Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Fellowship Summary

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will offer a 3 month placement in its Digital Services unit, working to a detailed weekly programme.

This is Council's third application, the previous two having been successful. Before local government reorganisation in 2015, one of its four legacy councils, Coleraine Borough Council, hosted 5 Fellowships over the previous 10 year period.

Council's experience was that the concepts underpinning it's functions are transferable to the developing world. However the limited resources available in the developing world require a quite different delivery of these concepts to that in the West.

The Fellows thus will be encouraged to maintain a weekly work diary; and each week to identify what concepts are applicable in their home work place. At the end of the 3 months, they will be encouraged to develop short and long term programmes for the transfer of these concepts to their home work place.

Weblink for Candidates

https://www.causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/

Eligibility

Causeway Coast and Glens Council has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Zomba City Council (ZCC) in Malawi. The MOU refers to a support partnership, one outworking of the partnership being this application. Eligibility will thus be restricted to candidates employed in the field of Digital Services in ZCC.

Proposed Programme Dates

11 February 2026 to 11 May 2026

Proposed Activity

1: Digital Services (DS) Fellowship - Objectives

1.1: Short term - Develop skills/understanding of the implementation/management of DS, including insight into UK councils' evolution over the years from traditional IT focus on hardware and data management to a DS transformation. Explore how council delivers DS using corporate websites, social media channels, mobile phones, tablets and AI tools; and supporting hybrid working environments via e.g. platform Microsoft (MS) Teams. Interacting with the frontline departments supported by DS, providing context of DS in practice and perceptions of it within the organisation.

1.2: Medium term - Adapt/apply DS concepts in Zomba Council.

1.3: Long term - Contribute to sustainable development goals and governance in Malawi through improved DS infrastructure.

2: Programme Structure

A line manager, a work mentor and a social/ weekend mentor have been named.

2.1 Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

introduction; Weeks 1/2

Introduction to GIS tools to capture, manage and present location information, experiencing Council's use of GIS to map anything from playgrounds to asset management; also gaining experience using ESRI software such as ArcGIS Pro, Survey123, and Field Maps.

Working with staff in the field, experiencing the collection of real time data using tablets and smartphones—eg recording problem areas in public parks. This practical experience will show how digital maps help departments make informed decisions.

Topics include:

• Basic map reading and spatial awareness

• Creating simple maps and adding information (e.g. photos, descriptions)

• Using mobile apps to collect/upload location data

• Understanding how different council departments rely on mapped information

2.2 GIS Analysis, Integration & Visualisation;

Weeks 3/4

Experience more advanced GIS applications, exploring how data from different sources (drones, field inspections, public reports) is combined, providing integrated awareness of activities.

Training on the use of maps to spot patterns/ problems—eg clusters of potholes.

• Analysing spatial data to support decisionmaking

• Creating dashboards for managers/councillors to visualise key information

• Exploring GIS links with other systems like asset registers or complaint databases

• Understanding how mapped data supports emergency planning and town development

2.3 Drone Survey Implementation; Weeks 5/6

Using drones for infrastructure inspection/mapping, including image capture, flight safety and data integration with GIS platforms for spatial analysis.

2.4 Artificial Intelligence (AI); Weeks 7/8

Introduction to AI concepts; using AI Builder to automate and streamline routine administrative tasks, eg form reading and email triage. Understanding GDPR/ethical data use. Using AI for chatbots and virtual assistants, improving public access to services.

2.5 Information and Communication Technology

(ICT); Weeks 8/9

Overview of cloud infrastructure, network improvements, secure data systems; exploring how Application Programming Interface (APIs) and middleware support digital integration and service delivery.

2.5 ICT Operations; Weeks 10/11

Practical training on open-source helpdesk systems eg Gestionnaire Libre de Parc Informatique, Personal Computer imaging, remote support tools and troubleshooting; also exposure to security protocols, antivirus tools and Wi-Fi setup.

2.6 Emergency planning; Week 12

Overview of DS in support of Council's Emergency Plan. Use of GIS for hazard mapping, risk assessment, real-time dashboards. Drafting emergency digital plans.

2.7 Final Report; Week 13

Finalise report on learning and its applications.

Priority Theme

Strengthening global peace, security and governance