

October 21st, 2025

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Wednesday, 22nd October 2025** at **6:00 pm** in **Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall.**

Committee Membership 2025-26

Councillor O Magennis **Chairperson**

Councillor M Hearty **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor T Andrews

Councillor W Clarke

Councillor C Enright

Councillor K Feehan

Councillor D Finn

Councillor J Jackson

Councillor M Larkin

Councillor K Murphy

Councillor S O'Hare

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor M Ruane

Councillor D Taylor

Councillor H Young

Agenda

1.0 Introduction and Apologies

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting Held on 16 September 2025

 *Action Sheet - 16.09.2025 inc. historic actions updated.pdf*

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For Discussion/Decision

4.0 Officer Report on Notice Of Motion - Climate Change Act

For Decision

 *SE Committee Report - Notice of Motion - Climate Change Act.pdf*

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5.0 DAERA Public Consultation on Northern Ireland's draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027

For Decision

 *SE Committee Report - NI Climate Action Plan Consultation.pdf*

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 *Appendix 1 - Draft NMDDC Response to NICAP Consultation.pdf*

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 *Appendix 2 - Consultation Document NICAP.pdf*

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6.0 Depot Charging Funding Scheme

For Decision

 *SE Committee Report - Depot Charging Scheme.pdf*

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7.0 7. Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy – Public Consultation

For Decision

 *SE Committee Report - Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.pdf*

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 *Appendix 1 - Draft Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.pdf*

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 *Appendix 2 - Strategy Consultation Questions.pdf*

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Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local

8.0 Contract Modification – Fixed Wire Testing, Emergency Lighting and Small Electrical Works contract

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **SE Committee Report - Contract Modification - Fixed Wiring Emergency Lighting and Small Electrical Works Contract.pdf**

Not included

9.0 Appointment of Public Analyst

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **SE Committee Report Appointment of Public Analyst - October 2025.pdf**

Not included

10.0 Health and Safety Partnership Officer Funding

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **SE Committee Report - Update on Health and Safety Partnership Officer.pdf**

Not included

11.0 Business Case - Provision of Dog Kennelling Services

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **SE Committee Report - Business Case for Dog Kennelling.pdf**

Not included

FOR NOTING Items deemed to be exempt under Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

12.0 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Update

For Information

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

SE Committee Report - EV Charging Infrastructure Update.pdf

Not included

13.0 Action Sheet from the Sustainability and Environment Working Group Meeting of 16 September 2025 and Presentation on Climate Change from same meeting

For Information

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Action Sheet from SE Working group 16 Sept 2025.pdf

Not included

Presentation - NMDDC Sus & Climate Change Strategy Cllr Workshop 16 Sept 25.pdf

Not included

14.0 Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting in Committee Minutes of Thursday 28 August 2025 & Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin of 25 September 2025

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

ARC21 - Item5-JC In Comm Minutes 28Aug25.F.pdf

Not included

ARC21 25 Sept 25 JC MembersBulletin.F.pdf

Not included

For Noting

15.0 Arc21 Joint Committee meeting held on Thursday 28 August 2025.

For Information

 *ARC21 - JC Minutes 28Aug25.F.pdf*

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16.0 Online Reporting of Dog Fouling Incidents

For Information

 *SE Committee Report - Dog Fouling online reporting .pdf*

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Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Mr Caolain Boyd

Cllr Jim Brennan

Lorraine/Emma Burns/McParland

Mr Gerard Byrne

Cllr Pete Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Cllr Doire Finn

Ms Joanne Fleming

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Mr Conor Haughey

Cllr Martin Hearty

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tierna Howie

Ms Catherine Hughes

Ms Marina Hughes

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Joanne/Noelle Johnston

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Josephine Kelly

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Cllr Aurla King

Cllr Cathal King

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Ms Carol McClean

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Jonathan McGilly
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Mr Colin Moffett
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Cllr Kate Murphy
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Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Declan Murphy
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Sinead Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Cllr Áine Quinn
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Cllr Michael Rice
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Ms Alison Robb
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Mr Peter Rooney
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Mr Conor Sage
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Mrs Amanda Smyth
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Ms Sinead Trainor
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Cllr Jill Truesdale
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Mrs Marie Ward
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Cllr Helena Young
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SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE**HISTORIC ACTIONS TRACKING SHEET**

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 21 APRIL 2022					
Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
NS/052/2022	Compost Week 2022	Note and approve the additional activities in 2.2 to highlight and promote the importance of recycling food waste. Note and approve the launch of an application process, with set criteria, to establish demand for deploying brown bins to residents of high rise buildings who were not previously provided with these.	S Trainor	In progress	N
NS/057/2022	Various issues concerning the Events Space Kilkeel	Approve the Officers recommendation that the legal position of the Council regarding its maintenance of the events space, Kilkeel, is reviewed with a separate report to be provided to the Council once this has been considered further.	C Sage	Legal position and maintenance of the events space being confirmed. Report to be brought back to S&E Committee.	N
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING 22 JUNE 2022					
NS/091/2022	Enforcement Improvement Plan Update	Agreed to note the content of this update report and to agree review of key actions from the	S Trainor	In progress	N

		Enforcement Improvement Plan to be incorporated into a timebound programme of work for 2022/23 and annually thereafter. Test case footpaths – small footpath leading to WIN – officers to examine this area for dog fouling.			
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 18 OCTOBER 2022					
SE/143/2022	Notice of Motion – revenue from EV Charging Infrastructure	Agreed to endorse the recommendation made at the Strategic Finance Working Group Meeting of 16 June 2022 as set out in Section 2.2 of the report and that officers consider the most appropriate way forward in relation to identifying appropriate spaces that may be suitable for the proposal as outlined in the Notice of Motion	C Sage	Update to be provided at October S&E committee	Y
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 17 OCTOBER 2023					
SE/107/2023	Notice of Motion – Animal Welfare	It was agreed to remove the final sentence of the notice of motion. It was agreed to defer a decision on the Notice of Motion until the outcome of the legal process was known.	S Trainor	On hold pending legal process	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 22 NOVEMBER 2023					

SE/125/2023	Report on Notice of Motion in relation to Livestock worrying	It was agreed that a meeting be organised with relevant partners to discuss a way forward to produce a publicity campaign highlighting the importance of ensuring dogs are kept under control in the Mourne Mountains.	S Trainor	In Progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING					
24 JANUARY 2024					
SE/004/2024	Report on Notice of Motion – Flood Defences	The following was agreed: - Further investigate the possibility of a Shared Island application to assist with flood defences - Write to DFI Rivers and request a river maintenance schedule.	S Murphy	In Progress	N
SE/005/2024	Report on Notice of Motion – Flood Preparedness	The following was agreed: - Liaise with local DEA forums to discuss and plan the set-up of Community Resilience Groups - Investigate the facilitation of sandbag availability and management through these Community Resilience Groups - Look into sharing information the website from the Regional Community Resilience Group	S Murphy	Complete In Progress In Progress	N N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING					
21 FEBRUARY 2024					

SE/018/2024	Report on Notice of Motion – Climate Change	It was agreed that this Council acknowledges the work done to date to help address the climate emergency; reaffirms previous motions regarding the degenerating global situation; and again, reiterates that the crisis is the biggest threat posed to our constituents, our district, and our planet. Further acknowledges, however, that recent data collated by Climate Emergency UK ranks NMDDC 8th out of the 11 Councils within NI; and thus, pledges to include ambitious targets in the forthcoming Sustainability and Climate Strategies and Action Plans to expedite implementation. It was also agreed that a benchmark report would be brought back to Committee regarding Council actions and progress to mitigating climate change impact.	C Sage	Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy was presented at S&E Working Group – September 25. Draft Strategy to progress to public consultation – October 25. Climate mitigation report in progress and due to be completed by 31st October 25 in accordance with Climate Change Act (NI) 2022. This includes carbon copying baseline reporting.	N N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 20 MARCH 2024					

SE/036/2024	Former landfill site review – Aughnagun and Drumanakelly	It was agreed that officers develop a Business Case for the installation of Solar Panels at the former landfill site Aughnagun for further consideration.	S Murphy	In Progress	N
		It was agreed that Council further explore the benefits of installing reed beds at both sites in order to make the sites self-sustaining in terms of the management of the leachate generated on site.	S Murphy	In Progress	
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 23 APRIL 2024					
SE/046/2024	Notice of Motion – Newry Market	Officers continue their commitment to revitalise the market through engagement with traders, the business community and other potential stakeholders.	C Sage	A focussed social media campaign has been completed.	N
		It was also agreed that Officers reach out to other local councils with successful markets and explore additional uses to encourage footfall, including with arts and community groups	C Sage	Council Officers met with Belfast City Council colleagues to review St George’s market.	
		It was further agreed that a report be brought back to committee in 6 months to provide detail of any progress made.	C Sage		
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 21 AUGUST 2024					
SE/091/2024	Notice of Motion – Dog Fouling	it was agreed to note the report and approve the following: The development of an online reporting form for Residents and Elected Members to report dog fouling issues to the Council while exploring alternative digital options for reporting dog fouling and other complaints to the department; and	S Trainor	An online dog fouling reporting tool was launched on 10 th October 2025.	Y

		A mapping exercise to be undertaken by Officers of identified hotspots or problem areas against litter bin provision data to determine if additional litter bins can be provided to assist with the disposal of dog fouling.		Enforcement officer patrols within hotspots are ongoing and once further data is obtained from the above a mapping exercise will be undertaken.	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 20 NOVEMBER 2024					
SE/133/2024	Action Sheet item: NS/091/2022	it was agreed to submit a league table of other Councils' enforcement practices to the Strategic Finance Working Group	S Murphy	To refer through SFWG	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 18 DECEMBER 2024					
SE/150/2024	NOM – Vaping	it was agreed that the Council recognised the 2024 Northern Ireland Audit Office report on tackling the public health impacts of smoking and vaping that showed an increase in 11-16 year olds vaping; that Council is concerned that children vaping in schools is detrimental to a child's health and educational outcomes; agrees that greater awareness must be raised with children in schools about the risks of vaping; acknowledges that teachers and school staff must have the support and resources they require to raise awareness and inform children on the risks of vaping; agree to write to both the Minister of Education and Health urging them to bring forward a plan to end vaping in school grounds, to reduce	S Murphy	In progress	N

		the number of young people vaping and to eradicate the sale of vapes to children. It was also agreed to write to all Councils in the North asking them for support in tackling this issue.			
SE/151/2024	NOM – Newry Canal	it was agreed to request support from support from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council to write to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for the urgent establishment of a multi- agency Newry Canal regeneration taskforce to work in partnership to deliver on the potential of inland waterways across both Council areas.	S Murphy	In progress Initial meeting has taken place with ABC Council on 2 nd May 2025. Newry Canal Regeneration Working Group meeting took place in September 25. A further meeting to be arranged in October with representatives from ABC Council.	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 19 FEBRUARY 2025					
SE/018/2025	NOM – Vital Role of trees	It was agreed to note the following: -Council continues to implement actions within the Biodiversity Strategy and Tree Strategy -Council continue to work with local community groups, businesses and new	C Sage	Noted	N

		stakeholders on creations of new woodlands across the District -Council continues to raise awareness of Sustainability and Biodiversity issues at Council events and workshops. It was also agreed that Council write to the Minister for Agriculture to highlight the damage as a result of storm Éowyn and to request if any support was to be put in place to mitigate the loss of fallen trees. Council will also write to other Councils request support in this regard.	C Sage C Sage	In progress In Progress	N N
SE/020/2025	Application for bus shelter at Hilltown Road, Newry	It was agreed to the installation of a new bus shelter at Hilltown Road, Newry as per the recommendations stated in Appendix 1 of the officer's Report	G Kane	In progress	N
SE/022/2025	On Street Residential Charge Point (ORCS) Scheme update	It was agreed to continue to proceed with the ORCS EV charger project following successful appointment of a Charge Point operator	C Sage	Complete	Y
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 19 MARCH 2025					
SE/034/2025	Officer Report on NOM – Street Lighting	It was agreed to write to DFI Roads to advise of concerns in relation to areas that have little of no street lighting and request that a scoping exercise is undertaken to identify areas that could avail of additional street lighting across the district. It was also agreed that Council owned green spaces would be reviewed to	S Murphy S Murphy	In progress In Progress	N N

		identify any areas that could avail of additional lighting across the District			
SE/036/2025	Home to Hospital update	it was agreed to approve the continued funding for The Mournes and Slieve Gullion Home to Hospital Volunteer driver schemes from 01 April 2025 – 31 March 2026, and that Council seek Expressions of Interest from suitable Community and Voluntary Sector organisations to administer the schemes, subject to funding being identified.	S Trainor	In progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 29 APRIL 2025					
SE/045/2025	Notice of Motion re Memorial Garden, Newcastle	It was agreed to approve the proposal to create a memorial garden to acknowledge the 180 th anniversary of the Newcastle Fishing Disaster	C Sage	Works delayed by NIW infrastructure project	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 21 MAY 2025					
SE/056/2025	Officer Report on Notice of Motion – Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty & Air Quality Management Areas	the following was agreed: •Members considered and approved the endorsement of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and agree to write to the Northern Ireland Executive urging them to support this initiative. •Members noted the current on-going review process on the effectiveness of the Council's Air Quality Management Areas in liaison with DAERA and the potential expansion of the number of air quality monitor stations throughout the District, subject to funding.	C Sage	In Progress	N

SE/060/2025	Request to approach DFI about transfer of ownership of Carparks	it was agreed to approve the request for Council Officers to formally approach DFI and research the feasibility of a land transfer of their portion of the site into Council ownership	C Sage	In Progress	N
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 19 AUGUST 2025					
SE/088/2025	Cycle To Work Scheme	The following was agreed: - To proceed with the appointment of a new Provider for the Council's Cycle to Work Scheme as detailed in section 2.2 of the report. - To increase the upper limit for purchases via the Cycle to Work scheme and that the scheme remains open for applications all year round as detailed in section 2.3 of the report.	C Sage	In Progress	N
SE/090/2025	Fleet Fuel Verification Process	it was agreed to approve the recommended fuel infrastructure changes, as detailed in table 2, to ensure that the Council's fuel stock counting procedure are consistent, robust and meet the recommendations highlighted in the Fuel Management Audit.	C Sage	Complete	Y
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 16 SEPTEMBER 2025					
SE/099/2025	Action Sheet: Sustainability And Environment Committee Meeting Held On 19 August 2025	It was agreed to note the action sheet	S Murphy	Noted	Y

SE/100/2025	DAERA NICAAP Consultation Response	it was agreed to amend the DAERA consultation response on NICCAP3; •To reflect the importance of all-island co-operation on environmental and climate issues, particularly in relation to Newry, Mourne and Down as a border region with a significant agricultural sector and proximity to Carlingford Lough. •To acknowledge the Council's sustainability agreements with Louth County Council. • The inclusion of comments on page 15 of the response, encouraging cross-border collaboration with Government departments, the Irish Government, and other local County Councils to facilitate resource sharing and best practice.	C Sage	Complete	Y
SE/101/2025	Consultation on Grey Market Goods	It was agreed to approve the FSA consultation response in Appendix 1, on Local Authority and District Council Guidance on Grey Market Goods in the United Kingdom.	S Trainor	Response Sent	Y
SE/102/2025	Fleet Business Cases	It was agreed to approve the recommendations of the business cases attached at appendices: 1,2 and 3 of the officer's report.	C Sage	Procurement to be progressed as part of the S&E Procurement Action Plan	Y
SE/103/2025	Asbestos Management Surveys Business Case	It was agreed to approve the findings of the business case as detailed at Appendix 1 of the officer's report.	C Sage	Procurement to be progressed as part of the S&E Procurement Action Plan	Y

SE/104/2025	Newry Canal Water Level Monitoring	It was agreed to approve the recommendations of the business case as detailed in Appendix 1 of the officer's report.	C Sage	Procurement to be progressed as part of the S&E Procurement Action Plan	Y
SE/105/2025	Sustainability Contract	It was agreed to approve the award of the contract as detailed in Appendix 1 of the officer's report.	C Sage	Procurement to be progressed as part of the S&E Procurement Action Plan	Y
SE/106/2025	Waste Contracts	It was agreed to approve the price uplift and contract modification as detailed in section 2.2 of the officer's report.	S Trainor	Procurement to be progressed as part of the S&E Procurement Action Plan	Y
SE/107/2025	Deep Cleansing Business Case	It was agreed to approve award of the contract for deep cleansing of the district as detailed in section 1.3 of the officer's report.	S Trainor	Procurement to be progressed as part of the S&E Procurement Action Plan	Y
SE/108/2025	Corporate Health & Safety Training	It was agreed to approve the recommendations of the business case attached at appendix 1 of the officer's report.	S Trainor	Procurement to be progressed as part of the S&E Procurement Action Plan	Y
SE/109/2025	Action Sheet And Presentation from Cleansing And Refuse Task Group Meeting Of 19/08/25	It was agreed to note the action sheet and presentation.	S Murphy	Noted	Y
SE/110/2025	Arc21 In	It was agreed to note the	S Murphy	Noted	Y

	Committee Minutes Of 26/06/25 Monthly Bulletin of 28/08/25	documents.			
SE/111/2025	Arc21 Minutes of Meeting Held On 26/06/25	It was agreed to note the minutes.	S Murphy	Noted	Y
SE/112/2025	Cleaner Neighbourhoods Report 2024/2025	It was agreed to note the report.	S Murphy	Noted	Y

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 October 2025
Subject:	Notice of motion – Climate Change Act
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Sinead Murphy, Director: Sustainability and Environment
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability

For decision		X	For noting only		
1.0	Purpose and Background				
1.1	The purpose of this report is to facilitate discussion on the Notice of Motion received from Councillor Reilly as deferred from the Council Meeting of 6 th October 2025, in accordance with standing order 16.1.16, Climate Change Act 2022.				
1.2	The following Motion was received from Councillor Reilly: "That this Council requests the Northern Ireland Assembly to repeal the Northern Ireland Climate Change Act (2022) and replaces it with workable legislation." The Motion was seconded by Councillor Hanna.				
2.0	Key Issues				
2.1	The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 established a legally binding framework for achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with interim targets including a 48% reduction by 2030. It introduces carbon budgets, climate action plans, and sector-specific strategies, all aimed at supporting a just transition to a low-carbon economy. Under the Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024, 40 large public bodies—including all 11 councils—must submit climate change mitigation reports by 31 October 2025 and adaptation reports by 31 March 2026, with subsequent reporting cycles every 3 and 5 years respectively. These reports must detail emissions baselines, reduction policies, adaptation strategies, and progress assessments, and will be published by both the councils and DAERA.				
2.2	Council is actively progressing its sustainability and climate agenda. The first Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy is currently being finalised and is expected to be released for public consultation in November 2025. Alongside this, Council is completing its Climate Mitigation Report and has begun developing a Climate Adaptation Report in line with the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 and the Public Body Reporting Regulations. Council is working towards improved waste & recycling targets and will continue to progress implementation of new legislation and initiatives including the Extended Producer Packaging Responsibility and the upcoming Deposit Return Scheme.				
3.0	Recommendations				

3.1	Members are asked to consider the Motion, note the ongoing work by Council to comply with the legislative requirements of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, and consider the recommendations of the Notice of Motion.	
4.0	Resource implications	
4.1	No additional resources associated with this report.	
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)	
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> <i>n/a</i> ☐	
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐	
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☒ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐	
	<i>Rationale:</i> <i>n/a</i>	
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐	
7.0	Appendices	
	None	
8.0	Background Documents	

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 nd October 2025
Subject:	Consultation Response – DAERA Public Consultation on Northern Ireland’s draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Sage, Assistant Director, Sustainability
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Eamonn Keaveney, Head of Sustainability

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either: -

For decision	X	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	That the Committee consider and approve the submission of the attached Draft Consultation response. Suggested changes or additions can be added and passed on to DAERA to be included in the Consultation response.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	In 2022, Northern Ireland passed its first climate legislation - the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. The Act sets an ambitious target to reduce Northern Ireland’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2050. This means by 2050 that we must remove at least as many emissions from our atmosphere as we produce each year.
2.2	The Act requires DAERA to prepare and publish a Climate Action Plan every five years. The draft Climate Action Plan (2023-2027) is the first step on Northern Ireland’s journey to net zero. It sets out policies and proposals to achieve reductions in emissions and the actions which will enable this to happen. The focus of this draft plan is on meeting the first carbon budget.
2.3	A carbon budget sets a limit on the maximum amount of GHG emissions that can be produced over a five-year period. Keeping emissions within the limit set for each carbon budget period is important as it will set us on the right pathway to meet 2030, 2040 and 2050 targets, in line with the requirements of the legislation.
2.4	In December 2024, the Executive agreed that for the period of this plan, 2023-2027, greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by 33% on average, to set us on the right path to net zero and contribute to global climate targets.
2.5	Innovation and creative solutions to existing challenges will have an important role to play in this Climate Action Plan. Without which we will not achieve our goals. New ideas and technologies will help us achieve our climate ambition and create opportunities along the way.
2.6	The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has co-ordinated the publication of this draft Climate Action Plan with each Northern Ireland department identifying policies and proposals to reduce emissions in line with the carbon budget. This first draft Climate Action Plan sets out 52 policies and proposals to reduce

	emissions across nine sectors: energy production and supply; transport; business and industrial processes; residential buildings; public buildings; waste management; agriculture; land use, land use change and forestry; and fisheries.
2.7	A Copy of The draft Climate Action Plan is available to access on the DAERA website along with alternative formats on request. There have been a series of stakeholder engagement events during the consultation period. Details and Documents are available on the DAERA website https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation
2.8	Organisations are asked to respond and comment on whether they support the proposed Policies and Proposals in the Climate Action Plan. A response has been prepared and submitted to meet the deadline which was 8 th October 2025 stipulating that the Draft response is subject to Council approval.
2.9	The Council discussed the consultation and DAERA's proposals with other Councils through the NI Sustainable Development Forum. We also received advice on additional recommendations and areas for improvement and best practice from Sustainable NI who support and advise Councils on sustainability issues. SOLACE also carried out a number of workshops with DAERA to inform Councils more and facilitate further input in the consultation process. This enabled us to give an informed and robust response to the consultation.
2.10	These suggestions along with our own comments have been included in the response to the consultation submitted. An important issue highlighted was the need for additional resources to be provided to Councils from central government if they are to deliver best practice and effective interventions on climate change adaptation. This will be essential to allow Councils to deliver Climate Action.
2.11	The Draft consultation response is provided in Appendix 1 and comments or additions from Members can be added and passed on to DAERA as part of the final response.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	That the Committee consider and agree to the submission of the attached Consultation response (see Appendix 1) including any comments or additions as necessary.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	There are no resource implications in relation to the consultation response.
4.2	There are likely to be resource implications in meeting future actions in the climate change plan. Further resources and significant budget are expected to be required in order to deliver climate action for the council.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒

5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1: NMDDC Draft Response to DAERA Consultation on the Draft NI Climate Action Plan 2023-2027 Appendix 2 Consultation Document
8.0	Background Documents
	Online link to the DAERA Public Consultation on NI's Draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027: http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations

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About You

First, please tell us a little 'About You' to help us analyse the responses.

