

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Thursday, 16th April, 2026

MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

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

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

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 12th March 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 April.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Presentation

Great Big Green Week

The Chairperson welcomed Ms. Sara McCracken and Ms. Mary Corfield, The Climate Coalition, to the meeting. Ms. McCracken provided the Committee with an overview of the Great Big Green Week, where more than a million people would come together, from 6th to 14th June, to take action for their communities, for nature and for the climate. She outlined that, from repair cafés and nature walks to community clean-ups and film screenings, people everywhere could come together for good and make a real difference to their communities. In 2025, she explained that more than 1.2 million people had taken part and they wanted to increase the number of participants this year. She advised the Committee that they would love to work alongside the Council on any relevant projects.

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In response to a Member's question, the Climate Commissioner outlined that there were a number of sustainability and climate-related projects which the Council was involved in and that it could work with the Corporate Communications team to highlight the positive things which the Council was working on throughout the Great Big Green Week.

In response to a further Member's question, Ms. McCracken explained that they were working on reaching out to as many schools as possible and that she had met with the Eco Schools team. She highlighted that there were free school resource packs available on their website, containing curriculum linked activities for various ages. It was agreed that the link would be circulated to the Committee.

A further Member queried whether the school resource packs were available in Irish. Ms. McCracken advised that they were currently only available in English and Welsh but that she would be happy to take that suggestion back to her team for future consideration.

Moved by Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor T. Brooks and

Resolved – that the Committee agreed:

- that an ILLUMINATE request be considered by the Director of Legal and Civic Services to light up City Hall, marking the start of the Great Big Green Week, 6th-14th June, 2026; and
- that the Council's Corporate Communications Team would work with the Great Big Green Week to promote and showcase the relevant projects that the Council is working on, through its social media channels.

**Update on Public Body Reporting –
Climate Adaptation report**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To inform members of the requirements for the Council's Climate Adaptation Report that was submitted to DAERA by the statutory deadline of 31st March 2026.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note:

- I. **that the Council is required to submit an adaptation report 31st March 2026 covering a 4 year period from 1st Jan 2026;**

- II. that the contents of the report must outline the current and predicted climate change impacts in relation to the Council's functions i.e. a climate change impact assessment along with the Council's adaptation targets and priority actions;
- III. that the priority actions are based on the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programmes 2 and 3, the Council's Climate Action Plan (CAP) and any additional adaptation work taking place across Council;
- IV. That all actions submitted in the report are outlined below;
- V. that the adaptation report was submitted to DAERA on the mandatory deadline of 31st March and is attached as an appendix to this report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

In June 2024 members were informed of the Public Body Reporting Requirements under the NI Climate Act 2022. 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 were laid in the Assembly. The first report required under the regulations, the mitigation report was submitted to DAERA in October 2025. The Council was required to prepare and submit an adaptation report for submission by 31st March 2026.

3.2 The first adaptation report must cover the 4 year period beginning 1st January 2026 and include:

- an assessment of the current and predicted impact of climate change in relation to the organisation's functions; and
- the proposals and policies for adapting to climate change in the exercise of its functions, along with implementation timescales.

3.3 The second and subsequent reports are required every 5 years and will include an assessment of the progress the body has made towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in any previous climate change adaptation reports.

Report Contents

3.4 The adaptation report includes information under six headings.

- **Part 1: Profile** – information about the organisation.
- **Part 2: Governance** – what governance structures exist in Council to manage adaptation, strategies and plans that integrate adaptation planning and what objectives relate to it.
- **Part 3 – Impacts**: the Council’s climate risk assessment including the methodology and findings.
- **Part 4 – Actions**: the Council’s adaptation targets and priority actions and how this relates to the NICCAP.
- **Part 5 – Case Studies**: inclusion of up to 5 case studies that illustrate best practice being undertaken by Council.
- **Part 6 – Validation and Authorisation**: validated findings (i.e. through peer review or external experts) and authorisation of the plan with the relevant decision makers within the organisation.

Part 3 – Impacts

3.5 The **Impacts** section sets out the various climate risks and opportunities work completed by the Council to date including the development of climate risk register in 2022 and the assets-based risk assessment in 2023.

The climate risks for the Council include:

- 11 risks under flooding
- 8 risks under extreme heat (including urban heat island effect)
- 5 risks under storms
- 4 risks for extreme cold
- 4 risks that are linked to global and city-wide factors

Each of these risks have been assessed and given a risk score in terms of their likelihood and impact, determined through engagement workshops with departments in 2021-2022.

