7 April 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a meeting of the Corporate Services Committee of Ards and North Down Borough in the Council Chamber, 2 Church Street, Newtownards, on **Tuesday 14 May 2024 commencing at 7pm**.

Yours faithfully

Susie McCullough
<a href="Interim Chief Executive">Interim Chief Executive</a>
Ards and North Down Borough Council

### AGENDA

- 1. Apologies
- 2. Declarations of Interest

### **Reports for Approval:**

- 3. Sustainable NI Request for Funding (Report attached)
- 4. Electric Car Policy (Report attached)
- 5. Official Portrait of the Monarch (Report attached)
- 6. Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 New Climate Change Reporting Duties for Your Organisation (Report attached)

### **Reports for Noting:**

- 7. NILGA Corporate Plan (Report attached)
- 8. Veterans Champion Update (Report attached)
- 9. Response to Notices of Motion:
  - a) NOM 190 NIO Consultation on Water Charges (Report attached)
  - b) NOM 191 Deep concern poor state of the roads across

### ANDBC (Report attached)

10. Any other notified business

### ITEMS 11 – 16 \*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\*

### **Reports for Approval:**

- 11. Potential acquisition of land at Ambleside (Report attached)
- 12. Capital Projects Land Acquisition (Report attached)
- 13. Balloo Wetlands Land Acquisition (Report attached)
- 14. Ballyholme Yacht Club Deed of Rectification (Report attached)
- 15. Renewal of Lease of premises at Fort Road, Helens Bay (Report attached)
- 16. Grant of a licence agreement to Bangor Marine for ground hole testing at Bangor Marina (Report attached)

Alderman Brooks	Councillor Kennedy
Alderman Graham	Councillor S Irvine
Alderman McAlpine	Councillor W Irvine
Alderman McIlveen	Councillor Irwin
Alderman Smith	Councillor Thompson
Councillor Chambers	Councillor McCracken
Councillor Cochrane (Vice Chair)	Councillor McRandal
Councillor Gilmour	Councillor Moore (Chairman)

#### Unclassified

### ITEM 3

### Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	14 May 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	19 April 2024
File Reference	Sus 1
Legislation	Climate Change Act Northern Ireland NI (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ⊠ No □ Other □  If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Sustainable NI Request for Funding
Attachments	Appendic 1: Letter from Sustainable NI Appendix 2: Sustainable NI Impact Report 2023

As members will be aware, the Council has a statutory duty to contribute to Sustainable Development in Northern Ireland and The Climate Change Act NI.

Sustainable NI (SNI) has played a critical role in helping councils meet their statutory obligations on sustainable development through cross sector partnership work, policy analysis and development, provision of advice and peer to peer support through the Sustainable Development Forum, training and events. SNI bridges the gap between policy and practice on key environmental social factors at a local government level, working alongside NILGA allowing improved engagement with Elected Members.

More recently it has added further support by guiding councils through the recent introduction of the Climate Change Act, NI. This led to SNI co-ordinating and hosting a Needs Analysis workshop at the end of 2023. The aim was to identify where councils support would be needed in the months and years ahead to meet the requirements of the Climate Change Act. These asks will be difficult to meet for many councils (mainly due to resourcing) and a collaborative approach across all

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councils will be a much more efficient use of time and resource moving forward. A range of officers from across ANDBC and other councils from across NI attended this workshop to ensure full cross-service discussions were had.

SNI have therefore tailored their service provision to meet that growing need.

SNI presented to April Corporate Services Committee and the detail of this is covered within the Letter from Sustainable NI (Appendix 1).

The basic support membership (Supporter) is £6000, and this is already accounted for within existing budgets. It is noted this is an increase on previous years however it reflects a growing team within SNI and a general increase in costs overall. This funding will support the following:

- Assisting public sector organisations to comply with the new climate change reporting regulations introduced under Section 42 of the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022
- Provide timely and well-researched policy consultation responses. SNI compile
  and submit to the relevant bodies their own consultation responses. These are
  shared with Councils to use as they feel appropriate. Officers may use none,
  some or all of the consultation response to develop our own. Prior to any formal
  submission being issued on behalf of the Council, a draft response is tabled at
  Committee/Council for comment and final approval.
- Managing the Sustainable Development Forum, which enables collaboration and coordination of climate action and net zero delivery by public bodies
- Advancing the development of a web-based decision-making tool to help councils and public bodies screen strategies, decisions and investments for climate and environmental impacts
- Promoting understanding and awareness of sustainability and climate change issues across your organisation through presentations at relevant meetings and forums on request
- Providing training and follow-up 1-2-1 on understanding Scope 1, 2, and 3
  emissions and learning how to use the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool and
  the Waste Emissions Calculator

Officers ask the Committee to consider the Accelerator and Accelerator Plus membership (subject to being funded through the council's Sustainability Fund if agreed).

1. The Accelerator Membership include all Supporter membership benefits and will provide additional support for exclusive workshops, support for economic development and procurement, including a focus on scope 3 emissions and target setting, creating conditions for sustainable and inclusive growth and checklist for sustainable procurement. This additional support would help officers meet the requirements of both the Climate Change Act NI and Roadmap to Sustainability (action 16) to measure and monitor councils carbon

#### Unclassified

footprint and develop a clear target to meet the Climate Change Act NI requirement of net zero by 2050. It is possible that Scope 1 & 2 emissions can be calculated and monitored within existing resource but scope 3 would require 3<sup>rd</sup> party support due to its time-consuming nature and more complicated calculations. To note Belfast City Council recently completed a Scope 3 exercise with a private consultant at the cost of £10k so this option with SNI would provide better value for money.

2. The Accelerator Plus Membership will include all Accelerator membership benefits and will provide additional support through the development of strategies and actions plans. Again, this would add to our need for a full Climate Action Plan – a clearly defined action plan to meet the requirements of the Climate Change Act including measuring, tracking and reducing GHG emissions, incorporating our commitments to net zero fleet and climate adaptation.



Table 1: Summary of pricing structure and benefits

The options of additional levels of membership would provide much better value for money than private consultants and provide the added benefit of working with an existing partner, knowledgeable of local council processes and remits.

Sustainable NI Impact Report (Appendix 2) summarises their activity for 2023 for information.

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council commits to The Accelerator Plus Membership for 2024/25 as detailed in the report with cost difference awarded from the Sustainability Fund.



Innovation Factory 385 Springfield Road Belfast BTI2 7DG T. 028 9590 2500 E. info@sustainableni.org sustainableni.org

Stephen Reid, Chief Executive Ards and North Down Borough Council

22 January 2024

Dear Stephen

#### **SNI New Membership Model**

Thank you for your continued support of Sustainable Northern Ireland as one of our valued members. It has been hectic since the introduction of the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022, and we look forward to continuing to provide our services in helping you embed these new regulations and responsibilities as we work together toward a sustainable future.

Based on the recent Needs Analysis with all our members and Local Authorities at the end of 2023, we have tailored membership packages to provide wider flexibility for the emerging needs and support services you require.

These now include the <u>Accelerator and Accelerator Plus</u>, as well as the Supporter membership.

We have included our Impact Report (2022/2023) summarising the wider work of the organisation last year.

### **Memberships Overview**



### Your Membership Renewal

Sustainable Northern Ireland is an independent charity funded by our members.

We understand that this is a challenging time for many organisations. Without your membership, we could not continue supporting Northern Ireland's public bodies in creating a sustainable future through our advocacy, information, and service provision.

**Your Membership** is due to renew for another year, and SNI will request the due amount on 1 April 2024. Please contact us by 15 February at the latest if you would like to discuss or make any changes to your membership.

There is much to do in 2024-2025. We will continue to support local government and public bodies by:

- Assisting public sector organisations to comply with the new climate change reporting regulations introduced under Section 42 of the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022
- Provide timely and well-researched policy consultation responses
- Managing the Sustainable Development Forum, which enables collaboration and coordination of climate action and net zero delivery by public bodies
- Advancing the development of a web-based decision-making tool to help councils and public bodies screen strategies, decisions and investments for climate and environmental impacts
- Promoting understanding and awareness of sustainability and climate change issues across your organisation through presentations at relevant meetings and forums on request
- Providing training and follow-up 1-2-1 on understanding Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions and learning how to use the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool and the Waste Emissions Calculator

Based on your feedback you may now wish to upgrade your membership and avail of either our Accelerator Membership package or the Accelerator Plus. Both packages provide additional support services from the Supporter Membership.

The **Accelerator Membership** includes the development of bespoke resources and the delivery of exclusive workshops; 1-2-1 support for Economic Development and Procurement aimed at

- cutting down Scope 3 emissions in your local council area,
- setting measurable targets and
- helping create the conditions for sustainable and inclusive growth.

### The **Accelerator Plus** includes

- the development of strategies and action plans (Sustainability, Climate and Sustainable Procurement, (or bespoke on request)
- access to initial sustainability and screening audits.

Compare memberships in the <u>Table Below</u>.

### **Memberships Features**

		Supporter Membership	Accelerator Membership	Accelerator Plus Membership
	Support for new climate reporting regulations compliance	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Ø</b>
	Timely and well-researched policy consultation responses	<b>Ø</b>	<b>②</b>	<b>②</b>
	Sustainable Development Forum Coordination	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Ø</b>
	Advancement of web-based decision-making tool for screening strategies and projects	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Ø</b>	<b>⊘</b>
MEMBERSHIPS FEATURES	Training to understand Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and how to use Greenhouse Gas Tool and Waste Emissions Calculator	0	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Ø</b>
	Presentations to increase sustainability awareness	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Ø</b>	<b>⊘</b>
	Development and delivery of exclusive workshops (Sustainable Capital Projects, Sustainable Procurement, etc.)	8	<b>⊘</b>	<b>Ø</b>
	1-2-1 Support for Economic Development and Procurement for Scope 3 Emissions cut and measurable targets	8	<b>Ø</b>	<b>②</b>
	Bespoke Resources Developmet	8	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Ø</b>
	Initial Sustainability and Screening Audits	8	<b>×</b>	<b>Ø</b>
	Development of Strategies (Sustainability, Climate, Sustainable Procurement)	8	8	<b>⊘</b>
	Development of Action Plans (Sustainability, Climate, Sustainable Procurement)	8	8	<b>Ø</b>

We are excited to be working with you again in what is already shaping up to be an important year, and if you wish to discuss your options and membership package, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

If you wish to proceed with a Supporter Membership in 2024-25, please raise a purchase order no later than 31 March to facilitate prompt payment in April.

If you wish to proceed with an Accelerator Membership in 2024-25, please raise a purchase order no later than 31 March to facilitate prompt payment in April.

If you wish to proceed with an Accelerator Plus Membership in 2024-25, please raise a purchase order no later than 31 March to facilitate prompt payment in April.

If you wish to upgrade your initial Membership later in the year or have any queries about these requests, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### Thank you for your support

Sustainable Northern Ireland is an independent body that relies on membership support, and your support this year has made a real difference; thank you.

Continuing your membership is the most important way to sponsor us while experiencing the unique support available to your sector. We look forward to working with you this coming year.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Francesca Di Palo

from a sep Di Rolo

SNI Head of Public Sector Services



### BEHIND THE COVER

The image on the cover carries a strong message: we're putting too much pressure on our planet, and the metaphorical dam is about to break. We are currently overshooting five of the nine boundaries crucial to the health of our planet—continuing along this path will mean putting people and the planet increasingly in harm's way. Through a circular net zero economy, we can relieve these pressures, bringing humanity back within a safe operating space.



We promote a more sustainable way of living and working to protect the planet and its resources for the benefit of society, now and in the future.

We do this by providing information, advice and support to help individuals and organisations become more sustainable.

Our vision is a fair, green economy that operates within planetary boundaries.

### **BOARD** OF DIRECTORS

**RACHAEL SINGLETON** Behavioural scientist at the NI Innovation Lab



Rachael is currently the Chair of the Sustainable NI Board. She is an experienced behavioural scientist who works for the Northern Ireland Civil Service Innovation Lab where she applies psychology to the design and implementation of policy to solve key societal challenges such as climate change.

**ROBERT CLEMENTS** Head of Sustainable Development at NI Housing Executive



Robert is Head of Sustainable Development at the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the largest social housing provider in Northern Ireland, where he leads the team responsible for residential energy efficiency, decarbonisation and mitigating fuel poverty.



Alan is Head of the Strategic Investment Board's Council Support Unit which supports councils in the delivery of their capital programmes, with a particular emphasis on waste and the circular economy.

ANDREW BENFIELD Ireland Country Manager at Cenex



Andrew is Regional Manager at Cenex, an independent, not-for-profit research technology organisation (RTO) and consultancy, specialising in zero emission transport and energy.

SUSANN POWER Lecturer at Ulster University Business School



Susann is a lecturer in Hospitality Management at Ulster University and holds a PhD in Sustainable Tourism. She has recently been appointed the Chair of the University's Sustainability Committee. She is also a National Jury Member for Blue Flag International.

IAN GARNER Consultant at Ulster Wildlife



Ian served for 20 years as Head of WRAP in Northern Ireland, a key resource efficiency delivery body for the public sector. He currently provides support to Ulster Wildlife on peatland restoration and its long-term management.

Sector Speciailist in Waste



Keith is a waste and recycling specialist at WRAP where he uses an evidence-based approach to develop resource management strategies, behaviour change campaigns, tools, and resources aimed at maximising the value and use of materials.

JAC CALLAN Sustainability & Impact Manager at Visit Belfast



Jac is Sustainability & Impact Manager for Visit Belfast, where she works alongside Belfast City Council and tourism stakeholders to help Belfast become a leading sustainable tourism and events destination.

Impact Report 2023

# **TEAM**MEMBERS

NICHOLA HUGHES

Executive Director



Known for her tenacity and unwavering optimism, Nichola uses her skills in science and communication to empower others to act on the planetary emergency. She is an experienced climate scientist, policy advisor and communicator and is dedicated to channelling her energy for environmental and social justice. Nichola is very proud to say she loves her job.

DR FRANCESCA DI PALO Head of Public Sector Services



Francesca is an environmental scientist and ecologist focusing on natural carbon sinks. The desire to merge academia with a hands-on career built on enhancing environmental attitudes and promoting positive behaviour change has led her to develop expertise and experience in a range of areas from conservation to education for sustainable development at an international level. Francesca's energy and passion motivate everyone around her.

CLARE BAILEY
Interim Director



Clare was MLA for South Belfast from 2016-2022 and is a former leader of the Green Party in Northern Ireland. During this time, she worked with Climate Coalition NI to introduce Northern Ireland's first Climate Change Bill. Clare is experienced in strategic management and with her extensive cross-sectoral networks is excited about building a climate-positive future for Northern Ireland.

DR CLAIRE MCVEIGH
Head of Advisory Services



Claire is a climate scientist with a PhD investigating carbon sequestration in peatland environments. She is passionate about supporting organisations to make positive environmental and social change and has gained experience with a wide range of businesses, including supporting strategy development and environmental impact assessment. Claire enjoys sharing her expertise and being a catalyst for positive change.

