



<b>Subject:</b>	NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP) 3 2024-2029
<b>Date:</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> August, 2025
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Tully, Director Organisational and City Strategy
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to inform members about the recent public consultation on the Draft NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2024-2029
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I. Note that the NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme has been drafted and refers to a series of climate risks for Northern Ireland based on the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022.</li><li>II. Note that the current Programme out for consultation identifies a range of actions to be carried out by local government up to 2029.</li><li>III. Retrospectively approve the response that was submitted by Belfast City Council to the Public Consultation which closed on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2025.</li></ul>

	IV. Agree that further discussion and engagement should be requested with DAERA on the actions to understand the resource implications of these on the Council before they can be agreed and adopted.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>The Climate Change Act 2008 places a statutory duty on Northern Ireland Executive Departments to lay programmes before the Northern Ireland Assembly, which set out their objectives, policies, proposals and timelines for introducing those policies and proposals in response to the most recent UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) which was published in January 2022.</p> <p>To fulfil this legal requirement the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has led on the development of a series of single coordinated adaptation programmes, which are known as the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP), since the 2008 Act came into effect.</p> <p>The recent public consultation, which opened on 9 June 2025 and closed on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2025 sought the views of stakeholders on the draft third iteration of these programmes (NICCAP3) which has been developed with input from all Departments and a range of key stakeholders, in response to the latest Third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3).</p> <p>The Climate Change Committee are obligated under section 57 of the 2008 Act to produce an Independent Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA-IA) on a five yearly cycle, which is used to inform the development of the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) which must be laid in Parliament every five years under section 56.</p> <p>Section 60 of the Act provides for Northern Ireland Departments to respond to each CCRA through an adaptation programme setting out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the objectives of the department in relation to adaptation to climate change,</li> <li>- the department's proposals and policies for meeting those objectives, and</li> <li>- the timescales for introducing those proposals and policies.</li> </ul> <p>Effective climate change adaptation action requires a collaborative approach and so in recognition of this, DAERA has led on the development of a coordinated Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP) with the input of adaptation responses from across each of the NI Executive Departments.</p> <p>The consultation document states that it also recognises the important role that key stakeholders including Local Government, academia, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and businesses can play in creating a climate resilient Northern Ireland, and in acknowledgement of this, they have also included an extensive range of actions from outside of Departments in the NICCAP3 Adaptation Delivery Plan.</p>
3.2	<p><b>What is in NICCAP 3?</b></p> <p>Part 1 provides information on the legislative context for NICCAP3 and details on the consultation itself including how to respond as well as a short introduction to the two main responses to climate change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mitigation</li> </ul> <p>Climate change mitigation refers to actions or activities that limit emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) from entering the atmosphere and/or reduce their levels in the atmosphere. •</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adaptation</li> </ul> <p>Climate adaptation means taking action to prepare for and adjust to the current and projected impacts of climate change.</p>

	<p>Part 2 covers NICCAP3 itself including how DAERA has chosen to structure it and why it provides detail on each of the Key Areas within NICCAP3 which cover 5 key areas of sectoral impact as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natural Capital;</li> <li>- Food Security;</li> <li>- Infrastructure Services;</li> <li>- People and the Built Environment; and</li> <li>- Disruption to Business and Supply Chains.</li> </ul> <p>This chapter also provides details on the statutory and best practice impact assessments which were carried out on the draft NICCAP3.</p> <p>Part 3 provides details on the next steps, following the close of the consultation, including information on the confidentiality of responses to the consultation, as well as on Data Protection and Freedom of Information consideration.</p>
3.3	<p><b>Actions relating to Belfast City Council</b></p> <p>There are 28 actions identified in the programme that are either owned by the Council, councils are required to support delivery of, or they are referenced in the programme description.</p> <p>As part of our participation on the Local Government Climate Action Network (LGCAN), the following ongoing projects were highlighted and input into the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Belfast Tree Strategy</li> <li>- The Belfast Sustainable Food Strategy</li> <li>- Preparation of a Climate Change Risk Assessment, Action Plan and Investment Framework</li> </ul> <p>As well as that, the Council is listed as partners on the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greening the City (Belfast Healthy Cities)</li> <li>- Regional Coordination of Adaptation (Climate NI)</li> <li>- UPSURGE (QUB)</li> <li>- SPACE (QUB)</li> </ul> <p>Other actions that have an impact on Council programmes and operations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NI Priority Species List (DAERA)</li> <li>- NI Historic Environment Policy (DfC)</li> <li>- Living with Water in Belfast Plan (DfI)</li> <li>- The Eastern Transport Plan (DfI)</li> <li>- The Connswater Community Greenway (Eastside Partnership)</li> <li>- NILGA Elected Member Development Programme (NILGA)</li> <li>- TalX 2 (University College Cork)</li> </ul> <p>Actions relating to our Emergency Planning functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Severe Weather Debriefing (RCRG)</li> <li>- NI Civil Contingencies Framework (TEO)</li> <li>- Continued working by RCRG with communities impacted by flooding</li> </ul>