A. What is your name?

Name (Required) Eamonn Keaveney

B. What is your email address?

Email (Required) eamonn.keaveney@nmandd.org

C. What is your postcode?

Postcode (Required) BT33 0GT

D. Are you responding as an individual or as part of an organisation?
(Required)

Organisation (Please tell us your organisation name or what sector you operate in)

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Local Authority (Council)

Important Note:

Please note this Draft Consultation Response on behalf of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is subject to approval at Council Committee and ratification by Full Council. This response will be brought for consideration for approval by the Council's Sustainability and Environment Committee on 22nd October 2025 and then will be subject to further consideration and approval at the Council Meeting on the 3rd of November 2025. If there are any revisions or additions to the Consultation response we will forward these to DAERA after the Council meeting of 3rd November 2025.

Consultation Questions on the CAP

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Relates to Chapter 5: Quantification Summary

Quantification of emissions reductions from policies and proposals

Each policy and proposal within the draft Climate Action Plan was assessed for its projected impact on GHG levels and the findings were combined into sectoral and overall analyses. Achieving these emissions projections would represent an annual average reduction of 33.1% over the years 2023 to 2027 and therefore the combination of quantified policies and proposals contained within the draft Climate Action Plan is expected to be sufficient for Northern Ireland to meet its first carbon budget.

Question 1.

To what extent do you agree with the quantification methodology used to calculate emissions reductions from policies and proposals?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

There is some variation in how the modelling of projected emissions was carried out and there is some confusion on which version of NI GHG Inventory 2022 or 2023 should be used. However we agree that using the standardised UK GHG Inventory Reporting Protocol and the latest GHG Inventory data will make the quantification methodology credible and robust.

Question 2.

Do you have any comments on the quantification methodology used to calculate emissions reductions from policies and proposals?

Yes

No

Additional comments to support your answer

We agree with selecting the Central Scenario of GHG emissions reductions associated with the proposed policies and proposals as the most realistic delivery scenario.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Energy Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Energy production and supply emissions are almost exclusively from burning fossil fuels for electricity generation at power stations.

Question 3.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed policies and proposals will effectively reduce emissions for the energy sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

The consultation acknowledges the critical role that a replacement renewable energy support scheme will have both in terms of meeting climate objectives and also the 80% of electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030 target. We look forward to seeing more detail on the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme for Northern Ireland. The scheme will need to resolve barriers to renewable energy deployment, which include a lack of financial incentives and uncompetitive planning timelines. DfE must remove barriers, enabling new renewable projects to be delivered faster and at lower cost.

Another key barrier to renewable electricity generation has been managing the grid impacts of renewable technologies. The energy transition will require significant upgrades to the electricity network. NIE Networks has begun the initial phases of procurement as part of its planned £2.3 billion investment over the next six years to upgrade the electricity transmission and distribution network. Significantly more investment will be needed than is currently planned to meet rising electricity demand and increased supply of renewable electricity. Proposals need to set out how DfE will work with NI Electricity Networks to strengthen the grid, streamline planning approvals and remove policy uncertainty, all of which are currently hindering progress in this sector.

Question 4.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the energy sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Policies and proposals listed in the Energy Section consider the importance of consumer protection, affordability and fairness, all of which are Just Transition Principles. The document also cites the importance of upskilling the workforce in new green jobs that will be created through, for example, the Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan.

We note that while the requirement for a Just Transition Commission exists in law, it was not operational in time to influence the drafting of the CAP or the Policies and Proposals referenced within it, undermining the Commission's ability to shape energy sector policies. This could result in a lack of equity-focus in energy policies.

There is also some ambiguity around funding to support communities most affected by the energy transition, for example in rural areas, or in areas where manufacturing industries are most prevalent. There is no detail or clarity on how success in achieving a just transition will be measured across energy policies. We also note there is an opportunity

for greater worker participation in co-designing energy sector plans, to ensure voices from fossil fuel-dependent sectors and localities are heard.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Transport sector contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

The transport sector includes emissions from surface road transport, domestic shipping and aviation, and aircraft support vehicles. It is the second largest contributor to emissions in Northern Ireland.

Question 5.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the transport sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

The CAP provides a robust strategic framework to align Northern Ireland's transport policies with the net zero emissions target by 2050. However, at present, the transport policies and proposals are too high-level to confidently assess their direct impact on emissions reductions. They lack detailed implementation plans or targets. Whilst the plan establishes the right guiding principles and signals strong intent, it doesn't describe delivery mechanisms to understand if transport decarbonisation will happen at the pace required.

Question 6.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the transport sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

The Climate Action Plan lays down a good foundation for a just transition in the transport sector, which is significantly strengthened by the legal requirement for a minimum level of active travel funding. This investment will be critical for people in urban areas and for those without access to cars. The proposed expansion of EV charging infrastructure in public and workplace settings is also vital, especially in rural areas. If delivered well, it will avoid excluding rural communities from the low-carbon transition.

However, there is a particularly strong focus on private solutions like EV ownership which low-income households will not be able to afford in the short term. This could risk deepening transport inequality. Policies in this area should consider targeted financial support, such as grants, for low-income households and consider instruments to promote the used EV market as well as incentives for rural users.

Northern Ireland has a large rural population where active travel is not feasible. Public transport should be the corner stone of a just transition in the transport sector. Yet, within the 'Shift' Policy listed, there is no dedicated programme to electrify buses or make public transport more affordable or accessible. Policy design in this area should consider pricing reform, rural service expansion, and modal shift strategies to reduce car dependence.

A network of Greenways needs to be built to join up urban areas and rural villages and rural communities, along with active travel cycle paths /walkways where possible in towns and along roads. This should be progressed by DfI as the highway agency in partnership with local councils.

Additionally, there is no mechanism for the co-design of transport plans with communities, local councils, or transport users, particularly marginalised or rural groups, which could risk leaving people behind. Like Scotland, Northern Ireland could develop a **Just Transition Transport Plan** to fully address job transitions in the transport sector including reskilling, manufacturing opportunities and logistics.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Business and industrial processes sector contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Business emissions from stationary combustion in industrial and commercial sectors including industrial off-road machinery, refrigeration and air conditioning, and the use of fluorinated gases for other applications.

Question 7.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the business and industrial processes sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

UK and EU-led Regulation, Compliance and Reporting will undoubtedly do a lot of the heavy lifting in generating carbon reductions in this sector, however given that the NI economy has a higher composition of small and medium sized enterprises than the rest of the UK, government support to enable small businesses to decarbonise will be critical. We have provided a short review of the Northern Ireland-led policies and proposals below:

Fuel Switching to Natural Gas

We are supportive of the acknowledgement in the draft CAP that gas is a transition fuel, rather than the long-term solution. It is important that this policy signals to the energy market that natural gas has an expiry date. The policy should oversee the phase out of gas, with clear timelines, rather than increase investment in gas infrastructure to the detriment of investment in other clean renewable fuels. An example of this are gas price controls. The current natural gas price control period 2023-2028 has allowances for fuel switching to gas. The next gas price control period must initiate a reduction in these allowances to encourage fuel switching to electric forms of heating at scale. The Fuel Switching to Natural Gas policy is based on the idea that, over time, the gas network will transition away from natural gas to lower-carbon alternatives like biomethane and potentially hydrogen. The hope is that this shift will provide homes connected to the gas grid with cleaner heating and hot water options. However, this approach has significant weaknesses. In the United States, where biomethane is already widely in use, studies have shown that its production and distribution can result in methane leaks known as fugitive emissions. Since methane is a powerful greenhouse gas, these leaks can actually worsen climate change rather than reduce emissions, challenging the claim that biomethane is a climate-neutral fuel (see Wera et al., 2021, *Environmental Science & Technology*).

Additionally, scientific evidence suggests that hydrogen should only be used in situations where electrification is not possible. This is because converting electricity into hydrogen and then using it to produce heat is much less efficient than using electricity directly in heat pumps (see the UK's Climate Change Committee Seventh Carbon Budget report, 2025). Therefore, while gas, biomethane, and hydrogen might have a limited role in certain industrial applications, promoting these fuels across all sectors—including residential heating—could lead to higher emissions and inefficiencies if cleaner

energy solutions like electrification are available. It's important that policies reflect this and avoid encouraging fuel switching in cases where better alternatives exist.

Biomethane

See comments above caveating the role of biomethane in the energy transition.

Uplifts to Building Regulations in Northern Ireland and Further Building Regulations Uplifts

Since 2022, all new buildings in Northern Ireland are required to achieve a 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared to previous standards, through a combination of improved energy efficiency standards for building fabric and the use of low-carbon heating systems. Whilst uplifts in building regulations are planned in 2026/27, Northern Ireland has not yet set concrete long-term regulatory targets for buildings beyond that. The Department of Finance should show a similar level of ambition to Scotland, aiming for a Passivhaus-level standard in all new builds with bans on new oil or gas boilers by 2028 at the latest. Developers that are currently building to Passivhaus standard in Northern Ireland have said that Passivhaus homes are not necessarily more expensive than traditional houses, the main challenge is upskilling the labour force. This may happen organically in response to rising demand for sustainable homes due to uplifts in building regulations. However, alongside the proposed uplifts in building regulations, government support should be provided to upskill the construction sector in Passivhaus (or equivalent) construction standards.

Invest NI Energy and Resource Efficiency Programme / Invest NI Industrial Decarbonisation for Northern Ireland Project

One of the current issues with the Energy and Resource Efficiency Programme is that the technical consultancy support is only available for businesses spending over £30k annually on energy and resources which precludes many small businesses. Given there are currently 80,000 registered SMEs in operation across Northern Ireland, more support is needed for smaller businesses with lower annual resource costs. Additionally, businesses supported by both of these programmes face challenges in implementing the measures recommended due to finance constraints, lengthy payback periods, and internal capacity constraints. So, whilst advisory and financial support is available, impact is currently limited. These challenges must be addressed when redesigning the programmes.

Question 8.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the business and industrial processes sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

The Industrial Decarbonisation Programme and Energy and Resource Efficiency Programme led by Invest NI can help businesses reduce energy costs, which may protect jobs and competitiveness in the long term. If delivered well, this kind of support could help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) adapt to change without bearing the full financial burden. Similarly, proposed updates to building regulations could drive new skills and job opportunities in construction and green technologies, supporting employment in a low-carbon economy. However, Invest NI's reach is currently limited with only about 6% of businesses actively engaged with its services. This limits its ability to support widespread change or ensure that all businesses, especially smaller ones, benefit equally from the transition.

Given manufacturing industries and construction represent 71.5% of emissions from this sector, there is little detail in the draft Climate Action Plan on how workers in these high-emitting industries will be retrained or supported as industries shift to cleaner technologies. Without clear funding, training programmes, or long-term workforce planning, there is a risk that these communities and sectors could be left behind.

More inclusive engagement, stronger worker protections, investment in skills, and better access for marginalised groups will need to be addressed in the policies and proposals mentioned in the draft CAP, if Northern Ireland is to ensure a just transition in the business and industrial processes sector.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Residential buildings sector contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Residential building emissions are primarily affected by fuel combustion for heating and the production of hot water.

Question 9.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the residential buildings sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

We welcome the range of policies and proposals to decarbonise the residential buildings sector listed, with a couple of caveats:

Affordable Warmth Scheme / Warm Healthy Homes Scheme

The government policy to replace older inefficient oil boilers with more efficient oil boilers should stop, as oil is not compatible with carbon reduction targets.

NISEP / Scale and Launch Energy Efficiency Programme

We welcome a radical scaling up of NISEP into a domestic Energy Efficiency Programme that mirrors the breadth of support currently offered by SEAI in the Republic of Ireland. In addition, stronger market incentives are necessary for private homeowners to renovate an existing property rather than demolish and build a new home. This will require collaboration with HM Treasury to review tax incentives in this area, as the current tax regime leans towards demolition.

Clean Heat Market Mechanism

Deployment of this policy must be carried out alongside energy efficiency improvements in the housing stock as heat pumps are more efficient and therefore effective in homes with an EPC of D or above. If they are installed in homes with lower SAP ratings the heat gradient may be too high for the technology to work effectively, resulting in cold homes, potentially leading to mould and damp, which would trigger scepticism in the technology. Policy safeguards must be in place to prevent this from happening.

Gas Network Connections General Determinations 2023-2028

As previously outlined, this policy is highly controversial as it incentivises fossil fuel use, bypassing heat pumps and geothermal energy for residential heating. The sector summary on P106 lists fuel switching to natural gas first before mentioning support for low carbon heating technologies. It is concerning that the short-term emphasis on a transition to natural gas will undermine efforts to transition to genuinely clean energy as the majority of funding is diverted to the gas network instead of geothermal heat networks, for example. As mentioned previously, there are valid concerns that biomethane and hydrogen are not sustainable fuels for heating therefore the assertion that efforts to scale up gas infrastructure will eventually lead to zero carbon heating is tenuous.

Biomethane

See comments above.

Further Building Regulations Uplifts in Northern Ireland

See previous comments recommending Northern Ireland to align to Scotland's ambition that require new developments to build to Passivhaus standard, or equivalent.

There is also an opportunity to strengthen building regulations to help increase tree cover and cut carbon emissions from land use. This can happen by encouraging the use of sustainably sourced timber, which is a low-carbon building material. By promoting low-carbon construction methods in new building regulations, government could boost demand for timber and support more tree planting.

Question 10.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the residential buildings sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

We support the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in this sector. There could be a risk of public backlash if people feel excluded from the benefits of the green transition, whether due to high costs or negative impacts like rising bills or mould/damp from poor-quality retrofits. We back means-tested grants to protect vulnerable households from unfair costs. Strong safeguards will be needed to ensure energy efficiency measures are installed to a high standard.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Public buildings contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Sector emissions primarily result from fuel combustion in public buildings for heating, cooling and hot water.

Question 11.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the public buildings sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Energy Management Strategy & Action Plan to 2030 & Energy Invest to Save Fund

Progress towards the 30% reduction target by 2030 is slow, with a reduction of only 12% in carbon emissions by 2022. We recommend that local councils are included in future government energy efficiency schemes. Although they do not represent a large proportion of emissions in this sector they have an important presence in communities and should be seen to be leading by example in terms of energy consumption and best practice.

Broadly speaking, the lack of progress in this sector may be attributed to four key barriers preventing the retrofit of public sector buildings happening at the required rate and scale:

- a lack of capacity and expertise within public sector organisations to identify and implement projects
- access to finance
- long and complex procurement processes
- risks associated with investing money with long term paybacks and no savings guarantees.

We therefore recommend that the Invest to Save Fund is either linked to complimentary support broadened to become a more holistic scheme which aims to support both specialist advisory costs (related to project appraisal and procurement of Energy Performance Contracts*) and the capital costs of energy upgrades. This scheme could be cross-sectoral, accepting applications from both public and private sector organisations, to reduce operational costs.

*Energy Performance Contracts (EPCs) are contracts where an Energy Service Company (ESCO) implements energy efficiency or renewable energy projects, and their payment is linked to the achieved energy cost savings, therefore de-risking the investment for the contracting authority.

2012 and 2022 Uplifts to Part F (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations in Northern Ireland

We support further uplifts to Part F, but the current implementation timeline is extremely slow. Many public authorities are already choosing to go beyond current building regulations, specifying higher standards such as BREEAM Excellent or Passivhaus for new public buildings. As public buildings constructed over the next two years will likely be in use for 25+ years, and retrofitting is significantly more expensive than building to higher energy performance standards in the first place, it is crucial that the government speeds up planned uplifts to building regulations to ensure Northern Ireland meets its net zero by 2050 target.

Question 12.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the public buildings sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

There has been little engagement with local authorities in the development of policies and proposals to decarbonise the public building stock. Given their influence at local level, it is important that they are not left behind and are adequately supported to decarbonise their estates, given many councils have old traditional buildings that require specialist retrofit expertise. Councils also have financial constraints hampering their ability to leverage new finance for capital improvements. Councils should be encouraged and supported, starting with including local authority estate management representatives in policy design and implementation working groups to ensure their needs are met.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Waste sector contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Emissions in the waste management sector include those released from waste disposal at landfill sites, wastewater treatment and waste incineration. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 includes a requirement to recycle at least 70% of waste by 2030.

Question 13.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the waste sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Diverting Biodegradable Waste from Landfill

We fully support the introduction of a policy that requires all businesses to present biodegradable waste for separate collection.

Achieve a 65% municipal waste recycling rate whilst reducing waste to landfill to no more than 10% by 2035

The current approach to increasing recycling rates, which is largely focused on communicating the benefits of recycling to householders, may not be sufficient to achieve the next phase of recycling targets which are extremely challenging. As well as better recycling infrastructure, including a higher level of kerbside sorting, Northern Ireland should consider incentive-based policies to encourage hard to engage groups to recycle.

Introduction of Mandatory Recycling for Commercial and Industrial Sector

We fully support mandatory business recycling as it would help achieve the '70% by 2030' recycling requirement in the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 and reduce the amount of recyclable material entering landfill sites and the associated greenhouse gas emissions.

Increasing Household Recycling

We support approaches that aim to promote enhancements in the quality and quantity of recycle to enable more local reprocessing, for example through a minimum service standard across all council areas, best practice guidance, and funding to improve collection systems. However, this will not be enough to meet Northern Ireland's challenging recycling targets. Northern Ireland should consider incentive based policies such as Pay As You Throw schemes (PAYT) which charge customers based on the amount of waste they throw away. Evidence from international examples shows that PAYT schemes can be extremely effective when accompanied by high profile awareness programmes and better recycling infrastructure. For example, cities such as San Francisco (77 per cent recycling rate) or the German town of Neustadt an der Weinstrasse (70 per cent) all use PAYT schemes. Local Authorities do not currently have the powers to introduce PAYT so this would need to be revisited by the UK government.

Question 14.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the waste sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Whilst retraining of the workforce and educating children and young people through the curriculum are welcome measures, proposals need to be developed to educate the broader adult population, particularly those from low income or minority ethnic backgrounds, who are less likely to practice sustainable behaviours like recycling. If stricter recycling rules are introduced, they must be implemented with equity in mind. For example, ensuring recycling information is accessible to all, ensuring fair enforcement, and providing additional support and infrastructure in low-income areas to avoid unintended harms (such as fly tipping) and ensure all communities benefit from the transition.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Agriculture sector contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

In agriculture the two main greenhouse gases are methane and nitrous oxide rather than carbon dioxide. Livestock emissions dominate greenhouse gases in the agriculture sector. Other key sources are from manure management, soils and emissions from offroad vehicles and machinery.

Question 15.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the agriculture sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Farmers need to be supported financially if there is to be a fair and just transition for agriculture. Sustainable levels of livestock needs to be managed carefully alongside direct emission reduction measures (e.g. feed additives, manure management systems, alternative fertilisers, genetic improvement programmes etc). We support the provision of supplementary financial support to help sustain farm incomes in the short to medium term, to buffer the financial impact of these policies.

Government schemes that encourage farms to transition to alternative agricultural enterprises and techniques including agroforestry and tree planting, wetland restoration, agri-tourism, cover cropping, organic farming and conservation tillage under a 'public goods for public money' model could also be considered. Additionally, carbon can be 'farmed' as a commodity. Typically referred to as 'carbon farming', this innovative farming approach focuses on capturing or reducing greenhouse gas emissions in ways that can be measured, verified, and monetised through carbon credits or government incentives. These methods would turn climate-friendly practices into income streams for farmers. However, a long-term policy commitment from government would be necessary, as carbon farming often requires long-term changes in land management and constitutes a significant departure from livestock farming which is commonplace across Northern Ireland.

Anaerobic Digestion

We are supportive of the use of anaerobic digestion plants to capture and recycle nutrients from the digestate that would otherwise be land spread and capture and use the methane that would otherwise go into the atmosphere. However, there could be a number of unintended harms from this policy if it is not well designed. Risks include:

- AD digestate spread as a fertiliser can contribute to ammonia emissions and water pollution if applied in excess or poorly timed.
- The handling and spreading of digestate can produce strong odours and the operation of AD plants and compression units for injecting biomethane into the grid can be noisy and become a nuisance for local residents.
- If AD systems are poorly sealed, fugitive methane emissions can offset climate benefits. Studies from the U.S. and EU have shown that actual emissions from some biomethane supply chains can be significantly higher than reported.
- To feed AD plants, some farms could increase slurry production or grow dedicated energy crops like maize. This can lead to monocultures and competition with food production. Increased livestock numbers to supply slurry could worsen other environmental issues (e.g., ammonia, methane, habitat loss).

Question 16.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the agriculture sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Ensuring a just transition in the agriculture sector means recognising that not all farmers are equally positioned to adapt to climate policies. The Northern Ireland Integrated Farm Survey highlights that small farms often have older age profiles who may be nearing the end of their working lives. These farms may face the greatest challenges in adapting either due to limited financial capacity, lower uptake of new technologies, or reduced incentive to make long-term changes. Special provisions may be required in these instances, whether through tailored support, flexible timelines, or financial assistance, to ensure they are not left behind in the transition. We look forward to further detail on the Just Transition Fund for Agriculture and will reserve comment on this policy until the details of this scheme are published.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry sector contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

The Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector covers emissions and removals of greenhouse gases resulting from direct human-induced land use, land-use change, and forestry activities.

Question 17.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the LULUCF sector?

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Radical action will be needed in the LULUCF sector to reach net zero by 2050. Of the 1.4 million hectares of land in Northern Ireland, currently 1 million hectares is farmed. One radical proposal may be that government, alongside the existing Forests for our Future programme, seeks to acquire land from private landowners to create national parks, forests, and other protected areas through some form of compensation. This may be appealing to small farm owners approaching retirement with no succession plan. These lands would then become public land, managed for conservation, carbon sequestration, recreation, and other public purposes. We look forward to seeing this option explored in the land use policy for Northern Ireland, currently in development.

Question 18.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the LULUCF sector?

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

We are broadly content with the proposed approach. We look forward to commenting on the just transition provisions in LULUCF policies and proposals which should incorporate relevant guidance from the Just Transition Commission.

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Fisheries sector contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Fisheries sector includes emissions from activities associated with sea fisheries, inland fisheries and aquaculture.

Question 19.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the fisheries sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Initiatives are welcome that prepare for roll-out of electrification and low or zero emission fuels across the fishing fleet. R&D to drive innovation is essential for this challenging sector however it makes up a relatively small proportion (0.1%) of Northern Ireland's total GHG emissions.

Question 20.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the fisheries sector?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

The considerations outlined are acceptable and we look forward to reviewing the financial assistance and incentive schemes that will provide support to workers in the sector who may be negatively affected by climate policies. It is critical that government ensures collaboration with the fisheries sector to co-design decarbonisation policies that ensure no one is left behind or disadvantaged by the transition.

Relates to Chapter 7: Impact Assessments

Impact Assessments of the Climate Action Plan

Several impact assessments have been undertaken as part of the development of the draft Climate Action Plan. Individual assessments have been carried out for the policies and proposals across all sectors, with each assessment proportionate to the scale and likely impact of the respective measure. In addition, overarching impact assessments have been conducted to consider the cumulative effects of the draft Plan as a whole. Where proposals are at an early stage of development, some impacts may not yet be fully identified, and these will be considered further as the proposals are refined.

Question 21.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Financial, Social and Economic Impact Assessments that have been carried out on the policies and proposals within the draft Climate Action Plan?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

The findings note there are short-term financial costs associated with implementing policies and proposals in the draft Climate Action Plan which are generally balanced by long-term financial gains. The co-benefits of climate action have been somewhat underplayed in this section; however we note climate benefits are discussed later in the document.