AIDEEN NOLAN
Student / Volunteer

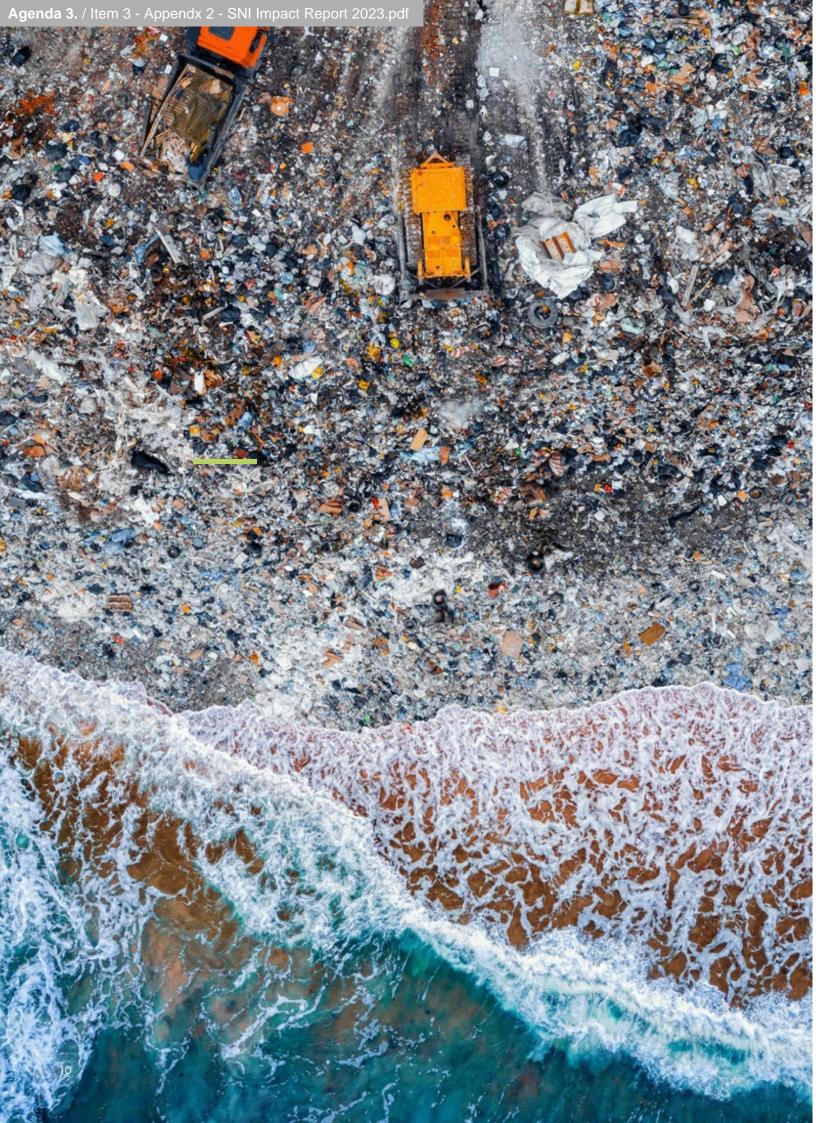


Aideen is currently in her third year studying Geography at Ulster University. A placement student within Sustainable NI, she is passionate about sustainability and climate change and is excited to pursue her future career in this field.

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# T EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this Impact Report, we highlight how we are working to support Northern Ireland's transition to a green, net zero economy. We reflect on both highlights from the work we completed in 2022-23 and the ongoing projects and partnerships we're involved in that continue to bear fruits.

This year, Sustainable NI has been incredibly busy growing the team and expanding services. With support from Dormant Accounts Fund NI, we've been working on becoming more resilient and prepared for the future by pursuing activities that will increase our own capacity and sustainability to better support the transition to a green, net zero economy. With this goal in mind, our Board and Team carried out a strategic review of Sustainable NI's brand identity, mission, aims, services and values. The outcomes fed into a new operational plan and a new website which is due to launch in 2023. A new strategy will be published in 2024.

This year we added two new members to our team and with additional capacity, we have been able to do more. Highlights this year include supporting the development of critical government regulations and policies such as the Energy 'One Stop Shop' Implementation Plan, Circular Economy Strategy and Public Body Reporting Duty. We're also looking forward to shaping the NI Climate Action Plan, due for consultation this summer.

In continuing to facilitate the All Party Group on Climate Action despite the collapse of the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly, we have made sure that climate action remains a political priority for our politicians so that they can take decisive action when back in government.

Our staff continue to perform exceptionally well, with a marked increase in educational outreach and support work this year. The Sustainable Development Forum continues to function as critical support for local government and public bodies to lead transformative change and measurable climate action across the region.

Due to the lifting of lockdown restrictions, we have been able to get out to more events and reach a wider audience than ever before. From engaging with local chambers of commerce to school events, we continue to challenge thinking and raise awareness of the need to be more sustainable and how to achieve it.

We have looked at options to help diversify and grow funding, including through direct service provision, for example by expanding our portfolio of training courses. This year we introduced two new courses: Sustainable Design & Construction (for those working on capital projects and public realm schemes) and Carbon Literacy Training for interested organisations. We hope to promote these next year.

We continue to offer sustainability audits for businesses and organisations looking to establish a baseline to measure and evaluate progress on sustainability as well as carbon footprinting services. We see this as a key area of growth. We also want to do more to support the third sector. We have been successful in receiving funding to coordinate a regional green clubs programme in 2023-24, in partnership with Ulster GAA, which we are optimistic will evolve into broader support for sustainability and climate action in the third sector.

All of this activity exists in the context of a rapidly escalating climate and ecological crisis. Northern Ireland must achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. This is a monumental challenge. Organisations are beginning to wake up to the challenge, but there is still a sizeable policy, knowledge and resource gap. Sustainable NI recognises that rising greenhouse gas emissions can be attributed to consumption. In fact, around 70% of global GHG emissions are linked to material handling and use. It's no coincidence that we are currently transgressing five of nine planetary boundaries that are crucial to planetary health: climate change, biodiversity loss, land system change, chemical pollution, and cycles of nitrogen and phosphorus. Clearly, our relationship with materials requires change. Increasing education and awareness about our consumption habits, and the toll it is taking on the planet and humanity, will be the focus of our work next year.

As we enter 2023-24, we will prioritise our resources to support and guide public, private and third-sector organisations to push the boundaries on climate action. With a Climate Change Act now in place, it is an opportune time for Sustainable NI to extend its role and reach in order to make a positive impact on policy and practice and help secure the sustainable future we all want.

# 2 IMPACT SUMMARY

## Deliverables this year:



**BUSINESS AUDITS** 



6 **CONSULTATION RESPONSES** 



1,745
PEOPLE TRAINED



**STRATEGIES & ACTION PLANS** 

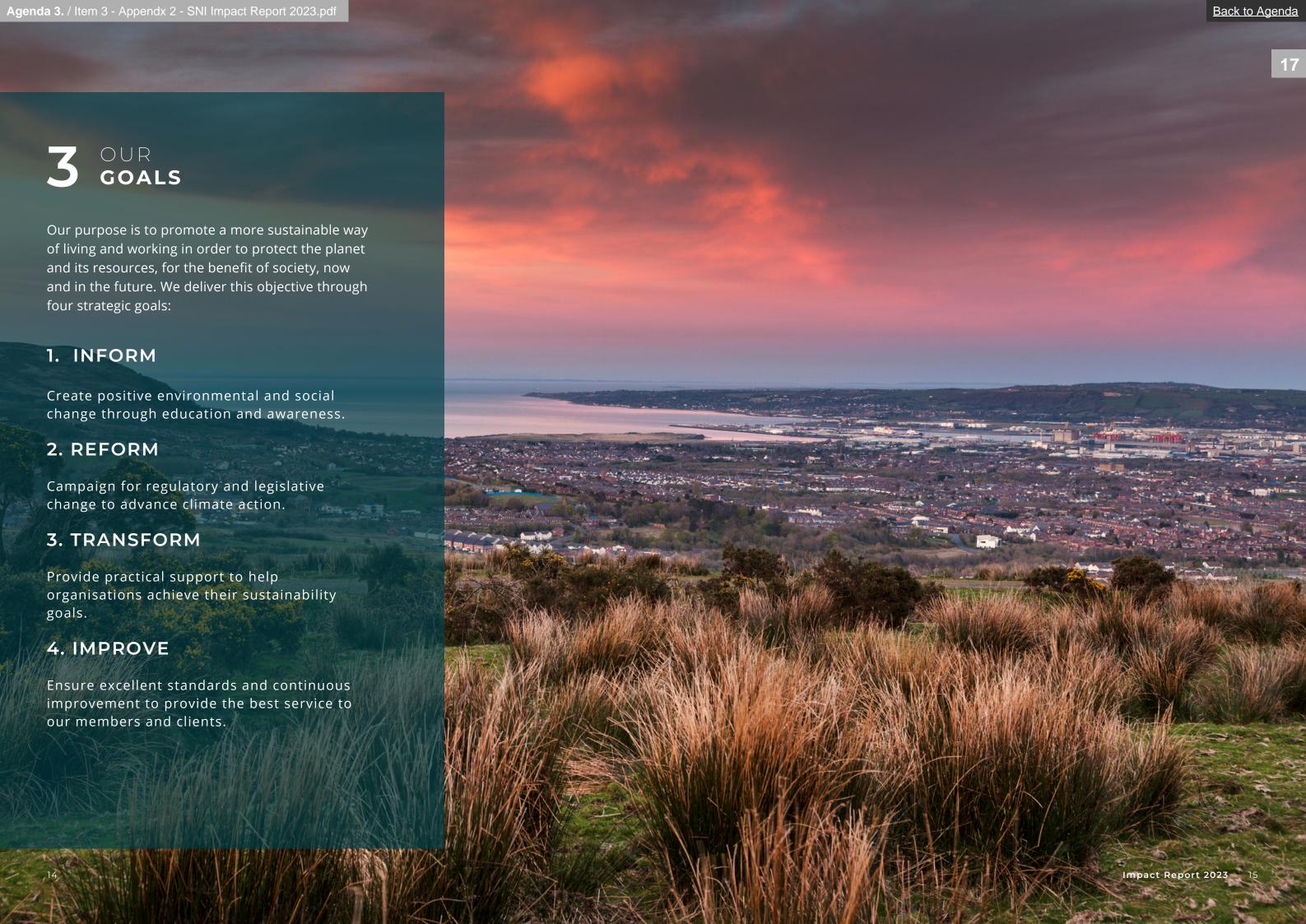


26 **WORKSHOPS OR EVENTS** 



15 **LEARNING RESOURCES** 







# 4 EDUCATION & AWARENESS

We work to create positive environmental and social change through our education and awareness activities. In 2022-23 these included:

# DISSEMINATING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

We used a variety of platforms to inform and influence including:

- Bimonthly digital newsletter (reaching 600 people)
- Social media (reaching 1500 people)
- Website (reaching 9,700 people)

Resources developed this year:

- Lámh Dhearg GAA Case Study a Green Sports
- Springfield Meadows Case Study a Net Zero Passivhaus Development
- Mahon Point Case Study Ireland's Greenest Shopping Centre
- One Planet Mind Case Study a Sustainable Clothing Brand
- South West College Case Study a Passivhaus Premium Building
- 10 Blogs/Articles for the website
- Survey/Report on sustainability in the Third Sector in Northern Ireland
- Briefing note on the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act

Talks and presentions this year:

- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Climate Change Working Group
- Mid Ulster District Council Climate Change Working Group
- Belfast Citizen Jury
- GAA, IFA and Ulster Rugby Green Clubs Webinar
- FinTru Lunch and Learn
- Energy Manager's Forum
- Lisburn Chamber of Commerce Seminar
- SW College Sustainable Future Conference
- NI Retail Consortium Conference
- NI Manufacturing & Supply Chain Conference
- NI Economic Development Conference

# PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY AND DIVERSE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

We developed the following training courses this year:

- Sustainable Design & Construction for Capital Projects
- Becoming a Sustainable Business (received by businesses in Ards and North Down)
- Developing a Climate Action Plan (received by Mid Ulster District Council; Mid and East Antrim Borough Council)

# PROVIDING THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FORUM

The mission of the Forum is to coordinate and support local government and public bodies to lead transformative change and measurable climate action across the region. It connects, informs and inspires sustainable changemakers to turn ideas into action and collaborate on shared objectives.

Membership is exclusive to the public sector. As a member, public bodies have year-round access to an annual programme of meetings, webinars and policy briefings. They also benefit from expert insights from a dedicated Sustainable NI Advisor, who coordinates the Forum. The Chair is currently Emma Adair from Ards and North Down Borough Council.

This year five meetings/events of the Forum were held:

- 16 June 2022 (Belfast)
- 16 September 2022 (Enniskillen)
- 23 November 2022 (Virtual)
- 14 December 2022 (Webinar)
- 8 March 2023 (Virtual)

Local authorities occupy a pivotal role in the transition to net zero by demonstrating public sector leadership on climate action in their local areas as well as becoming key mobilisers of behaviour change at a community level. To capture current activity in the sector, we conducted a survey on climate action taken by local authorities in Northern Ireland. The findings will feature on our new website, due to launch later this year.





# 5 POLICY & ADVOCACY

We advocate for ambitious legislative and regulatory change in support of our mission through our policy and advocacy work. In 2022-23 this included:

# ACTIVELY ENGAGING IN POLICY FORMULATION, APPRAISAL AND LOBBYING

As political appetite for the green economy continues to grow, knowledge needs to be cultivated and shared, to ensure we make the correct policy choices to achieve net zero by 2050. This year we fed into several policies that will be critical to meeting our net zero aspirations, including:

- Energy 'One Stop Shop' Implementation Plan
- Review of permitted development rights to protect the environment and help address climate change
- Circular Economy Strategy

In addition to providing written consultation responses, we participated in several government forums and committees to help shape policy and investment in the area of energy and environment:

- NI Affairs Committee Inquiry into Investment in Northern Ireland (Sustainable and genderequitable investment)
- NI Government Green Growth Forum (Climate Change Reporting Regulations)
- NI Advisory Group on non-household recycling provisions

In May 2022 we launched a manifesto for the Northern Ireland Assembly Elections. In the document, we highlighted five key issues that must be addressed to put the economy on a more sustainable footing whilst simultaneously tackling the climate emergency.

# PROVIDING THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE ALL PARTY GROUP ON CLIMATE ACTION

The All Party Group on Climate Action is a forum for discussion between politicians, NGOs, business leaders and academics, to advance climate action through legislative and regulatory change in the Assembly and Executive.

Sustainable NI provides the secretariat for the All Party Group on Climate Action. Membership is cross-party and includes representatives from the NI Assembly as well as NI councils. The Chair is Kate Nicholl MLA.

For the 250+ observers, it is a great way to keep abreast of climate and environmental policy and legislation and influence policymakers at the highest level in Northern Ireland.

The APG met five times in 2022-23, including:

- 22 June 2022 (AGM)
- 21 September 2022
- 16 November 2022
- 25 January 2023
- 22 March 2023

A range of issues, projects and campaigns were discussed from sustainable food growing (Acorn Farm), fuel poverty and cost of living, green hydrogen, energy policy & strategy, the office for environmental protection, expansion of rail infrastructure and local authority climate action (Belfast City Council).

### PRIORITIES IN THE SUSTAINABLE NI MANIFESTO FOR ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2022:

- Green government agenda to ensure the government 'does as it says' in relation to protecting our climate and environment.
- 2. Improved planning for a green economy calling for a simplification of local authority and regional planning in support of renewable and low-carbon energy, including better guidance on ways to achieve Net-Zero.
- 3. **End government support for fossil fuels** and introduce incentives for energy efficiency measures, heat pumps, district heating and low-carbon retrofit measures.
- 4. **More investment in sustainable travel infrastructure** through a Clean Air Act and strategic review of public transport pricing, availability and cycling infrastructure.
- 6. More government support for community energy so that community groups can explore the feasibility of community energy schemes.







We provide practical support to help organisations achieve their sustainability goals. Our advisory services include strategy development, reporting, training, workshops and communications support.

#### STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

Sustainability has become increasingly critical for organisations to remain relevant and competitive today. Like digital transformation, driving sustainability requires organisations to transform every business division, making sustainability an integral part of corporate strategy. This year, we supported five organisations to develop sustainability and/or climate change plans, each one tailored to the individual client's support needs:

- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Apex Housing Association
- Mid Ulster District Council
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

In most of these organisations, we delivered workshops to co-design the strategies with staff and decision-makers.

