



Subject:	Sustain Exchange Climate Business Conference Funding Agreement
Date:	23rd September, 2022
Reporting Officer:	Debbie Caldwell, Climate Commissioner
Contact Officer:	Richard McLernon, Climate Programme Manager - City

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform Committee of a proposal by the Management and Leadership Network (MLN) to host a prominent climate business conference ‘Sustain Exchange’ in Belfast with up to 300 business leaders. To request approval for a funding agreement to be put in place between Belfast City Council and the event organiser with the value of £10,000. The event will put the challenges, opportunities and absolute need for positive action associated with climate change, on the agenda for local organisations and leaders. The Management and Leadership Network is a network that provides managers and leaders in Northern Ireland with access to the thinking, insights and

	experiences of high-achievers and thought-leaders, to support and develop individual managers, companies and our economy.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to support this business focused climate conference by approving a funding agreement to the value of £10,000 be entered into with the event organiser, a report having previously been submitted to and approved by CMT.
3.0	Main Report
	Background
3.1	<p>The United Nations COP 26 Climate Summit in Glasgow in November 2021 placed a sharp focus on the role of the business community on delivering on global net zero GHG emissions by 2050. It also challenged business to radically reduce their environmental impact both directly and indirectly through their supply chains. The extreme weather experienced across Europe and beyond this summer further evidenced the reality that the effects of climate are being felt now and the need for decisive action from the business and leadership community is now.</p> <p>It is a truly transformative time for businesses as they address climate risks and identify new opportunities in the green economy. The transition is not straightforward. Businesses need help in securing cleaner power, heat and transport solutions. They need help in navigating new markets to find more environmentally sustainable solutions in their supply chain, and they need to do it fast. There has never been a more important time to find specialist help to navigate the transition, and to educate inform and engage by sharing the existing knowledge and exemplar experience of those at the forefront of the transition.</p>
	Purpose and Format of Event
3.2	The event will be planned to deliver on the objectives above and will connect local business leaders with international thought leaders with those at the forefront of the transition locally. The event is expected to attract some 300 local leaders (primarily business leaders but also those from the public, NDPB and third sectors) and will either be delivered as an in-person-only event or a hybrid event which would see 120 leaders gather in-person with some additional 200 leaders attending the event via a live stream. Both delivery models will ensure the messages, around the importance of positive climate action, have reach and that partners get a level of profile, amongst the NI business / leadership community, to justify their investment.
	Opening Address and Format
3.3	The opening keynote address will be delivered by two world-renowned authorities on how to achieve 'net zero faster'. They will focus on the business threat of the climate crisis, the legacy of the imperative for businesses and leaders to act fast and meaningfully. The keynote speakers will

be followed by a carefully selected line-up of local leaders who will be challenged to share their story (exemplar), insights (expert) or support offering (stakeholder).

As exemplars these businesses will share their story and associated lessons in an engaging, informative, and entertaining manner. The speakers will encourage and empower other sectoral representative bodies (insurance, banking, hospitality transport and logistics etc) to consider their own climate impact and take the first steps on their pursuit of net zero faster.

Management and Leadership Network Experience

3.4 Management and Leadership Network (MLN) have previous experience in hosting several large events with 500 + attendees.

Virtual summits organised by Management and Leadership Network include:

Galvanise NI May 2020 - 1400 Business leaders

Re- launch July 2020- 900 business leaders

Unlearn 2021 December 2020- 700 business leaders

WELL – February 2021 – 1000 business leaders

Leadership Summit - February 2020 Prior to first lockdown MLN hosted 500 paying business leaders at Titanic Belfast. BCC was a partner on this event which featured world class speakers including Lord David Puttnam at Titanic Belfast. Podium and MLN's virtual events have been created and delivered in a 3–4-week lead time (and have consistently attracted business leader audiences of 500+).

As host, MLN will facilitate the event and invite all speakers to provide their slides in advance so that the idea-sharing session is delivered in a concise, visually impactful and professional manner. Belfast City Council would once again be invited to participate and profile its extensive climate work i.e Mini – Stern Report, and associated Housing and Transport Readiness Assessments, Climate Ambitions Report, Reset Agenda, internal climate mitigation and adaptation plans and /or the work of the Belfast Climate Commission, Resilience and Sustainability Board etc.

Legacy Platform and Annual Event

3.5 The conference is an opportunity to highlight and celebrate the activity that is already underway in Belfast. As the host city it positions Belfast as a centre of excellence and activity when it comes to businesses and getting to net zero faster. The climate challenge will inevitably move further up the political and business agenda as we move through the decade and the pace of change on this issue is fast, so there is a need for annual event for the NI business/leadership community to share knowledge, experience and progress and supporting platforms available all year round to share resources.

<p>3.6</p> <p>3.7</p> <p>3.8</p> <p>3.9</p> <p>3.10</p> <p>3.11</p>	<p>Net Zero Faster - Branding</p> <p>The conference will be branded with the theme of ‘Net Zero Faster’. It is deigned to speak to and encourage participation from those businesses well on their way and those just starting their zero-carbon pathway. It acknowledges the challenges involved in committing to take meaningful action and will offer examples, insights and inspiration for individuals, businesses and policy makers. Podiem will complete a comprehensive evaluation report on the conference.</p> <p>Date, Venue and Contingence</p> <p>The total cost of the conference will be in excess of £60k. Podiem has already secured some corporate sponsorship for the event from Danske bank and are in advanced conversations with Belfast Harbour along with other corporate partners of MLN (energy companies etc). The date and venue are currently being finalised, with Belfast City Hall a potential venue.</p> <p>Venue</p> <p>The event will be hosted in a City Centre location (to encourage use of public transport and cycle networks) that can accommodate both in-person and virtual attendees.</p> <p>Partner Contribution and Profile Benefits</p> <p>If the Council chooses to support the conference it would be profiled as an ‘Event Partner’ alongside several other lead event partners. The Council brand would be prominent on all event marketing collateral as well as ‘at-event’. A Council representative would be invited to participate in the event press launch and MLN would be delighted for the Council to deliver a presentation. Council would also promote the conference through its social media and other relevant communication channels.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>£10,000 to support this initiative has been allocated from within the existing City and Organisational Strategy budget.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no direct equality or good relations/rural needs implications.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None</p>