3.4	<p><b>Actions Endorsed by SOLACE/NILGA</b></p> <p>There are 11 actions that the Council is required to deliver on that were endorsed by SOLACE in 2024. Some of these are on target to deliver, whilst others will require resources to be identified and deployed in their delivery across Climate, Emergency Planning, Spatial Planning, Community Planning, CNS and Finance and Resources. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate Adaptation Planning By 2025, councils will be delivering at least the first iteration of a climate adaptation action plan, linked to a regularly reviewed risk register, in alignment with public body reporting duties brought forward by DAERA.</li> <li>- Corporate Risk and Adaptation Climate change adaptation will be embedded in each council corporate plan by 2029, recognising the challenges of increasing climate impacts over coming decades.</li> <li>- Develop a baseline of Climate Impacts on Finance From 2025, councils will create a climate impact 'tagging' system, to create a baseline of financial impacts on council business operations from severe weather events. This will complement existing Met Office information gathering on non-financial impacts of weather events.</li> <li>- Emergency Planning By 2029, Regional Community Resilience Group (RCRG) will have widened its remit to consider the promotion and development of societal resilience.</li> <li>- Up to and beyond 2029, the Regional Community Resilience Group will continue to work with communities impacted by flooding to enhance preparedness, to better understand requirements for support, and identify what interventions should be prioritised to mitigate the impacts of flooding.</li> <li>- Spatial Planning Councils will ensure local development plans demonstrate how climate adaptation considerations will be embedded in all approval decisions, recognising increasing climate impacts over coming decades.</li> <li>- Local Development Plans will specify that developments are designed using the most up-to-date floodplain definitions from DfI, and councils will publish figures of how many approvals are granted by exception annually.</li> <li>- Green and Blue Infrastructure targets are set by councils to ensure places and people are well informed and more resilient to more intense and frequent flooding and heatwaves.</li> <li>- Community Planning Councils will collaborate through the community planning partnership to undertake work on how adaptation relates to community planning by 2026.</li> <li>- Procurement Councils will ensure that any sustainability/net zero procurement screening includes climate adaptation considerations, to take advantage of co-benefits, ensure consistency and avoid unintended consequences.</li> <li>- Food growing/local ownership Work with sustainable food places partnerships/communities to develop initiatives which enable more local food growing and community-owned food partnerships by 2029.</li> </ul>
3.5	<p><b>Public Consultation Response</b></p> <p>The response to the public consultation is attached in Appendix I for noting purposes.</p>
4.0	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p>
4.1	<p>At this stage there is no immediate resource or financial ask of the Council to respond to this public consultation.</p> <p>Should the actions be adopted, resources will be required across departments to ensure their effective delivery and compliance with the plan. Identifying what the financial and</p>

	resource implications are will require further cross-department consultation and agreement across Council.
<b>5.0</b>	<b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b>
<b>5.1</b>	<p>While NICCAP3 contains a wide range of policies and proposals which cut across multiple sectors of society, the consultation document states that because NICCAP3 is a high-level programme which serves as a coordination document for these policies and proposals its creation and presentation to the Assembly does not in itself impact on any of the areas covered by the listed assessments. However, as policies and proposals contained within NICCAP3 may impact on each area to varying degrees, it will be the responsibility of the owners of such policies or proposals to ensure they are individually screened or assessed as part of their development as appropriate.</p> <p>As a result of this determination, in each case DAERA has either found there to be no impact from the laying of NICCAP3 at the Assembly or have screened NICCAP3 out from a full assessment.</p>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b> <p>I – Council Public Consultation Response</p> <p>II – <a href="#">DAERA NICCAP 3 Public Consultation Link</a></p>