#### SUSTAINABILITY AUDITS AND REPORTS

Our Sustainability Audit analyses and measures sustainability in a company's day-to-day operations and its overall business model. It identifies opportunities to rethink and improve upon product and service design, operations, and business models to maximise social and environmental impact. This year, we carried out sustainability audits for two local businesses:

- Castle Mall, Antrim
- Mercury Security, Lisburn

The output was a clear sustainability roadmap to guide the companies on how to embed sustainability within the core of the business.

#### **PARTNERSHIPS**

The power of partnership working cannot be understated. Partnerships build momentum, coordinating action between organisations and allowing opportunities to exchange views, supporting innovation and providing additional momentum to get things done. Existing partnerships include the Sustainable Development Forum; the Circular Economy Coalition which has been collectively working on developing a Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland; and the Northern Ireland EV Consortium which was successful in securing £1,348,370 this year for new residential EV charging infrastructure.

Additionally, we became a partner in the Green Clubs Programme. Led by the GAA, the programme is structured around the themes of Energy, Water, Waste, Biodiversity and Travel & Transport and is designed to promote sustainability awareness and action in GAA clubs and communities. We supported the development of the Green Clubs Toolkit and delivered a webinar called 'Clubs Going Green' in September 2022.

### **SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS**

# FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES & ORGANISATIONS

Many businesses have already recognised that a sustainable business strategy brings them a competitive advantage. By lowering operating costs and improving brand appeal, sustainability can lead to increased profits. It can also help reduce risk, from energy price volatility to supply chain failures. However, sustainability can be a complex business. To help organisations make continual progress and demonstrate impact, have a team of experts who can

help by providing advice, workshops and bespoke planning to help organisations on their sustainability journey. Our advisory services are available for private, public and voluntary sector organisations, with content and delivery tailored according to the client's needs and focus areas. Our services have been designed around a suggested approach to delivering sustainability, which embraces four themes:

### 1. DEVELOP A VISION FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND EMBED IT INTO STRATEGY

A good strategic vision looks beyond the lifetime of whoever creates it and focuses on joined-up thinking to ensure services and operations are designed with environmental, social and economic objectives in mind. Our strategy workshops and action planning sessions help you see the big picture and deliver a bold strategy fit for the future.

### 2. MEASURE PERFORMANCE THROUGH ROBUST METRICS AND REPORTING

Metrics are key to ensuring you deliver on your climate and sustainability promises. We help organisations select the most relevant KPIs, allowing them to track progress on sustainability where it matters most. We can also review your carbon footprint, making recommendations on how to reduce emissions and improve reporting procedures.

# 3. USE COMMUNICATION TOOLS TO CONVINCE CORE STAKEHOLDERS

By definition, sustainability requires extensive collaboration among internal and external stakeholders. We provide a range of tools to successfully involve and engage your stakeholders. From campaign materials to staff inductions, we know how to convince your board, staff, investors and customers of the value of your sustainability strategy.

# 4. STRENGTHEN CAPACITY & SKILLS TO REALISE YOUR VISION

Sustainability is everyone's business. From the CEO to Grounds Maintenance, we can empower your team to become change makers, providing tips to overcome challenges on the road to sustainability. The training courses we offer are highly customisable and are aligned to the stages of your sustainable transformation.

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# GOVERNANCE & IMPROVING STANDARDS

We are continually striving to ensure excellent standards and continuous improvement to provide the best service to our members and clients.

#### ENSURING GOOD GOVERNANCE

This year we said goodbye to three board members and welcomed five new board members. Resignations included: Aoife Foley, Nuala Flood and Andrew Cassells. New board members included: Keith Patterson, Rachael Singleton, Robert Clements, Andrew Benfield and Jac Callan. All Trustees received governance training and completed a skills assessment. Four board meetings took place this year, including the AGM on 6 December 2022,

#### SUPPORTING THE WORKFORCE

Our staff are our primary asset and investing in the workforce is a key priority. This year we recruited two additional staff members including the Head of Advisory Services (April) and the Interim Director (March). We hosted one placement student (September to March). Staff training was provided in support of skills development and we carried out a staff engagement survey over the summer which resulted in a review of and subsequent increase in staff pay. We also reviewed our policies and benefits to ensure they promote employee wellbeing and support equality. This resulted in several new policies such as incremental annual leave in recognition of long service, well-being leave provisions and a career break policy.

#### GROWING RESILIENCE

The Dormant Accounts NI funding received this year provided Sustainable NI with an opportunity to strengthen resilience in the organisation. With grant support received over two years, 2022-23 & 2023-24, the aim of the project is to strengthen the business plan, making the charity less reliant on income from one source and instead diversify revenue, strengthening existing income and fundraising for new resources.

We used some of the funding to carry out a review of our brand identity, working with a graphic design house to update our logo, values and marketing materials including a new website. The website was built in 2022-23 and will be launched in the summer. As well as a brand review, we reviewed our key services and developed a suite of new training courses to cater for a range of client needs which will provide a future source of income as part our Advisory Services. We also used the funding to carry out a review of sustainability in the Third Sector, to build a stronger case for funding.

We have also been working on a web-based decision tool for councils and public bodies to clearly show the environmental and social implications of proposed decisions. The tool is based on 'Donut Economics' which is a visual framework for sustainable development. The aim is to make the screening assessment mandatory across public sector decision-making processes; challenging strategies, procurement and investment decisions. The tool will help public bodies satisfy the requirements of the Sustainable Development Statutory Duty (2007) and indirectly will support Public Body Reporting Duties under the Climate Change Act (2022).

As the output is a digital solution we received expert mentoring and support through the Digital Surge Programme. The Digital Surge Programme is a NI-wide programme that is partfunded by all 11 local authorities. It supports businesses that are deemed to have digital transformation potential. We will be ready to proceed with app development in the summer, and the project is due to be completed in 2023-24.

Impact Report 2023

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to place on record our gratitude to all the organisations and individuals who continue to support the work of the organisation. Our work would not be possible without the support of our clients and funders. We also want to thank the many volunteers who freely give their time to help the charity. Funders this year were:























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### ITEM 4

### **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified	
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee	
Date of Meeting	14 May 2024	
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services	
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Finance	
Date of Report	24 April 2024	
File Reference	FIN58	
Legislation	Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (NI) 2019	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ⊠ No □ Other □  If other, please add comment below:	
Subject	Electric Car Policy	
Attachments	Appendix 1 Draft Electric Car Policy	

### **Background**

Section 1 of the Local Government Finance Act requires councils to "make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs". For a number of years the Finance Service has been operating under legacy policies and has therefore been working on a programme to reviewing and updating current practice. To date the following policies have been approved:

- 1. Anti-fraud, bribery and corruption v3 (March 2023)
- 2. Asset Management v1 (March 2023)
- 3. Reserves v1 (July 2023)
- 4. Charging and Income v1.1 (July 2023)
- 5. Budgeting v1 (November 2023)
- 6. Purchasing and Payments v1 (March 2024)
- 7. Inventories v1 (March 2024)

### Unclassified

Currently a Sustainable Travel and Expenses Policy and also an Employee Payments Policy are under development. However, a number of staff have already acquired electric vehicles and therefore it is necessary in advance of the above two policies being finalised to agree a policy for the payment of allowances in respect of electric cars. This is being addressed on an ad-hoc basis as there is no legacy arrangements to consider.

The main points of both documents are set out below:

- 1. Payment of mileage rates that follow the HMRC rates and thresholds;
- 2. Payment of a lump sum for essential users at the same rate as claimed for their previous diesel or petrol vehicle.
- 3. Introduction of a 92 claim deadline (except for the first claim)
- 4. Normal daily commutes must be deducted from all claims when traveling from a non-work location.
- 5. Home to office mileage will only be paid where no other recompense is received (eg. overtime or TOIL).

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approves version 1 of the electric car policy.

### **POLICY COVER SHEET**

Policy Title	Electric Car Mileage Policy
Policy/File Reference	FIN58
	Ref: 303
Version	1.0
Policy Summary	The purpose is to allow Council to pay
	mileage rates for electric cars.
Responsible Officer(s)	Head of Finance
Date of Equality	26/05/2023
Screening	
Date of consultation with	24/04/2024
Consultative Panel	
Date of consultation with	28/02/2024
Unions	
Date of Council approval	Target May Council
Implementation date	Target 1 June 2024
Appendices attached	
Next review date	June 2026

### Revision History:

Version	Changes made by	Date	Reason for change	
0.1	Head of Finance	04/05/2023	Draft for Finance consultation	
0.2	Head of Finance	24/05/2023	Draft for CLT	
0.3	Head of Finance	30/05/2023	For HoST consultation	
1.0	Head of Finance	24/04/2024	For CSC approval	

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### **Chapter 1 Policy Statement**

#### Introduction

This interim policy is needed due to the continued use of legacy travel policies and the fact that neither make any provision for payment of mileage allowances for electric vehicles.

### **Policy Scope**

Applies to all employees.

### Policy Objectives

The objective of the policy is to ensure:

- 1. Establish mileage arrangements for employees using electric vehicles.
- 2. Provide reimbursement for employees who use their private electric cars for Council business.
- 3. Indemnify Council in case of accident.

### Policy Statement

Vehicles must have valid:

- Business insurance
- Car Tax (Vehicle excise duty)
- MOT certificate if required.

Electric cars will be paid mileage rates in accordance with HMRC approved rates and thresholds until a full ANDBC policy is implemented.

Essential car users will be entitled to the same lump sum allowance to which they were entitled to immediately prior to acquiring their electric car.

Claims must be made within 3 months (defined as 92 calendar days) of the date of the journey. This time limit does not apply to the first claim made in respect of mileage undertaken prior to the implementation of this policy.

Reimbursement will only be for incremental costs and therefore any journeys started or ended from a non-working location (eg. home) must have a single or return commuting journey deducted as appropriate.

Mileage allowance may not be claimed for commuting journeys unless no other recompense is made for the hours worked. All journeys thus claimed are taxable in full. HMRC rules will be used to determine whether a journey is similar to a commuting, when it does not start or finish at a work place.

Continued on next page

### Chapter 1 Policy Statement, Continued

# Associated Policies

The following policies are associated with this policy:

Ref	Policy
-	ABC Staff Travel Policy
-	NDBC Employee Expenses and Benefits Policy



### ITEM 5

### **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	14 May 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	25 April 2024
File Reference	
Legislation	Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ⊠ No □ Other □  If other, please add comment below: with mitigation
Subject	Offical Portrait of the Monarch
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Image of the Portrait Appendix 2 - Letter from the UK Government Appendix 3 - ANDBC screening document

This portrait of King Charles III was gifted to Ards and North Down Borough Council by The Cabinet Office in April 2024 (Image attached in Appendix 1). King Charles III, formerly known as The Prince of Wales, became King on the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September 2022. The Portrait was provided with a letter detailing the portrait description, the materials it is made from and the practical tips for hanging it (Appendix 2).

### **Screening Considerations**

It is essential that the Council promotes equality of opportunity for those of different religious opinions when implementing this policy. This exercise has been screened by Officers. It is noted that this is a replacement of the current portrait, therefore the

### Not Applicable

conclusion has been reached that the policy be Screened Out with Mitigating Actions due to the minor impacts. (Appendix 3).

### Mitigation

It is noted that this is a replacement portrait of the last monarch. By contextualising the portrait with a plaque, it will serve a purpose within the function of Ards and North Down Borough Council's role within the United Kingdom. It will be important to review this in the event of any substantial change to working arrangements and / or complaints in relation to any aspect of the portrait.

### Request for additional portrait for Ards Chamber

Given there is currently a Portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth II in Newtownards Chamber, a letter was sent to the Cabinet Office requesting an additional portrait. The Cabinet Office (HM The King Portrait Scheme) responded to say that they were only able to provide one free portrait per authority and are not permitted to sell the portraits. A portrait will be available in due course from commercial outlets but as yet no details are available.

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council agree to replace the Official Portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth II with the Official Portrait of the King Charles III in the Chamber in Bangor City Hall and should an additional portrait be available to the Council, it will replace the existing portrait in the Chamber in Church Street Offices, Newtownards. Both replacements will be subject to an accompanying plaque explaining the context of why the Portrait has been placed in the Chamber(s).



The UK Government is pleased to provide you with this official portrait of His Majesty King Charles III marking the start of the new Reign, for use in public buildings and for other official purposes.

There is a long tradition of displaying a portrait of the Monarch in public buildings, signifying their importance at the heart of national life.

The photograph of His Majesty was taken in autumn 2023 in Windsor Castle by photographer Hugo Burnand, who also took The King and Queen's Coronation photographs.

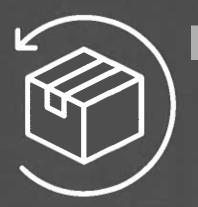
His Majesty is shown in the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet (No. 1 Tailcoat), and is wearing the Garter Collar and Sovereign's Badge, Garter Star, Thistle Star, the Bath Sovereign's Badge, the Order of Merit, the Royal Victorian Order's Royal Victorian Chain and GCVO Sash, as well as a set of medals on his medal bar.

Care has been taken to ensure sustainability of materials and minimisation of the environmental impact in the material used in the production of the portraits and packaging and also the processes used. The packaging is made from 70% recycled material and is 100% recyclable.

There is no obligation to take down portraits and likenesses of Queen Elizabeth II, and indeed many public institutions have portraits and likenesses of previous Monarchs on display.

We hope the portrait will be hung in reception areas, function rooms and similar locations where the portrait will be on display to staff and visitors alike for all to see and appreciate.

# HM King's Portrait Returns Procedure



Every endeavour has been made to ensure your portrait reaches you in perfect condition. In the unfortunate event that you find an issue with your portrait then we will work with you to rectify the situation in the shortest possible timeframe.

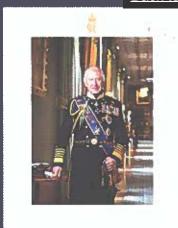
If you do find an issue with your portrait, please follow the instructions below.

 Scan the QR code below to access to Returns Form.
 Alternatively, please go to this URL: https://portraitscheme.cubiquityonline.com/t/Returns and Damages Form



- 2. Please enter your details into the online form including a description of the damage. We also ask you to upload photos of any damage or defect. It is essential that we receive photos to establish the best course of action to rectify the situation.
- 3. You will then receive an email or call from our Customer Service Team at admin@brookpace.co.uk advising on what actions we will take to ensure you receive a replacement. This may involve you repacking the portrait and we will then arrange collection.
- 4. We aim to respond to all queries within 72 hours.
- 5. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact kingsportrait@cubiquitymedia.com
- 6. The portrait comes with a 36 month warranty against failure of the portrait materials or assembly. This will not include accidental damage or damage caused during storage or hanging of the portrait.

# HM King's Portrait Hanging Instructions



Your portrait is made using sustainably sourced oak and conservation grade glass - please handle with care. The portrait weighs 3.05 kilograms and has an outer size of 637mm (h) x 507mm (w).

We recommend engaging a member of your facilities or building maintenance team to ensure the portrait is hung safely using appropriate fixings for the location and wall type.

The portrait has a hinged metal hanger fixed in the centre on the reverse. Folding the top part of this hanger slightly away from the portrait back will assist with locating the hanger on to the wall fixing. Adjust to the left or the right to ensure the portrait hangs straight.

Care instructions: Please keep the portrait away from direct sunlight to avoid fading and clean with a soft dry cloth only.



Image of pre-fixed metal hanger on the reverse of your portrait

Friday, April 26, 2024



### **Screening Form**

**1. Is this a** Policy

2. Name of King Charles III Portrait

Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service

3. Reference 323

4. Category of New

Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service

### 5. Please provide a description of the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service

The Cabinet Office announced last year that it had set aside funds to offer every public body – local councils, courts, schools, police forces, and fire and rescue services – a free portrait of King Charles. Ards and North Down Borough Council applied for the The portrait of King Charles III and it was gifted to Ards and North Down Borough Council by The Cabinet Office in April 2024 (King Charles III, formerly known as The Prince of Wales, became King on the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September 2022.

