regional planning policies and guidance, including the RDS and the SPPS.
- 2.16 The Council is currently preparing a new Plan for the Borough which will cover the period up to 2038. The Plan will provide certainty and guide development proposals throughout the Plan period. It will include an overall figure for housing allocation across the Borough, based on the (2016-based) Housing Growth Indicators published by DfI<sup>2</sup>.

### **Spatial Growth Strategy for the Borough**

- 2.17 The Plan seeks to promote growth in the Borough's hubs by increasing the housing allocation within them, while recognising and supporting the Borough's Towns and Villages to retain their important local roles and functions. It will also seek to identify potential for some development in the smaller settlements, to sustain rural communities, consistent with the guidance set out in the RDS.
- 2.18 The issue of climate change and how the Planning System may influence the potential impact of this on the Borough is an overarching concern which is also particularly relevant to the consideration of the distribution of future growth in the Borough, where development should be focused to make the best use of existing and future infrastructure resources and accessibility to them, but also to seek to reduce the potential impacts arising from climate change, such as flooding and coastal erosion.
- 2.19 As such, the Council wishes to appoint independent consultant(s) to carry out independent research into the new dwellings requirement for the Borough covering the Local Development Plan (LDP) period. This must cover both the urban and rural provision.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/2016-based-housing-growth-indicators-hgis>

### 3.0 Objectives

3.1 The main objectives are to:

- Undertake a review and analysis of the historic and future drivers of housing need and demand in the Borough by undertaking a review of the current operation of its housing market.
- Evaluate demographic trends, population growth, and migration patterns impacting housing demand.
- Assess economic factors influencing housing development, such as employment opportunities, income levels, and affordability.
- Investigate social considerations affecting housing requirements, including household size, composition, general and special needs, etc.
- Identify environmental considerations, such as land availability, deliverability, sustainability, affecting new housing developments.
- Forecast future housing demand based on the analysis of current trends and projections.
- Consider and present a reasonable range of future housing growth scenarios for the Borough (from a base year of 2008 up to 2023), setting out the implications for each scenario.
- Set out how each growth scenario and recommendation take account of the legislative requirement set out in Section 8 (5) the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011<sup>3</sup> regarding the requirement to take account of the RDS (including the HGIs) and the SPPS in the preparation of the Plan.
- Serve as an expert witness on behalf of the Council during any scheduled independent examination<sup>4</sup> relating to housing.

### 4.0 Scope of Work

4.1 Using the latest available datasets<sup>5</sup>, the scope of work is as follows:

- Review Housing Market Signals, in both the urban and rural areas across the Borough, including the following:
  - House prices & rent

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2011/25/contents>

<sup>4</sup> Refer to the Council's most up to date published LDP timetable, available to view at: <https://www.causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/live/planning/development-plan>

<sup>5</sup> This should not rely solely on the data used by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive when calculating its housing need figures.

- Affordability
  - Build Rates
  - Housing Land Supply
- Review existing literature, reports, and data related to housing within the Borough. This will include:
    - Private Housing
    - Private Rented Housing
    - Social Rented Housing
    - Intermediate Housing

Also consider the impact, on housing allocation for the Borough, of the following:

- Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs)
  - Second Homes
  - Short-term Lets
- Conduct surveys, interviews, and focus groups with relevant stakeholders, including residents, developers, and housing associations, where required.
  - Analyse demographic data, economic indicators, and housing market statistics to understand demand dynamics.
  - Evaluate planning policies, regulations, and land use plans influencing housing development in the Borough.
  - Assess the availability of suitable land for residential development and any potential barriers to new dwelling construction.
  - Utilise GIS mapping and spatial analysis techniques to visualise housing trends and spatial distribution patterns.
  - Develop a comprehensive report outlining research findings, conclusions, options, and recommendations for addressing the new dwellings requirement in the Borough.

4.2 All sources of information should be accurately referenced in the Report.

## 5.0 Deliverables

5.1 The key deliverables of this project are:

- Interim progress report at predetermined milestones throughout the project duration.
- Draft research report for review and feedback by the Council.



- Final research report incorporating revisions and feedback, accompanied by supporting data, analyses, and any related visualisations, etc.
- Presentation of findings, options, and recommendations to relevant stakeholders, including Elected Members, Senior Management Team, and other key council staff.
- Preparation of expert witness statements reports and evidence in advance of any scheduled independent examination into the Draft Plan Strategy.
- Participation in pre-examination meetings and discussions to clarify issues and establish the scope of expert testimony.
- Provision of expert testimony and response to questioning during Draft Plan Strategy examination sessions.
- Assistance in the preparation of post-examination submissions, or follow-up documentation as needed.

## **6.0 Timetable**

- 6.1 The report should be completed no later than six calendar months from the date of appointment, with five months to prepare the final draft report and one month for adjustment/finalisation.
- 6.2 The consultant will work closely with the Council and present an interim update report monthly. A draft final report should be presented no later than one calendar month before the contract end date. Presentation of the final report to Elected Members and the Council's Senior Management Team may also be required, and this should be included in any costings.