Question 22.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the overarching Financial, Social and Economic Impact Assessment of the draft Climate Action Plan?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

The summary fails to frame climate action as cost avoidance, treating the short-term costs of climate action in isolation, without comparing them to the much higher economic, social, and environmental costs of climate inaction. Cost avoidance is critical to justifying upfront investment. Also, there is no mention of intergenerational equity, acknowledging that climate action today helps avoid passing greater costs and risks onto future generations.

Question 23.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Equality Screening and Equality Impact Assessment?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

We have no comments on the findings.

Question 24.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Rural Needs Impact Assessments that have been carried out on the policies and proposals in the draft Climate Action Plan?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

There is very little detail on the findings of the RNIA. The summary frames the impact on rural communities as largely positive but this depends on policies being well-designed so that they deliver new green employment in rural areas, improved sustainable transport opportunities, opportunities for rural communities to own renewable energy projects and opportunities for more sustainable agriculture practices all of which could lead to better economic prospects for rural communities. Climate policies must be designed so that they support rather than disadvantage rural communities. We look forward to reviewing the details of these policy proposals to ensure they deliver the opportunities promised.

Question 25.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the overarching Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the draft Climate Action Plan?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

We broadly agree with the findings of the overarching RNIA. We look forward to reviewing the mitigation measures mentioned to address adverse impacts on rural areas as part of the policies and proposals.

Question 26.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

We echo the last paragraph of the summary, in which the SEA recommends close monitoring of policies and proposals set out within the draft Climate Action Plan are closely monitored to ensure that negative or unforeseen effects can be effectively responded to and managed. As previously mentioned, we have serious concerns that the strong focus on natural gas and biomethane, and associated processing technologies, may lead to unintended environmental harms that will

undermine the intended climate benefits. Mitigation measures should be included in these policies to prevent potential negative impacts from the outset.

Question 27.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

Without further detail on the findings of this Assessment we are unable to provide comment.

Question 28.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Regulatory Impact Assessment?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

We agree the draft plan itself will not make any new regulations and therefore will not impose any costs, savings, additional compliance or administrative burdens on the wider business community.

Question 29.

To what extent do you agree with the key findings of Childs Rights Impact Assessment?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

We agree there is likely to be a net benefit to children and young people from the draft Climate Action Plan as it will deliver a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable environment whilst providing opportunities for the economy and job creation.

Question 30.

Can you provide any further information which will help to supplement the completion of these impact assessments?

No

Please details, identifying the assessment(s) to which the information relates:

N/A

Relates to Chapter 8: The Natural Environment and Climate Change

Soil quality, biodiversity and air quality targets

The Act requires us to set specific targets for soil quality, biodiversity and air quality in this draft Climate Action Plan. The Act also requires that, where practicable, the policies and proposals should support and use nature-based projects, either individually or as part of wider action.

Question 31.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Soil Quality?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

We understand government is constrained in its ability to set targets for Soil Quality due to a lack of baseline data on soil health. We look forward to the development of indicators for soil health and the inclusion of meaningful targets on Soil Quality in the next iteration of the Climate Action Plan.

Question 32.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Biodiversity?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

The proposed biodiversity target falls short of what is required. To align more closely with EU and global biodiversity frameworks, Northern Ireland needs to commit to the 30x30 target (30% of land and 30% of oceans to be conserved by 2030). The target must strengthen the clarity of conservation condition goals (i.e. refer to actual favourable condition rather than approaching favourable condition) and include strict biodiversity protection measures.

Question 33.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Air Quality?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Whilst introducing regulations to meet WHO Interim Target 4 (10 µg/m³ for PM2.5 and 20 µg/m³ for PM10) is an improvement over existing standards, however, it should only be seen as a stepping stone toward full alignment with WHO 2021 guidelines. The WHO sets the guideline of 5 µg/m³ for PM2.5 because **no level** of exposure to PM2.5 is considered

safe. We expect full alignment with current UK and EU ambitions; therefore the final goal should be 5 µg/m³ and 15 µg/m³ targets for PM2.5 and PM10 respectively.

Relates to Chapter 8: The Natural Environment and Climate Change

Nature Based Solutions

Nature-based Solutions will create thriving habitats and ecosystems which reduce emissions, whilst also providing a landscape and marine environment which is more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Question 34.

Can you provide any further information which will help us to incorporate Nature-based Solutions into our policies and proposals?

Yes
No

If yes, please provide details:

Sustainable NI has developed a climate screening tool for projects and plans which acts as a 'stop, think, consider' checklist for measures such as Nature-based Solutions. This tool could be adapted for government policy and decision making to fulfil this legal requirement.

Relates to Chapter 9: Governance for Delivery

Climate Action Governance Arrangements

We will only meet our carbon budget if we can successfully deliver the policies and proposals we have identified. Achieving this will require ongoing commitment and prioritisation of this work, shared ownership and cross-departmental working, and appropriate levels of oversight and scrutiny to keep us on track. Managing this implementation process will mean establishing appropriate governance structures within government, creating new statutory oversight bodies and working in partnership with existing independent oversight bodies.

Question 35.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements to support the delivery of the Climate Action Plan?

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Oversight

We broadly agree with the proposed governance arrangements, but we think one key part is fundamentally wrong: separating Climate Action from Green Growth. This has led to two very similar Programme Boards - one for Green Growth and one for Climate Action Plan delivery. While Green Growth focuses more on the economic opportunities of climate action, in practice, many of the same projects and actions will fall under both programmes. Having two separate boards adds extra work and complexity that could be avoided. It would make more sense to combine them into a single programme, as is already done in other countries. Our suggestion is to bring climate, economic, and just transition (social) dimensions together into a single Climate & Sustainability Programme, merging two programme boards into one.

Just Transition Commission

Ideally the Just Transition Commission would have been established in time to work with and advise departments to inform the development of the draft Climate Action Plan to ensure that proposals, policies, strategies and plans comply with the just transition principle. Instead, it will only be able to provide an oversight review of the first Climate Action Plan rather than actively shape its development.

Relates to Chapter 10: Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting on policies and proposals

Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of policies and actions and the resulting impact on emissions reduction will be an essential element of tracking progress towards achieving the 2023-2027 carbon budget and meeting interim targets set for 2030 and 2040. We will ensure a robust monitoring framework is in place to keep us on our net zero pathway.

Question 36.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to monitoring and reporting on policies and proposals?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

We agree with the proposed monitoring and reporting approach and have no comments to add.

Relates to Chapter 11: Public Sector Leading by Example

Public Sector leading by example

The public sector is critical to the successful delivery of the draft Climate Action Plan - influencing and enabling positive behaviours, driving change and acting as a leader on climate action and low carbon innovation. We are committed to forging a net zero pathway by delivering vital public services in a way that reduces emissions, reduces waste and uses scarce resources more sustainably.

Question 37.

Do you have suggestions about other actions that we should be taking across the public sector?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details:

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) report on 'Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget' states that local councils have powers or influence over roughly a third of emissions in their local areas. This means therefore that collectively the eleven councils have powers or influence over a third of emissions across all sectors in Northern Ireland. This is significant, yet there are few provisions in the draft Climate Action Plan to enable and support a coordinated approach to local government climate action.

Local Planning

The national planning framework could set minimum standards and requirements for local authorities in relation to sustainable residential development, new renewable energy generation and nature-based solutions. These standards could be further elaborated in climate change guidelines for planning authorities.

Local Government Co-ordination

In its report 'Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget' the CCC recommend four key things to achieve collaborative delivery with local government:

- Framework: An agreed framework for delivery for Net Zero incorporating local and national climate action
- Financing: Appropriate long-term financing to support local authorities in delivering Net Zero
- Flexibility: Local operational flexibility around how local areas address climate change
- Facilitation: coherent policy and powers for the facilitation of delivery.

Here are some practical ways that government and local authorities can work more seamlessly together:

- Link council and departmental climate units or climate coordinators up to share tools, ideas and collaborate, for example by extending the membership of existing forums such as the NI Sustainable Development Forum
- Extend the NICS staff training system (LIInKS), known as 'Climate Smart for Civil Service', to Local Authorities
- Provide significantly more support that is currently available for public body reporting compliance including tools, further guidance, and a training programme tailored to the needs of local authorities including dedicated support to calculate scope 3 emissions.

Relates to Chapter 12: Enabling the Transition to Net Zero

Enabling the change to net zero

The draft Climate Action Plan sets out the importance of science and innovation, education and skills, infrastructure, planning, behaviour change and communication as enablers to delivering our pathway to net zero.

Question 38.

To what extent do you agree with the actions that we are taking to enable the transition to Net Zero?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Science and Innovation

P237 of the Climate Action Plan Consultation references the 2022 Matrix Report 'NI's Future Hydrogen Demand and Capability' highlighting '*it suggests Northern Ireland can be at the forefront of developing a hydrogen economy to heat our homes, fuel our transport and power our industry.*' However, contrary to what the draft Climate Action Plan states, the report does not recommend hydrogen for home heating, stating on two separate pages that '*the role of hydrogen in heating buildings is less certain*'. This is an important distinction. Government policy should not over emphasise the role of hydrogen in home heating if there is still scientific uncertainty on this, as it could send the wrong signal to the market. (Note: Use of hydrogen for heating is uncertain because converting electricity to hydrogen to then convert it back to heat is less efficient than converting electricity directly to heat in the first place. It only makes sense to do this in instances where

electric forms of heating are not feasible or in a situation where renewable electricity is extremely cheap and widely available).

Behaviour Change and Communication

There is a need for a national public awareness campaign for behaviour change for climate action that targets the adult population in Northern Ireland in the same way that previous high-profile campaigns led by other departments have led to widespread change, for example, the Executive's Coronavirus public information campaign, DfI Road Safety Campaigns, the Department of Justice's Ending the Harm campaign to highlight organised crime and paramilitary activity and the Health and Safety Executive campaigns "Stop and Think SAFE" targeting farm safety. As climate action is a cross-cutting executive level strategic issue, communication budgets from all departments could be pooled to increase resourcing and impact. As awareness campaigns and information are insufficient to bring about major change alone; they should be closely linked with other levers, including regulations, fiscal incentives and disincentives, and the development of sustainable infrastructure. Ultimately the sustainable behaviours must be **comparatively cheaper** and **easier** than unsustainable behaviours, in order to create lasting change.

Relates to Chapter 13: Investing in Climate Action

Cost of implementing the Climate Action Plan

Delivering a cost-effective path to decarbonisation in Northern Ireland requires action across all sectors of the economy and a joined-up approach. Funding our net zero transition will be a collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Question 39.

To what extent do you agree with the assessment of the costs of implementing this Climate Action Plan?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

Government spending

The costs are set out in gross terms, i.e. government expenditure, rather than net costs. We would like to see the CAP investment costs set out as net costs and also as a % of GDP to understand if planned government investment commitments align with the level of investment recommended by the Committee on Climate Change.

Leveraging private sector investment for nature and nature-based solutions

We would highlight a relatively new legal requirement in England for new developments to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity either on-site, off-site, or by purchasing biodiversity credits. The policy has sparked a growing market in private biodiversity units and habitat banks, where landowners and conservation groups create and sell habitat improvements to developers, helping leverage private sector investment for nature and nature-based solutions. This could be a statutory requirement in the national planning policy framework in Northern Ireland.

Question 40.

Do you have any other information to inform this cost assessment?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details:

No further comment.

Relates to Chapter 13: Investing in Climate Action

Just Transition Fund for Agriculture

The purpose of this scheme is to provide advice and financial assistance to the agriculture sector to deliver its contribution to meeting the carbon budgets and emissions reduction targets by implementing proposals and policies to be included in Climate Action Plans.

Question 41.

To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to establishing a Just Transition Fund for Agriculture?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives:

We look forward to seeing the future Just Transition Fund for Agriculture. We support the shift to sustainable farming, but policies to reduce emissions in farming should be introduced gradually. It will take years, and in some cases decades, for farm management practices to change. If farmers are pushed to make too many changes too quickly, or if they feel unfairly impacted by the transition, it could lead to public opposition. While many farmers will be open to change, others may be hesitant to make large investments or significant changes to how they farm. This needs to be reflected in the support, compensation, and timelines for implementing these changes.

NORTHERN IRELAND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN



Department of
Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs

An Roinn
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Department of
Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

**Consultation Document
2023-2027**

This document is also available on the DAERA website at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation>

On request, we can arrange to provide other formats of the documents above, such as:

- Paper Copy
- Large Print
- Braille
- Other Languages

To request an alternative format, please contact us:

Email: climateactionplan@daera-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 028 9081 6904 and talk to one of the Consultation Team.

If you have a hearing difficulty, you can contact the Department via Text Relay.

Dial: 18001 028 9081 6904

Post: Climate Action Delivery Division
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Clare House
303 Airport Road
BT3 9ED

Guidance is provided on the 'Confidentiality' of responses under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, in Annex 1 for your reference. Also, if you require any further information, please contact a member of the consultation team on 028 9081 6904.

Seeking your views

Why we are consulting?

We have engaged with organisations and individuals to start a climate conversation about this draft Climate Action Plan. However, this plan will impact everyone - so we want everyone to have the opportunity to consider and inform the final plan by holding a 16-week public consultation.

We want you to tell us what you think of the policies and proposals that we have identified and share any comments or suggestions that you have. The draft Plan will be revised to reflect the views from the consultation, before we lay a final Plan before the Assembly, following Executive agreement.

How to respond to the consultation

You are invited to respond to the questions by completing the online survey. The survey is quick and simple to complete and seeks views on our proposed approach, policies and proposals and delivery and monitoring arrangements. Please supplement your response with any relevant information, evidence or analysis.

The consultation will run from 19 June 2025 at 10:00 to 8 October 2025. We encourage early responses, and all responses should be submitted no later than **11.59pm on 8 October 2025** to ensure they can be fully considered.

If you are unable to complete the survey online, please contact the Climate Action Plan consultation team by email: climateactionplan@daera-ni.gov.uk

An easy read version of the consultation document is available online but if you need documents to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.

By responding to this consultation, you are agreeing that any information gathered may be shared with other NICS departments.

There will be a series of stakeholder engagement events during the consultation period. These will take place both online and in person across Northern Ireland.

Details are available on the DAERA website:
<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation>

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1. Introduction

This is Northern Ireland's first Climate Action Plan 2023-2027. It is important because it is the first step on our journey to net zero. Producing this plan is a statutory requirement under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. In December 2024, the Executive agreed that for the period of this plan, 2023-2027, greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by 33% on average¹, to set us on the right path to net zero and contribute to global climate targets.

This first draft Climate Action Plan sets out 52 policies and proposals to reduce emissions across nine sectors: energy production and supply; transport; business and industrial processes; residential buildings; public buildings; waste management; agriculture; land use, land use change and forestry; and fisheries.

Our analysis shows that if all the policies and proposals are implemented at the pace and scale detailed in this plan, the first carbon budget 2023-2027 can be met.

Innovation and creative solutions to existing challenges will have an important role to play in this Climate Action Plan. Without it we will not achieve our goals. New ideas and technologies will help us achieve our climate ambition and create opportunities along the way.

This draft Northern Ireland Climate Action Plan 2023-2027 Consultation Document provides some of the key elements of what is an extremely detailed, complex and technical document. The full draft Climate Action Plan is available to access on the DAERA website along with alternative formats as requested.



¹ Compared to the base year (1990 for most gases)

2. Overview

In 2022, Northern Ireland passed its first climate legislation. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (the Act) sets an ambitious target to reduce Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2050. This means that we must remove at least as many emissions from our atmosphere as we produce.

The Act requires us to prepare and publish a Climate Action Plan every five years.

This plan sets out policies and proposals to achieve reductions in emissions and the actions to enable this to happen. The focus of this Climate Action Plan is on meeting the first carbon budget. A carbon budget sets a limit on the maximum amount of greenhouse gas emissions that can be produced over a five-year period. Keeping emissions within the limit set for each carbon budget period is important as it will set us on the right pathway to meet 2030, 2040 and 2050 targets, in line with the requirements of the legislation.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has co-ordinated the publication of this draft Climate Action Plan, with each Northern Ireland department identifying policies and proposals to reduce emissions to reduce emissions and ensure that the carbon budget is achieved.

2.1 Climate Commitments in Northern Ireland

In January 2020, the need for a coordinated and strategic approach to the challenge of climate change was recognised in 'New Decade, New Approach', the deal to restore devolved government in Northern Ireland. Following the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments, it committed to introducing legislation and targets for reducing carbon emissions in line with the Paris Agreement.

In March 2022, the Northern Ireland Assembly passed the Climate Change Bill fulfilling the Executive's commitment to introduce its first climate legislation. Having received Royal Assent, the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 took effect in June 2022. The Act sets an ambitious emissions target of net zero by 2050, to achieve an overall balance in the emissions that we produce and those we remove from our atmosphere.

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 sets a number of legal obligations including:

- Net zero target by 2050,
- Carbon budgets have to be set for each five year period, beginning in 2023 to 2027
- Climate Action Plans to be published covering each five year period – setting out how we will achieve our carbon budgets,
- Establish an independent Northern Ireland Climate Commissioner (being led by The Executive Office),
- Establish a Just Transition Commission,
- Establish a Just Transition Fund for Agriculture to provide advice and financial assistance to the agriculture sector,
- Sectoral Plans which set out longer term plans to meet targets,
- The requirement for Public Body Reporting legislation,
- Climate Action Plans must contain targets on soil quality, air quality and biodiversity and to support nature-based projects and solutions,
- Policies and proposals must have regard to the Just Transition Principle and the 11 just transition objectives.

2.2 Carbon Budget 2023-2027

After the Act was passed, DAERA sought advice from the Climate Change Committee (CCC) on what a path to net zero might be on appropriate emissions reduction targets for 2030 and 2040 and on appropriate levels for Northern Ireland's first three carbon budgets. This advice was provided by the CCC in its Advice Report² which was published in March 2023.

Following completion of the consultation exercise and consideration of the responses provided (a summary of the responses is available on DAERA's website³), regulations reflecting the CCC's recommendations were approved by the DAERA Minister and ultimately passed by the Assembly in December 2024. As a result, Northern Ireland's first three carbon budgets have been set in law and a new target for 2040⁴ has been set through an amendment made to the Act⁵. The current emissions reduction targets in the Act and carbon budgets which have been set for Northern Ireland under the Act are outlined in Table 1.

² Advice report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland - Climate Change Committee (theccc.org.uk)

³ Summary of Responses: Consultation on Northern Ireland's 2030 & 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets & First Three Carbon Budgets & Seeking views on Climate Change Committee (CCC) Advice Report: The path to a Net Zero Northern Ireland | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

⁴ The Climate Change (2040 Emissions Target) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024

⁵ The Climate Change (Carbon Budgets 2023-2037) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024

Table 1: Northern Ireland’s 2030 and 2040 targets and first three carbon budgets.

Target/Budget	Emissions reductions required
2030 Target	A 48% emissions reduction by 2030 against the baseline ⁶
2040 Target	A 77% emissions reduction by 2040 against the baseline
2050 Target	A 100% emissions reduction by 2050 against the baseline
Carbon Budget 1 (2023-2027)	33% average annual reduction compared to the baseline
Carbon Budget 2 (2028-2032)	48% average annual reduction compared to the baseline
Carbon Budget 3 (2033-2037)	62% average annual reduction compared to the baseline

To achieve the emission reductions in line with the first carbon budget (covering the period 2023-2027), emissions need to reduce by an average of 33% annually, from the 1990 base year emission levels, across the five-year period. Therefore, policies and proposals included in this first draft Climate Action Plan need to meet this first carbon budget over the five-year period from 2023 to 2027.

⁶ The net Northern Ireland emissions account should be at least 48% lower than the baseline in 2030 and at least 77% lower than the baseline in 2040, while for carbon budgets, the recommended average annual reduction relates to reductions in the net Northern Ireland emissions account across the period compared to the baseline. The net Northern Ireland emissions account for a year means the aggregate amount of net emissions of each greenhouse gas in Northern Ireland (emissions and removals of a gas plus/minus any carbon units debited or credited to the account. The baseline is the aggregate amount of net Northern Ireland emissions of each greenhouse gas in the year specified in relation to that gas (1990 for Carbon dioxide, Methane and Nitrous oxide; 1995 for Hydrofluorocarbons, Perfluorocarbons, Sulphur hexafluoride and Nitrogen trifluoride).

3. Developing the Climate Action Plan

Developing this draft Climate Action Plan has provided a significant opportunity to work together, across government, across sectors and across society to address the most important challenge of our time. Significant collaboration across departments has taken place to understand the Act’s requirements (including roles and responsibilities), determine the strategic direction, identify methodologies and agree the content of this pivotal plan. Against a background of complex circumstances, departments have managed priorities, reallocated staff resources and built internal knowledge and capacity to support the development process as far as possible. In wider engagement with stakeholders, the shared goal has been to ensure that Northern Ireland is well placed to meet the challenge of reducing emissions.

3.1 DAERA Responsibilities

DAERA is responsible for leading the preparation and publication of this draft Climate Action Plan. DAERA is required to carry out a 16-week public consultation on the draft plan and, subsequently, to lay the results of the public consultation before the Assembly, and at the same time lay a final Climate Action Plan. In fulfilling these responsibilities, DAERA is required to collaborate with all departments and other stakeholders⁷.

⁷ Section 29 of the Act

3.2 Departments’ Responsibilities

Whilst all departments have informed the development of this Climate Action Plan, Table 2 identifies the lead department assigned to eight sectors.

Table 2: Climate Action Plan Sectors and associated Lead Department

Climate Action Plan	Lead Department(s)
Energy production and supply (including for residential, public and district heating and cooling purposes)	Department for the Economy
Transport (including shipping and aviation)	Department for Infrastructure
Business and Industrial Processes	Department for the Economy
Residential and Public Buildings ⁸	Residential Buildings – Department for Communities Public Buildings - Department for the Economy
Waste Management	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Agriculture	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Land Use and Land Use Change, including Forestry	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Fisheries	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

⁸ For the purposes of this plan, the two components of the buildings sector are considered separately.

3.3 Measuring Greenhouse Gases

Greenhouse Gas Inventories are compiled by following detailed guidance produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – the UN body for assessing the science related to climate change. Inventories report on seven direct GHGs:

- Carbon dioxide (CO₂);
 - Methane (CH₄);
 - Nitrous oxide (N₂O);
 - Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs);
 - Perfluorocarbons (PFCs);
 - Sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆); and
 - Nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃).
- 
- known as Fluorinated gases
or F-gases

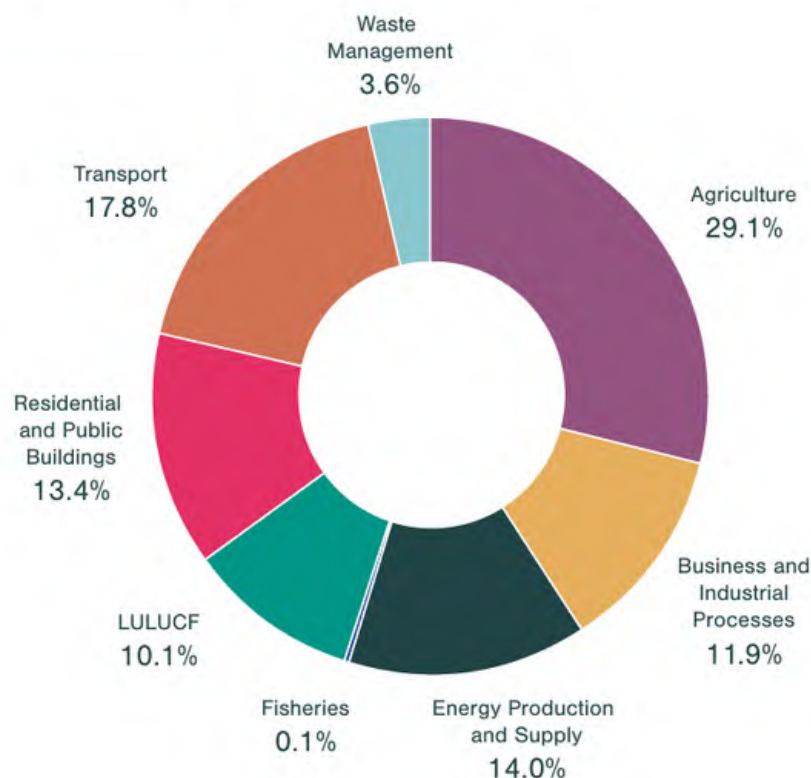
Each of these gases has been assigned a global warming potential (GWP) which defines how potent it is compared with CO₂ over a 100-year cycle (where CO₂ has a GWP of 1). Once the emissions of GHGs are converted into their GWP equivalents, the emissions are presented as CO₂ equivalent emissions, i.e. CO₂e.⁹ This approach, known as GWP100, is the internationally accepted reporting standard required by the UN.