# 6. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The aims of this policy are to replace the current portrait of Queen Elizabeth II located in the City Hall Chamber, Bangor with a portrait of the current reigning monarch King Charles III. Given there is currently a Portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth II in Newtownards Chamber, a request was made by Elected Members to replace this one also. A letter was sent to the Cabinet Office requesting an additional portrait. The Cabinet Office (HM The King Portrait Scheme) responded to say that they were only able to provide one free portrait per authority and are not permitted to sell the portraits. A portrait will be available in due course from commercial outlets but as, yet no details are available. This screening excerise will focus on the replacement within City Hall, Bangor.

7. Who initiated or wrote the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service?

Director of Corporate Service

8. Who is responsible for the implementation of the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service?

**Director of Corporate services** 

9. Is this policy affected by timetables established by other relevant Public Authorities?

Yes

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## **Equality**

# 1. Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

Yes

#### 1a. If Yes, which Section 75 categories are expected to benefit?

Religious Belief, Political Opinion

#### 1b. How are they expected to benefit?

It's important to note that there is a correlation between religious beliefs and political opinions. In particular, individuals who identify as Protestants tend to be more likely to hold Unionist political views and may also be more receptive to the idea of having a portrait of His Majesty the King displayed in the City Hall Chamber. Similarly, those who identify as Unionists or Loyalists are also more likely to support the presence of such a portrait in this space.

# 2. Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

No

# 3. Who are the internal/external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

Staff, Service Users, Other Public Sector organisations, Voluntary/Community/Trade Unions, Potential Visitors

#### 4. Is this policy associated with any other Council Policy (or Policies)?

Yes

#### 4a. If yes, please state the related Policy (or Policies)

- 39 Dignity at Work Policy
- 52 Requests to Name Council Facilities
- 68 Policy for the Provision of Memorial Benches
- 90 Draft Behaviour Charter for Employees
- 130 Integrated Tourism, Regeneration and Development Strategy
- 131 Naming of New Leisure Facility in Newtownards
- 162 Ards and North Down Borough Council Integrated Arts and Heritage Development Strategy (IAHDS) 2018-2023
- 179 Policy on Requests for the Utilisation of a Council Display Bed
- 224 Borough Events Strategic Direction 2020-2025
- 231 Ards and North Down Borough Council Roadmap to Sustainability 2021-2028
- 234 Equality Action Plan 2020-2025
- 241 Social Value in Sustainable Procurement Policy
- 244 Borough Marketing and Communications Strategy
- 260 Commemorative Tree Policy
- 268 Bangor Waterfront: OBC
- 269 Sustainability and Climate Change Policy
- 278 Big Plan part ii
- 280 Street Naming and Numbering
- 282 Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)
- 301 ANDBC Land and Property Policy
- 324 Corporate Plan 2024
- 327 Good relations Action Plan 24/25
- 328 Naming a place or Building after Queen Elizabeth II

#### 5. Does this policy affect Internal or External users?

**Both** 

Evidence to help inform the Section 75 screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

# 6. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy?

Religious belief, Political opinion

#### Religious belief evidence

According to the 2021 census The religious group the person belongs to or for people with no current religion their religious group of upbringing is as follows Catholic 14%, Protestant & other Christian religions 68%, Other religions 1%

None 17%. This is higher than the Northern Ireland average

(17.4%) and the highest of all 11 district council areas. This information points to the increased secularisation of ANDBCs population.

In relation to employees statistics show that of 882 employees 131 identified as Roman Catholic, 685 identified as protestant and 65 where non determined. As the portrait will be hung in a working environment it is important to include evidence from a previous EQIA of the flying of the Union flag on Council buildings. Staff comments concurred that the workplace should be a harmonious environment and represent all communities and that Council offices should be viewed as a safe and welcoming space for all

employees and visitors/users of the facility.

#### Political opinion evidence

Electoral Office data from recent Local Government elections (2023) and Northern Ireland Assembly Elections (2022) detail the political representation on Ards and North Down. Data also shows the turnout to vote. This tends to be lower that the rest of Northern Ireland, suggesting less strong political Opinions, however the results show a preference in Ards and North Down for Unionist Parties. ANDBC does not hold political evidence of employees.

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy / decision?

# 7. Please provide details of different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the categories

Based on the available evidence, it appears that the proposed policy may have a varying impact on two specific grounds mentioned in Section 75 - religious belief and political opinion. However, it could also be argued that the issue of national identity may bring a third category, ethnic origin, into play. In general, the impact of the policy would be related to the perceptions of the Monarchy by different communities in Northern Ireland, which in turn is linked to considerations of national identity and loyalty.

# 8. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Religious belief?

Minor

#### 8a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Religious belief

The portrait may have the potential to create an adverse impact on employees and visitors from a Roman Catholic and/or

Nationalist and/or Republican background, or those who do not identify with any community background, by disrupting a good and harmonious working environment.

# 9. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Political opinion?

Minor

#### 9a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Political opinion

The portrait may have the potential to create an adverse impact on employees and visitors from a Roman Catholic and/or

Nationalist and/or Republican background, or those who do not identify with any community background, by disrupting a good and harmonious working environment.

10. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Racial group?

None

11. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Age?

None

12. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Marital status?

None

13. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Sexual orientation?

None

14. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Men and women generally?

None

15. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Disability?

None

16. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Dependants?

None

17. Are there opportunites to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? If Yes, provide details. If No, provide reasons.

#### Religious belief

In light of the sensitivities surrounding the replacement of the portrait, it is essential that the Council promotes equality of opportunity for those of different religious opinions when implementing this policy. The Equality Commission suggests that decisions made by employers about workplace emblems should be supported by sound and objective rationale, in keeping with underlying equality policies. It is also crucial to reflect on the purpose or function of the organisation. For example, if its function and remit are of a "political" or "religious" nature, it may be acceptable and even expected that there may be some reminders of the nature of the organisation or its role in the community.

Ards and North Down Borough Council plays a crucial role in governing and serving the people throughout the Borough in line with national laws and responsibilities within the United Kingdom. By contextualising the portrait, it will serve a purpose within the function of Ards and North Down Borough Council's role within the United Kingdom. This policy should be disseminated through specific staff communications to explain the policy and its purpose. It is also important to review this policy in the event of a substantial change to working arrangements and or complaints in relation to any aspect..

#### **Political opinion**

In light of the sensitivities surrounding the replacement of the portrait, it is essential that the Council promotes equality of opportunity for those of different political opinions when implementing this policy. The Equality Commission suggests that decisions made by employers about workplace emblems should be supported by sound and objective rationale, in keeping with underlying equality policies. It is also crucial to reflect on the purpose or function of the organisation. For example, if its function and remit are of a "political" or "religious" nature, it may be acceptable and even expected that there may be some reminders of the nature of the organisation or its role in the community.

Ards and North Down Borough Council plays a crucial role in governing and serving the people throughout the Borough in line with national laws and responsibilities within the United Kingdom. By contextualising the portrait, it will serve a purpose within the function of Ards and North Down Borough Council's role within the United Kingdom. This policy should be disseminated through specific staff communications to explain the policy and its purpose. It is also important to review this policy in the event of a substantial change to working arrangements and or complaints in relation to any aspect..

#### Racial group

none

#### Age

None

#### **Marital Status**

None

#### Sexual orientation

None

#### Men and women generally

None

#### Disability

none

#### **Dependants**

none

# 18. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion and/or racial group?

Minor

#### 18a. Please describe the details of the policy impact on good relations

The policy may carry sensitivities for those of certain religious background with those of a Protestant or other religions background being generally more supportive than those of a Catholic identity.

Mitigations will reduce the impact for both staff and visitors to the City Hall, Bangor

# 19. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion and/or racial group?

Yes

#### 19a. Please provide your reasons below

As leaders of public authorities, it is crucial that we demonstrate our commitment to promoting good relations. This includes not only avoiding or removing occasions of difficulty between various groups but also actively encouraging the expression and promotion of good relations in all aspects of our work. Section 75 mandates us to create an ethos and culture of good relations, recognizing the need to promote

them within and between communities. Promoting good relations can sometimes involve addressing complex issues and taking steps to create safe shared spaces and a harmonious working environment.

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## **Disability Discrimination Order (NI) 2006**

20. Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability?

No

21. Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would encourage the participation of people with a disability in public life?

No

#### **Additional Considerations**

22. Are there any potential impacts of the policy / decision (positive or negative) on people with multiple identities?

Yes

22a. Where appropriate, provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned

It is important to consider that decisions may have a negative or positive impact on individuals as everyone has their own unique identity. Some people may not want to be associated with a particular identity and would prefer shared spaces instead of spaces that are identified with a specific Section 75 identity. This is particularly important for younger individuals who, based on data sources and attitude surveys, do not want to use past references to any specific identity.

## **Monitoring Arrangements**

23. Outline what data you could collect in the future to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on equality, good relations and disability duties

Comments or Complaints in relation to any aspect of this policy.

# 25. On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy/decision is

Screened Out - Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)

#### 25a. Mitigating Actions

It is noted that this is a replacement portrait of the last monarch.

By contextualising the portrait, it will serve a purpose within the function of Ards and North Down Borough Council's role within the United Kingdom. This policy should be disseminated through specific staff communications to explain the policy and its purpose. It is also important to review this policy in the event of a substantial change to working arrangements and or complaints in relation to any aspect..

#### 26. Monitoring Recommendations

It is suggested that this policy be monitored on an annual basis and the policy be revised should any complaints arise.

**Email** 

sian.mcconnell-porter@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

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# **Screening Panel Comments**

## **Appendix - Religious Belief**

#### Religious belief (Internal)

\* Small numbers removed as indiviuals could be identifiable

	Catholic	Protestant & other Christian	Other religions	Total
Males F/T	33	388	34	425
Males F/1	8%	84%	8%	100%
Males P/T	*	*	*	8
Males P/1	25%	63%	13%	100%
Females F/T	58	223	6	287
remales r/1	20%	78%	2%	100%
Fameles D/T	12	20	5	35
Females P/T	32%	54%	14%	100%
Total	105	606	46	757
Total	14%	80%	6%	100%

#### Religious belief (External)

The Northern Ireland Census 2021 (NISRA) statistics for the Borough area show the religious group the person belongs to or for people with no current religion their religious group of upbringing. People with no current religion and no religion of upbringing are labelled 'None'.

On Census Day 2021 in Northern Ireland just under one person in five (19.0%) either had 'no religion' (17.4%) or 'religion not stated' (1.6%). Nearly one person in three in Ards and North Down (32.1%) had 'no religion' or 'religion not stated' On census day 2021 bringing together information on current religion and religion of upbringing, 45.7% of the population were either Catholic or brought up as a Catholic, while 43.5% were recorded as 'Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related)'. Again, bringing together information on current religion and religion of upbringing, 1.5% of the population are classified as 'other religions' and 9.3% of the population identified that they neither belonged to nor were brought up in a religion. This points to the increasingly secular nature of the population ('None').

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	All usual Residents	Catholic	Protestant and other Christian Religions	Other Reglions	None	
Ards and North Down	163,659	22,912	111,288	1,636	27,822	
Northern Ireland	1,903,178	875,461	818,366	19,031	171,286	
		Ards and I	North Down	Northern	Ireland	
All Usual residents		163	163,659		1,903,178	
Catholic		18	18,003		334	
Presbyterian		47	47,461		540	
Church of Ireland		22, 912		228,381		
Methodist		6,	6,546		38,063	
Other Chrtistian Religions		16	16,365		133,222	
Other Religion	ns	1,	636	19,031		
No Religion/Not stated		52	52,370		361,603	

## **Appendix - Political Opinion**

#### Political opinion (External)

Electoral Office data from recent Local Government elections (2023) and Northern Ireland Assembly Elections (2022) detail the political representation on Ards and North Down. Data also shows the turnout to vote. This tends to be lower that the rest of Northern Ireland, suggesting less strong political Opinions, however the results show a preference in Ards and North Down for Unionist Parties.

Constituency	Registered Voters	Turnout
North Down	70,176	60%
Strangford	70,755	68%
Northern Ireland	1,373,731	63%

District Electrol Area	Eligible Electorate	Votes Polled
Overall Turnout (2023)		
Ards and North Down Borough Council Area	123,736	57,677
Overall Turnout (2023)  Northern Ireland	1,380,372	745,400

Party	Local Government Seats Held	Local Government Seats Held	NI Assembly Elections seats held	NI Assembly Elections seats held
	ANDBC	Northern Ireland	North Down and Strangford	Northern Ireland
Alliance	12	67	4	17
Aontù	0	0	0	0
DUP	14	122	3	25
Green	2	5	0	0
Independants	3	19	1	2
People before Profit	0	1	0	1
SDLP	1	39	0	8
Sinn Fèin	0	144	0	27
TUV	0	9	0	1
UUP	8	54	2	9
Other	0	1	0	0

## **Appendix - Racial Group**

#### Racial group (Internal)

\* Small numbers removed as indiviuals could be identifiable

Racial Group	Total	Percentage
White	682	78.66%
Black	*	*
Chinese	*	*
Other	*	*
Did not want to answer	*	*
Left Black	176	20.30%

#### Racial group (External)

On Census Day 2021, 3.4% of the population, or 65,600 people, belonged to minority ethnic groups. This is around double the 2011 figure  $(1.8\%-32,400\ \text{people})$  and four times the 2001 figure  $(0.8\%-14,300\ \text{people})$ ; Taken together the bulletin reports and tables released today show an increasing diversity from 2011 to 2021 in Northern Irelands population across statistics on ethnic group, main language, country of birth and passports held. This increasing diversity is evident to a greater or lesser degree across all 11 Local Government Districts.

All Usual Residents	163,660
White	159,892
Irish Traveller	24
Roma	19
Indian	388
Chinese	500
Filipino	308
Pakistani	87
Arab	28
Other Asian	468
Black African	309
Black Other	135
Mixed	1,236
Other ethnicities	266

Main LanguageArds and North DownNorthern IrelandEnglish160,3851,808,019

**Other** 3,279 95,158

Passports Held	<b>Ards and North Down</b>	Northern Ireland
All Usual Residents	163,659	1,903,178
UK only	109,651	894,493
Ireland Only	13,092	513,858
Uk and Ireland	13,098	95,158
Other Passport(s)	4,909	95,158
No Passport	21,275	304,508

## **Appendix - Age**

Age (Internal)

Age Profile	Female	Female %	Male	Male %
16 to 29	20	6%	26	65%
30 to 39	75	23%	83	19%
40 to 49	105	33%	121	27%
50 to 59	80	25%	176	39%
65+	42	13%	41	9%
Total	322	100%	447	100%

#### Age (External)

On Census Day 2021 Ards and North down had the largest increase in the number of people aged 65 and over. This rose from 27,692 (17.7%) in 2011 to 36,226 (22.1%) in 2021, demonstrating the scale of population change due to ageing.

Age Profile Northern Ireland Ards and North Dov	vn
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0 to 14	361,602	27,822
15 to 39	589,983	44,187
40 to 64	609,015	55,644
65+	323,539	36,226
Total	1,903,173	163,659

## **Appendix - Marital Status**

#### **Marital Status (Internal)**

\* Small numbers removed as indiviuals could be identifiable

Marital Status	Total	Percentage
Single	180	20.76%
Married	405	46.71%
Divorced	35	4.04%
Co Habiting	14	1.61%
Separated	25	2.88%
Civil Partnership	*	*
Left Blank	207	23.88%

#### **Marital Status (External)**

Statistics classifies people aged 16 and over according to their legal marital or civil partnership status on Census Day 21 March 2021. The law in relation to marriage and civil partnership changed in the ten years to 2021. A summary of the changes in Northern Ireland is given below:

- civil partnership for opposite-sex couples became legal in late 2019;
- marriage for same-sex couples became legal in 2020; and
- in late 2020 a couple in a civil partnership could convert their status from civil partnership to marriage.

