



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Notice of Motion response – Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation</b>
<b>Date:</b>	6th November 2025
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Debbie Caldwell, Climate Commissioner

### Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

☐

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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☐  
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### Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To respond to the Notice of Motion referred to this Committee by the Standards and Business Committee on 22nd May 2025 in relation to Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and the request to investigate cost implications made at Climate and City Resilience Committee on 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2025.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	<p>Members are asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.</p> <p>At this time Members are asked to note the outline consideration of the Notice of Motion and potential cost implications.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p>The following Motion was referred to the Climate and City Resilience Committee at its meeting on 12 June 2025</p> <p><b><u>Motion: Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty</u></b>  “Recognising Northern Ireland’s commitment to achieve net zero by 2050, (and Belfast City Council’s previous motion recognising a climate emergency), Belfast City Council will endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, an initiative to secure an international and legally binding treaty to phase out fossil fuels, and will write to the Northern Ireland Executive as well as the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero urging them to support this initiative.”</p> <p>Proposer: Councillor Anthony Flynn  Seconder: Councillor Brian Smyth</p>
3.2	The Motion calls upon the Council to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and to write to the Northern Ireland Executive, the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero urging them to support this initiative.
3.3	<p><b><u>Consideration of the Notice of Motion</u></b>  The Notion of Motion to endorse the Non-Proliferation of Fossil Fuel Treaty has been considered by officers within the Climate team in terms of its effectiveness and potential cost implications.</p>
3.4	<p>Endorsing the Treaty means supporting the three central commitments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) ending the expansion of fossil fuel production;</li> <li>2) setting and equitable path to phase out existing coal, oil and gas; and</li> <li>3) ensuring a just transition for communities and workers affected by the energy shift.</li> </ol>
3.5	Under The treaty, as a developed economy, Northern Ireland will be expected to phase out faster than less developed countries. The commitments in the Treaty compliment the obligations in the Paris Agreement. As of October 2025, sixteen countries and more than 130 cities (including 8 UK cities) and sub-national governments have officially endorsed the Treaty. The UK and Ireland have not officially endorsed the Treaty.
3.6	

3.7	<p>The Notice of Motion is aligned with the Council's ambition of achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050. The ending of fossil fuel expansion is considered to be highly beneficial for the global climate and efforts made by nations, governments and organisations to decarbonise their activities with renewable technologies at the forefront of moving toward net zero. Aside from their impact on climate change, there are other significant co-benefits associated with a move away from fossil fuels as their continued use contributes significantly to air pollution and associated human health impacts, water quality (from spills, wastewater discharges etc), land degradation, and the displacement of communities.</p>
3.8	<p><b><u>Implications of endorsing the Treaty</u></b></p> <p>Endorsing the Treaty signals support for a global phase-out of fossil fuel production and a just energy transition. The implications are mostly political, reputational and advocacy based rather than legal and financial.</p> <p>Politically, endorsement places Belfast among other cities advocating for rapid climate action and builds pressure for the UK government to endorse the Treaty. It also signals to local communities the Council's commitment to social justice and an equitable transition. Endorsement would increase global visibility and help to build momentum for the phase out of fossil fuels.</p>
3.9	<p><b><u>Potential financial and legal implications</u></b></p> <p>As the Council's existing climate ambitions align with the Treaty no additional Council resources, reporting or legal changes will be required. There are therefore no direct financial or legal obligations as the Treaty aligns with ongoing local climate ambitions. However, there could be higher costs for BCC and City residents as the NI economy transitions away from fossil fuels. Members should be aware that there are cost implications to decarbonisation, both to Council operations, especially where fossil fuels are still used by the Council's fleet and to heat its buildings, and at city level as transport and heating are increasingly electrified.</p>
3.10	<p>There may be some indirect cost implications for the Council through staff time for writing additional briefing notes, stakeholder engagement, communications or policy alignment checks. There may also be cost implications for bringing the wording or principles of the treaty into the procurement, strategies or plans of the Council.</p> <p><b><u>Next steps if Council decides to endorse the Treaty</u></b></p> <p>Endorsing the Treaty is essentially an advocacy gesture and there is no requirement to take any further action after endorsement. However, members may wish to consider the following possible actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish the endorsement and make a public announcement through the BCC website and local media.</li> <li>• Use the financial planning and rate setting processes as an opportunity to review and strengthen commitment to climate-related policies and those plans which prioritise fossil fuel phase out and adoption of renewable energy (e.g. Sustainable Procurement, decarbonisation of BCC estate and operations, installation of EV chargers, Bolder Vision etc.)</li> <li>• Advocate for an increase in the level of financial support available to enable vulnerable households to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and transition to low carbon heating solutions.</li> <li>• Support renewable energy projects and community energy schemes including an assessment of the suitability of Council assets to host renewable energy and community energy schemes.</li> </ul>

<b>4.0</b>	<b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b>
<b>4.1</b>	There is no immediate resource or financial ask of the Council.
<b>5.0</b>	<b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></b>
<b>5.1</b>	There are no immediate implications regarding equality, good relations and rural needs aside to say that the cost of transitioning from fossil fuels will be disproportionately more challenging for low-income households.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	None.