⁹ Emissions are based on 100-year GWPs (without climate feedback) that are set out in the IPCC's Fifth Assessment report (AR5). As such, data contained in this document is reported on an 'AR5' basis.

3.4 Current Emissions by Sector

The Act requires that plans are made to reduce emissions by sectors. Therefore, a profile of greenhouse gases emitted within each of the sectors is detailed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector (%), 2022¹⁰



¹⁰ From 2022, there have been changes to emissions reporting in the UK GHG Inventory, with NC sectors being replaced by Territorial Emissions Statistics (TES) sectors to better meet users' needs. These changes have been reflected in the Northern Ireland GHG Inventory statistical bulletins. For the Northern Ireland draft Climate Action Plan and Quantification Report, Inventory lines within the TES sectors have been mapped back to the NC sectors to maintain alignment to the sectors detailed in the Act. The data used to inform this chart is available at: Greenhouse Gas Inventories for England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland: 1990-2022 | National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory

4. Quantification Summary

The policies and proposals set out across the sectors in the Sector Policies and Proposals chapter in the plan represent Northern Ireland's approach to delivering the emissions reductions required during the first carbon budget period (2023-2027). To assess the impact this suite of policies and proposals will have on emissions levels, an Evidence and Analysis Group, representing each department and led by the DAERA Chief Scientific Adviser, oversaw the estimation of emissions savings arising from the policies and proposals in each sector. Details of the exercise to quantify each policy and proposal, including the methodologies used and assumptions for each sector, are set out in the Quantification Report which has been published alongside the draft Climate Action Plan. Chapter 5 in the plan summarises the approach to and results of the quantification exercise for the first carbon budget period (2023-2027).

4.1 Quantification of Policies and Proposals

Each policy and proposal within the plan was assessed for its projected impact on GHG levels and the findings were combined into sectoral and overall analyses. Emissions projections to 2027, based on the draft Climate Action Plan policies and proposals, are outlined in Table 3. These projections align with the Central Scenario for all policies and proposals and therefore represent the expected outcome of the draft Climate Action Plan.

Table 3: Annual emissions levels for period 2020 to 2027 (actual and projected)

Year	Historic Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)	Central Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)	Reduction in emissions from Base Year
Base Year*	**29.0	-	-
2020	**21.2	-	27.0%
2021	**22.0	-	24.1%
2022	**21.3	-	26.4%
2023	-	20.5	29.1%
2024	-	19.6	32.3%
2025	-	19.4	33.1%
2026	-	19.0	34.3%
2027	-	18.4	36.6 %
Total (2023-2027)	-	97.0	33.1% Average Annual Reduction

*1990 Base Year refers to 1990 for CO₂, CH₄ and N₂O, or 1995 for fluorinated gases (F-gases¹¹). **published GHG Inventory data.

¹¹ F-gases are fluorine containing compounds which are potent greenhouse gases, including: Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF₆), Nitrogen Trifluoride (NF₃), Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

5. Sector Policies and Proposals

This chapter describes the policies and proposals required to achieve the first carbon budget for Northern Ireland.¹²

Policies and Proposals

A policy is a committed course of action to which a policy outcome can be attributed with a reasonable level of confidence.

A proposal is a suggested course of action or exploratory action, the details of which might change as this course of action is explored further. Proposals are generally at an earlier stage of development than policies and more work will be needed to determine what they entail, how they might be delivered and how they could be funded.

Collectively, the policies and proposals included in this plan describe the approach to meeting Northern Ireland’s emissions reduction targets.

The policies and proposals outlined in this chapter of the draft Climate Action Plan represent those which departments consider are achievable and deliverable as part of a credible approach to meeting our proposed 2023-2027 carbon budget.

To assess the impact the suite of policies and proposals will have on emissions levels, an Evidence and Analysis Group, representing each department and led by the DAERA Chief Scientific Adviser, oversaw the estimation of emissions savings arising from the policies and proposals in each sector. For some of the policies or proposals, the emissions savings cannot be quantified at this time (referred to as unquantified in subsequent sections in this report).

¹² The sectors in this chapter are ordered to align with section 33 of the Act.

5.1 Energy production and supply

Sector Summary	
Energy Production and Supply Emissions Summary	- Energy production and supply emissions are almost exclusively from burning fossil fuels for electricity generation at power stations. - Energy production and supply emissions have made the biggest contribution to the overall decrease in Northern Ireland emissions from 1990 to 2022, with a 43.8% decrease in this sector. - Renewable sources produced 45.4% of Northern Ireland’s electricity from April 2023 – March 2024.¹³ - The Act sets a target of at least 80% of electricity consumption to come from renewable sources by 2030.
Policy Approach	Further emissions reductions will be achieved through increasing renewable energy production . This requires continued management of the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) support scheme and a new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme which both protects consumers and provides incentives to invest in new renewable electricity projects.
Policies and Proposals	Policy: The Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) support scheme (jointly quantified in the 80% of electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030 target). Proposal: A new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (jointly quantified in the 80% of electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030 target). Policy: Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (F-Gases) Regulations (2015) (UK-wide policy, but with separate Regulations for GB and NI), and new EU Regulation on F-gases in 2024 (Unquantified).

Emissions Projections:

Table 4 presents the projected emissions for the energy production and supply sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Energy production and supply sector emissions are projected to be 0.52 MtCO₂e less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

¹³ Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland (nirsra.gov.uk)

Table 4: Energy production and supply sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

 Sector	Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Energy Production and Supply	2.98	2.29	2.35	2.39	2.33	12.33	-0.52 MtCO ₂ e
Energy Production and Supply CCC*	2.76	2.63	2.58	2.5	2.37	12.85	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

5.2 Transport (including shipping and aviation)

Sector Summary 	
Transport Sector Emissions Summary	- Tackling transport sector emissions will require a clear, strategic, focused approach. Interventions linked to switching fuels will be crucial in decarbonising the transport sector. Whilst other interventions, such as a focus on shifting modes of travel and reducing travel journeys, will not deliver the same level of reductions to overall emissions, they will have an important role to play in contributing to the decarbonisation agenda and the wider strategic goals of DfI. - The Transport Sector includes emissions from surface road transport, domestic shipping and aviation, and aircraft support vehicles. It is the second largest contributor to emissions in Northern Ireland. - Tailpipe emissions from road transport - cars, buses, light duty trucks, heavy duty trucks, and motorcycles are responsible for 88.7% of the sector's emissions in 2022, with the passenger car being the largest contributor to transportation emissions. - The Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas emissions inventory highlights that the Transport Sector Emissions in 2022 (3.8 MtCO₂e) are greater than 1990 emissions (3.6 MtCO₂e). - This increasing road transport emissions trend is a global issue. Although there have been improvements in vehicle and fuel efficiency; this benefit has been offset by increasing numbers of registered private vehicles, increased journeys and the increasing size and weight of vehicles.
Policy Approach	Tackling transport sector emissions will require a clear, strategic, focused approach. DfI will prioritise and deliver against three policies over the first carbon budget period to reduce vehicle emissions: - Policy One: Reducing vehicle emissions by switching fuels to zero and low emission alternatives - Policy Two: Shifting modes of transport away from private car journeys to sustainable travel alternatives. - Policy Three: Reducing the need and length of vehicle journeys. - Interventions linked to switching fuels will be crucial in decarbonising the transport sector. Shifting modes of transport or reducing journeys will not, of themselves, deliver the same level of reductions to overall emissions but are important elements of our overall approach and the wider strategic goals of the Department have a relatively lower impact on transport emissions we will use a precautionary approach to sustaining or developing other forms of transport and travel options.

Sector Summary



Policies and Proposals	- Dfi will develop a strategic approach to communications to support the three high level policies. This will be informed by behavioural science to increase awareness and encourage behaviour change. - Dfi's bespoke Transport Emissions Model (TEM) will assist in scenario testing to identify options for future policy development. Policy: 'SWITCH'- Reducing vehicle emissions by switching fuels to low emission alternatives (Quantified) Policy: 'SHIFT' – Reducing vehicle emissions by shifting modes of transport away from private car journeys to sustainable travel alternatives (Unquantified) Policy: 'REDUCE' - Reducing vehicle emissions by reducing the need and length of journeys (Unquantified)
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To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:

Table 5 presents the projected emissions for the transport sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Transport sector emissions are projected to be 1.12 MtCO₂e more than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 5: Transport sector projected emissions in the Central Scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

 Sector	Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Transport	3.83	3.78	3.72	3.65	3.55	18.53	1.12 MtCO ₂ e
Transport CCC*	3.87	3.69	3.47	3.29	3.1	17.41	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.3 Business and Industrial Processes

Sector Summary	
Business and Industrial Processes Sector Emissions Summary	- The business and industrial processes sector includes: - Business emissions from stationary combustion in industrial and commercial sectors including industrial off-road machinery, refrigeration and air conditioning, and the use of fluorinated gases for other applications. These account for the majority of emissions in the sector at 91.9%. - Industrial processes sector contains all emissions from industry except for those associated with fuel combustion accounting for the remaining 8.1% in the sector. - Emissions have decreased by 54.9% since 1990. - This is the fifth largest emitting sector, accounting for 11.9% of Northern Ireland greenhouse gas emissions.
Policy Approach	Unlike other sectors, business and industrial processes relies predominantly on UK wide policies. The UK policies are complemented by Northern Ireland specific policies that are intended to address our small and medium sized economy. There are also some EU policies that have an influence on the sector in Northern Ireland as a result of the Windsor Framework. UK and EU-led Regulation, Compliance and Reporting has an important role to play. Key policies include assessing combined heat and power schemes on the basis of their energy efficiency and environmental performance, thus ensuring that the associated tax benefits are in line with environmental performance and ensuring that harmful fluorinated gases are ultimately eliminated. Other policies relate to improving the energy performance of buildings, emissions trading, product design and labelling, the reporting of emissions and funding to support the transition. Northern Ireland-led Regulation, Compliance and Reporting also has a role. This will be through two policies and two proposals. The policies are Fuel switching to natural gas, (it is recognised that fuel switching to natural gas is not a long-term solution to emissions reduction, but gas has a role to play in the short to medium term as a transition fuel) and Uplifts to Building Regulations in Northern Ireland. This will potentially have a significant role in reducing emissions from new buildings and from existing buildings that are being upgraded. The two proposals under Northern Ireland-led regulation relate to biomethane and further uplifts to building regulations.

Sector Summary



	There are a number of other initiatives which are being delivered by Investing in Northern Ireland's Businesses, through Invest Northern Ireland, especially in relation to capital grants, resource matching and technical consultancy. Invest Northern Ireland also lead the Industrial Decarbonisation for Northern Ireland project. The aim of the project is to identify effective ways for organisations to make environmental and economic improvements by reducing energy consumption.
Policies and Proposals	Policy: The Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (F-Gases) Regulations (2015) (UK-wide policy, but with separate Regulations for GB and NI), and new EU Regulation on F-gases in 2024 (Quantified) Policy: The EU Ecodesign Directive and Energy Labelling Framework Regulation (Quantified) Policy: Industrial Non-Road Mobile Machinery Decarbonisation (Quantified) Policy: Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) (Quantified) Policy: Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (Quantified) Policy: Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (Quantified) Policy: Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (Quantified) Policy: Combined Heat and Power Quality Assurance Programme (Quantified) Policy: UK Emissions Trading Scheme (Unquantified) Policy: Gas Network Connections General Determinations 2023-2028 (Quantified) Policy: 2012 and 2022 Uplifts to Part F (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations in Northern Ireland (Quantified) Proposal: Further Building Regulations Uplifts (Unquantified) Proposal: Biomethane (Quantified) Policy: Invest Northern Ireland Energy and Resource Efficiency Programme for Northern Ireland Businesses (Quantified) Proposal: Invest Northern Ireland Industrial Decarbonisation for Northern Ireland project (Quantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:

Table 6 the projected emissions for the business and industrial processes sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Business and industrial processes sector emissions are projected to be 0.89 MtCO₂e less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 6: Business and industrial processes sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

 Sector	Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Business	2.02	1.92	1.86	1.71	1.57	9.07	-0.89 MtCO ₂ e
Industrial Processes	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	1.03	
Business and Industrial Processes total	2.23	2.12	2.06	1.91	1.77	10.1	
Business and Industrial Processes CCC*	2.43	2.3	2.2	2.09	1.97	10.99	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.4 Residential Buildings

Sector Summary	
Residential Buildings Sector Emissions Summary	- The buildings sector is covered in two sections within this draft Climate Action Plan: a Residential Buildings sector, and a Public Buildings sector. - Together they account for 13.4% of Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. - Residential buildings sector emissions have fallen by 31.4% between 1990 and 2022 and account for 89.6% of emissions from the overall buildings sector. This represents 12.0% of Northern Ireland's emissions in 2022. - Residential building emissions are primarily affected by fuel combustion for heating and the production of hot water.¹⁴
Policy Approach	Policies and proposals for retrofitting existing dwellings to reduce energy consumption through energy efficiency are important to reducing emissions in residential buildings and in preparing homes for the adoption of decarbonised heating systems. These will be delivered through existing schemes and delivery partners, including the Utility Regulator and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive with the delivery model for proposals for a new energy efficiency programme and a future warm healthy, homes scheme aimed at addressing fuel poverty, subject to necessary procurement and funding. Reducing emissions will also rely on the adoption and use of low carbon options for heating. This will be delivered through a policy of fuel switching to natural gas which includes exploring the potential use of biomethane to displace fossil fuel gas in the gas network and a proposal to provide support to low carbon heating technologies delivered through electrification. The current estimates of impacts from policies which raise standards mean they play an important part in overall emissions reduction. Savings will be delivered through current and proposed Uplifts to Building Regulations in Northern Ireland, more energy efficient product designs and improved labelling.

¹⁴ 'Includes fuel combustion for heating, cooking, garden machinery, gases released from aerosols and inhalers, and emissions released from the breakdown of products such as detergents.' Emissions are affected by energy efficiency, heating and hot water demands, and the fuel type for domestic combustion.

Sector Summary	
Policies and Proposals	Policy: Affordable Warmth Scheme (Quantified) Policy: Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme (including uplifts) (Quantified) Policy: Northern Ireland Housing Executive Stock Investment Programme – Including Thermal Improvements (Quantified) Proposal: Warm Healthy, Homes Scheme (Quantified) Proposal: Scale and Launch Energy Efficiency Programmes (Quantified) Policy: Clean Heat Market Mechanism (Quantified) Policy: Gas Network Connections General Determinations 2023-2028 (Quantified) Proposal: Low Carbon Heat Support Programme (Quantified) Proposal: Biomethane (Quantified) Policy: The EU Ecodesign Directive and the Energy Labelling Framework Regulation (Quantified) Policy: Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (F-Gases) Regulations (2015) (UK-wide policy, but with separate Regulations for GB and NI), and new EU Regulation on F-gases in 2024 (Quantified) Policy: 2012 and 2022 Uplifts to Part F (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations in Northern Ireland (Quantified) Proposal: Further Building Regulations Uplifts (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:

Table 7 presents the projected emissions for the residential buildings sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Residential buildings sector emissions are projected to be 1.31 MtCO₂e less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway. CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 7: Buildings sector (including residential and public buildings) projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

 Sector	Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Residential Buildings	2.27	2.24	2.24	2.3	2.3	11.36	-1.31 MtCO ₂ e
Public Buildings	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1.40	
Buildings total	2.55	2.52	2.52	2.58	2.58	12.76	
Buildings CCC*	3.02	2.94	2.83	2.71	2.57	14.07	

*These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.

5.5 Public Buildings

Sector Summary	
Residential Buildings Sector Emissions Summary	- The buildings sector is covered in two sections within this draft Climate Action Plan: a Residential Buildings sector, and a Public Buildings sector. - Together they account for 13.4% of Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. - Public building emissions account for 10.4% of the overall buildings sector emissions with a 49.8% reduction in public building emissions from the base year of 1990. This represents 1.4% of Northern Ireland's emissions in 2022. - Sector emissions primarily result from fuel combustion in public buildings for heating, cooling and hot water.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions in this sector will be through two key Northern Ireland policies and two UK wide policies. Within Northern Ireland, the Energy Management Strategy & Action Plan to 2030¹⁵ seeks to reduce sector emissions and manage financial exposures. It will be delivered by access to better data and analytics to inform investment decisions through an Energy Invest to Save Fund. Behavioural change, building performance standards and procurement also have key roles to play in delivery. Emissions will also be reduced through uplifts to Building Regulations in Northern Ireland which will provide a basis for emissions assessment and measuring improved standards. UK wide policies include reporting on annual energy use, greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency actions thereby encouraging cost savings and emission reductions. Also included are policies to improve the design and labelling of products aiming to take the least efficient products off the market and to give consumers clear energy use information to guide their purchasing decisions.
Policies and Proposals	Policy: The Energy Management Strategy and Action Plan to 2030 (Quantified) Policy: 2012 and 2022 Uplifts to Part F (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations in Northern Ireland (Quantified) Policy: The EU Ecodesign Directive and the Energy Labelling Framework Regulation (Quantified) Policy: Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (Quantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

¹⁵ Energy-Management-Strategy-March-2019.pdf (sibni.org)

Emissions Projections:

Table 8 presents the projected emissions for the public buildings sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Buildings sector emissions are projected to be 1.31 MtCO₂e less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 8: Buildings sector (including residential and public buildings) projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

 Sector	Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Residential Buildings	2.27	2.24	2.24	2.3	2.3	11.36	-1.31 MtCO ₂ e
Public Buildings	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1.40	
Buildings total	2.55	2.52	2.52	2.58	2.58	12.76	
Buildings CCC*	3.02	2.94	2.83	2.71	2.57	14.07	

*These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.

5.6 Waste Management

Sector Summary	
Waste Management Sector Emissions Summary	- Emissions in the waste management sector include those released from waste disposal at landfill sites, wastewater treatment and waste incineration. - The sector is responsible for 3.6% of total Northern Ireland greenhouse gas emissions. - Waste Management Sector emissions have fallen by 62.1% between 1990 and 2022. - Household recycling rates have increased from 10% in 2002 to just over 50% in 2022/2023 - The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 includes a requirement to recycle at least 70% of waste by 2030.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions in the waste management sector will be achieved through two key interventions. The first is to reduce landfill emissions, through improvements to the separate collection of food waste from households and a new proposal to divert biodegradable waste from landfill. The other is to increase recycling rates and improve quality of the material that is collected for recycling. To drive this, a target is in place to achieve a 65% local authority collected waste recycling rate whilst reducing waste to landfill to no more than 10% by 2035. This is supported by two proposals to increase household recycling and the introduction of mandatory recycling for the commercial and industrial sector.
Policies and Proposals	Policy: Separate Collection of Food Waste from Households - The Food Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (Quantified) Proposal: Diverting Biodegradable Waste from Landfill (Quantified) Policy: Achieve a 65% municipal waste recycling rate whilst reducing waste to landfill to no more than 10% by 2035 (Quantified) Proposal: Introduction of Mandatory Recycling for Commercial and Industrial Sector (Quantified) Proposal: Increasing Household Recycling (Quantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:

Table 9 presents the projected emissions for the waste management sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Waste management sector emissions are projected to be 0.15 MtCO₂e less than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 9: Waste management sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway.

 Sector	Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Waste Management	0.74	0.73	0.68	0.68	0.56	3.39	-0.15 MtCO ₂ e
Waste Management CCC*	0.79	0.75	0.71	0.67	0.61	3.54	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.7 Agriculture

Sector Summary	
Agriculture Sector Emissions Summary	• In agriculture the two main greenhouse gases are methane and nitrous oxide rather than carbon dioxide. Livestock emissions dominate greenhouse gases in the agriculture sector. Other key sources are from manure management, soils and emissions from off-road vehicles and machinery. • The agriculture sector is the largest emitter and accounts for 29.1% of Northern Ireland greenhouse gas emissions in 2022. • There has been a 14.9% increase in agriculture emissions from the base year of 1990. • While the Act requires overall net emissions for 2050 to be 100% lower than the baseline, it does not require methane emissions to be more than 46% lower than the baseline.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions in the agriculture sector will be achieved through the delivery of DAERA's new Sustainable Agriculture Programme. This Programme and associated policies and proposals will support the sector's decarbonisation, focusing on improving the productivity of the agriculture sector, delivering improvements in environmental sustainability and resilience and supply chain integration. The CCC's Path to Net Zero for Northern Ireland assumes a significant reduction in livestock numbers and an associated transition to bioenergy cropping and increased forestry on agricultural land. The reduction in livestock numbers is based on the assumption that the consumption of livestock products in the UK will fall and that this will lead to an equal reduction in Northern Ireland livestock numbers. The Sustainable Agriculture Programme encourages a rapid transition to low carbon farming practices, as advised by the CCC, but also provides an alternative approach for reducing emissions from the agriculture sector to that advised by the CCC through more targeted (but still significant) reductions in livestock numbers, delivered through improved livestock productivity while allowing the agriculture sector to maintain output, avoid carbon leakage, and contribute to the growing global demand for livestock food products projected by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Sector Summary	
Policies and Proposals	Policy: Beef Sustainability Package (including The Beef Carbon Reduction Scheme and The Suckler Cow Scheme) Policy: Knowledge and Innovation Policy: Reducing emissions by including methane suppressing feed products in Livestock Diets and reducing the Protein and Phosphorous content of Livestock Diets (Quantified) Policy: Ruminant Genetics Programme (Quantified) Policy: Capital Investment Scheme (Unquantified) Proposal: Increased slurry aeration and novel slurry treatment systems (Includes pig, beef and dairy slurry aeration) (Quantified) Proposal: Anaerobic Digestion (Quantified) Policy: The Carbon Footprinting Project (Unquantified) Policy: The Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (Unquantified) Policy: The Farming with Nature Package (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:
Table 10 presents the projected emissions for the agriculture sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Agriculture sector emissions are projected to be 0.93 MtCO₂e more than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 10: Agriculture sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway

 Sector	Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Agriculture	6.03	5.97	5.88	5.67	5.44	28.99	0.93 MtCO ₂ e
Agriculture CCC*	5.98	5.74	5.6	5.45	5.29	28.06	

*These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.