Part 4 - Adaptation Actions

3.6 The following adaptation actions have been included in the submission:

**Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2
(2 actions)**

3.7

1. In bringing forward their Local Development Plans, Councils will take account of climate change adaptation considerations as indicated in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement.
2. Embed adaptation planning cycle across local council planning.

**Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 3
(16 actions)**

3.8

3. Preparation of a
4. Climate Change Risk Assessment and Action Plan for Belfast City Council
5. Belfast Community Planning Our Planet Board
6. The UPSURGE project testing nature-based solutions
7. Belfast Sustainable Food Programme
8. Belfast Tree Strategy (formerly Preparation of an iTree Eco Report for Belfast)
9. Develop a baseline of Climate Impacts on Finance 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.
10. 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.
11. Corporate Risk and Adaptation - Climate change adaptation will be embedded in each council corporate plan, recognising the challenges of increasing climate impacts over coming decades.
12. Work with sustainable food places partnerships/communities to develop initiatives which enable more local food growing and community-owned food partnerships.
13. Regional Community Resilience Group (RCRG) will have widened its remit to consider the promotion and development of societal resilience.
14. Regional Community Resilience Group will continue to work with communities impacted by flooding;

15. 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;
16. 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;
17. Local Development Plans will specify that developments are designed using the most up-to-date floodplain definitions from Dfl, and councils will publish figures of how many approvals are granted by exception annually;
18. Councils will collaborate through the community planning partnership to undertake work on how adaptation relates to community planning;
19. 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.

3.9

BCC Climate Action Plan (13 actions)

20. Initiate a series of building-level Climate Risk Assessments for buildings identified at most risk from extreme weather events;
21. Integrate climate risk scores identified in the CCRA into the BCC Asset Management system and utilise to identify areas for more detailed Climate Risk Assessments on priority sites/buildings and new developments;
22. Raise awareness of nature-based solutions (NbS) as a resilience measure;
23. Develop plan to identify, assess, develop and maintain and enhance existing nature-based solutions for climate resilience;
24. Invest in projects that aim to increase resilience and mainstream nature-based solutions;
25. Apply SUDs policy and guidance (SUDS Manual C753) as standard practice in the Capital Programme;
26. Start to deliver the Tree Establishment Strategy and continue the One Million Trees Programme (linked to action 7);
27. Develop a sustainable/ low carbon procurement policy and supplier guidance documents to support

a transition to an inclusive, net zero and resilient future.

28. Establish an internal Council governance structure that supports sustainable food – potentially reporting to the Climate Programme Board;
29. Develop a sustainable food policy for the Council that addresses waste, sourcing, packaging, emissions measurement and an events protocol;
30. As part of the development of a sustainable/ low carbon procurement policy and supplier guidance documents, include sustainable food requirements such as Veg City, Soil Association's bronze catering mark and the Cool Food Pledge into food provided within Council's estate;
31. Explore the potential and feasibility of increasing the no. of climate friendly meals sold within the Council estate.
32. Develop and launch an accessible climate data platform to track progress on delivering climate adaptation and mitigation actions.

3.10

33. New Actions in 2026 (3 actions)
34. Deliver the Nature in Towns and Cities Project
35. Deliver the Belfast Alleyways Programme
36. Develop a City Climate Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan

3.11 Part 5 – Case Studies

The Council is also required to publish case studies demonstrating adaptation action across the Council. These are:

1. Belfast Tree Strategy
2. Local Development Plan
3. Nature in Towns and Cities & Alleyways
4. Belfast Sustainable Food Programme
5. UPSURGE

The content of these case studies has been developed by the relevant departments across council responsible for delivering them.

Full details of the submission are available in Appendix 3 and 4

3.12 Part 6 – Data Validation

This section verifies and confirms data is validated and approved under the relevant governance structures of Council.

4.0 Financial & Resource Implications

4.1 Many of the actions identified are already resourced and underway. However, there are a number of actions in NICCAP 3 that when published will require a resource and action owner to be identified in Council and a monitoring plan developed. These will come forward within the annual planning cycle for the Council's CAP which will be included in each corporate planning cycle up to the end of the reporting period which is December 2029.

**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 \(section 42\)](#)
3. Draft Adaptation Report Presentation to include impacts, risks, actions and case studies.
4. [Submitted Adaptation Report to DAERA"](#)

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

Moved by Councillor Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Groogan and

Resolved - that the Committee also agrees its support for the "March for Lough Neagh", scheduled for Sunday, 17th May 2026, organised by the Save Lough Neagh campaign, which was seeking to address the ongoing environmental crisis, including toxic algae blooms and demanding action to protect the lake.

Chairperson