### Future Involvement

- 6.3 The appointed consultant(s) will be required to participate in any future Independent Examination (IE) to the Draft Plan Strategy related to the LDP's policies and proposals arising from the study/report. It is anticipated that this would involve up to 10 working days total (including preparation of evidence and attendance at the IE).
- 6.4 The consultant(s) must be available to undertake this work and it must be included in the total price submitted in the bid. No additional payment will be made for participation at the IE, irrespective of the time or the workload involved at that stage.

## **7.0 Format of Report**

7.1 The report should be presented both electronically and on paper. It should comprise:

- An executive summary.
- An A4 Report in colour (maps may be presented in A3) (10 copies).
- A separate A4 Background Survey Report including survey data (2 hard copies (bound) and an electronic copy).
- All appropriate technical appendices including any related maps.

7.2 All material, documents, etc will become the property of the Council and all rights, such as copyright, will become Council property.

## **8.0 Study Management**

8.1 The client is Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

8.2 The appointed consultant will be expected to consult with statutory bodies, key stakeholders and other relevant parties as may be deemed appropriate to undertake the study.

8.3 The Council expect the study to commence immediately after the selection of the successful consultant and to be completed no later than six months from this date.

8.4 The appointed consultant(s) will be expected to work closely with the Council's Development Plan team, based in Coleraine. The consultant(s) will be expected to provide a monthly interim report on progress/issues arising, and a draft final report one month before the agreed contract end date.

8.5 Any delay in the completion of the study beyond the end date will be subject to a daily financial penalty at a charge based on the consultant's hourly rate specified in the tender submission.

## **9.0 Submission Requirements**

9.1 Interested parties are invited to submit a detailed bid proposal. The submission should be no more than 10 sides of A4 at size 12 Arial font and should include the following:

- An outline of the proposed methodology, sources of information, and partner (if appropriate) to undertake any elements of the study;
- An outline of the proposed timetable including a breakdown of each stage of the work and the intended hours of direct contact with council officers;

- A detailed breakdown of the composition of the proposed team, including the time devoted to the project by each member of the consultancy team. This should also include details of the relevant skills and experience in relation to the service provided;
- A detailed breakdown of the assistance/input required from council officers;
- The total cost of the project on a **fixed price** basis. This should include details of **all expenses including travel costs** and the work associated with **preparation for and attendance at any scheduled independent examination** (as set out above).

## **10.0 Qualification and Experience**

10.1 Bidders should demonstrate the following:

- expertise in housing research, urban planning, demographic analysis, and statistical modelling.
- Experience working with local government authorities, housing providers, or similar organisations is preferred.
- Strong analytical skills, proficiency in data collection and analysis methods, and the ability to communicate complex findings effectively are essential.

## **11.0 Evaluation Criteria**

11.1 Bids will be assessed based on the Pass/Fail criteria under the Assessment Criteria set out in Appendix 1.

11.2 The Council reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal and to negotiate modifications with the selected consultant(s).

## **12.0 Confidentiality**

12.1 All information provided by the Council and that obtained during the project shall be treated as confidential and used solely for the purpose of fulfilling the contract.

## **13.0 Payment Details**

13.1 The appointed consultant may invoice for part payment for work completed at the end of the five-month stage on the Council's receipt of the final draft report, and for final payment at the end of the six-month stage on the Council's receipt of the final report.

## 14.0 Formal Points of Contact

- 14.1 If you require clarification on points concerning the Terms of Reference, please contact the Development Plan Manager, Sharon Mulhern, on 028 7034 7244 or by email at [Sharon.Mulhern@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.Mulhern@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)
- 14.2 If you require clarification on contractual matters, please contact Peter Kydd on 028 7034 7126 or by email at [peter.kydd@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:peter.kydd@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1: Proposed Scoring Matrix for the Award of Tender

The following scoring criteria will be used to assess the full tender submissions:

Consultant's Name		
Initial Assessment	Pass	Fail
Previous relevant experience including 2 similar projects within the last 8 years		
Professional indemnity/liability insurance of £500,000 minimum.		
Declaration of any potential (perceived or not) conflicts of interest in any housing developments or other matters relevant to this Borough.		
The tenderer should provide details on how they will deliver the requirements outlined in the Terms of Reference. Tendering organisations should include the following:		
1. A project delivery plan highlighting the various stages of the assignment including in detail:		
a. The timetable; and		
b. The team members and their respective roles and responsibilities; and		
c. Total number of consultancy hours spent on project; and		
d. Presentation to Elected Members and Senior Management Team; and		
e. Up to 10 working days including preparation of evidence and attendance at Independent Examination of the Draft Plan Strategy.		
2. Details of potential risks involved in the management and delivery of this project and the proposed		

contingency plans to deal with such risks.		
3. Details of the quality control mechanisms that the tendering organisation will put in place throughout the delivery of the project.		
<b>4. Overall fixed total cost (100%).</b>		

The contract will be awarded on a fixed price basis, to incorporate all the identified work outlined above.