5.8 Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry

Sector Summary 	
LULUCF Sector Emissions Summary	- The Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector covers emissions and removals of greenhouse gases resulting from direct human-induced land use, land-use change, and forestry activities. - LULUCF is the only sector where removal of emissions (sequestration) is recorded with the majority of removals by forest land and grasslands. - Whilst peatland is a natural sink for carbon dioxide it is currently estimated that the majority of our peatlands are degraded and act as emitters instead. - LULUCF emissions have reduced by 20.5% since 1990 and represent 10.1% of total annual emissions in Northern Ireland in 2022.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions and increasing sequestration in the LULUCF sector can be achieved through key interventions which include, increasing forest cover through a policy to deliver the Forests for Our Future programme to create 9,000 hectares of new woodland by 2030. Also, through restoring peatland habitats by delivering the Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy. Delivering carbon sequestration will reduce emissions through land management and will be supported through agri-environment schemes such as the delivery of the Farming with Nature Package and the Soil Nutrient Health Scheme. There are also additional land use proposals to develop a future land use policy for Northern Ireland and considering the feasibility of policy development for biomass.
Policies and Proposals	Policy: Deliver the Forests for Our Future programme to create 9,000ha of new woodland by 2030. (Quantified) Proposal: Deliver the Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy (Quantified) Policy: Sustainable Agriculture Programme – The Farming with Nature Package and the Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (Unquantified) Proposal: Develop a future land use policy for Northern Ireland (Unquantified) Proposal: Consider the feasibility of policy development for bioenergy crops, engineered removals and carbon capture (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:

Table 11 presents the projected emissions for the LULUCF sector across the first carbon budgetary period. LULUCF sector emissions are projected to be 0.69 MtCO₂e more than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 11: LULUCF sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway

 Sector	Projected Emissions (MtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
LULUCF	2.17	2.18	2.16	2.14	2.11	10.77	0.69 MtCO ₂ e
LULUCF CCC*	2.11	2.06	2.02	1.97	1.91	10.07	

**These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication.*

5.9 Fisheries

Sector Summary 	
Fisheries Sector Emissions Summary	- Fisheries is the smallest emissions sector and includes emissions from activities associated with sea fisheries, inland fisheries and aquaculture. - Fisheries accounts for 0.1% of Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas emissions (2022). - Fisheries emissions have decreased by 2.5% from 1990 to 2022.
Policy Approach	Reducing emissions in this sector will be through developing initiatives to decarbonise the fishing fleet. The UK Joint Fisheries Statement sets high level policies for how the fisheries policy authorities will work together to develop solutions that minimise the adverse effect of fishing and aquaculture activities on climate change whilst also adapting to climate change. In Northern Ireland the policy is to invest in research and development to create the innovative solutions needed to decarbonise the fishing fleet and minimise adverse effects of fishing on climate change. There is a proposal to prepare for roll-out of electrification and low or zero emission fuels across the fishing fleet.
Policies and Proposals	Policy: UK Joint Fisheries Statement (Unquantified) Policy: Invest in research and development to decarbonise the fishing fleet and minimise adverse effects of fishing on climate change (Unquantified) Proposal: Prepare for roll-out of electrification and low or zero emission fuels across the fishing fleet and reduce emissions along the fisheries supply chain (Unquantified)

To read the policies and proposals for this sector in full, please go to Chapter 6 in the draft Climate Action Plan document.

Emissions Projections:

The fisheries policies and proposals are not expected to result in the reduction of emissions until alternative fuels and vessel designs come into operation. Emissions are expected to hold relatively stable to 2030, before reducing to close to net zero by 2050.

Table 12 presents the projected emissions for the fisheries sector across the first carbon budgetary period. Fisheries sector emissions are projected to be 16.00 KtCO₂e** more than the emission levels assumed for this sector within the CCC adjusted pathway.

Table 12: Fisheries sector projected emissions in the central scenario compared with the adjusted CCC sectoral pathway

 Sector	Projected Emissions (KtCO ₂ e)						Difference in CCC adjusted pathway and Northern Ireland Projections
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Fisheries	21.09	21.41	21.69	21.97	22.26	108.41	16.00 KtCO ₂ e
Fisheries CCC*	18.31	18.40	18.50	18.57	18.63	92.41	

*These figures are based on the CCC advisory pathway but have been adjusted to take account of the 2022 inventory publication. ** Please note, emissions for the fisheries sector are displayed in KtCO₂e.

Impact Assessments

A range of impact assessments have been conducted on the draft Climate Action Plan including environmental, economic, rural and equality impact assessments. To read a summary of the impact assessments please go to Chapter 7 in the draft Climate Action Plan document. A full suite of impact assessments are available on the DAERA website: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation

6. The Natural Environment and Climate Change

It is internationally agreed that climate change and biodiversity loss are interdependent and need to be addressed together. The Act requires us to set specific targets for soil quality, biodiversity and air quality in this draft Climate Action Plan. The proposed targets are set out below.

The proposed Soil Quality Target is:

By 2027, to have at least 75% of Northern Ireland agricultural fields soil sampled and analysed to form a baseline of key soil nutrients from which further and more refined targets in respect of soil nutrient health can be considered.¹⁶

The proposed Biodiversity Target is:

By 2027, to have 65% of designated features in protected sites to be in or approaching favourable conservation condition, and at least 12% of all land, freshwater and marine environments effectively conserved, managed and well connected for nature.

The proposed Air Quality target is:

In 2025 DAERA will engage with other departments and key delivery organisations, with a view to considering the feasibility of implementing new regulations that would bring into operation tighter annual average limits/targets/objectives for PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀, in line with interim target 4 of the World Health Organisation Air Quality Guidelines 2021 of 10 and 20 ug/m₃ respectively.

We must prioritise measures which can deliver for both nature and emissions reduction. These measures are known as Nature-based Solutions (NbS). Nature-based Solutions will create thriving habitats and ecosystems which reduce emissions, whilst also providing a landscape and marine environment which is more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

It is a legal requirement of the Act¹⁷ that, where practicable, the policies and proposals within the Climate Action Plan should support and use nature-based projects, whether alone or as part of other types of action.

¹⁶ Soil Nutrient Health Scheme | Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

¹⁷ Section 34 of the Act

7. Monitoring and Reporting

The Act sets ambitious targets to reduce emissions. Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of policies and actions and the resulting impact on emissions reduction will be an essential element of tracking progress towards achieving the 2023-2027 carbon budget and meeting interim targets set for 2030 and 2040. We will ensure a robust monitoring framework is in place to keep us on our net zero pathway. This framework will adapt to an evolving policy context, new data and emerging solutions. We will ensure a transparent approach to reporting that provides meaningful information and encourages participation from partners and stakeholders seeking to support our journey towards decarbonisation.

8. Public Sector Leading by Example

The public sector is critical to the successful delivery of this draft Climate Action Plan - influencing and enabling positive behaviours, driving change and acting as a leader on climate action and low carbon innovation. We are committed to forging a net zero pathway by delivering vital public services in a way that reduces emissions, reduces waste and uses scarce resources more sustainably. We will pursue a net zero approach across all sectors of our economy and society, leading by example by taking actions across our estate, fleets, procurement processes, energy use and our approach to service delivery. We recognise that transformation of public services will help us to maximise the opportunities these changes bring. During the carbon budget period, we will continue to build on the actions outlined in chapter 11 to ensure that we deliver on our climate duty.

8.1 Local Government

Local government is already leading by example on climate action. Alongside central government, it will have a vital role in driving and facilitating the realisation of Northern Ireland's climate targets. During the carbon budget reporting period, departments have been working with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) to establish structures which will facilitate a joined-up approach between central and local government. This will help to ensure strong leadership at all levels across our communities as we implement ambitious climate action.

Significant action is already being taken forward within local government; approximately half of our 11 local councils have put in place a climate action plan with target dates for reaching net zero ranging between 2040 and 2050.

9. Investment Required and Anticipated Benefits

Implementing the policies and proposals set out in this draft Climate Action Plan will require investment. This investment is necessary if we are to realise the wide-ranging benefits and transformative opportunities that come with the transition to a low carbon economy and an improved society for future generations. We also need to avoid the additional costs incurred from delayed action and the damage that occurs because of our changing climate. Additional investment by government will be crucial to finance the major infrastructure projects required to enable the transition to a low carbon economy. It will also be necessary to incentivise further investment in early-stage technologies and demonstrator projects.

Delivering a cost-effective path to decarbonisation in Northern Ireland requires action across all sectors of the economy and a joined-up approach.¹⁸ Funding our net zero transition will be a collaboration between the public and private sectors.

9.1 Investment Required and Anticipated Benefits

Public Sector Investment to Deliver the Draft Climate Action Plan

Delivering the emissions savings projected in this plan will require a commitment to investing in net zero. In developing this draft Climate Action Plan, departments have sought to estimate the capital investment required to deliver the policies and proposals outlined in the Sector Policies and Proposals chapter.

The information presented in this section focuses on the anticipated level of Climate Action Plan investment from the Northern Ireland Executive budgets to support our transition to net zero. All values provided are in line with the Central Scenario criteria, which assumes that credible funding arrangements are in place or there is high confidence of funding availability.¹⁹

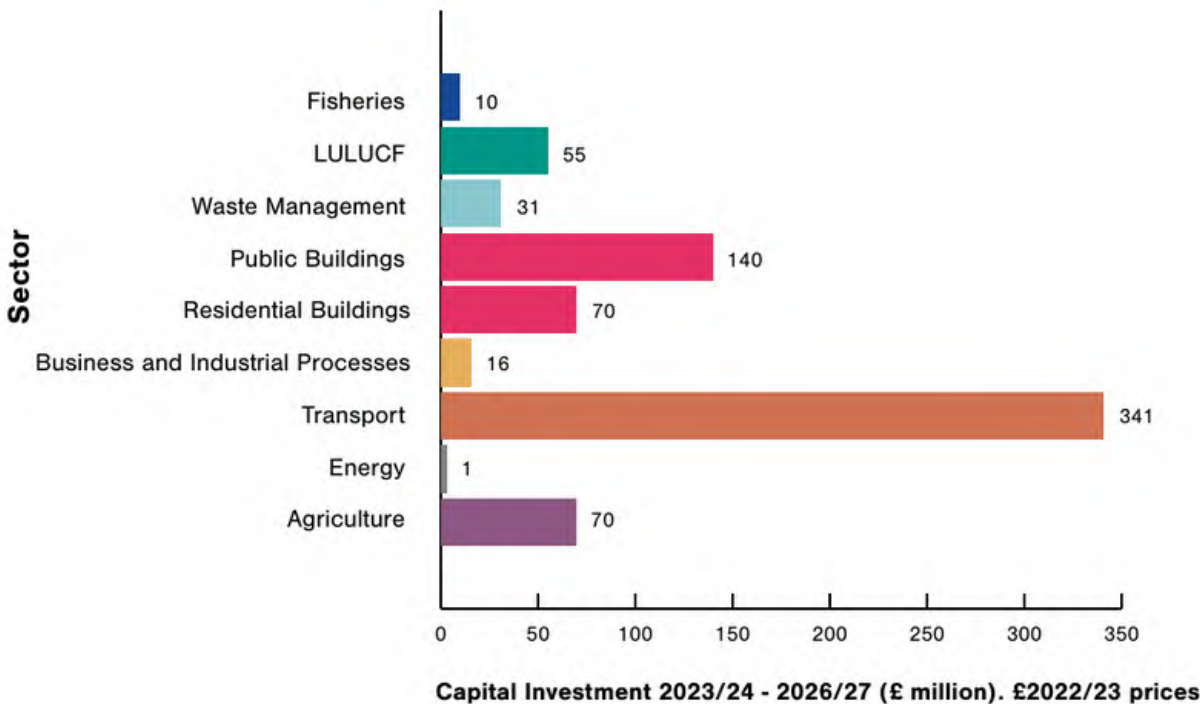
Across the four full financial years of the Climate Action Plan (2023/24 – 2026/27), it is estimated that a total of £718million²⁰ of capital investment will be directed to deliver the policies and proposals within the draft Climate Action Plan. **This equates to an average total capital investment of £93 per person, per year.** Figure 2 illustrates the level of capital investment required by each sector.

¹⁸ Reducing emissions in Northern Ireland - Climate Change Committee (theccc.org.uk)

¹⁹ See Chapter 5 for full definitions

²⁰ All costs listed within this chapter are in £2022/23 prices

Figure 2: Sector Capital Investment²¹



It is not possible to accurately estimate what portion of total Northern Ireland Executive capital budgets would have been spent on policies to promote decarbonisation without the draft Climate Action Plan. It is likely that at least some of this capital would have been invested through the same (or a similar) set of policies and proposals to support other legislative requirements and strategic commitments. Not all of this increase in expenditure will result in an equivalent increase in departmental budgetary pressures.

While significant investment will be required across the public and private sectors to meet our net zero target, the transition to a low carbon economy will present many opportunities as we deliver green jobs, reduce pollution, promote more efficient use of resources within a circular economy, improve infrastructure and support sustainable economic growth. The up-front costs represent investments in an improved society for future generations and the cost of delaying action will ultimately be much greater.

²¹ Note that values will not tally to total due to duplication of costs between sectors.

The transition to a low carbon society will have wider implications on how we live our lives. Although rarely measured, quantified, or monetised, co-benefits²² increasingly form a key consideration in decisions relating to climate change.²³ The policies and proposals which are identified in this Plan and which contribute to decarbonisation are expected to bring substantial co-benefits, particularly for public health, green jobs, households and businesses, the natural environment and climate resilience.

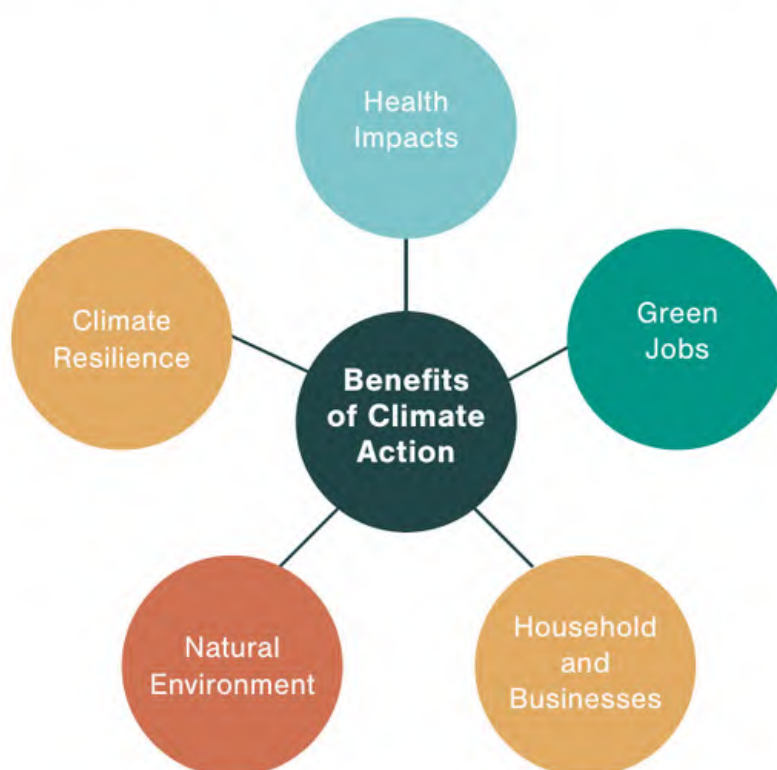


Figure 3: Selected benefits of Climate Action

While investments through the Climate Action Plan are aimed at reducing our GHG emissions, many investments also **improve our resilience**. The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) recognises that achieving net zero carbon emissions is the necessary pathway to limit the worst impacts of climate change yet to come. As the impacts of a changing climate are already being felt, prioritised investment is required to ensure infrastructure is equipped to handle a range of shocks and stresses in the short, medium and long term.²⁴ Investment through the implementation of the draft Climate Action Plan policies and proposals – particularly through investments in the LULUCF, agriculture, transport and energy sectors – can help to maximise long-term benefits from maintaining, planning and delivering resilient infrastructure.

²² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, “Fifth Assessment Report, Annex II Glossary”. IPCC, 2014

²³ Measuring the Co-Benefits of Climate Change Mitigation | Annual Reviews

²⁴ Resilient Infrastructure for Northern Ireland | 2024 | Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)

10. Adaptation and Mitigation

Whilst in recent years much focus has been placed on climate mitigation measures concerned with reducing our emissions, we must not lose sight of the fact that reduction of emissions is only part of the climate change challenge. Even when emissions are reduced to net zero, we will still have locked in climate change impacts as a result of historic emissions. To properly address the impacts of climate change, we must ensure that there continues to be adequate investment and attention given to climate adaptation measures, whilst we simultaneously continue to progress work to reduce our emissions.

Some measures, such as peatland restoration and afforestation provide dual mitigation and adaptation benefits through the carbon they store and their contribution to flood prevention through increased water storage capacity and lag time following periods of heavy rainfall. However, it is also critical that we continue to invest in and take forward specific climate adaptation measures, focused on protecting our economy, communities and environment from the impacts of climate change that cannot be avoided through emissions reduction alone.

Overview

Public Consultation on Northern Ireland's draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027

In 2022, Northern Ireland passed its first climate legislation - the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (the Act).

The Act sets an ambitious target to reduce Northern Ireland's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2050. This means by 2050 that we must remove at least as many emissions from our atmosphere as we produce each year.

The Act requires us to prepare and publish a Climate Action Plan every five years. The draft Climate Action Plan (2023-2027) is the first step on Northern Ireland's journey to net zero. It sets out policies and proposals to achieve reductions in emissions and the actions which will enable this to happen. The focus of this draft plan is on meeting the first carbon budget.

A carbon budget sets a limit on the maximum amount of GHG emissions that can be produced over a five-year period. Keeping emissions within the limit set for each carbon budget period is important as it will set us on the right pathway to meet 2030, 2040 and 2050 targets, in line with the requirements of the legislation.

In December 2024, the Executive agreed that for the period of this plan, 2023-2027, greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by 33% on average, to set us on the right path to net zero and contribute to global climate targets.

Innovation and creative solutions to existing challenges will have an important role to play in this Climate Action Plan. Without it we will not achieve our goals. New ideas and technologies will help us achieve our climate ambition and create opportunities along the way.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has co-ordinated the publication of this draft Climate Action Plan, with each Northern Ireland department identifying policies and proposals to reduce emissions in line with the carbon budget.

The draft Climate Action Plan is available to access on the DAERA website along with alternative formats on request. There will be a series of stakeholder engagement events during the consultation period.

These will take place both online and in person across Northern Ireland. Details are available on the DAERA website <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation>

Why your views matter

We have already engaged with organisations and individuals in the development of the draft Climate Action Plan. However, given its impact, we are now holding a 16-week public consultation, to provide everyone with the opportunity to consider the draft plan.

We want you to tell us what you think about the draft Climate Action Plan and share any comments or suggestions that you have.

It is not essential for everyone to answer every question, rather, we would prefer you to only answer the questions you feel are relevant to you or the organisation you are responding on behalf of. We are encouraging everyone to respond to this consultation through our Citizen Space website as this makes analysing the responses and any future decision making more consistent and provides better data outputs. However, if you cannot respond using the website and would like to submit your response using a different format, please contact climateactionplan@daera-ni.gov.uk

Your feedback will be used to inform the final Climate Action Plan which will be laid before the Assembly, following Executive agreement.

Privacy

The information you provide in completing this consultation will be controlled and processed in line with Data Protection Legislation by DAERA. To find out more about how we handle your personal information, DAERA's Privacy Notice can be viewed online at <http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/daera-privacy-statement>

Further information about the consultation

The draft Climate Action Plan and other supporting documents are also available on the DAERA website at: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-consultation>

On request, we can arrange to provide other formats of the documents, such as:

- Paper copy
- Large print
- Braille
- Other languages

To request an alternative format, please contact the consultation team:

Email: climateactionplan@daera-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 028 9081 6904

Post:

Climate Action Delivery Division
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Belfast BT3 9ED

If you have a hearing difficulty, you can contact the Department via Text Relay:

Dial: 18001 028 9081 6904

Guidance on the confidentiality of responses under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is provided in Annex 1 of the Consultation Document for your reference. If you require any further information, please contact the consultation team using the details provided above.

About You

First, please tell us a little 'About You' to help us analyse the responses.

A. What is your name?

Name (Required)

B. What is your email address?

Email (Required)

C. What is your postcode?

Postcode (Required)

D. Are you responding as an individual or as part of an organisation?

(Required) Personal response

Organisation (Please tell us your organisation name or what sector you operate in)

Consultation Questions

Relates to Chapter 5: Quantification Summary

Quantification of Emissions Reduction from Policies and Proposals

1. To what extent do you agree with the quantification methodology used to calculate emissions reductions from policies and proposals?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
2. Do you have any comments on the quantification methodology used to calculate emissions reductions from policies and proposals?
Yes/No If yes, please provide your comments

Relates to Chapter 6: Sector Policies and Proposals

Energy Production and Supply Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Energy production and supply emissions are almost exclusively from burning fossil fuels for electricity generation at power stations.

3. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to to reduce emissions for the energy production and supply sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
4. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the energy production and supply sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Transport Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

The transport sector includes emissions from surface road transport, domestic shipping and aviation, and aircraft support vehicles. It is the second largest contributor to emissions in Northern Ireland.

5. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the transport sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
6. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the transport sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Business and Industrial Processes Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Business emissions from stationary combustion in industrial and commercial sectors including industrial off-road machinery, refrigeration and air conditioning, and the use of fluorinated gases for other applications.

7. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the business and industrial processes sector?

Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

8. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the business and industrial processes sector?

Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Residential Buildings Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Residential building emissions are primarily affected by fuel combustion for heating and the production of hot water.

9. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the residential buildings sector?

Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

10. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the residential buildings sector?

Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Public Buildings Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Sector emissions primarily result from fuel combustion in public buildings for heating, cooling and hot water.

11. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the public buildings sector?

Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

12. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the public buildings sector?

Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Waste Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Emissions in the waste management sector include those released from waste disposal at landfill sites, wastewater treatment and waste incineration. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 includes a requirement to recycle at least 70% of waste by 2030.

13. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the waste sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
14. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the waste sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Agriculture Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

In agriculture the two main greenhouse gases are methane and nitrous oxide rather than carbon dioxide. Livestock emissions dominate greenhouse gases in the agriculture sector. Other key sources are from manure management, soils and emissions from off-road vehicles and machinery.

15. To what extent do you agree with the proposed enabling actions to reduce emissions for the agriculture sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
16. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the agriculture sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

The Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector covers emissions and removals of greenhouse gases resulting from direct human-induced land use, land-use change, and forestry activities.

17. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the LULUCF sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
18. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the LULUCF sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Fisheries Sector Contribution to Carbon Budget 2023-2027

Fisheries sector includes emissions from activities associated with sea fisheries, inland fisheries and aquaculture.

19. To what extent do you agree with the proposed policies and proposals to reduce emissions for the fisheries sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
20. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to achieving a just transition in the fisheries sector?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Relates to Chapter 7: Impact Assessments

Impact Assessment of the Climate Action Plan

Several impact assessments have been undertaken as part of the development of the draft Climate Action Plan. Individual assessments have been carried out for the policies and proposals across all sectors, with each assessment proportionate to the scale and likely impact of the respective measure. In addition, overarching impact assessments have been conducted to consider the cumulative effects of the draft plan as a whole. Where proposals are at an early stage of development, some impacts may not yet be fully identified, and these will be considered further as the proposals are refined.

21. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Financial, Social and Economic Impact Assessments that have been carried out on the policies and proposals in the draft Climate Action Plan?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:
22. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the overarching Financial, Social and Economic Impact Assessment of the draft Climate Action Plan?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:
23. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Equality Screening and Equality Impact Assessment?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:
24. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Rural Needs Impact Assessments that have been carried out on the policies and proposals in the draft Climate Action Plan?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:

25. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the overarching Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the draft Climate Action Plan?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any comments on the findings:
26. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
27. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
28. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Regulatory Impact Assessment?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
29. To what extent do you agree with the key findings of the Children's Rights Impact Assessment?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
30. Can you provide any further information which will help to supplement the completion of these impact assessments?
Please provide details, identifying the assessment to which the information relates

Relates to Chapter 8: The Natural Environment and Climate Change

Soil Quality, Biodiversity and Air Quality Targets

The Act requires us to set specific targets for soil quality, biodiversity and air quality in this draft Climate Action Plan. The Act also requires that, where practicable, the policies and proposals should support and use nature-based projects, either individually or as part of wider action.

31. To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Soil Quality?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
32. To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Biodiversity?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives
33. To what extent do you agree with the proposed target for Air Quality?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Nature-Based Solutions to Reducing Emissions

Nature-based Solutions will create thriving habitats and ecosystems which reduce emissions, whilst also providing a landscape and marine environment which is more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

34. Can you provide any further information which will help us to incorporate Nature-based Solutions into our policies and proposals?

Yes/No If yes, please provide details

Relates to Chapter 9: Governance for Delivery

Climate Action Governance Arrangements

We will only meet our carbon budget if we can successfully deliver the policies and proposals we have identified. Achieving this will require ongoing commitment and prioritisation of this work, shared ownership and cross-departmental working, and appropriate levels of oversight and scrutiny to keep us on track. Managing this implementation process will mean establishing appropriate governance structures within government, creating new statutory oversight bodies and working in partnership with existing independent oversight bodies.

35. To what extent do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements to support the delivery of the Climate Action Plan?

Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Relates to Chapter 10: Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and Reporting on Policies and Proposals

Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of policies and actions and the resulting impact on emissions reduction will be an essential element of tracking progress towards achieving the 2023-2027 carbon budget and meeting interim targets set for 2030 and 2040. We will ensure a robust monitoring framework is in place to keep us on our net zero pathway.

36. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to monitoring and reporting on policies and proposals?

Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree

Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Relates to Chapter 11: Public Sector Leading by Example

Public Sector Leading by Example

The public sector is critical to the successful delivery of the draft Climate Action Plan - influencing and enabling positive behaviours, driving change and acting as a leader on climate action and low carbon innovation. We are committed to forging a net zero pathway by delivering vital public services in a way that reduces emissions, reduces waste and uses scarce resources more sustainably.

37. Do you have suggestions about other actions that we should be taking across the public sector?
Yes/No If yes, please provide details

Relates to Chapter 12: Enabling the Transition to Net Zero

Enabling the Change to net zero

The draft Climate Action Plan sets out the importance of science and innovation, education and skills, infrastructure, planning, behaviour change and communication as enablers to delivering our pathway to net zero.

38. To what extent do you agree with the actions that we are taking to enable the transition to net zero?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Relates to Chapter 13: Investing in Climate Action

Cost of Implementing the Climate Action Plan

Delivering a cost-effective path to decarbonisation in Northern Ireland requires action across all sectors of the economy and a joined-up approach. Funding our net zero transition will be a collaboration between the public and private sectors.

39. To what extent do you agree with the assessment of the costs of implementing this Climate Action Plan?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

40. Do you have any other information to inform this cost assessment?
Yes/No If yes, please provide details

Just Transition Fund for Agriculture

The purpose of this scheme is to provide advice and financial assistance to the agriculture sector to deliver its contribution to meeting the carbon budgets and emissions reduction targets by implementing proposals and policies to be included in Climate Action Plans.

41. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to establishing a Just Transition Fund for Agriculture?
Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree nor disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree
Please provide your reasons and any alternatives

Annex 1

Publication of Responses

Confidentiality

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation may be disclosed on request. The Department can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations as these provide guidance on the legal position of any information given by you in response to this consultation. Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system in e-mail responses will not be treated as such a request.

Data Protection

Section 8 (e) of the Data Protection Act 2018 permits processing of personal data when necessary for an activity that supports or promotes democratic engagement. Information provided by respondents to this consultation exercise will be held and used for the purposes of the administration of this current exercise and subsequently disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation.

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority (the Department in this case). This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances.

The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- The Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
- The Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature;
- Acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses, please contact the Information Commissioner's Office:

0303 123 1113

ni@ico.org.uk

www.ico.org.uk



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Depairtment o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 nd October 2025
Subject:	Depot Charging Funding Scheme
Reporting Officer	Conor Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability
Contact Officer	Eamonn Keaveney, Head of Sustainability

<table><tr><td>For decision</td><td>X</td><td>For noting only</td><td></td></tr></table>		For decision	X	For noting only	
For decision	X	For noting only			
1.0	Purpose and Background				
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Committee to proceed with an application for grant funding for Electric Vehicle chargers funded through the Depot Charging Scheme.				
2.0	Key Issues The Depot Charging Scheme, launched by the UK Cabinet Office in partnership with the Department for Transport and the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), is a grant initiative aimed at accelerating the transition to zero-emission commercial fleets by supporting the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure at fleet depots.				
2.1	The scheme offers up to 75% funding (capped at £1 million per organisation) for eligible installation costs, including chargepoints, civil works, and energy systems. It targets public and private sector fleets, with installations required to be completed by 31 March 2026.				
2.2	Council is currently in the process of the procurement of 12No electric vehicle chargepoints to be installed at Downshire Civic Centre, Strangford Rd Depot and Greenbank Depot. If successful, the grant funding would offset the current capital costs associated with this project. Costs are to be determined following completion of the procurement exercise.				
3.0	Recommendations				
3.1	Members are asked to: Note the contents of the report and approve the submission of an application for grant funding under the Depot Charging Scheme				
4.0	Resource implications				
4.1	There are no additional resources associated with this submission.				
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)				
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒				
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i>				

	Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
7.1	N/A
8.0	Background Documents
8.1	None.

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 nd October 2025
Subject:	Draft Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Sage, Assistant Director, Sustainability
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Eamonn Keaveney, Head of Sustainability

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

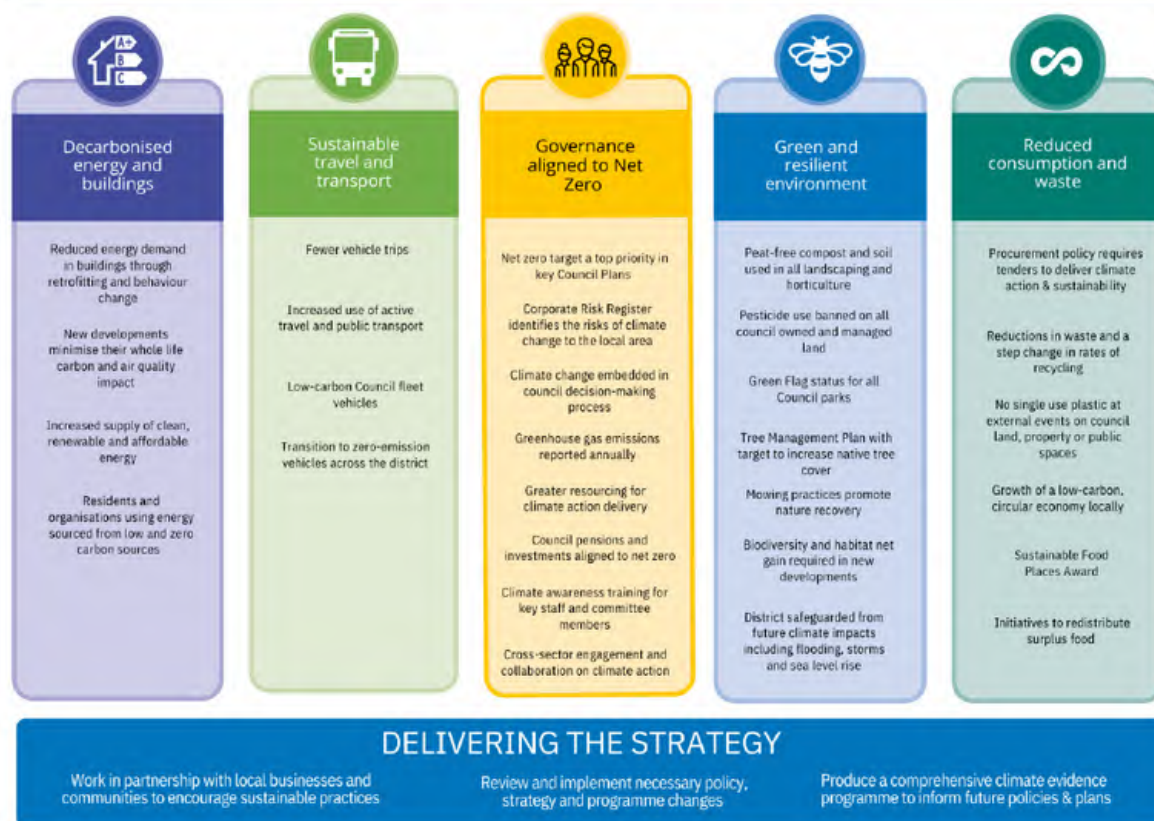
For decision	x	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	To provide an update on the Draft Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and seek approval to proceed with public consultation.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	Sustainability and Climate Change are both important cross cutting themes in the Council's Corporate Plan and Community Plan. The Council is currently developing its first Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. A first draft was brought to Committee previously and work has been ongoing to develop the final draft including a Workshop with key cross departmental staff, a Councillor Workshop, and Consultation with other Councils. The process has been supported by Sustainable NI who are recognised external experts on Sustainability.
2.2	The Strategy sets out how the Council plans to address climate change in Newry, Mourne and Down District over the next four years (2026 to 2030). The strategy sets out how the Council will act to reduce our carbon emissions and our impacts on climate change, meet our requirements under the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 and work in partnership to influence others to take positive action to reduce our emissions and our impacts on climate change to ensure that together we become a resilient and thriving zero carbon district and region. This will include cross border collaboration with Louth County Council to share best practice and ensure a strategic approach to climate action in the region.
2.3	The Strategy sets Key targets to be achieved including: • Net Zero Council and District by 2050 • Climate Resilient Council and District by 2050 • Council's scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions will be net zero by 2050 • 50% reduction in Council's scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2040 • Measure and reduce our scope 3 emissions by engaging with 80% of our supply chain by 2035

	• Transition our light fleet to 100% electric or zero emission vehicles by 2035 • Increase Recycling rates to 70% by 2030 • Fully decarbonise our fleet (including medium and heavy duty vehicles) by 2050
2.4	Additional Target areas include: • Energy Efficiency and retrofitting of buildings • Invest in Renewables • Promote and develop Active Travel • Align Climate Action with other key strategies, including our Biodiversity Strategy, Tourism Strategy, AONB Management Plans and our 10 Year Masterplan for our UNESCO Global Geopark. • Engagement with Community, businesses and schools to encourage climate action • Strategic Leadership on Climate Action in the District • Strategic Cross Border Cooperation with Louth County Council to develop a Net Zero region
2.5	The Strategy sets specific key targets and objectives across the 5 themes below towards the achievement of net zero carbon by 2050 (which is an international, UK and NI level target).

Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy 2025 - 2030

POLICY FRAMEWORK



Actions linked to the objectives listed above under each Theme will be set, delivered and reviewed annually and will be reported on every 3 years in accordance with Public Body Reporting legislation. An Action Plan will be developed alongside the Strategy and delivered across Council as part of the Council's Climate Action programme.

The Strategy is a public facing document, which will be launched online and available for all to read. The Action Plan will be an internal, working document, that will ensure we develop and deliver effective climate action to reduce our impacts on climate change and become more energy efficient across the Council estate.

2.6

Public consultation is intended to take place from 13th November 2025 closing on 6th February 2026, through the NMD Speak service, where respondents will be asked to consider a number of set questions (attached at Appendix 1). Public consultation will last for 12 weeks.

	The draft strategy will be revised in light of any relevant feedback received through the consultation process and a final version will be brought back to Committee at the earliest opportunity for approval. The planned timeframe for publication and launch of the Strategy is the start of the new financial year 2026/27. We would particularly welcome any further feedback from elected representatives as part of the public consultation process. Members will be informed when it goes live, and will be requested to provide feedback via NMD Speak service or directly to besustainable@nmandd.org.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	Members are asked to note the draft Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy in Appendix 1, along with the attached consultation questions in Appendix 2, and approve the launch of a 12-week public consultation.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	As the strategy is intended to be a public facing document, there will be a financial cost for design works, which has been estimated at approximately £2490.00, although this will vary based on final drafts and proposals. This is already included in the current rates estimates. Any future resource requests will be considered annually when required. External funding will also be applied for when available.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☒

5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☒ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☒ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐ If no, please complete the following: The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs ☐ <i>This will be carried out as required for the new Strategy in advance of a final draft being brought to Committee for approval.</i>
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1 - Draft Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy Appendix 2 – Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy Consultation Questions
8.0	Background Documents
	None

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Sustainability and Climate Change

Strategy

2026 – 2030



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Forewords

As Chairperson of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, I have great pleasure in introducing this Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and action plan.

Our District is a special place and it is vitally important that we preserve and enhance the beauty of the area and its fragile environment and the benefits it provides for those who live and visit the region, for current and future generations.

In delivering this strategy we would seek the support of local people as we change the way we do things. We would also encourage people to make changes to their lifestyles, by becoming more energy efficient, reducing waste and making greater use of sustainable forms of transport.

Together we can make Newry, Mourne and Down a safe, sustainable and prosperous place where we are proud to live, work and play, now and into the future.

PHOTO

Cllr Philip Campbell, Council Chairperson

I am pleased to introduce the Council's first Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, which outlines how we will take positive action to address the challenges we face.

In the wake of mounting concerns about the already evident impacts of climate change both globally and locally including within our own district, the Council needs to set out a clear plan of action across its services. We are becoming increasingly aware of the fragility of our planet and the localised impact of climate change, including increased frequency and severity of flooding in our District. We recognise that our Council has a responsibility to make changes to our own practices and operations, but crucially that we must also take a leading role in fostering a wider culture of sustainability across our District.

In order to deliver real change, we are embedding sustainability across all areas of our work. Sustainability has been included as a cross-cutting theme in the Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans. Each member of staff has a key role to play. We will also continue to engage with local communities, citizens, businesses and other stakeholders to ensure we have a resilient, thriving and sustainable District.

I would like to thank those who have contributed to the development of this strategy and who will continue to work in cooperation to ensure it is implemented to counter the threats and take advantage of the opportunities arising from climate change.

PHOTO

Marie Ward, Chief Executive Officer

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Summary

This Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan sets out our plans to address climate change in Newry, Mourne and Down District over the next four years.

By identifying the current and projected impacts of climate change across the district, the plan looks at how the Council will act to reduce our carbon emissions and our impacts on climate change, meet our requirements under the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 and work in partnership to influence others to take positive action to reduce our emissions and our impacts on climate change to ensure that together we become a resilient and thriving zero carbon district and region.

Who we are



Newry, Mourne and Down District nestles in the south-east coastal area of Northern Ireland, encompassing large parts of Counties Down and Armagh.

The natural beauty and unique character of the area has been widely recognised, boasting no less than three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs): Mourne, Ring of Gullion and Strangford and Lecale. In 2023 the unique landscape and geology of the area was also internationally recognised, through the award of UNESCO Global Geopark status.

Alongside the natural characteristics of the area, the District is strategically located on the important eastern A1/M1 economic corridor, within one hour travelling distance from Dublin and Belfast, with close proximity to two major airports, a deep-water port at Warrenpoint, and transport routes to the south of Ireland and UK.

The economic strengths, complimented by the environmental beauty and natural resources of the area, makes the District an attractive place to invest in, and also a popular place to live in, work in, and to visit.

We fully recognise that as a Council we have a statutory duty to promote the achievement of sustainable development in the exercise of our functions, which is evidenced in the significant work undertaken in recent years. A sustainability team has been operating in Council for several years, working on areas such as sustainability, environmental education, energy management, biodiversity, active travel and sustainable food. Developments in the areas of waste prevention, recycling and recovery have also helped lead us towards a circular economy approach.

Our Commitment

“Newry, Mourne and Down District Council will work in partnership to influence others to take positive action to reduce our emissions and our impacts on climate change to ensure that together we become a resilient and thriving zero carbon district and region.”

Key targets

- Net Zero Council and District by 2050
- Climate Resilient Council and District by 2050

These first 2 key targets are set at International, UK and NI level and therefore must be met.

- Council's scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions will be net zero by 2050
- 50% reduction in Council's scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2040
- Measure and reduce our scope 3 emissions by engaging with 80% of our supply chain by 2035
- Transition our light fleet to 100% electric or zero emission vehicles by 2035
- Increase Recycling rates to 70% by 2030
- Fully decarbonise our fleet (including medium and heavy duty vehicles) by 2050

Additional areas for action

- Energy Efficiency and retrofitting of buildings
- Invest in Renewables
- Promote and develop Active Travel
- Align Climate Action with other key strategies, including our Biodiversity Strategy, Tourism Strategy, AONB Management Plans and our 10 Year Masterplan for our UNESCO Global Geopark.
- Engagement with Community, businesses and schools to encourage climate action
- Strategic Leadership on Climate Action in the District
- Cross Border Cooperation with Louth County Council to develop a Net Zero region – check wording

Themes

The Council has a Statutory Duty to report its carbon emissions/carbon footprint and how it is taking action to reduce emissions.

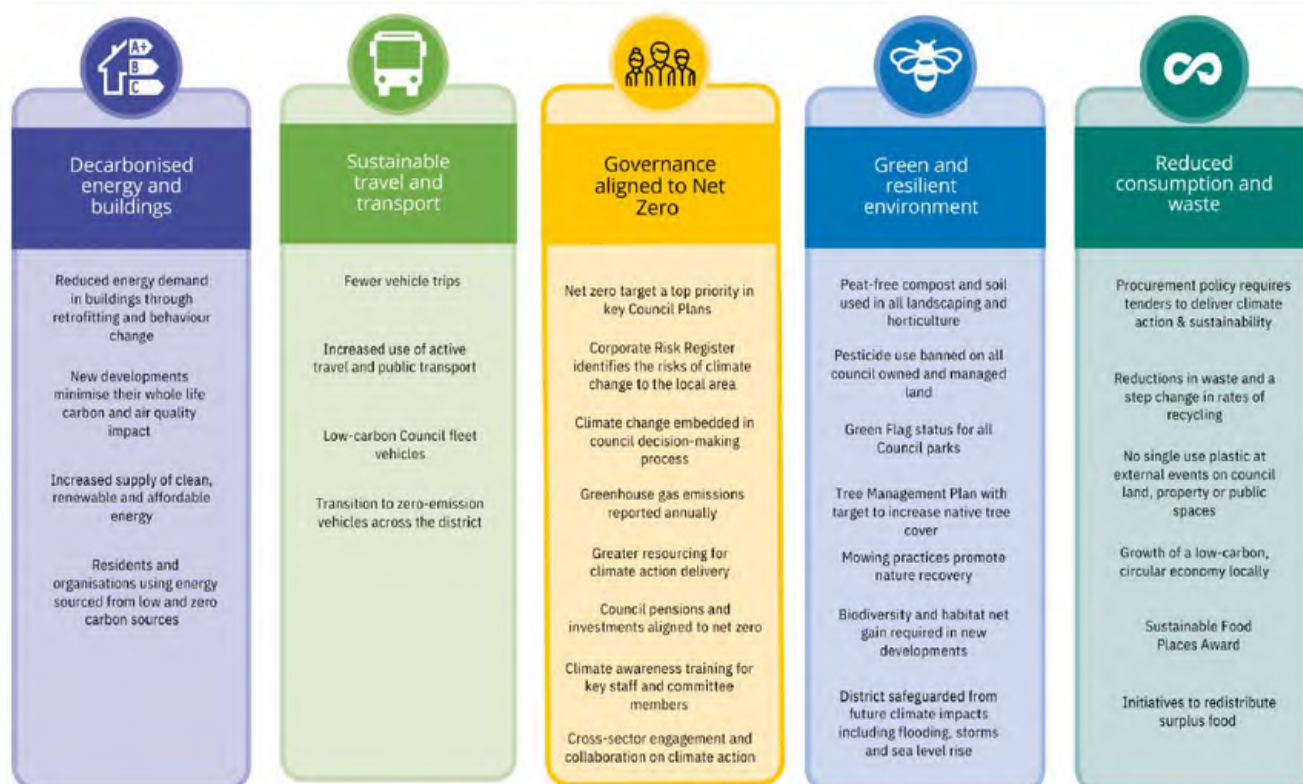
The Council also has a key role as an enabler and influencer to encourage and work with Government Departments, statutory bodies, community and local organisations as well as the district's citizens to ensure the entire district moves towards being a Net Zero District by 2050.

Actions will therefore be included which will directly encourage action across the district as well as internally within the Council estate and services.

Actions have been identified across 5 general themes, outlined below, with a commitment to ensuring that appropriate resources and funding must be in place in order to deliver on our targets.

Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy 2025 - 2030

POLICY FRAMEWORK



DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

Work in partnership with local businesses and communities to encourage sustainable practices

Review and implement necessary policy, strategy and programme changes

Produce a comprehensive climate evidence programme to inform future policies & plans

The Strategy sets specific key targets and actions across these 5 themes towards the achievement of net zero carbon by 2050 (which is an international, UK and NI level target). Actions will be reviewed annually and will be reported on every 3 years in accordance with Public Body Reporting legislation.



Our Vision

“Our vision is a net zero, greener, healthier, sustainable district by 2050 - where people, communities, and businesses thrive and are resilient to the impacts of climate change.”

Aims

- To support a fair transition to net zero.
- To build climate resilience.
- To protect, restore and reconnect people with nature.
- To champion a circular economy

What is Climate Change?



Aerial Photo of Flooding in Newry 2023

Climate change is the long-term shift in average weather patterns across the world and the increase in extreme weather events. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) highlight in its most recent report how human activities are extremely likely to have resulted in the unprecedented warming observed since the pre-industrial era via increased emission of greenhouse gases (IPCC, 2014).

The Greenhouse Effect

The earth is surrounded by a layer of gasses which retain some of the heat from the sun's rays and prevent it from radiating back into space. This is called the Greenhouse effect - a natural process without which earth would not be warm enough for life to survive. Human activity, mainly from burning of fossil fuels, releases greenhouse gases including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and sulphur dioxide. This has resulted in an increase in this layer of gases around the earth, resulting in higher levels of heat being trapped and therefore a warmer world.

The IPCC has warned urgent action is needed to cut greenhouse gas emissions and limit warming to at least 2°C and preferably 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial values, to avoid catastrophic impacts of climate change. The most recent data from the IPCC confirms that human-induced climate change is already causing observable adverse impacts and damages to both people and nature, beyond typical variability of the climate (IPCC, 2022).

UK climate change projections, published in 2018 (UKCP18), set out a range of possible outcomes over the next century. They are based on different rates of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. It is expected that Northern Ireland will have a greater chance of hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters with more extreme weather and rising sea levels.

