

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Thursday, 11th September, 2025

MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor M. Donnelly (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Doherty;
Aldermen Copeland and McCoubrey; and
Councillors R. Brooks, T. Brooks, Collins, P. Donnelly,
S. Douglas, Ferguson, Groogan,
Lyons, Magee, McCann, Meenehan and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Ms. D. Caldwell, Climate Commissioner;
Ms. C. Shortt, Monitoring, Learning & Reporting Officer; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Murray.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 7th August were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st September.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Presentations

Shared Island Unit

Mr. E. Duffy and Ms. A. Murphy, Shared Island Unit (Department of the Taoiseach), were welcomed to the meeting.

Together they outlined that the Shared Island Initiative aimed to deepen cooperation and reconciliation across the island of Ireland. It emphasised building consensus around a shared future, leveraging the principles of the Good Friday Agreement, and fostering North-South and East-West relationships. The initiative was supported by the Irish Government's Programme for Government 2025 and the National Development Plan 2026-2030, with a €2 billion Shared Island Fund allocated for strategic projects until 2035. Key elements included cross-border investment, research on economic, social, and cultural issues, and dialogue through events such as the Shared Island Youth Forum and the Shared Home Place programme.

The Members were advised that recent announcements had highlighted significant funding for projects such as sustainable tourism, arts and cultural heritage, nature restoration, and cross-border research. Examples included €50 million for tourism destinations such as Carlingford Lough and Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Geopark, €16 million for research on topics such as cybersecurity and Parkinson's disease, and €9 million for bioeconomy demonstration projects. Belfast-specific initiatives included feasibility studies for cross-border partnerships, electric vehicle charging infrastructure for local sports clubs, and climate action projects in collaboration with Cork.

The Shared Island Research Programme had produced numerous reports analysing cross-border issues, such as trade, education, healthcare, and energy infrastructure. The studies aimed to provide evidence-based insights to inform policy and foster collaboration. The Shared Home Place programme, announced in 2025, focused on connecting communities through heritage and culture, exploring shared histories, and celebrating traditions. Funding for that initiative would begin in 2026, supporting projects that reflected themes like built heritage, cultural heritage, and Ireland's global connections.

Together they outlined that the Shared Island Civic Society Fund promoted practical North-South cooperation through civic society partnerships. With €6 million allocated for 2025-2027, the fund supported projects which demonstrated collaboration between organisations from both sides of the border. In 2024, Belfast-based organisations were involved in 31 successful applications. The fund aimed to strengthen cross-border connections and foster mutual understanding, with annual calls for proposals managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

In response to a Member's question, Mr. Duffy explained that the work of the program continued without prejudice on the constitutional question, with the Good Friday Agreement guaranteeing it.

After discussion the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and they retired from the meeting.

Centre for Cross Border Cooperation

The Chairperson welcomed Dr. A. Soares, Director of the Centre for Cross Border Studies, to the meeting.

Dr. Soares explained that the Centre for Cross Border Cooperation (formerly known as the "Centre for Cross Border Studies") was established in 1999 as an independent organisation based in Armagh. Its mission was to empower citizens and build capacity to promote cooperation across the Northern Ireland-Ireland border, as part of the peace and reconciliation process. The Centre also fostered collaboration between Ireland, Great Britain, Europe, and beyond, aiming to enhance mutual understanding, prosperity, and well-being. It provided practical advice for individuals crossing the border for work, study, or retirement, and conducted research and analysis on policies and legislation from London, Dublin, Belfast, and Brussels to support decision-makers and cross-border practitioners.

The Centre's research focused on key areas such as labour markets, conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation, and economic inactivity in border regions. It actively engaged with stakeholders through initiatives like the Ad-Hoc Group for North-South and East-West Cooperation and meetings with legislative committees, including those related to the Windsor Framework. Additionally, the Centre built capacity for cooperation at community, local authority, and public body levels, while supporting cross-border mobility through its Border People platform, which provided information, fostered networks, and generated evidence-based research.

The Members were advised that funding had evolved significantly over the years, with support from EU programs like INTERREG, PEACE initiatives, and the PEACEPLUS program (2021-2027).

Dr. Soares highlighted opportunities for growth in green sectors like sustainable transport, aerospace, and offshore wind electricity generation. It also underscored the need for upskilling to address challenges in advanced manufacturing, automation, robotics, and AI-driven digital transformation.

In response to Members' questions, Dr. Soares outlined that an agreed definition of what a cross-border worker would be useful, in order that they could more closely determine the numbers and provide further practical research and support.

In response to a further Member's query, he explained that the Centre would be happy to work to bring local Councils and other organisations together and suggested setting a theme.

After further discussion, the Chairperson thanked Dr. Soares for his presentation and he retired from the meeting.

Public Body Reporting - Mitigation Report

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To highlight the information that will be submitted onto the DAERA Public Body Reporting platform by 31st October 2025.

2.0 Recommendations

- I. To approve the short-term actions to be reported to DAERA as the required 'proposals and policies' to mitigate against the effects of climate change.**
- II. To approve the amounts and sources of the council's greenhouse gas emissions to be reported to DAERA for the past 3 years.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Section 42 of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 requires DAERA to make new Regulations, which will place climate change reporting duties on specified public bodies. The regulations came into operation in early May 2024, 21 days after they are laid in the Assembly. The first report required under the regulations, is the mitigation report which must be submitted by 31st October 2025.

3.2 What will be required?

There are two types of reports which we will be required to provide under the reporting duties set by the Regulations: 1) 'climate change mitigation' reports; and 2) 'climate change adaptation' reports. The mitigation report is due by 31st October 2025 and is outlined below.