The rise in the 'single' population and the fall in the 'married' population here is in line with results from recent censuses in England and Wales. These figures mirror changes in society and specifically in personal relationships that has been witnessed over the last 50 years. Ards & North Down LGD, which has the oldest demographic profile of all 11 LGDs, has the highest percentage of adults who were widowed, at 8%.

Marital Status	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
Single	575,966	41,540
Married or in Civil Partnership	682,065	68,340
Separated, Divorced or Formally in a Civil Partnership	151,570	13,400
Widowed or Surviving partner from a Civil Partnership	97,004	10,720

## **Appendix - Sexual Orientation**

#### **Sexual Orientation**

Statistics show that 2.1% (31,600) of NI population aged 16 and over identified as 'lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+)' and 90.0% (1,363,900) identified as 'straight or heterosexual'. More urban LGDs have a higher percentage of people who identified as LGB+. Almost 8% of our population aged 16 and over (119,300) either ticked 'prefer not to say' or chose not to answer the question. Taken together, these are labelled 'No sexual orientation stated' in these statistics.

8.8% percent of people who identified as LGB+ in Northern Ireland live in the Ards and North Down Borough, Statistics also show that 800 Households in the Borough are living in a same sex couple relationship.

Living in households by relationship	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
Living in a Same Sex Couple	9,600	800
Not Living as a Couple	694,600	53,500
	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
All usual Residents (over 16)	1,515,700	134,000
Straight or Hetrosexual	1,364,130	121,940
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or other Sexual orientation	30,314	2,680
No sexual orientation stated	121,256	9,380

## **Appendix - Men and Women Generally**

Men and women generally (Internal)

Male	Female	Total
511	356	867
58.94%	41.06%	100%

#### Men and women generally (External)

The Northern Ireland usually resident population increased by 5.1% (92,300) from 2011 to 2021. The Census 2021 population is recorded at 1,903,175 people up from 1,810,863 people in 2011. Ards & North Down had an increase of population from 2011 of 7,000, which is 4.5%.

The census day population comprised of 967,000 females and 936,100 males. Statistics show that for every 100 females in Ards and North Down Borough there were 94.9 males.

Statistics show that 54% of the Borough are employed 2% are Unemployed and 43% are Economically inactive. Of those employed, 37% were in the Public administration, education and health Industry and 2% were in the Agriculture, energy and water industry.

62% of employed people travelled to work in a car or van and 34% travelled 5km-20km to their place of work.

There were 70,445 households recorded in Ards and North Down 4,400, 5.9% were unoccupied at the time of the survey.

The average household size in sits at 2.30 (2.44 in NI). 31% are single occupancy and 6% had more than 6 people living in the property.

72% of the Borough owns their own property, this has decreased by 2% from 2011 where 13% are Social rented and increase of 2% increase in 2011.

LGD	Male	Female
Northern Ireland	932,554	970,618
Ards and North Down	80,192	83,466

## **Appendix - Disability**

#### **Disability (External)**

A self-assessment of whether a person has a long-term health problem or disability that limits daily activities and which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. It includes problems that are due to old age. The 2021 Census (NIRSA) demonstrates an increase of 15% or more in the percentage of people who reported a long-term health problem or disability which limited day-to-day activities. 41,300 or 25.3% of people in Ards and North Down had a limiting long-term health problem or disability. Ards & North Down experienced an increase of 31.4% from 2011. These changes are in part a reflection of the Boroughs ageing population.

The following statistics show a breakdown in residents in Northern Ireland and Ards and North Down borough with a Disability that is expected to last 12 months or more.

The figures show that 7.2 per cent of the Borough have deafness or partial hearing loss, 68% being over the age of 65. 2% have blindness or partial sight loss, 11% of those people are aged 0-39 years. 1.6 % have mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair, in comparison to Northern Ireland statics this means that 9.3% of all those who have mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair reside in the Borough.

0.8% have an intellectual or learning disability including dyslexia and Downs Syndrome. 1.6% have Autism or Asperger syndrome, 49% are between 0-14 years whilst 40% are aged 15- 39 year. 8.1 % have an emotional, psychological or mental health condition, includes depression and schizophrenia, this is highest in the age ranges of 40 – 64 years (47%). 2% have frequent periods of confusion or memory loss, including Dementia, this is most prevalent with ages 65+. 10% of residents have another condition, for example Cancer, Heart Disease or Diabetes, again this is most prevalent in age 65+. Taken together these results show that policy making must consider Ards and north Down aging population and health and disability issues as well as recognition for those that provide unpaid care throughout the Borough.

aric	id disability issues as well as recognition for those that provide unpaid care throughout the Borough.						
	LGD	All usual residents		Activites Not Limited	Limited a little	Limited a lot	
	Northern Ireland	1,903,178		1,446,415	247,413	209,349	
	Ards and North Down	163,659		122,744	22,912	18,002	
	Long term Health Conditions	None		1	2	3 or More	
	Northern Ireland	1,237,065		342,572	152,254	171,286	

Ards and North Down	101,468	32,731	14,729	14,729
Disability Breakdown Age range (0 - 65+)	Ards and North Down		Northern Ireland	
Deafness or Partial Hearing loss	11,802		109,457	
Blindness or Partial Sightloss	3,214		33,961	
Mobility or dexterity difficulty that required the use of a wheelchair	2,641		28,138	
Intellectual or learning disability include dyslexia and Downs Syndrome	1,469		16,923	
Autism or Asperger Syndrome	2,628		35,367	

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Emotional, psychologica I or mental health condition inc depression and schizophreni a	13.275	165,127	
Frequent periods of confusion or memory loss inc Dementia	3,432	37,789	
Other conditions E.g Cancer, Heart Disease or Diabetes	167,752	16,636	

## **Appendix - Dependants**

#### **Dependants (External)**

For the Purposes of S75 a dependant can be classed as Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.

In Census 2021 one person in eight of NI population aged 5 or more (or 222,200 people) noted that they provided unpaid care. One important point to note in Policy making is that 2,600 children aged 5 to 14 in Northern Ireland provide unpaid care.

Ards & North Down LGD had the highest percentage of people who provide unpaid care throughout Northern Ireland , 13.7% estimated at 30,414 residents. 'Unpaid care' covers looking after, giving help or support to anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age

A dependent child is a person aged 0 to 15 in a household (whether or not in a family) or aged 16 to 18 in full-time education and living in a family with his or her parent(s) or grandparent(s). 'No dependent children' includes households with no children and households where all children are non-dependent.

In Ards and North Down there were 27,822 Children (defined as those aged 0 to 14). Children make up 19.2% of the Northern Ireland population. This percentage varies across the Local Government Districts and is lowest in Ards and North Down where the proportion is 17.0%.

According to Birth statistics on NISRA Ards and North Down recorded 2,854 births between 2020 and 2022, giving an indication of the numbers using buggies or prams in use.

	Dependent children in household: None	Dependent children in household: one	Dependent children in household: Two	Dependent children in household: Three
Northern Ireland	71%	11%	11%	6%
Ards and North Down	74%	11%	11%	4%

24. Does this policy require an Equality Impact Assessment?

No

1. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. E.g

The Cabinet Office announced last year that it had set aside funds to offer every public body – local councils, courts, schools, police forces, and fire and rescue services – a free portrait of King Charles. Ards and North Down Borough Council applied for the The portrait of King Charles III and it was gifted to Ards and North Down Borough Council by The Cabinet Office in April 2024 (King Charles III, formerly known as The Prince of Wales, became King on the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September 2022.

2. What definition of 'rural' is the Plan using in respect of Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition)

# Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

3. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?



3d. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas

No Rural needs identified

# Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service? Deprivation levels can be found at Home Page | NI Area Statistics | NISRA



4d. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

No Rural needs identified

# Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

5. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the Social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

No Rural needs identified

## Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

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6. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service been influenced by the rural needs identified?

No

6b. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified

No Rural needs identified

## **Documenting and Recording**

7. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information complied.

Sustainability is a holistic approach that considers ecological, social and economic dimensions, recognising that all must be considered together to find lasting prosperity.

Sustainable development is all about meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Depending on your answer your answer may be a 'positive' impact or a 'negative' impact. Specific guidance at each question.

There may be 'no impact'.

If you are not sure complete as 'don't know'

# 1. What impact will the proposal have on the local community including the ability of people to meet their essential needs?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Transport - Is the activity accessible to everyone via public transport or active travel, in a safe and sustainable way?  Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	No Impact
Public Placemaking, Community & Culture - Is the activity impacting on people's sense of place and community by being included and connected to the area?  Is the activity impacting on our cultural offering, helping citizens, visitors and young people become acquainted with art and culture?  Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	No Impact

### 2. What impact will the proposals have on local, sustainable food supply chains?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Food - If this activity involves either the direct or indirect purchase of food or catering services will there be a negative impact on a sustainable food system?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.	
Additional information:	
Food systems currently account for 21-37% of total global greenhouse gases and are a primary cause of environmental degradation and significantly contribute to socioeconomic and health inequalities. This can be mitigated by specifying sustainable food and catering services, fresh seasonal food of a high nutritional value produced through low environmental impact farming methods and high standards of animal welfare.	No Impact

### 3. What impact will the proposals have on diversity and equality of opportunity?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Equal opportunity - Does the activity have a positive or negative impact on inclusivity and discrimination?	Don't know

#### **Comments**

	Comments	
Equal opportunity	See S75 Screening	

#### 4. What impact will the proposals have on prosperity, social value and fair trade?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Decent jobs and income - Are local employment opportunities being created removed 'or removed'? Will there be any volunteering opportunities?	No Impact
Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	

	What is the impact of the activity?
Will the financial benefits help raise local income levels and tackle poverty and derivations of poverty such as food and fuel poverty?  Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	No Impact
Social Value - Will the activity lead to the creation of works or services? Are there opportunities to support apprenticeships or training opportunities to combat social exclusion? Are there any opportunities to work with organisations with an environmental or social mission (e.g., from the VCSE sector)?  Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	No Impact
Human and labour rights - Will there be provisions to ensure workers up the supply chain have their human and labour rights respected?  Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	
Additional information:	No Impact
Products at high risk of the use of child labour and contravention of human and labour rights include electronic equipment, textiles, agricultural commodities and construction materials.	

# 5. What impact will the proposals have on greenhouse gas emissions, including energy and transport?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Greenhouse Gas Emmissions - Will this activity have a positive or negative impact on greenhouse gases (most commonly caused by fossil fuel burning or deforestation)?	
Additional information:	
Greenhouse gases include CO2, CH4, N2O, HFCs, PFCs or SF6. The most common sources include consumption of brown (non-renewable) electricity, burning of coal, oil, petrol, diesel, natural gas, emissions from landfill sites, and the destruction of natural carbon sinks such as peat bogs, woodlands, forests, grasslands, freshwater lakes, and wetlands.	No Impact

	What is the impact of the activity?
Energy - Will the activity reduce energy demand through energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	
Additional information:	No Impact
Will energy come from renewable energy sources e.g., solar, wind etc.? Will buildings be designed and constructed to high energy and environmental standards?	
Transport - Will the activity be accessible to everyone via active travel (Bike/walking) or public transport? Does the proposal help to reduce non-essential travel and individual car use?	No Impact
Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	
Embodied carbon - Will the activity use materials from 'heavy industries' such as cement, concrete, iron and steel, or require international transportation of materials using aviation or shipping?	No Impact
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.	

### 6. What impact will the proposals have on waste generation or how waste is managed?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Waste generation - Will this activity lead to the production of waste?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.	
Additional information:	No Impact
Have you considered how to reduce waste through demand management and re-use strategies which support the circular economy?	
Waste Management - Is waste going to be managed in a responsible, sustainable way?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	No Impact
Additional information:	
Will waste be monitored? What recycling provisions are there? Will any waste be sent to landfill?	

# 7. What impact will the proposals have on the direct consumption of natural resources, including materials, minerals and fresh water?

	What is the impact of the activity?	
Materials - Will this activity lead to the consumption of raw materials? (Raw materials include steel, oil, corn, grain, gasoline, wood / forest resources, plastic, natural gas, and coal).		
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.	No Impact	
Additional information:		
Can materials be swapped or reduced, to minimize pressure on natural resources and reduce environmental impact?		
Will lifecycle costing exercises be used in procurement (e.g., if purchasing vehicles, energy-intensive equipment or major capital projects) in order to minimise the consumption of natural resources and achieve value for money	No Impact	
Note: If the answer is yes, select positive		
Fresh water - Will this activity increase pressure on freshwater resources through direct water consumption?	No Impact	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative		
Will the activity impact on the public's ability to access a clean and safe water supply?		
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	No leave a st	
Additional information:	No Impact	
Unsustainable water consumption includes use of mains water or other freshwater supplied without water efficiency or recycling measures.		

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8. What impact will the proposals have on local resilience to the adverse effects of climate change and severe weather events, including drought, landslips, flooding and sites designated as being at risk of flooding or sea level rise?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Adverse Weather and Climate Impacts - Will buildings, infrastructure, or natural assets be at risk to the adverse effects of climate change and extreme weather?	
Note: If the answer is yes select negative	
Additional Information:	
For Northern Ireland, climate change is causing hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters with more extreme weather and rising sea levels.	No Impact
A precautionary approach is advised for all planning and construction decisions, taking into account the latest UK Climate Change Projections and making sure that development is not permitted on flood plains and / or land at risk of flooding under future climate scenarios.	No Impact
Avoid activities that may be vulnerable to overheating or flood risk.  New assets (e.g. landscaping, buildings etc.) should be future proofed, ensuring all investments are resilient to current and future climate conditions.	

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9. What impact will the proposals have on the local environment (e.g., air/water/soil pollution, land conversion, visual impacts, traffic, noise, vibration, odour, dust, particulates, smoke), heritage (including designated heritage, archaeology sites or listed buildings) and wildlife (including protected sites and species)?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Air pollution - Will the activity produce air pollutants?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	
Additional Information:	
Air pollutants include: Particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5); Ozone (O3) Nitrogen dioxide (NO2); Carbon Monoxide (CO); Sulphur Dioxide (SO2).	No Impact
The most common causes of air pollution are:-	
<ul> <li>Fuel combustion from motor vehicles (e.g. cars and heavy-duty vehicles)</li> <li>Heat and power generation (e.g. oil and coal power plants and boilers)</li> <li>Industrial facilities (e.g. manufacturing factories, mines, and oil refineries)</li> <li>Municipal and agricultural waste sites and waste incineration/burning.</li> </ul>	
Ozone layer depletion - Will this activity produce ozone depleting substances (fluorinated gases)?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	
Additional Information:	No Import
Fluorinated greenhouse gases (F gases) include: • hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) • perfluorocarbons (PFCs) • sulphur hexafluoride (SF6)	No Impact
For example through the use of refrigeration and air conditioning units.	

	What is the impact of the activity?
Water/soil pollution - Will this activity involve any construction work, street works or road deliveries of construction materials or other goods?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	
Additional Information:	
Soil and water pollution is caused from damaging rainwater run-off arising from road surface treatments, tyre abrasion, fuels and lubricants.	No Impact
Procurement and contractual mechanisms can be used to ensure that building and civil engineering contractors adhere take steps to ensure pollution is prevented from occurring or from dispersing to other areas. Contractors can minimise the use of all substances that could cause pollution and failing that, implement and communicate procedures to ensure the correct disposal (or release) of substances that could cause pollution.	
Chemical pollution - Will there be any use of toxic chemicals including pesticides, paint or cleaning products?	No Impact
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	
Will there be any excess fertiliser use that could result in nitrogen or phosphorus runoff?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	
Noise pollution - Is the activity likely to create a noise nuisance?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	
Additional information:	
Noise pollution can have detrimental effects on human health, amenity, productivity and the natural environment.	No Impact
Eliminating or reducing excessive noise is a legal responsibility and helps to limit the disturbance of residents and businesses, caused by activities and operations.	

