

# Climate and City Resilience Committee

Thursday, 14th September, 2023

## MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND  
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor R-M Donnelly (Chairperson);  
Alderman Copeland; and  
Councillors Anglin, Bell, Bower, R. Brooks, T. Brooks,  
Carson, Collins, Doherty, M. Donnelly, D. Douglas,  
Kelly, McCabe, McKeown, Smyth and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;  
Mr. R. McLernon, Climate Programme Manager City; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend was reported from Councillors S. Douglas and Maghie.

### **Minutes**

In considering the minutes of the meeting of 10th August, which had been adopted by the Council on 4th September, Councillor T. Brooks indicated that the minutes stated that she had declared an interest as she was employed by QUB and the minutes on page H13 say that QUB gave the presentation on solar panels. That was not correct – as she declared an interest as QUB are one of the partners for the pathfinders net zero funding application. As it turned out there was no conflict issue at the time, but I would like the record to be correct.

Accordingly, the minutes of the meeting of 10th August 2023 were taken as read and signed as correct, subject to the foregoing variation,

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

### **Restricted Items**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following two items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.**

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following

ten items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**National Cyber Security Centre – Presentation**

(Mr. P. Gribben, Head of Digital Services, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee noted the presentation by the National Cyber Security Centre.

**Shared Island Funding –  
Belfast City Council Project Updates**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the ongoing work in relation to a number of project proposals which were being developed under the Shared Island Initiative. The report also outlined other projects being developed in partnership between the Council and partner councils in the Republic of Ireland for funding to develop agreed programmes of work.

The Committee:

- i. noted the update provided in relation to work underway to bring forward projects under the Shared Island initiative;
- ii. noted the update in relation to other partnership work being undertaken with partner councils in the Republic of Ireland to realise funding opportunities; and
- iii. noted the plans for detailed engagement with elected members, being organised via the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, that would form a key element in developing a wider Funding Framework for the Council. This wider Funding Framework will reflect current projects being developed under the Shared Island initiative and other funding plans being pursued with a North/South dimension.

**Climate Action Pledge – BITC**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 This report will update Members on the Business in the Community (BITC) Climate Pledge and the opportunity for Belfast City Council to join the initiative.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- I. Note the opportunity for Belfast City Council to join the Business in the Community (BITC) Climate Pledge.**

- II. Note that a prerequisite of signing the pledge is the agreement of a Council target year for the reduction of GHG gases, and incorporation of relevant projects into the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan, which would be followed by a public pledge to communicate this widely.
- III. Give their approval for the Council to sign up to the BITC Climate Pledge when the above prerequisite has been achieved.
- IV. Note that Belfast City Council manages a separate Belfast Business Promise which contains a pledge, criteria and workstream dedicated to Climate. Belfast City Council is currently working through the Belfast Business Promise accreditation process.

3.0 **Main report**

3.1 **Background**

3.2 **Business in the Community Climate Action Pledge**

3.3 Business in the Community established the Climate Pledge to encourage and support businesses to reach net zero, building momentum across a range of organisations across Northern Ireland.

3.4 Signatory organisations commit to reduce their absolute scope 1 and scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions by either 30% or 50% by 2030; and to work towards measuring and reporting their scope 3 GHG emissions. The chosen base year must be 2015 or thereafter. Members will be aware that a Belfast City target of 80% reduction by 2030 has been approved with 100% reduction to be achieved by 2050. Work is also underway with the procurement team to measure the Council's scope 3 emissions. Members should note that the achievement of the targets set out above would be subject to Council agreeing a net zero target and on including the relevant projects / actions within the corporate plan and medium-term financial plan.

3.5 In addition, through the campaign Business in the Community supports signatories to achieve the targets of the Pledge by providing:

- i. A [Climate Action Pledge FAQ factsheet](#) that helps the organisation to sign up to the Climate Action Pledge, use the Climate Action Pledge Reporting Platform, and meet the requirements of the commitment.
- ii. Free access for Pledge signatories to calculate and measure emissions on the Pledge Reporting Platform.

- iii. Bespoke training, e-learning and education opportunities for senior management and staff.
  - iv. Support with development and evaluation of strategies and action plans through workshops.
  - v. Sector-focused Climate Action Toolkits.  
Signposting to useful resources from Business in the Community and external organisations
  - vi. Support with measurement, reporting and communicating progress to key stakeholders.
  - vii. Links to carbon offsetting opportunities at a local level.
  - viii. Best practice examples and case studies.
  - ix. Networking and profiling opportunities through BITC communication channels and events.
- 3.6 87 companies have signed up to the BITC Climate Pledge to date, including key city partners such as NIHE, Translink, Belfast Harbour and NI Water.
- 3.7 **Belfast Business Promise**
- 3.8 Members will be aware of the Belfast Business Promise, which is an initiative led by Belfast City Council is a key commitment in the Council's Inclusive Growth strategy with the aim of creating a more inclusive city. As such, it is also included as a key action in the refreshed Belfast Agenda. Members will be aware that a cross council team, led by the Strategy, Policy and Partnership in partnership with Economic Development, has been progressing the development of the Belfast Business Promise, alongside an external business working group and the council's Social Policy Working Group (SPWG).
- 3.9 The Belfast Business Promise has been co-developed with businesses and has eight pledges designed to create a more inclusive and sustainable city. As part of the development of the accreditation system, an accreditation mapping exercise has been completed so that the Belfast Business Promise recognises the accreditation standards that businesses may already have achieved. 22 organisations, including the Council, Translink, QUB, UU, BT, SENI and Equality Commission have signed up to the pilot phase to refine the Charter and delivery model for full roll-out later this year.
- 3.10 As an organisation, the Council has also signed-up to the Belfast Business Promise demonstrating leadership and commitment to working with employers to deliver on the ambition of creating an inclusive and sustainable city. Detailed internal discussions have been ongoing with key officers and professions to assess the Council's position in relation to meeting the pledges and the subsequent action planning to ensure continuous improvement. The first

assessment is currently in progress, with the initial feedback to be reported to the next meeting of the Social Policy Working Group in September.

3.11 Pledge 8 of the Belfast Business Promise – Protect our Environment, is a commitment to ‘Work together to tackle the global challenge of climate change and protect our environment for future generations’. All pledges are set out in the diagram below.



3.12 Officers from the Belfast City Council Climate Team have liaised with the Belfast Business Promise team to support the development of the criteria under pledge 8, to support and assess businesses who apply, and to support the process of Belfast City Council going through the accreditation process itself.

4.0 Financial & Resource Implications

4.1 There are no financial or resource implications at present.

5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications

5.1 There are no direct equality and good relations implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Request to present - Ms. Lise McGreevy**

The Committee acceded to a request from Lise McGreevy to attend a future meeting of the Committee to present on her RETAIN: SUSTAIN programme and short film on tackling eco anxiety in the wider Belfast Community.

Chairperson