3.3 Climate change mitigation reports must include:

- a statement, in respect of each of the three preceding financial years, of the amounts and the sources of the council's greenhouse gas emissions;
- a statement of the council's proposals and policies for reducing those amounts and otherwise for mitigating the effects of climate change in the exercise of its functions;
- a statement of the time-scales (this will be our short, medium and long-term actions) for implementing those proposals and policies; and
- an assessment of the progress made towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in any previous climate change mitigation report (we will add this – however this will become more important in future years submissions).

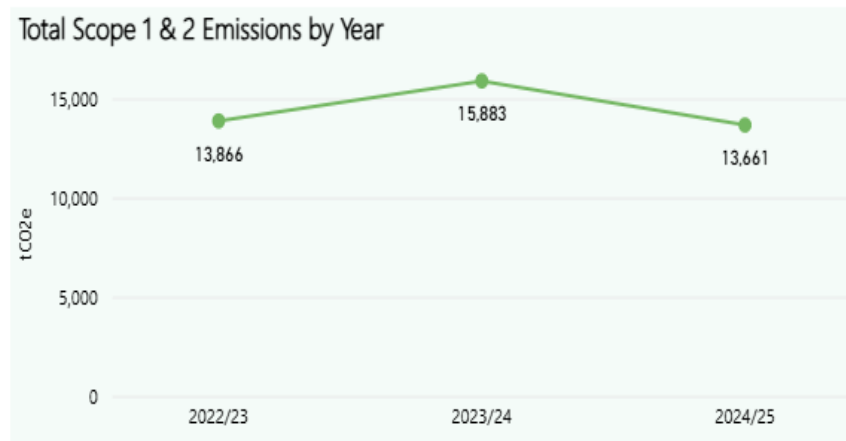
3.4 Greenhouse gas figures

The amount of greenhouse gases that the council emits annually is calculated using meter readings from our, gas and electricity usage. These figures then have a carbon factor applied to them to create an estimate for our greenhouse gas equivalent (CO₂e). The new DAERA reporting platform will require Public Bodies to input their raw data – for example KWh used of electricity. It will then apply a carbon figure to this within their system. We have mirrored this process using already published Welsh and Scottish models (DAERA have not published their model yet), and emission factors from the Department of Energy

Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to obtain the Council's scope 1 and 2 emissions figures.

- 3.5 The estimated scope 1 and 2 emission figures are shown in the chart below. These figures may change depending on the finalised requirements from DAERA and any updated emission factors from Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

3.7



Proposals and policies for reduction

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a combined mitigation and adaptation plan. For the purpose of public body reporting, the short-term mitigation actions will be submitted to DAERA as our proposals and policies for carbon reduction. The short-term actions are listed below. Note that the short-term adaptation actions have been removed as they will form part of the adaptation report that is due to be submitted to DAERA in March 2026.

3.8

- Develop and launch an accessible climate data platform to track progress on delivering climate adaptation and mitigation actions (1.7)
- Develop a sustainable/ low carbon procurement policy and supplier guidance documents to support a transition to an inclusive, net zero and resilient future (1.12)
- Develop a sustainable food policy for the Council that addresses waste, sourcing, packaging, emissions measurement and an events protocol (1.14)
- Complete a second phase of building energy audits - (Andersonstown LC, Lisnasharragh LC, Templemore Av LC, Brook LC) and the Waterfront Hall (3.4)

- Develop the integration of whole life carbon assessments as standard practice in the Capital Programme (3.8)
- Launch a phased metering and retrofitting programme across BCC's top energy users based on the findings of the building level audits of Adelaide, Cecil Ward, City Hall and Duncrue (3.11)
- Scope out a strategy to increase renewable and low-carbon energy use through corporate power purchase agreements (3.15)
- Review the Business Travel Policy and develop the Sustainable Staff Travel Plan to encourage modal shift, active travel and more fuel-efficient driving for Council staff (4.1)
- Through sustainable procurement, aim to use local suppliers to the Council to reduce miles travelled within the confines of procurement legislation and Local Govt Act restrictions (4.4)
- Conduct a commercial assessment of Council land suitable for installing low emission vehicle (LEV) charging points (4.9)
- Commence work on repurposing staff parking spaces for cycle racks and integrate appropriate facilities to support active travel e.g. shower and changing facilities (4.10)
- Initiate an internal Council-level Waste Management Plan which aligns with the Waste Management Hierarchy and with an emphasis on green waste (5.3)
- Continue to progress the proposal for a single use plastics policy for the Council (5.4)
- Develop a mechanism to track and report on internal Council generated waste (5.7)

3.9 Internally, actions will be monitored and reported to the Climate Programme Board. Although the next mitigation report will not be required until 2028, a progress report will be developed for CMT and the Climate and City Resilience Committee on an annual basis to report on progress against each action, and the Council's emissions figures. Information collected will all be available on the Data Platform.

4.0 Financial & Resource Implications

4.1 There are no financial and resource implications.

**5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Implications**

5.1 Any good relations or equality implications will be identified as part of the Council's screening process.

6.0 Appendices

1. [The list of 40 public bodies that are required to report under the Act.](#)
2. [Climate change Act 2022 \(section 42\)](#)”

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

**Requests to Present at a Future Meeting –
Councillor T. Brooks to raise**

At the request of a Member, the Committee agreed to invite representatives from the following groups to present at a future meeting:

- Three Sisters Gardening Community Group; and
- Community Garden Support.

Chairperson