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	What is the impact of the activity?
Land conversion - Will this activity result in the reduction in the area of forested land, directly or indirectly?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	No Impact
Additional information:	No Impact
Deforestation usually arises from the clearing of land for development, agriculture, or logging for paper, wood, or minerals.	
Built Heritage - Will this activity impact on designated heritage sites such as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Archaeology Site, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site or Registered Park and Garden?	No Impact
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	
Natural Heritage and Biodiversity - Will this activity result in any displacement or loss of biodiversity, overfishing or affect protected or designated sites (e.g. ASSIs, SPAs etc).	
Note: If the answer is yes, select negative	
Changes in land use exert the most significant effect on biodiversity. These changes include the conversion of natural ecosystems into agriculture or into urban areas; changes in frequency, duration or magnitude of wildfires and similar disturbances; and the introduction of new species into land and freshwater environments.	No Impact

# 10 What impact will the proposals have on ensuring peace, justice, public participation and partnership working for sustainable development?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Peace - Will this activity have a negative or positive impact on community safety, crime or anti-social behaviour?	No Impact
Justice - Are there safeguards in place to prevent against bribery and corruption?	
Note: If the answer is yes, select positive	No Impact
Decision making should be open and transparent with clear governance and accountability arrangements.	

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	What is the impact of the activity?	
Political voice - Are citizens involved and do they have a role in deciding what happens and how it gets implemented?  Note: If the answer is yes, select positive	No Impact	
Partnerships - Will this activity involve working with others either locally or at a national level to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development?	No Impact	
Note: If the answer is yes, select positive		
On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend	Screened Out - No negative impacts	

that this policy / decision is

1. Is Data Protection relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

No

## **Data Protection Officer Comments**

Unclassified

## ITEM 6

## **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified	
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee	
Date of Meeting	14 May 2024	
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services	
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration	
Date of Report	23 April 2024	
File Reference	Sus 1	
Legislation	Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 NI (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ⊠ No □ Other □  If other, please add comment below:	
Subject	Draft Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 – New Climate Change Reporting Duties for Your Organisation	
Attachments	Appendix 1 Letter from DAERA re reporting obligations Appendix 2 Annex A draft Legislation Appendix 3 Annex B FAQs	

As members will be aware, the Council has a statutory duty to contribute to Sustainable Development in Northern Ireland and The Climate Change Act (NI) 2022.

#### **Background**

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 ('the Act') received Royal Assent on 6th June 2022. A briefing of the Act was reported to Corporate Committee, 15 February 2023. To summarise The Act will:

 set targets for net zero for the years 2050, 2040 and 2030 for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

#### Unclassified

- set out a carbon budgeting framework (Carbon budget was a term used to refer to the maximum amount of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions allowed over a period of time, to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius);
- provide for reporting and statements against those targets and budgets;
- confer power to impose climate change reporting duties on public bodies;
- establish a Northern Ireland Climate Change Commission and appoint a Climate Change Commissioner to oversee and report on the operations of the Act and stated a commitment to developing a climate action plan within 2 years of the Act receiving Royal Ascent.

The letter from DAERA in relation to the reporting obligations for the Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 – New Climate Change Reporting Duties for Your Organisation 2024 is attached in Appendix 1.

Under the reporting ask DAERA have laid the new Public Reporting Regulations before the NI Assembly. These Regulations will place new climate change reporting duties on public bodies. Details of the requirements set in the draft Regulations (Appendix 2) and a list of Frequently Asked Questions (Appendix 3) are attached.

DAERA has also requested a nominated point of contact/s to represent the organisation for further engagement.

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

- note the Draft Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 – New Climate Change Reporting Duties for Your Organisation, and,
- 2. the Head of Administration and Compliance Officer (Sustainability) are provided as points of contact going forward.

# Climate Change and Science Innovation Group

Climate Change and Green Growth Policy Division

Your reference Our reference

12th April 2024



An Roinn

Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Depairtment o'

Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers

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Dear Public Body,

# Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 – New Climate Change Reporting Duties for Your Organisation

I am writing to confirm with you that your public body organisation is specified as a 'Reporting Body' within the Schedule of the attached draft Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024, as having climate change reporting duties placed upon it.

A copy of the draft Regulations, which have recently been agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive, is attached in Annex A for your information. The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs ('DAERA') intends to make and lay these Regulations at the earliest opportunity in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Annex B of this letter contains some frequently asked questions and corresponding answers for your information on what the Regulations require and what they mean for you which we hope will address any immediate concerns that you may have.

#### Context

Making and bringing into operation these Regulations delivers on DAERA's legal requirement to do so under section 42 of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 ('the Act'). The Regulations put in place a climate change reporting framework for the specified public bodies, which can enable them to take informed, and timely climate action. The aim of this is to make public bodies more sustainable and give them the

**Sustainability** at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.



opportunity to provide a positive example and exploit the opportunities that early and effective climate action can deliver.

#### Operational date of the Regulations, and when reporting is required.

The Regulations will come into operation in early May 2024, 21 days after they are laid by DAERA in the Northern Ireland Assembly. The duties placed on the scheduled list of public bodies cover climate change reporting requirements on both adaptation and mitigation. However, reporting by public bodies will not be required immediately and they will not be required at exactly the same time. The first mitigation report by the public bodies will be required to be submitted to DAERA by October 2025. The first adaptation report is not due until March 2026. Mitigation reports will then be required on a 3-yearly cycle, and the adaptation reports will be required on a 5-yearly cycle.

The timing and frequency of reporting is to allow, and enable, your organisation to collect the necessary data, and for DAERA to develop and provide practical support to help you and the other organisations specified in the Regulations to report.

Support will be provided by DAERA through the provision of guidance co-designed with public bodies themselves. DAERA is also working on developing a reporting template which will again be informed by and co-designed with the specified public bodies. Training and an online portal for reporting bodies will also be put in place to make the process as straightforward as possible. Further information on timings and frequency of reporting is in Annex B at Question 6, and 'support' to public bodies at Question 9.

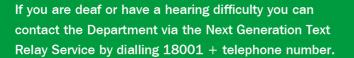
#### Consultation, and pre-consultation engagement

Your organisation had been previously contacted by DAERA regarding our consultation (which ran for an extended 10-week period from March 2023 until June 2023) on the development and making of these Regulations. The consultation can be found at Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies - Developing New Regulations. The summary of responses received to the consultation can be found at Summary of Responses and Next Steps: Consultation on Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies - Developing New Regulations . This summary of responses document also includes the detail on, and the outcome of, DAERA's pre-consultation engagement workshops undertaken with public bodies in the later quarter of 2022 which informed the development and content of the consultation.

#### **Reporting Bodies**

The Act does not require all public bodies to have reporting duties placed on them by the Regulations. A balanced approach has been applied to these first set of Regulations to minimise the risk of undue burden, by requiring only those public bodies which are large-sized organisations to report (40 organisations in total, which can be viewed here). Large-sized public bodies are more likely the highest emitters, and they can help most in contributing to ensuring a climate resilient and sustainable Northern Ireland, while also having the capacity to deliver on reporting requirements and show leadership in climate action. Details of the definition of a 'public body' under the meaning of the Act, and the criteria used to identify who should be required to report under this first set of Regulations, is detailed in the attached Annex B at Question 5.

Please note that DAERA is committed to reviewing these first set of Regulations, at a future point, to explore expanding them through amending regulations, including the **Sustainability** at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.





scope of bodies required to report. In the interim the Department intends to promote voluntary reporting from those public bodies not specified in the Regulations. It is clear from the consultation that there are many public body organisations that are keen to assess and report on their climate change risks, and actions to address these risks and reduce their emissions, including developing adaptation and mitigation plans. However, not all of these organisations come within scope of these first set of Regulations. The voluntary reporting is therefore a way for those bodies, that are not specified in the regulations, to develop their experience and skills for reporting.

#### What does DAERA require from you now?

After the Regulations are laid, DAERA's preparation work will then commence on the codesign of technical guidance including a reporting template, development of an online portal, and development and provision of training, to help public bodies meet their reporting duties.

In the interim, we would be grateful if you could please provide DAERA (at: <a href="mailto:climatechangediscussion@daera-ni.gov.uk">climatechangediscussion@daera-ni.gov.uk</a>), with the name and contact details of a nominated person(s) for your organisation for future direct engagement on matters regarding the requirements set by the Regulations.

DAERA looks forward to working with you on these important matters. Reporting will give the bodies an opportunity to show continued leadership on climate action within the public sector, providing positive examples and shared learning of what effective climate action can deliver, which is benefit to us all. If you have any issues or queries about these matters, you can contact the Public Body Reporting team at <a href="mailto:climatechangediscussion@daera-ni.gov.uk">climatechangediscussion@daera-ni.gov.uk</a>, or please call Arlene McGowan on (028) 9056 9484.

Yours faithfully,

Jane Grderoy

Jane Corderoy

Director

Climate Change and Green Growth Policy Division

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

Annex A

#### STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

### 2024 No. [TBC]

### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024

Made	[ ]2024
Coming into operation	[ ]2024

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 42(1) of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022<sup>(1)</sup>.

In accordance with subsection (7) of that section the Department has consulted such public bodies, and such other persons, as it considered appropriate before making these Regulations.

### **Citation and commencement**

- **1.**—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.
- (2) These Regulations come into operation on \_\_\_\_\_\_ [NOTE: a date 21 days after the Regulations are laid in the Assembly will be entered here].

### Interpretation

- 2. In these Regulations—
  - "climate change adaptation report" means a report under regulation 4;
  - "climate change mitigation report" means a report under regulation 5;
  - "publish" means publish in electronic form;
  - "reporting body" means a body specified in the Schedule;
  - "sent" means sent in electronic form.

### **Reporting bodies**

- **3.**—(1) The Schedule (reporting bodies) has effect.
- (2) Reporting bodies are specified public bodies for the purposes of section 42(1) of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.

### Climate change adaptation reports

- **4**.—(1) Every reporting body must prepare reports which include—
  - (a) an assessment of the current and predicted impact of climate change in relation to its functions;
  - (b) a statement of the body's proposals and policies for adapting to climate change in the exercise of its functions;
  - (c) a statement of the time-scales for implementing those proposals and policies; and
  - (d) an assessment of the progress made towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in any previous climate change adaptation report.
- (2) The first report must relate to the period of four years beginning with 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026.
- (3) Subsequent reports must relate to the period of five years beginning immediately after the end of the period to which the previous report relates.
- (4) Reports must be prepared and sent to the Department not later than one month after the end of the period to which the previous report relates, or in the case of the first report 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

#### Climate change mitigation reports

- 5.—(1) Every reporting body must prepare reports which include—
  - (a) a statement, in respect of each of the three preceding financial years, of the amounts and the sources of the body's greenhouse gas emissions;
  - (b) a statement of the body's proposals and policies for reducing those amounts and otherwise for mitigating the effects of climate change in the exercise of its functions;
  - (c) a statement of the time-scales for implementing those proposals and policies; and
  - (d) an assessment of the progress made towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in any previous climate change mitigation report.
- (2) A report must, unless the Department otherwise agrees, use—

- (a) as the reporting body's greenhouse gas baseline year the financial year ending  $31^{\rm st}$  March 2025, and
- (b) as the reporting body's baseline greenhouse gas emission amounts the amounts in that year.
- (3) The first report must be prepared and sent to the Department not later than 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.
- (4) Subsequent reports must be prepared and sent to the Department every third year not later than 31<sup>st</sup> October.
- (5) In relation to the first report—
  - (a) paragraph (1)(a) has effect as if the words "each of the three preceding financial years" were "the financial year ending 31st March 2025";
  - (b) paragraph (2) does not apply.
- (6) References in this regulation to a financial year are to be construed in accordance with section 39(6)(e) of the Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954<sup>(2)</sup> whether or not a body uses that financial year.

#### Guidance

- **6.**—(1) The Department may issue guidance to reporting bodies on their functions under these Regulations.
- (2) The Department may publish any guidance issued under paragraph (1).

#### Matters to which reporting bodies must have regard

- 7. Reporting bodies must have regard to (among other things) the following, so far as relevant
  - (a) the most recent report under section 56 of the Climate Change Act 2008<sup>(3)</sup> (report on impact of climate change);
  - (b) the most recent programme under section 60 of that Act (programme for adaptation to climate change for Northern Ireland);
  - (c) the desirability of co-ordinating the proposals and policies referred to in regulation 4(1)(b) or 5(1)(b) with corresponding proposals and policies in other parts of the United Kingdom, in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere; and
  - (d) guidance under regulation 6.

<sup>(2) 1954</sup> c. 33 (N.I.)

<sup>(3) 2008</sup> c. 27

### **Co-operation in preparation of reports**

**8**. A reporting body or any other public body may co-operate with another reporting body in the preparation of a report under these Regulations.

### Joint reports

**9**. Two or more reporting bodies may prepare a joint report under these Regulations.

### **Corrected reports**

- 10. (1) If it appears to a reporting body or to the Department that a report sent to the Department by the reporting body requires correction, the reporting body must send a corrected report to the Department as soon as practicable.
- (2) A corrected report must state the reasons for each correction.

### **Publication of reports**

**11**. Every reporting body and the Department must publish any report sent by the reporting body to the Department under these Regulations.

A senior officer of the

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Regs. 2, 3(1)

### **SCHEDULE**

### REPORTING BODIES

#### **Education**

**Education Authority** 

An institution of further education within the meaning of Article 2(2) of the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997  $^{(4)}$ 

Queen's University of Belfast

University of Ulster

Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Health and social care

A Health and Social Care Trust

Regional Agency for Public Health and Social Well-being

Regional Business Services Organisation

Miscellaneous

Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

Board of Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland

A district council

Invest Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Northern Ireland Library Authority ("Libraries NI")

Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company

Northern Ireland Water Limited

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Probation Board for Northern Ireland

<sup>(4)</sup> S.I. 1997/1772 (N.I. 15)

#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations specify certain public bodies ("reporting bodies") for the purposes of section 42(1) of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (regulation 3 and the Schedule).

Regulation 4 requires a reporting body to prepare prospective reports on how it is adapting to climate change in the exercise of its functions (a "climate change adaptation report"). The first report covers the four years beginning 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026 and subsequent reports cover periods of five years.

Regulation 5 requires a reporting body to prepare a report every three years on how it is reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and otherwise mitigating the effect of climate change in the exercise of its functions (a "climate change mitigation report").

Regulation 6 enables the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to issue guidance to reporting bodies on their functions under these Regulations.

Regulation 7 requires reporting bodies to have regard to certain matters including the most recent report on the impact of climate change under section 56 of the Climate Change Act 2008 and the most recent programme for adaptation to climate change under section 60 of that Act.

Regulation 8 provides for co-operation in the preparation of reports and regulations 9 and 10 provide for joint reports and corrected reports.

Regulation 11 requires any report sent by a reporting body to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs under these Regulations to be published in electronic form by the reporting body and by the Department.

#### Annex B

### The Climate Change (Reporting bodies) Regulations 2024: Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

### Index:

Question 1: Why are the Regulations being brought forward?

Question 2: When and how often will reporting be required?

Question 3: What information will the reports need to contain?

Question 4: What are the other requirements/allowances set by the Regulations?

Question 5: What support will be provided to you for meeting your reporting duties, and when?

Question 6: Why must the Regulations wait for 21 days before coming into operation, after they are made and laid in the Assembly?

Question 7: How were the Regulations informed?

Question 8: What was the UK Climate Change Committee's advice to DAERA?

Question 9: What criteria was used to identify which organisations should be specified to have climate change reporting duties placed on them by the Regulations?

Question 10: Will other public bodies be required to report in the future?

Question 11: What next?