The highest predicted projections for Northern Ireland show that by 2070 winters could be up to 3.9 °C warmer and 25 per cent wetter, whilst summers could be up to 4.9°C hotter and 38 per cent drier.¹

In the last decade we have already seen examples of more extreme weather in our District, with major flooding incidents in Newry, Newcastle and Downpatrick in October 2023, storm damage from a number of named storms including Storm Eowyn in 2025, and the extent of our coastline means that we are also at risk from coastal erosion and rising sea levels.

¹

Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

There are 2 aspects of Climate Change which the Council needs to take action on: Mitigation and Adaptation.

Climate Change Mitigation is taking actions to reduce our contribution to climate change by reducing our carbon emissions. This includes taking action to reduce our use of fossil fuels like gas, oil and diesel for heating cooling and powering our buildings and our fleet and switching to low or zero carbon alternatives like Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO), hydrogen, electric and renewable energy sources like solar and wind.

Climate Change Adaptation is preparing the Council to make its services, buildings and staff resilient and protected from the extremes of weather and climate which climate change will bring and is already causing across the globe.

Diagram showing Climate Mitigation and Climate Adaptation areas for action and Crossover activities



This Strategy and Action Plan focusses on Climate Change Mitigation – taking action to reduce our carbon emissions and our contribution to the Climate Change problem.

Climate Change Adaptation actions are covered in the Council's Climate Adaptation Plan which is being developed to look in more detail at the impacts of climate change such as increased rainfall and flooding, increased storminess, extremes of heat and cold and rising sea levels, and how we will adapt to make our staff, services and buildings more resilient to these impacts.

Strategic and Legislative Context

There are many reasons to respond to the challenges associated with Sustainability and Climate Change. Fundamentally it is the right thing to do in order to protect and enhance what we value in the District, and to deliver positive outcomes for the Council, and those who invest, live and work locally.

Action will be taken across our 5 themes, which are informed by the challenges and opportunities of climate change, our corporate objectives, and which respond to regional and national legislation which is in turn driven by International Law, and a number of key International Treaties and Agreements.

International

The Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol was the first major international climate change agreement adopted in 1997 aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions to combat climate change. It was a legally binding treaty that set emission reduction targets for developed countries, based on the scientific consensus that global warming is occurring due to human activities.

The Paris Agreement COP21

Climate change became a priority for governments all over the world as they realised its impacts threatened livelihoods, the environment, security, and economic growth. In 2015 in Paris 195 states agreed to sign the COP21 Paris Agreement to take action to reduce carbon emissions to limit Global warming to 1.5°C. The agreement set up the IPCC (International Panel on Climate Change) as the lead global body to advise countries on climate action.

A recent IPCC Special Report 2018 underlined the need to meet and exceed the Paris Agreement and achieve meaningful emission reductions before 2030:

“Pathways limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems... These systems transitions are unprecedented in terms of scale, but not necessarily in terms of speed, and imply deep emissions reductions in all sectors, a wide portfolio of mitigation options and a significant upscaling of investments in those options” - IPCC Special Report 2018

The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Sustainable Development Goals underline the importance of climate change for an equal and equitable society. All 17 goals can be related to the impacts and opportunities of climate change, with Goal 7 'Affordable Clean Energy' and Goal 13 'Climate Action' being particularly relevant. The SDGs recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.



The UK Climate Change Act 2008 establishes a framework for legally binding carbon emissions reduction targets and carbon budgeting. It was amended in 2019 to set a net-zero target by 2050.

NI Legislation

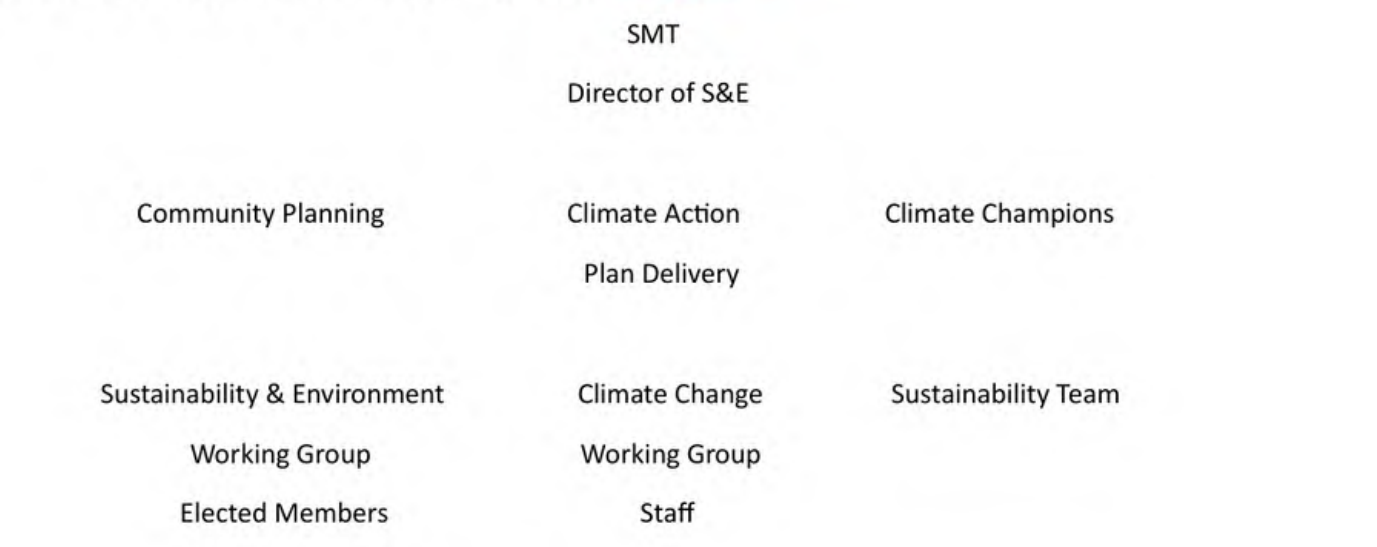
The NI Climate Change Act 2022 is the main NI Legislative driver which requires organisations here to take action to reduce their carbon emissions and their impact on climate change. Public bodies, such as local authorities, are also now required to report on their carbon footprint and initiatives that are being undertaken to mitigate against climate change. The recent *Climate Change (Public Bodies) Regulations NI 2024* now requires the council to report every 3 years with the initial baseline report due in October 2025. The Council has recently carried out work to measure its carbon footprint and prepare the first report to Government.

Additional Climate related Legislation is listed in Appendix 1

The Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will lay out how we will respond to the legislation and to the imperative to take action now and over the next few decades to reduce our impacts on climate change as we move towards a zero carbon future.

Implementing Climate Action

Council Structure for implementing Climate Action: **Diagram**



Implementation of the Climate Action Plan will be led by the Council’s Senior Management Team and elected members of the Sustainability and Environment Working Group, guided by the Community Planning process. The staff Climate Change Working Group will help deliver the Strategy and Plan, coordinated by the Sustainability team. The Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will feed into the Council’s Business planning process via the Community Plan and Corporate Plan. This in turn will inform the Directorate Business Plans and develop actions for inclusion in each Service Plan. This will ensure that each service will contribute to addressing the Council’s climate change impacts and reduce their carbon emissions by taking action across all areas of the council’s work.

Sustainability and Climate Change are already cross cutting themes within the Corporate Plan and this will develop further as climate action becomes a key theme for action across all service areas. Climate Champions will be identified and engaged across the Council to help coordinate and encourage action.

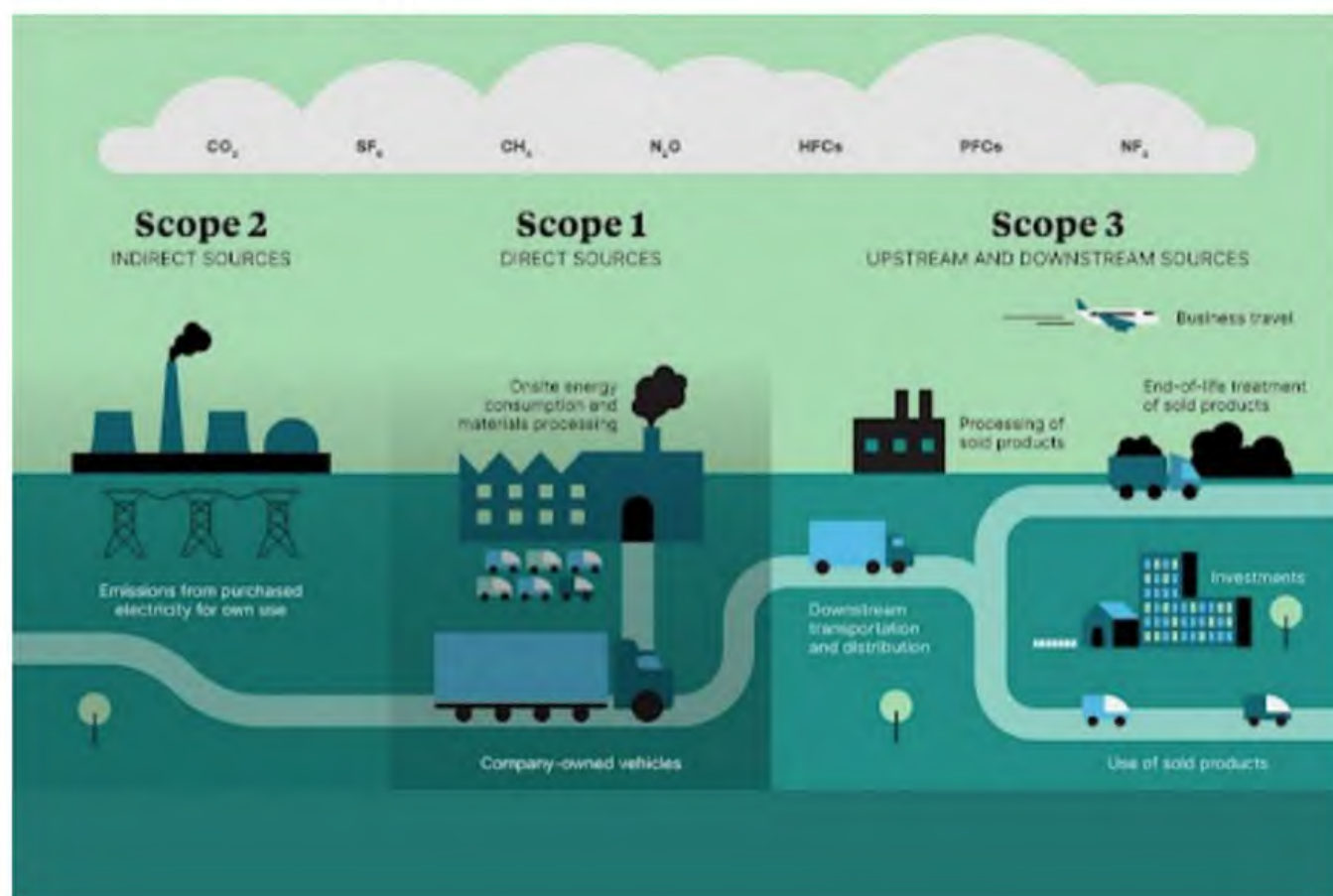
Areas for action will also develop as technology, legislation and the working environment evolves, for example a move towards electrification of heating and cooling as the electricity grid becomes decarbonised will ensure we reduce our emissions significantly. Measures such as switching our diesel fleet to running on Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) will reduce fleet carbon emissions in the interim, and boiler replacements in the short term from oil to gas will reduce those carbon emissions by about a third. In the longer term the move to net zero by 2050 will be delivered by further actions accessing technologies powered by fully decarbonised ‘green’ electricity and other renewable energy sources and technologies.

Getting to 100% Net Zero is a challenge and carbon offsetting will play a role in mitigating unavoidable carbon emissions to achieve net zero. This can partly be achieved through sustainable management of green spaces, wetlands and woodlands and other nature based assets within the Council’s ownership and management.

Carbon Emissions - Scope 1, 2 and 3

This strategy will initially focus on Council operations which include Scope 1 (emissions from heating and cooling buildings and fuelling fleet vehicles) and Scope 2 (emissions from electricity used in buildings) Carbon emissions. Scope 3 emissions will be included as part of planned future work. This is another means of ensuring that the strategy and our future actions have a wider impact, including positively impacting our supply chains.

Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 Emissions types



Our Baseline Emissions

Measuring and Reporting our Carbon Footprint

Public bodies, such as local authorities, are now required to report on their carbon footprint and initiatives that are being undertaken to mitigate against climate change. Under the recent *‘Climate Change (Public Bodies) Regulations NI 2024’* the council is required to report every 3 years with the initial baseline report due in October 2025.

Council has established its Baseline Carbon Footprint for the year 2024/25 (set by Government) by gathering and analysing data on Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions including electricity, gas and oil use in buildings as well as Transport/Fleet emissions.

The Council’s Carbon Footprint is 5,246 tCO2e (Tonnes of CO2 equivalent)

Table 1: Baseline emissions footprint for NMDDC

Scope	Emission Source	Total (tCO ₂ e)
Scope 1	Event Fuel (Gas Oil)	8
	Buildings – Heating fuels	2,173
	Kerosene	1,142
	Natural Gas	1,013
	Gas Oil	7
	LPG	5
	Propane	5
	Vehicles	2,116
	Diesel	2,105
	Unleaded	10
	Gas Oil	0
Scope 2	Buildings - Electricity	949
Total Emissions		5,246

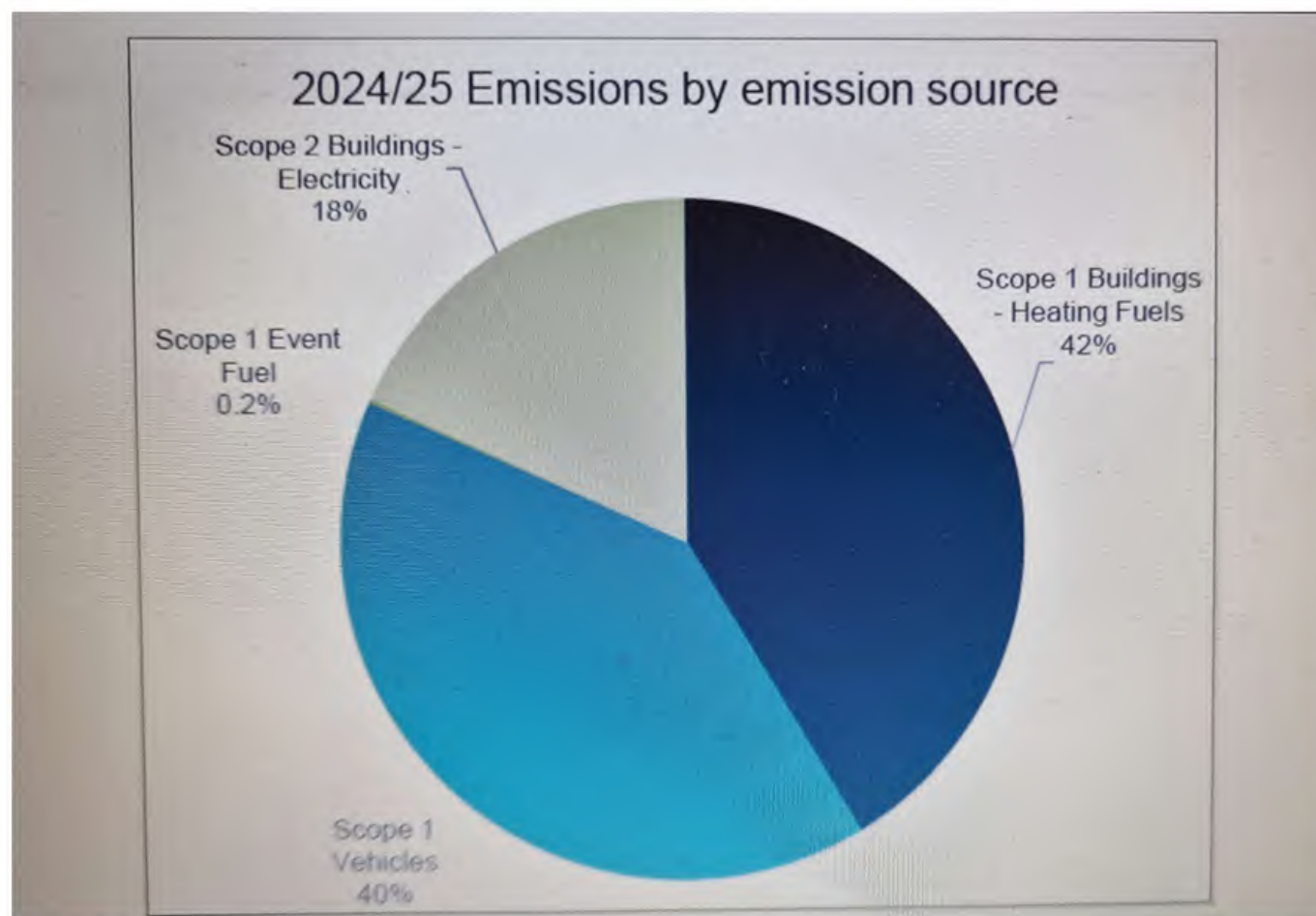


Figure 1: NMDDC's greenhouse gas emissions per scope and emission source

The Council's Carbon Baseline report also looked at a breakdown of the various aspects of the emissions to identify key areas for action to reduce them.

Scope 1 emissions make up the largest proportion of emissions (4,927 tCO₂e), with buildings heating fuels contributing 42% of emissions and fleet vehicles emissions 40%.

Scope 2 buildings electricity use makes up 18% of emissions.

Lesser emissions were identified from fuel use for events (generators) 0.2% and use of F Gases in air conditioning less than 0.2% - both Scope 1 emissions.

Carbon emissions from different fuel type use are set out in Table 1 above showing **that kerosene (heating oil) (1,142 tCO₂e) and Natural Gas (1,013 tCO₂e) along with diesel for vehicles (2,105 tCO₂e) are the 3 largest carbon emission sources.**

Further analysis shows that our biggest building energy users and carbon emitters are our Leisure Centres. This is to be expected as these buildings provide the community with activities which require a greater amount of heating (swimming pools) and electricity (lighting and equipment) during weekdays and weekends.

Further analysis and breakdown of the data from the carbon emissions baseline report will be used to identify target areas for actions to reduce our carbon emissions as well as ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of actions.

What are we doing well

In 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and has continued to take steps to effect change in every area under its control, to mitigate against the impacts of climate change. In 2020, the Council organised a Climate Symposium, bringing together a range of internationally renowned expert speakers as well as councils and community organisations from across the UK and Ireland, who shared with us their achievements in climate action and practical case studies on carbon reductions.

A review of staff structure set up a new Directorate of Sustainability and Environment led by a Director of Sustainability and Environment who is the Council's overall Sustainability and Climate Change Champion. An Assistant Director of Sustainability is responsible for Sustainability as well as Estates, Facilities and Fleet management and a Head of Sustainability heads up the Sustainability Team who will lead on developing and delivering the Strategy and wider Sustainability and Climate action.

Alongside the continued embedding of sustainability within Council policies and practices, a number of successful high-profile projects have been delivered in recent years. This includes:

- The CANN Project (Collaborative Action for the Natura Network), an INTERREG VA funded cross-border environment project to improve protected habitats and support priority species. A key part of CANN included the restoration of Peatlands and wetlands which are known to be important carbon sinks which can offset climate impacts.
- A former Council Landfill Site was used to improve biodiversity and help boost the population of the once endangered Irish Black Bees, an important pollinator species, by installing bee hives on site, with this initiative winning a number of awards.
- In 2023 the council was also part of the INTERREG VA supported FASTER project, which installed high-speed public EV Charging points for electric vehicles installed at prominent sites across the District. The Council is also a member of the NI EV Consortium delivering additional EV Chargepoints for residents as part of the ORCS project (On Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme).

Photos of Projects to be included

What we can do better

Achieving our collective net zero 2050 goal will require ambitious action within our own organisation and championing change across all sectors.

To ensure we can maximise our impact, we will prioritise actions that eliminate emissions, followed by those that reduce or substitute emissions. Offsetting will only be used where all other options have been explored first, in line with the principles of the carbon management hierarchy^{ref} set out below. We will prioritise nature-based solutions and solutions that help us adapt to climate impacts, where possible.



Source: Adapted from EMA Greenhouse Gas Management Hierarchy (2020)

Our Commitment to Sustainability

The Council recognises that environmental, social, and economic systems are interdependent. A thriving economy depends on a healthy society, which in turn relies on a stable and resilient natural environment.

Long-term economic success is only possible when the economy operates within environmental limits and contributes positively to society. That's why the council has taken steps to embed sustainability into our corporate strategy and community plan as a way of future-proofing our operations against regulatory changes, ratepayer expectations, and future risks.

Embedding climate action into everything we do

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to integrating climate action and sustainability into all aspects of its operations, decision-making, and policies. With a combined revenue and capital budget of approximately £60 million and a workforce of over 1,000 employees, the Council provides a wide range of services including Household Waste Collection, Births & Deaths Registration, Leisure, Community Engagement, Environmental Health, Building Control, Economic Development, and Tourism. We also manage Planning and Community Planning, functions that were transferred from central government to local authorities in Northern Ireland in 2015.

Our work is driven by collaboration with local communities and organisations across the public, voluntary, community, and private sectors. Together, we aim to create a shared vision for our area, improving services and quality of life for all citizens.

While this Strategy primarily focuses on reducing emissions and improving sustainability within Council operations, we are committed to working with relevant stakeholders, including government departments, on broader policies that affect emissions in our district. These include areas such as planning policy, energy policy, green growth, and transport infrastructure.

We will work closely with other local authorities, both north and south of the border, to maximise efficiency in delivering shared climate objectives. In particular we will work in partnership cross border with Louth County Council.

The Council also acknowledges the importance of supporting local communities, businesses, and households as they transition to a low-carbon future. By working closely with our partners, we will ensure Newry, Mourne and Down becomes a greener, healthier, and more sustainable district by 2050.

In the short term, it is essential that we begin by improving our own operations. This will involve reducing energy consumption in our buildings through retrofitting, adopting passive design, and implementing efficiency measures. We will also invest in renewable energy and low-carbon vehicles. We will ensure that any new technologies we adopt are cost-effective, suitable for our needs, and aligned with our service delivery objectives.

This Strategy also recognises the importance of a fair transition for all. We will continue engaging with stakeholders, including government Departments, to influence policy and deliver local programmes that drive meaningful change.

Additionally, we recognise the interconnected nature of sustainability challenges, including land and water use, waste reduction, recycling, pollution and plastic reduction, and air quality improvement. This

Strategy addresses these challenges with targeted actions to make our district more sustainable for future generations.

Taking a long-term approach

The pursuit of sustainability requires a long-term perspective and the courage to make bold, decisive choices to address the climate crisis with urgency.

Many climate measures offer a return on investment, but some will require larger upfront investments with longer payback periods. In such cases, the Council will adopt a long-term approach, using whole-life costing to balance initial capital outlay against reduced operating costs and long-term value.

At the same time, the Council will work to ensure the District benefits from the growing green economy by positioning itself to attract investment, support the creation of new green jobs, and equip people with the skills needed for a low-carbon future.

The evidence is clear: while the upfront investment in climate action is substantial, the economic and social benefits of action far outweigh the costs. Conversely, delaying action only increases future risks and expenses. As the Stern Review (2006) demonstrated, early and decisive action is both the most cost-effective and the most responsible course of action.