### Question 1: Why are the Regulations being brought forward?

**Ans:** Section 42 of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 ('the Act') requires DAERA to make new Regulations, which will place climate change reporting duties on specified public bodies. The Regulations are crosscutting and so the content of the Regulations in **Annex A** has been agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive, who have also agreed that DAERA should make and lay them in the Assembly and bring them into operation.

### Question 2: When and how often will reporting be required?

Ans: There are two types of reports which you will be required to provide under your reporting duties set by the Regulations, and these are - 'climate change mitigation' reports and 'climate change adaptation' reports. The required content of these reports is discussed in question 3 below. Detailed guidance, which will be co-designed with reporting bodies, and training, will be provided to you on the requirements and on how to meet your reporting duties.

The timings and frequency of reporting are set in the Regulations (Annex A), specifically regulation 4 for adaptation, and regulation 5 for mitigation.

The following provides an explanation of the timings and frequency of reports:

### Regulation 4: Adaptation Reports

- Your first 'adaptation report' must be submitted to DAERA by 31<sup>st</sup>
   March 2026 (the period which the first report will cover is 4 years\* beginning from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026).
- Your second and subsequent adaptation reports will be on a 5-yearly cycle\*.
- Your second adaptation report will therefore begin from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2030, and must be submitted to DAERA by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2030.
- Your third adaptation report will begin from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2035. This third report must be submitted to DAERA by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2035; and so on for subsequent 5-yearly adaptation reports.

[\*N.B. The frequencies and timings are set to align with, in order to aim to inform, the development of the 5-yearly UK Climate Change Risk

Assessments which are required under the UK Climate Change Act 2008 – these risk Assessments include detail on the current and projected climate change risks and impacts to Northern Ireland (see question 10 for more detail).]

### Regulation 5: Mitigation Reports

- Your mitigation reports will be on a 3-yearly cycle.
- Your first 'mitigation report' must be submitted to DAERA by 31<sup>st</sup>
   October 2025.
- Your second mitigation report must therefore be submitted to DAERA by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2028.
- Your third mitigation report must be submitted to DAERA by 31<sup>st</sup>
   October 2031, and so on for subsequent reports every 3 years.

### Question 3: What information will the reports need to contain?

Ans: The Regulations (Annex A) set the requirements on what your reports must contain. The requirements are set under regulation 4(1) which relates to adaptation, and regulation 5(1) which relates to mitigation. Please note that DAERA intends to develop and co-design guidance with reporting bodies to help them meet their reporting duties. This will include technical detail and guidance on what is reported, and how it is reported, for both adaptation and mitigation. Further detail on support to be provided to you to help you to meet your reporting duties is discussed under question 5.

### Adaptation reports

The first (4 year) adaptation report, and the subsequent 5-yearly adaptation reports are required to include your public body's:

- (i) current and predicted impact of climate change in relation to its functions; and
- (ii) proposals and policies for adapting to climate change in the exercise of its functions, including the timescales for implementing these proposals and policies.

Second and subsequent 5-yearly adaptation reports are also required to include your public body's:

 assessment of the progress it has made towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in any of its previous climate change adaptation reports.

### Mitigation Reports

The first mitigation report is required to include your public body's:

- (i) amounts and sources of greenhouse gas emissions, in respect of the financial year beginning 1st April 2024 and ending 31st March 2025; and
- (ii) its proposals and policies for reducing its emissions in the exercise of its functions, including timescales for implementing those proposals and policies.

The second and subsequent 3-yearly mitigation reports are required to include your public body's:

- (a) amounts and sources of greenhouse gas emissions in respect of each of the three preceding financial years (1<sup>st</sup> of April 31<sup>st</sup> March) [For example: Your public body's second mitigation report, to be submitted to DAERA by October 2028, will include the amounts and sources of its greenhouse gas emissions in respect of the three preceding financial years i.e. from 1st April 2025 until 31st March 2028.];
- (b) proposals and policies for reducing its emissions in the exercise of its functions, including the timescale for implementing those proposals and policies; and
- (c) assessment of the progress it has made towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in any of its previous climate change mitigation reports.

The Regulations require that a mitigation report must use as a baseline, the body's greenhouse gas emissions and sources which were reported in its first mitigation report, for the financial year beginning 1st April 2024 and ending 31st March 2025. This baseline will be used for assessing and reporting on progress. The Regulations also allow for an alternative baseline to be used, however, this will require agreement with DAERA.

For the support in place to help you with the reporting, and especially the first reports please see the answer to question 5 below.

### Question 4: What are the other requirements/allowances set by the Regulations?

### **Ans:** The Regulations:

- require the reporting bodies to have regard to certain matters (if relevant) when reporting, including, for example the most recent 5-yearly UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, required under the UK Climate Change Act 2008, which contains climate change risks and impacts to Northern Ireland (see regulation 7, Annex A);
- allow co-operation in preparation of reports, and/or joint reporting, between two or more reporting bodies to meet their reporting requirements (see regulation 8 and 9 respectively, Annex A);
- allow for corrections to be made to the reports, after they are submitted to DAERA (see regulation 10, Annex A); and
- require publication of a body's own reports on its website and also on DAERA's website (see regulation 11, Annex A).

### Question 5: What support will be provided to you for meeting your reporting duties, and when?

**Ans:** To help your organisation meet its reporting duties under the Regulations, DAERA will provide the following practical support:

- Technical, co-designed guidance on how to complete climate change reports.
- Co-development of a reporting template containing a list of climate change questions for your organisation to answer.
- Provision of an online climate change reporting portal, for you to enter your data into, to create your reports and make subsequent reporting as easy as possible.
- Provision of training on how to complete climate change reports to meet your reporting duties.

DAERA is undertaking preparation work to bring forward this support as soon

as possible. Support will be provided at the earliest opportunity and ahead of the reporting submission dates. DAERA may contact you regarding input to the co-design developmental work regarding this support.

DAERA also, intends as part of its co-development of support, where possible and as appropriate, to ensure a streamlined and consistent approach to reporting, where public bodies are required to report on climate change elsewhere. For example, we have already engaged with the Department of the Economy regarding their Energy Carbon Data Repository System. We recognise as streamlined and consistent approach as possible, in order to avoid any duplication of process, is very important for public bodies and for the success of the reporting.

Question 6: Why must the Regulations wait for 21 days before coming into operation, after they are made and laid in the Assembly?

**Ans:** The Regulations are subject to the 'negative resolution' procedure under the Act. This means that they are required to be 'laid' in the Assembly for 21 days, before they can become operational.

### Question 7: How were the Regulations informed?

**Ans:** The following have helped to inform the development of the Regulations:

- advice from the UK Climate Change Committee (the statutory independent expert advisers on climate change, to the Northern Ireland government);
- the outcome of DAERA's public consultation on developing the Regulations; and
- the outcome of the pre-consultation workshops with public bodies which informed the consultation's development.

The consultation can be found at: <u>Climate Change Reporting by Specified</u>

Public Bodies - Developing New Regulations.

The summary of responses received to consultation, including findings from the pre-consultation workshops with public bodies, can be found at: <u>Summary of Responses and Next Steps: Consultation on Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies - Developing New Regulations</u>

Question 8: What criteria was used to identify which organisations should be specified to have climate change reporting duties placed on them by the Regulations?

Ans: The Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 ('the Act'), in section 42, requires DAERA to make new Regulations which will set 'climate change reporting duties' on 'specified public bodies'. The Act's definition of a public body in section 42, is very wide - it can be: "a person or body with functions of a public nature" and "a person who is a statutory undertaker within the meaning of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011". The Act does not require all public bodies to report under the Regulations. DAERA therefore is applying a phased and balanced approach, in which these first set of Regulations will focus on large-sized organisations being required to report. DAERA intends to explore at a future point, bringing forward amending Regulations, to expand the scope of these first set of Regulations, including the scope of who is required to report.

The following criteria, which has been informed by the consultation and the pre-consultation workshops with public bodies, was used to identify the bodies which are specified in these first set of Regulations as having reporting duties placed on them:

#### Public Bodies:

- (i) with 250 or more staff (based on full-time equivalent (FTE) data or total of permanent staff),
- (ii) which are listed authorities in Schedule 3 to the Public Services Ombudsman Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 and/or in the list of organisations subject to the

- Department of Finance's public procurement policy,
- (iii) whose remit/functions do not fall under reserved or excepted matters, or they are not North/South government dual funded, and
- (iv) which are not a Registered Housing Association, a General Practitioner, nor a Northern Ireland Civil Service department and their Executive agency(ies) (due to the more extensive requirements\* placed on these departments by other sections of the Act).

\*The Act sets a range of duties on Northern Ireland departments including that they must all contribute to delivering the Act's emissions reduction targets and carbon budgets (i.e. caps or limits on the level of emissions which are permitted over a 5-year period). The Act places a range of reporting requirements on departments in that regard, including developing and publishing sectoral plans, climate action plans and progress reports and statements. Section 42 of the Act has a much narrower scope, in that the Regulations required by this section can only be made to require public bodies to report solely on climate change.

### Question 9: Will other public bodies be required to report in the future?

**Ans:** DAERA intends, at a future point, to review these Regulations (after they are made and are operational). The Review will include exploring the making of amending Regulations to expand the scope of the Regulations including who is required to report.

### Question 10: What was the UK Climate Change Committee's advice to DAERA?

**Ans:** The following is the UK Climate Change Committee's ('the CCC') advice to DAERA on the timing and frequency of climate change reporting by public bodies, with which the Regulations (in Annex A) are aligned:

### General Advice from the CCC

Actions and especially policy, for both tackling the causes of climate change (i.e. mitigation) and adapting to its impacts and risks, can have long lead-in times before they are embedded, and the results and benefits are seen. This is particularly true of adaptation.

### **CCC Advice on Adaptation Reporting**

5-yearly reporting is considered an appropriate interval at which to reassess climate risks, as the type and magnitude of climate risks facing an organisation are unlikely to change significantly on a year-to-year basis. Likewise, the observation that adaptation actions take time to identify, fund and implement, similarly supports 5-yearly adaptation reporting, to provide meaningful updates on progress and to identify new adaptation priorities. They have also said that 5-yearly reporting removes the risk of overly burdensome and unnecessary reporting and is consistent with similar reporting in other nations e.g. the adaptation reporting power under the UK Climate Change Act (2008).

Timing: The CCC recommended that the timing of provision of the adaptation reports by public bodies should align with development of the CCC's five-yearly evidence reports, which inform the five-yearly UK Climate Change Risk Assessment ('CCRA') required under the UK Act 2008. This is because the information collected under the regulations could be used to help inform these CCC evidence reports. The CCC also advised that public bodies should provide a risk assessment and an adaptation action plan at the same time. They said this is necessary to provide better insight, and full understanding into whether climate risks will be appropriately managed by a particular specified public body.

 DAERA has set adaptation reporting for every 5 years (which also aligns with the outcome of the consulation – see question 7 above).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The first adaptation report will cover a 4-year period, and second and subsequent adaptation reports will be 5-yearly. The frequencies and timings are set to align with, in order to aim to inform, the development of the 5-yearly UK Climate Change Risk Assessments required under the UK Climate Change Act 2008.

### CCC Advice on Mitigation Reporting

The CCC have said that reporting every 5 years on mitigation should be a minimum. However, they also advised that every 5 years would likely be too infrequent to drive the rapid progress needed to see any difference in cutting emissions, and it would not be enough to build a robust database (for mitigation). It was also their perspective that reporting every year (annual reporting) on mitigation by public bodies would not be necessary.

 DAERA has set mitigation reporting for every 3 years (which also aligns with the outcome of the consultation see question 7 above).

### Question 11: What next?

**Ans:** Once you have provided to DAERA, your body's nominated person(s) contact details, we will be in touch with that person to initiate engagement and regularly as the support referred to in question 5, is being developed, implemented and delivered.

### ITEM 7

### **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	14 May 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	<b>'</b> _
Date of Report	23 April 2024
File Reference	NILGA Corporate Plan
Legislation	'-
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ⊠ No □ Other □  If other, please add comment below:
Subject	NILGA Corporate Plan
Attachments	Letter from NILGA NILGA Corporate Plan

### **BACKGROUND**

NILGA (Northern Ireland Local Government Association) have shared a copy of their Corporate Plan 2023-2027 with the Chief Executive, and a copy is attached. NILGA note that the plan is intended to provide focus, pace and impact in supporting local Councils and was developed after considering feedback from local Councils.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

If is recommended that the Council notes the attached Corporate plan.



the voice of local government

Mr Stephen Reid Chief Executive Ards and North Down Borough Council Town Hall The Castle BANGOR BT20 4BT

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024

Dear Stephen,

A lot has changed for councils in the last year, with the local government elections in May 2023 and the NI Executive and Assembly once again functioning.

Councils have remained focused on how they can deliver growth and prosperity for their areas and have been very successful in the development of city/growth deals, securing UK Levelling Up and Shared Island Funding and delivering the critical front line services our ratepayers depend on.

Having completed two years as NILGA Chief Executive, I continue to be amazed by the flexibility, agility, innovation and commitment of your councils.

Thank you for your feedback on the draft NILGA Corporate Plan 2023-2027, which is intended to give NILGA's work focus, pace and impact as we support your council. The NILGA Executive considered all of the feedback received and agreed the final corporate plan to guide NILGA's work during the current local government mandate. Please find attached the final NILGA Corporate Plan 2023-2027 for your information.

In order for NILGA to be able to demonstrate impact, value for money and added value to you, our members, we developed a supporting impact framework focusing on sectoral sustainability, policy and development.

I am pleased to attach both NILGA's impact summary as well as a more detailed breakdown of that impact for your consideration.

To enable the continued delivery of NILGA's work, the annual core subscription for your council for 24/25 is £59368.00 (plus VAT), an invoice is attached.

Please be assured any increases are due entirely to the same unavoidable inflationary and staffing costs facing councils and we have made every effort to keep your subscription as low as possible.

**Northern Ireland Local Government Association**Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB

Tel: 028 9079 8972 email: office@nilga.org web: www.nilga.org twitter: @NI\_LGA

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On behalf of NILGA, I want to thank the NILGA Members from your council Ald Alan McDowell, Cllr Richard Smart, Cllr Robert Adair, and Cllr Victoria Moore, and your Officers that so willingly give of their time in supporting the work of NILGA.

I look forward to continuing the close relationship with both the political and corporate leadership in your council to shape NILGA's regional political leadership role in a way that adds value for the sector and please let me know if there is anything that I can do to assist you, your Members or your wider corporate team.

Yours sincerely

Alison Allen

**Chief Executive** 















# NILGA Corporate Plan

2023-2027

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### **NILGA's Impact**

# northern ireland local government association

### Who we are

The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) is the council led representative body for local authorities in Northern Ireland. The Association is supported by political parties and independent members in councils. NILGA members are drawn from each of the 11 councils providing regional and cross-party representation on the NILGA Executive Committee.

### **Our Aims**

- To be the inclusive and collective voice of councils and promote, enable and develop local government in Northern Ireland
- To convene and engage on matters relating to national, regional and local policy and the financing of local government services; as it affects the delivery of local services and outcomes for local people; and as the organisation deems appropriate
- To ensure that local government and the Northern Ireland Executive work together in partnership based on principles of mutual respect and interdependency whilst recognising the legitimacy of the role each play in Northern Ireland's governance

### Who We Work with

NILGA believes genuinely and wholeheartedly that working in partnership with others will add important value to our work. Whether that is in partnership with Ministers, civil servants, political parties, other local government associations or other key stakeholders.

Of particular importance though is the partnership with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives NI (Solace NI) as strategic professional officer advisors and the National Association of Councillors (NAC NI) as the organisation who represents the interests of individual councillors.

### What we do

NILGA is the Voice of Local Government in Northern Ireland. It represents the sector's views on critical policy issues and national pay, promotes the role and successes of local government, delivers training for elected members and works with partners to secure the future sustainability and transformation of the sector.

NILGA collaborates with the NI Assembly and Departments, regional, national and international bodies and other local government associations to support its work and enhance the role of NI local government.