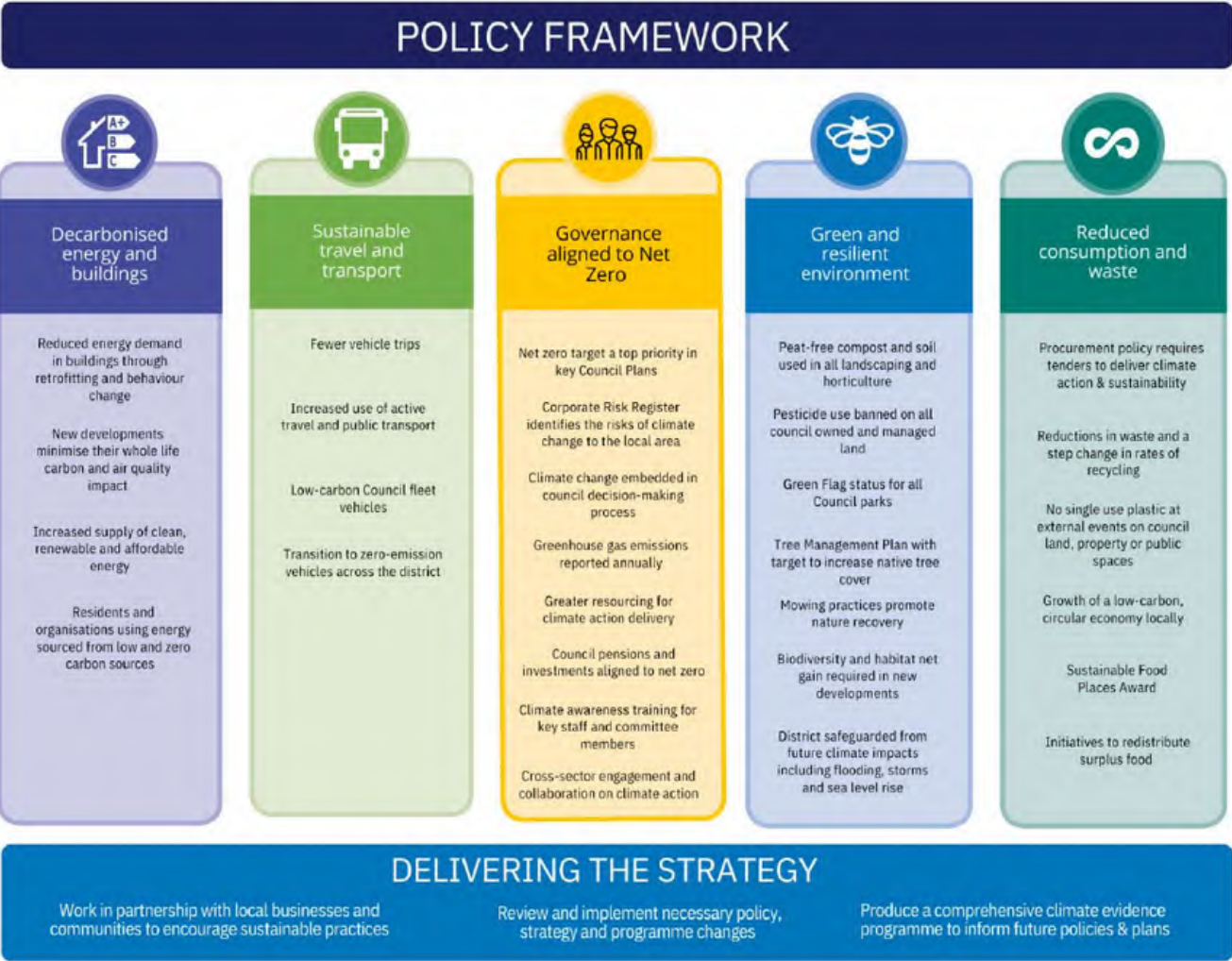
RENEWABLE ENERGY PHOTO/GRAPHIC



Action Plan

Actions will be developed based on the Objectives in the 5 Themes of the Strategy

Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy 2025 - 2030



Theme 1. Decarbonised Energy and Buildings

Objectives

1. Reduced energy demand in buildings through retrofitting and behaviour change
2. New developments minimise their whole life carbon and air quality impact
3. Increased supply of clean, renewable and affordable energy
4. Residents and organisations using energy sourced from low and zero carbon sources

Theme 2. Sustainable Travel and Transport

Objectives

1. Fewer vehicle trips.
2. Increased use of active travel and public transport.
3. Low carbon Council fleet vehicles.
4. Transition to zero emission vehicles across the district.

Theme 3. Governance aligned to Net Zero

Objectives

1. Net Zero Target a top priority in key Council plans.
2. Corporate Risk Register identifies the risks of climate change to the local area.
3. Climate Change embedded in Council decision-making process.
4. Greenhouse gas emissions reported annually.
5. Greater resourcing for Climate Action delivery.
6. Council pensions and investments aligned to Net Zero.
7. Climate awareness training for key staff and committee members.
8. Cross-sector engagement and collaboration on climate action.

Theme 4. Green and Resilient Environment

Objectives

1. Peat free compost and soil used in landscaping and horticulture.
2. Pesticide use banned on all Council owned and managed land.
3. Green Flag status for all Council Parks.
4. Tree Management Plan with Target to increase native tree cover.
5. Mowing practices promote nature recovery.
6. Biodiversity and habitat net gain required in new developments.
7. District safeguarded from future climate impacts including flooding, storms and sea level rise.

Theme 5. Reduced Consumption and Waste

Objectives

1. Procurement policy requires tenders to deliver climate action and sustainability.
2. Reductions in Waste and a step change in rates of recycling.
3. No single use plastic at external events on Council land, property or public spaces.
4. Growth of a low-carbon circular economy locally.
5. Sustainable Food Places Award.
6. Initiatives to redistribute surplus food.

Monitoring and Reporting - Methodology

The strategy was developed using ICLEI's Five Milestone Approach, a widely used framework for local authorities to plan, implement, and monitor climate action.

The Council applied this methodology by first drafting a framework of priorities and objectives, then identifying and screening actions through workshops with staff and elected members, ensuring actions were both ambitious and achievable within current policy and funding contexts.

Future iterations of the Plan will expand the process to include consultation with businesses and community stakeholders.

Diagram of ICLEI Methodology Process here



Figure X: International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Five Milestone Approach for Climate Action Planning

Monitoring and Review

Performance on the action plan will be monitored each year to track progress against agreed actions, and progress will be published on our website to ensure transparency. The Strategy and Action plan will be reviewed after five years

Resources and Funding

We recognise that delivering this Strategy and Action Plan will require significant additional resources over its lifetime. While the full costs of achieving net zero emissions are not yet known, further detail will be developed as specific actions are designed and implemented.

A business case approach will be used to develop specific projects and investments linked to the actions. This will look at costs, carbon and energy savings, return on investment and payback periods. The payback and carbon savings generated will be monitored as part of the project management process. Our aim is to have a fully costed project pipeline in place as soon as possible, which will inform future revisions of this Strategy.

Sustainability, climate change, and environmental and energy management require specialist expertise. Where appropriate, we will draw on consultancy support and engage with relevant stakeholders, businesses, and partners to ensure the most effective delivery.

It is clear from estimates of the potential net costs of meeting net zero in Northern Ireland that Councils cannot absorb the financial burden of decarbonisation within existing budgets without placing undue pressure on ratepayers. As part of a just transition, there is therefore a need for additional financial support, to help us make the necessary investments to realise longer-term financial benefits associated with climate action. The Council will continue to plan and invest strategically to deliver emissions reductions in the most cost-effective way, while actively seeking opportunities to secure external funding and working closely with government departments and stakeholders on a cross-border basis to unlock the resources required.

Acknowledgements

The Council wishes to acknowledge the support of Sustainable NI who facilitated staff workshops and reviewed the Strategy and Action Plan.

Ongoing support, advice and engagement from Council Elected Members, Senior Management Team and individual staff members is also much appreciated.

Photos from Workshop to be inserted here

References – to be finalised and added

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Additional Climate Change and Sustainability Legislation

The Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 Provision 25 outlines the Sustainable Development Statutory Duty on Departments and Councils	The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 This includes a target for net zero carbon emissions in Northern Ireland by 2050 alongside a target for 80% of electricity to be supplied from renewables by 2030.
Northern Ireland’s Green Growth Strategy (Draft) This is the Northern Ireland Executive’s multi-decade strategy, balancing climate, environment and the economy (including green jobs) in Northern Ireland. It sets out the long-term vision for tackling the climate crisis in the right way.	Northern Ireland’s First Climate Action Plan (CAP) Whilst still to be published at the time of drafting this strategy, Northern Ireland’s first Climate Action Plan (2023-2027) is anticipated to include additional targets, such as Carbon Budgets, with reporting requirements on areas such as climate mitigation and adaptation.
The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (as amended) Section 5 requires those who exercise any function in relation to Local Development Plans to do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development	NI Regional Development Strategy 2035 This strategy refers to climate change as a key economic and environmental driver and includes strategic guidance on relevant areas, such as a sustainable and secure energy supply, sustainable development and reducing our carbon footprint and facilitating mitigation and adaptation etc.
Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme There is a legal requirement for Northern Ireland Departments to prepare an Adaptation Programme in response to the latest UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA). A number of Councils, including Newry, Mourne and Down District Council have published or are working on Climate Adaptation Plans.	Energy Strategy for Northern Ireland – The Path to Net Zero The Energy Strategy sets out a pathway for energy to 2030 that will mobilise the skills, technologies and behaviours needed to take Northern Ireland towards a vision of net zero carbon and affordable energy by 2050.
Building (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022 This outlines minimum standards for new buildings and retrofit of existing buildings, with respect to carbon performance and energy conservation.	The Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland (Draft) This provides guidance on preserving, protecting and improving our environment for our children and grandchildren.

Back Page Logos



Public Consultation on the Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy for 2026-2030

* Required

* This form will record your name, please fill your name.

Your Privacy

PN to be added

About you

1. Are you answering as: *

- ☐ An Individual
- ☐ On behalf of an organisation

2. Name of organisation

3. Your Name

4. Email Address

Themes of the Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy

5. To what extent do you agree with the 5 themes of this strategy

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Decarbonise energy and buildings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sustainable travel and transport	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Governance aligned to Net Zero	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Green & resilient environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reduced consumption and waste	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6. Are there any additional Themes you feel should be included within the strategy?

Theme 1: Decarbonised Energy and Buildings

The Strategy identifies Decarbonised Energy and Buildings as a key theme

7. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach within the strategy for this theme?

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

8. Are there any other objectives or actions which you feel should be included for Decarbonised Energy and Buildings?

Theme 2: Sustainable Travel and Transport

The Strategy identifies Sustainable Travel and Transport as a key theme

9. **To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach within the strategy for this theme?**

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

10. **Are there any other objectives or actions which you feel should be included for Sustainable Travel and Transport?**

Theme 3: Governance aligned to Net Zero

The Strategy identifies Governance aligned to Net Zero as a key theme

11. **To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach within the strategy for this theme?**

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

12. **Are there any other objectives or actions which you feel should be included for Governance aligned to Net Zero?**

Theme 4: Green and Resilient Environment

The Strategy identifies Green and Resilient Environment as a key theme.

13. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach within the strategy for this theme?

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

14. Are there any other objectives or actions which you feel should be included for Green and Resilient Environment?

Theme 5: Reduced Consumption and Waste

The Strategy identifies Reduced Consumption and Waste as a key theme.

15. **To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach within the strategy for this theme?**

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

16. **Are there any other objectives or actions which you feel should be included for Reduced Consumption and Waste?**

Final Comments

17. Newry Mourne and Down District Council has statutory duties which includes promoting equality of opportunity and good relations in carrying out its functions, and due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans, and designing and delivering public services

To help ensure that we have fully understood any equality of opportunity, good relations or rural needs implications we would appreciate your feedback. Are you aware of any equality of opportunity, good relations or rural needs implications associated with the draft Strategy?

18. **If you have any other comments to make about the Strategy, please tell us here**

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ITEM 3
ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Meeting No 098
MINUTES
Thursday 28 August 2025
Using MS Teams

Members Present:

Councillor A Bennington
 Councillor A Groogan
 Alderman M Morrow
 Councillor K Murphy
 Councillor C Enright
 Councillor T Andrews

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
 Belfast City Council
 Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
 Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
 Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
 Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Members' Apologies:

Councillor M Goodman (*Chair*)
 Councillor H Cushinan
 Councillor J Cochrane
 Councillor E Thompson
 Councillor C Blaney
 Councillor M Collins
 Councillor E McDonough-Brown
 Alderman O Gawith
 Councillor A Givan
 Alderman S Skillen
 Councillor R Quigley
 Councillor G McKeen (*Deputy Chair*)

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
 Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
 Ards & North Down Borough Council
 Ards & North Down Borough Council
 Ards & North Down Borough Council
 Belfast City Council
 Belfast City Council
 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
 Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
 Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

Officers Present:

H Campbell (*Secretary*)
 K Boal
 J Green
 D Lindsay
 G Bannister
 N Martin
 J Frazer
 B Murray
 G Richardson
 W Muldrew
 S Morley
 S Murphy

arc21
 arc21
 arc21
 Ards and North Down Borough Council
 Ards and North Down Borough Council
 Ards and North Down Borough Council
 Ards and North Down Borough Council
 Belfast City Council
 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
 Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
 Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers' Apologies:

T Walker
 M Lavery
 S Leonard
 A McCann

arc21
 Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
 Belfast City Council
 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

In the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, Cllr Bennington was nominated to take the Chair, which was agreed by all.

The Chair welcomed Cllr Groogan, who replaced Cllr Smyth from Belfast City Council, to her first meeting of the Joint Committee.

Item 1 - Conflicts of Interest Statement

The Chair read out the Conflicts of Interest Statement, and none were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 2 - Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 3 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 097 held on 26 June 2025

The Joint Committee approved the minutes. Proposed by Cllr Enright, seconded by Cllr Murphy, and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

Item 4 - Matters Arising

Consultation on the EU Emissions Trading System and the Market Stability Reserve - Ms Boal advised that a response had been agreed with the Chair and submitted by the deadline.

Action: Noted

IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would now move "*in committee*" which was agreed. Proposed by Cllr Enright and seconded by Ald Morrow.

Matters of a confidential and commercially sensitive nature were discussed under these agenda items.

Following discussion on the commercially sensitive matters, the Chair recommended that the meeting would now return to the main agenda, which was approved, but whilst "*In Committee*" during this section of the meeting, there were four matters discussed.

Item 5 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 097 held on 26 June 2025 'in committee' (approved)

Item 6 - Matters Arising (noted)

Item 7 - Residual Waste Treatment Project (noted)

Item 8 - Commercially Sensitive Contract & Procurement Issues (noted)

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Proposed by Cllr Enright and seconded by Ald Morrow.

Item 9 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Ms Boal presented a report to provide the Joint Committee with an update in relation to contracts and operations.

Service Status

She reported that all services were operational during the months of June and July 2025, with contingency arrangements used by Natural World Products (NWP) for a short period of time.

She reported on two Enforcement Notices issued by NIEA in relation to a composting facility, at Nutts Corner and to a MRF facility operated by ReGen Waste Limited located at Derryboy Road, Newry.

Performance

She provided an update on performance across all the contracts for June and July and highlighted where service credits had been applied for turnaround times, the numbers of overweight vehicles, reporting issues by contractors, and the bring contracts rectification requests issued and serviced.

Health & Safety

The Health & Safety incidents during June and July were presented and she reported that there were four, three of which were fire related. She advised that there was increasing concerns by all operators of the risk of fire and the need for councils to encourage appropriate disposal of vapes or batteries.

Audits

Ms Boal reported that during June and July audits were conducted at Natural World Products at their Keady and Drumanakelly sites. She noted that there had been no issues identified or actions recommended, and the consultant had stated that the company had maintained a high level of compliance on site.

Vapes Collections Update

She informed the meeting that Ecogenesys were the new service provider for vapes collection.

She noted that this service will be in place for 6 months starting from 8th July 2025.

Rejected Loads

She reported that there were no rejected loads into Material Recovery delivery sites in June or July 2025, one rejected load delivered into Organics delivery sites in June 2025, and none in July 2025.

arc21 Contract Tonnages

Details of the tonnages delivered in June and July for the main contracts were provided, along with a comparison against the same period last year.

Supplies

A summary of orders and deliveries of supplies for June and July was presented, and Ms Boal noted that there had been one non-compliance where an incorrect pallet of goods had been delivered by the haulier and then rectified by the supplier.

She advised that council officers continue to be reminded to place orders for supplies at the earliest opportunity as delays due to transportation and increased demand for certain categories of containers etc. may occur which may affect delivery timescales.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by Cllr Murphy and seconded by Ald Morrow.

Action: Noted

Item 10 - Waste Tonnage Trends

Ms Boal presented a report showing the tonnage comparisons for material received through the arc21 contracts over the last four years and discussed the increases and decreases in the tonnage trends.

She noted that she would be bringing an update on the situation on textiles to the next meeting. She advised that there were still significant issues with selling this waste stream.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by Cllr Andrews and seconded by Cllr Enright.

Action: Noted

Item 11 - Update on Various Waste Policies and Direction of Travel

Ms Boal presented a report with an overview on some of the recent updates in relation to waste policy and direction of travel.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

She informed the meeting of two changes which had taken effect from August 2025 to close existing loopholes and ensure fairer cost treatment for end-of-life management of electronic products including:

- Dedicated Category for Vapes - now given a new classification within the regulations which will require vape producers to pay specifically for the end-of-life management of their products; and
- Online Marketplaces - now classified as producers and must register with producer compliance schemes by 15 November 2025, with quarterly data reporting requirements beginning from the date of the regulation's implementation.

Update on extended producer responsibility for packaging (pEPR)

An update was provided on the pEPR Scheme related to the establishment of three advisory groups, along with recent reports regarding the impact of the scheme on food price inflation.

In terms of the Efficiency and Effectiveness Technical Advisory (EETA) Committee, she noted that Mr Andrew Cassells (SIB) and Ms Katy Fulton (Bryson Recycling) had been appointed to this group which will serve as an independent technical committee offering suggestions and insights on local authority and waste management best practices across the UK. Its members will provide recommendations to support local authorities operating in varied circumstances and assist in ensuring the pEPR scheme is delivered efficiently and effectively.

She noted that having these two people and knowing them well within the arc21 group will be beneficial in getting feedback on what is happening within that committee. She advised that it is intended to have a movement of people within the committees, and arc21 will be getting feedback through various meetings in order to be kept apprised of what is happening.

Discussion ensued and Cllr Enright enquired if there was any flavour of a change in the way in which it is paid for to encourage producers to produce less waste? Ms Boal advised it was too early in terms of reported data but that she would seek to compile any data available and bring to the next meeting.

Action: Ms Boal

A question was raised by the Chair on whether arc21 will be able to feed into the EETA Committee. Ms Boal advised that Mr Cassells attended a number of meetings with officers to provide feedback on his work activities and also to enable feedback to be provided to him. She stated that there may be an opportunity for him to attend a future Joint Committee meeting.

Action: Ms Boal

Bank of England Monetary Report August 2025

She advised that when considering food price inflation, the Bank of England cited the impact of Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging and packaging waste (pEPR) on increased prices as a factor in their determinations.

This was picked up in the press and links to some articles were included in the report.

Deposit Return Scheme

Ms Boal reported on the latest development in terms of the Deposit Return Scheme with details provided, in the form of slides, in relation to the establishment of the Board and next steps.

In terms of the roll out, she noted that arc21 is expecting it to have a significant impact in terms of the materials collected by councils, particularly through their dry recycling collection services, and the impact it may have on future contracts in terms of pricing.

arc21 expect more information to be published on this topic over the next few months and will keep Members updated accordingly.

Digital Waste Tracking

Ms Boal provided slides from a Defra seminar in July with some high level points and timelines in relation to Digital Waste Tracking which is scheduled to begin to be implemented in 2026.

She noted that there are still queries around exactly when councils will be required to participate in the scheme and there is still some confusion over what sites will be classified as receiving sites for the October 2026 implementation date.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by Cllr Andrews and seconded by Cllr Enright.

Action: Noted

Cllr Groogan left the meeting which then became inquorate. The last few items were presented but deferred for noting/approval to the next meeting.

Item 12 - Update on Customer Survey

Ms Boal provided an update on the customer survey, the results of which had been presented at the last meeting.

She advised that the actions coming out of the survey had been discussed with the Steering Group officers and one of the things that we will be implementing is a knowledge hub / general library for both Members and Officers to access.

Item 13 - Consultations

Ms Boal reported on three consultations out for consultation and the actions that were being considered:

- Public Procurement Consultation: Growing British industry, jobs and skills – deadline 8 September – decided not to respond as a number of things in it will not affect us;
- Public Consultation on the Plastic Pollution Plan for Northern Ireland - PPP NI - deadline 24 September – a response is being considered and, if responding, Mr Walker will liaise with the Chair to meet the deadline and bring to the Committee at the September meeting for ratification;
- Northern Ireland's draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027 – deadline 8 October – a response is still under consideration.

Item 14 - Annual Report 2024/25

Ms Boal presented the Annual Report for the year to March 2025 reflecting the progress made in the first year of our Corporate Plan 2024-2028.

It was suggested that should Members wish to forward any queries or comments to Mr Walker, they should do so by 12 September.

Item 15 - AOB

The Chair inquired if social value was built into our contracts and Ms Boal advised that elements of social value had been included in a number of recent contracts.

Item 16 - Next Meeting and AGM Thursday 25 September 2025, hosted by Ards and North Down Borough Council in the Executive Business Lounge at Signal Centre, Bangor. The Chair asked Members to confirm their attendance with Ms Campbell at their earliest opportunity to ensure there is a quorum at the meeting, and to advise of their intention to attend online or in person in order that the catering can be confirmed with the venue.

Action: ALL

Date: _____ **Chairman:** _____

Report to:	Sustainability and Environment Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 October 2025
Subject:	Dog fouling online reporting tool
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Sinead Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Sinead Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment

For decision		For noting only		x
1.0	Purpose and Background			
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update members that an online tool for reporting dog fouling within the District was launched on Friday 10 October 2025.			
2.0	Key Issues			
2.1	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has a statutory duty under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to address dog fouling in public spaces. This includes enforcing penalties, maintaining cleanliness, and promoting responsible dog ownership.			
2.2	Council dog fouling responsibilities include: Monitoring and Enforcement: • Enforcement officers monitor public areas and respond to complaints about dog fouling. • Dog wardens and enforcement officers are employed to issue fines and educate the public. Public Awareness and Facilities: • Council provides bins and signage in public areas. • Council encourages responsible pet ownership through awareness campaigns Reporting Mechanisms: • Residents can now report dog fouling via the online reporting tool on the council website, phone, or email. • Council investigates reports and increases patrols in problem areas.			
2.3	Residents are asked to provide simple information through the reporting tool including: • Where the dog fouling is – the exact location, include postcode, street names, areas, or local landmarks. • The time that they think the dog fouling happens – what time the offending dog is usually walked? • What the dog looks like –the colour, breed or size this will help identify the offender.			
3.0	Recommendations			
	Members are asked to: • Note the report and encourage residents to report dog fouling through the online tool where possible			

4.0	Resource implications
4.1	None
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> <i>n/a</i> ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☒ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale: n/a</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
	None
8.0	Background Documents
	Responsible Dog Ownership – link to the Council online dog fouling reporting tool Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011 The Litter (Northern Ireland) Order 1994 The Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983