### NILGA's six key workstreams are:

### **Elected member development** "Being the best councillor you can be"

The learning and development of our councillors is a key priority for NILGA, empowering elected members to be the best community representatives they can be. NILGA's Regional Programme of Elected Member Development provides planning, leadership, and development training for our members every year. And by using collective purchasing power, we save councils and ratepayers nearly £200,000 per year to deliver high-quality training courses.

## I nent

### **Workforce** "Representing councils in national pay negotiations"

NILGA represents the 11 Northern Ireland Councils at national level where pay, terms and conditions for our 12,000+ workforce are agreed. We ensure that fair and affordable pay and terms are implemented by having a direct, council representation at every pay meeting until an agreement is struck, as well as providing advice to council HR teams.

Since 2015, the benefits financially to our 11 councils based on national agreement, compared to local and regional outcomes in Scotland and parts of England, amount to approx. £7,000,000.

### **Communications** "Speaking up for local government"

NILGA is the strongest voice for our 11 local councils. We highlight the positive work and successes of local government in Northern Ireland, the delivery of first-class public services for communities, and communicate the roles and responsibilities of our councils. We are a strong communicator of everything good about our 11 local councils and a consistent advocate of the positive role that local government plays for communities and areas across Northern Ireland.

### **Representation** "The strongest voice for local government"

NILGA ensures elected members and local councils are represented on regional, national, and international bodies which we can learn best practice from, secure crucial investment, and develop positive links across the world. Whether it's vital funding support during Covid, helping shape post-EU Exit funding and grant schemes, or co-designing policy, NILGA ensures local government's voice is heard at all levels.

#### **Policy** "Delivering practical solutions for local government"

Lobbying for progress and positive change is a key priority at NILGA. Policy work is a vital tool for our 11 local councils, collating ideas and solutions to present to partners in central and national government. NILGA's strong lobbying has helped deliver on issues as varied as waste management, the environment, place-shaping, infrastructure, and Covid support funding.



### **Local Government for the future** "Protecting the future of local government"

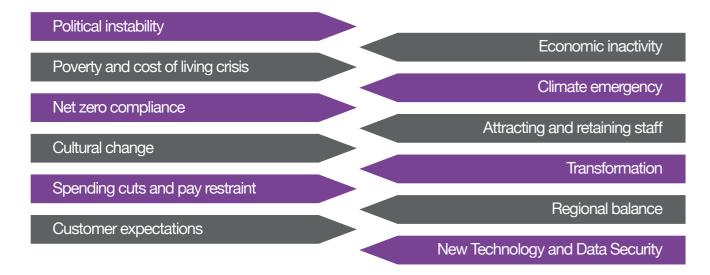
Despite our successes, NILGA is constantly seeking to deliver more for local government in Northern Ireland. Review of local government reform, transfer of key regeneration powers, the rejuvenation of our high streets, climate action, a new financial deal for councils, EU replacement funding, improvement and transformation – these are just some of the issues we are working on to continue lifting up local government in Northern Ireland.

### **Strategic Context**

### **Background**

Local government is integral to our structures of governance, public services and political life. Therefore, as the representative voice of local government, NILGA is central to key local, regional and national policy to delivering lasting, real and positive change in people's lives.

There are very significant challenges for the future of public services including:



NILGA wants to ensure that our future direction supports and enables councils and the local government sector to tackle these challenges and maximise opportunities to deliver for people. This is particularly important following local government elections on 18 May 2023 which provided a renewed and focused mandate for councils and councillors.

In anticipation of the 2023-2027 local government mandate, NILGA as the representative voice of local government has undertaken a number of independently facilitated reflective reviews of all aspects of our work, engaging widely with councils, councillors, chief executives, political parties and partner organisations such as the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives NI (Solace NI) and the National Association of Councillors (NAC). These reviews were:

- Review of NILGA's policy development, impact and future priorities
- Review of NILGA's governing constitution to ensure it is fit for the future
- Review of the effectiveness of NILGA's Elected Member Development Programme
- Review of NILGA's strategic operating context now and into the future

### **NILGA** for the Future

### **NILGA's Vision**

Councils, councillors, officers and partners welcome the renewed ambition and enthusiasm for NILGA's work with a recognition that this is an important period for local democracy.



### **Cross Cutting Enablers**

As a result of our recent reviews, it has been identified that NILGA must ensure that the following cross cutting enablers are in place to drive our success in the 2023-2027 local government mandate.

### Focus on enhancing NILGA's strategic profile

- A strategy must be in place to develop NILGA's strategic profile to effectively communicate our purpose, priorities, partnerships, relationships, client base and how we can best work with individual councils, local government collectively, central government, political parties, partners and stakeholders.
- NILGA will continually refresh our knowledge of the main and emerging actors within the various partner organisations, policy networks, political parties and civil servants.
- NILGA will highlight our success in providing an effective and positive forum for cross-party
  working and consensus development around policy issues and explore in more detail how and
  why NILGA operates effectively in this regard.
- NILGA will ensure key performance indicators are in place to measure all aspects of our work to ensure a decisive focus on our impact and effectiveness.

### Shifting from lobbying to negotiating

- NILGA will embed itself in the policy-making process of central government and transform this relationship from being perceived and operating as a lobbying body for local government to that of a negotiating partner, embedded in the policy-making processes
- NILGA will ensure balance between the work we undertake either individually or collectively
  for our membership on a functional process level and the work we undertake with central
  government as an advocate and partner in policy development; and promoting the interests of
  local government
- NILGA will ensure leadership on devolution and decentralisation to local government is at the centre of our work, including setting clear objectives as to what can and should be achieved for local government through any future process of devolution and decentralisation.

### Raising awareness of NILGA's purpose, services and impact

- NILGA will ensure there are high levels of awareness of our services and impact across both local government, central government, political parties, partners and stakeholders, including the range and quality of our services and the value added.
- NILGA will ensure the work we undertake is clearly distinguished from that of Solace NI and the National Association of Councillors and identify areas of mutually beneficial co-operation with those bodies while maintaining an independent identity
- NILGA will deepen our understanding of the varying needs and perceptions of its different partners and stakeholders to ensure our services have purpose and deliver maximum impact



### NILGA Corporate Plan 2023 -2027

This NILGA Corporate Plan 2023-2027 is intended to enhance our strategic alignment, outline our work in supporting councils, councillors and communities and deliver a NILGA that is valued and effective.

Strategic Themes	Corporate Priorities
Empowered and resourced councils	Influencing the delivery of outstanding legislation and financial sustainability to allow local government to function effectively
	<ul> <li>Delivery of balanced and respectful central/local relationships delivering on the principle of prioritising local decision making</li> </ul>
	Support sector led transformation and innovation informed by best practice
Empowered and confident councillors	Enable confident politically led representation for the sector
	Deliver high quality learning and development for councillors
	• Deliver improvements in effectiveness of Code of Conduct for councillors
Empowered and supported people and places	Influence further devolution of powers and resources to support local decision making
	Shape regional and national policy to empower local delivery
	Support councils and councillors in creating the conditions for local economic, social and environmental resilience
Empowered and valued NILGA	Build confidence in NILGA's effectiveness
	Enable proactive councillor and officer engagement in key regional sectoral work
	Reinvigorate local democracy through communications and collaboration

### Strategic Theme – Empowered and resourced councils

### Context

Public services have been under pressure for some time and as global economic and political uncertainty continues, the prospects for our citizens and businesses are under threat. Over the next decade councils will have to face the challenges of public sector spending restraint, meeting new legislative requirements and increasing customer expectations.

Local government has the ambition and drive to overcome these challenges and build on the confidence in councils to deliver for people, with strengthening local democracy as key. Councils are agile, dynamic, innovative, have a real connection with the communities they serve and have high levels of accountability and democratic oversight.

However, barriers to success remain - local government reform remains incomplete, with legislation and regulations to affirm council rules of operation, planning processes and a code of conduct outstanding.

To achieve our sectoral ambitions and create stronger more reliable public services, greater collaboration with government departments to design services, deliver added-value and remove duplication is essential. Embracing technology and using data to drive decision-making as well as investing in our workforce will be the cornerstones of innovative 21st century councils.

### **Corporate priorities**

- Influence the delivery of outstanding legislation and financial sustainability to allow local government to function effectively
- Support the delivery of balanced and respectful central/local relationships delivering on the principle of prioritising local decision making
- Support sector led transformation and innovation informed by best practice

### Why it matters

Financial sustainability is a critical success factor for the sector. Fair and transparent budget allocations over a longer term (which return the Rates Support Grant to sustainable levels) would offer greater certainty to councils and recognise their role and value. Pooling of budgets for place-based delivery and alignment of funding streams across government would minimize inefficiencies and bureaucracy. As a valued partner in government, local government can improve policy and process design and delivery for better local and regional outcomes.

Delivery of outstanding legislation to allow local government to function effectively, along with progress on priority policy areas will go some way towards empowering the local government sector in Northern Ireland. However, this must be underpinned by sector-led transformation and innovation, informed by best practice which takes advantage of the best knowledge and expertise across sectors and place real value on local decision making.

### Strategic Theme - Empowered and confident councillors

### **Context**

Councillors are elected to make decisions which affect the quality of life and livelihoods of local people. Inspiring local communities and creating the conditions for inclusive growth takes ambitious leadership – and effective political leadership is at the heart of a healthy democracy. By investing in the skills and knowledge of councillors through the provision of learning opportunities tailored to their role, NILGA will strengthen the impact councillors have on local areas and in doing so strengthen the voice of local government.

Through a standardised regional induction programme and renewed Elected Member Development programme, NILGA will support councillors to push boundaries for their constituents and the local government sector and deliver better outcomes for all.

Elected member conduct, ethics and standards are important issues for local government. The continued impasse on modernising the Code of Conduct in both content and process, undermines local democracy and the representative, policy and operational workings of councils and councillors.

### **Corporate priorities**

- Enable confident politically led representation for the sector
- Deliver high quality learning and development for councillors
- Deliver improvements in effectiveness of the Code of Conduct for councillors

### Why it matters

The role of local councillor is wide-ranging and demanding from place-shaping to licensing. Equipping local leaders with the competencies, skills and knowledge to carry out their roles is a priority for all councils, whether that be on developing skills in leadership or scrutiny and challenge; or building knowledge on planning, climate change, economic development or community planning.

Councils who want to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of their communities must invest in councillor learning and development. Councils participating in the Elected Member Charter process can benefit from a robust, structured framework to increase councillor competence and confidence; strengthened member-officer relationships; and enhanced democracy and participation.

A review of the current Code of Conduct for councillors to mirror that of the NI Assembly would provide clarity for councillors, while not impeding their role as democratically elected decision makers.

# Strategic Theme - Empowered and supported people and places

### **Context**

Councils are at the forefront of improving how people live and work. They are place-shapers and are best placed to identify solutions to local challenges and draw in the right partners to deliver for their areas.

Councillors are embedded in their communities, giving them unique insight into their needs, hopes and aspirations. Bringing this unique perspective to the delivery of public services both within their councils and with central government, councillors play a vital role in holding public services accountable for delivering for people.

Addressing climate change, improving community planning mechanisms, unblocking bureaucracy in the planning system, realising the potential of local development planning and using economic and social levers will stimulate growth and investment in local areas. Yet councils are still dependent on regional government delivering public services in local areas as the devolution and decentralisation of powers has not been comprehensive. The absence of regeneration powers and budgets diminishes the role of local councils in shaping and improving their areas.

### **Corporate priorities**

- Influence further devolution and decentralisation of powers and resources to support local decision making
- Shape regional and national policy to empower local delivery
- Support councils and councillors in creating the conditions for local economic, social and environmental resilience

### Why it matters

Pride in place is best achieved by delivery close to local people and businesses, in other words by local authorities that understand each place's unique local context. A place-based approach to public service delivery, underpinned by cross-government and cross-sectoral collaboration will drive inclusive growth in local areas. As the civic hub and primary co-ordinator of public services in local areas, local government has a central role to play to reduce fragmentation, improve efficiency and effectiveness in government.

### Strategic Theme - Empowered and valued NILGA

### Context

As the representative body for the local government sector, it is important that NILGA members are confident in its ability to provide strong leadership, scrutiny, representation and accountability.

NILGA's constitution sets out the governance framework for the organisation which will include regular engagement with the full NILGA membership as well as on an individual council basis. NILGA's Executive Committee members must engage in scrutiny of the organisation's performance and impact to shape its success, with input from councils and the wider group of councillors. Compliance with everchanging legislative and regulatory requirements, overseen by a strong Audit and Organisational Sustainability Committee will ensure value for money is achieved for members.

In addition, having a responsive and adaptable approach to formulating, co-designing and shaping policy with political and officer input will allow the organisation to engage effectively and proportionately and demonstrate its value to government and other sectors.

Communicating success as well as becoming more outward-looking and collaborative in our engagement will raise the profile and impact of the organisation and the sector

### Corporate priorities

- Build confidence in NILGA's effectiveness
- Enable proactive Councillor and Officer engagement in key regional sectoral work
- Reinvigorate local democracy through communications and collaboration

### Why it matters

To be strategically effective and sustainable, NILGA must demonstrate value and impact to its members and partners. Maintaining decisive focus on its corporate priorities, working at pace to deliver on these and providing evidence on the impact of its work will reassure members of the organisation's role and benefits.

As a political organisation NILGA will always be led by the views of its member councils. To support that, however, NILGA must understand and reflect the differing policy views of the political parties in its work and can only do this by maintaining sound and open relationships with political parties. Equally, NILGA will rely on reciprocally strong relationships with the professional officer core via Solace NI to advise on technical and operational matters which affect the sector, in particular on new and revised policy and regulatory requirements, funding, and processes. Fully communicating the shared and regional views of councils and councillors in its policy work will reinforce NILGA's representative voice for the sector.

### Making It Happen

The NILGA Corporate Plan 2023-2027 will be supported by an annual business plan, which will be agreed by the NILGA Executive. This will identify the specific actions required to deliver on these corporate priorities and more importantly the framework within which NILGA's performance and impact is measured and communicated to its members.



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### NILGA Corporate Plan

2023-2027

### Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)

Bradford Court Upper Galwally BELFAST BT8 6RB

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#### Unclassified

ITEM 8

### **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	14 May 2024
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	16 April 2024
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ⊠ No □ Other □  If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Veterans Champion Update
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Veterans Champion Events

Members will be aware, Alderman Trevor Cummings currently holds the position of Veteran's Champion, as nominated at the Council's Annual Meeting.

Alderman Cummings has provided the attached appendix summarising his activities with veterans across Ards and North Down Borough during the 2023/24 year and has provided the following update on his role for the information of Members.

"In my role as Veteran's Champion over the last number of years, I have been involved in outreach and engagement with veteran's groups across the Borough, including the Royal British Legion, Regimental Associations and Veterans Charities.

The promotion of support services covering health, education and employment has been widely welcomed, but some gaps have been identified. Veterans have highlighted challenges such as access to housing, and mental health services. These issues are not unique to the Borough but present themselves more regularly due to the high concentration of veteran's who reside in Ards and North Down.

### Not Applicable

The level of funding available to the role of Veteran's Champion is sufficient only to identify the needs of veterans, but it allows the opportunity to increase awareness, to campaign for greater interagency cooperation, and support for existing voluntary organisations working with veterans.

The NI Veterans Support Office (NIVSO) will close in September 2024 and strategic coordination beyond that date will be delivered by the Office of Veterans Affairs (Cabinet Office). At this stage, no further information is available in relation to the funding needed for local engagement, but I am hopeful we can secure a statutory budget to sustain regional coordination of services, which would allow the voluntary agencies to continue to draw down external funding.

As Veterans Champion I acknowledge the important work of the NI Veterans Commissioner, Danny Kinahan, who regularly advocates on our behalf with the Minister of the Office of Veterans Affairs in London and other Government officials.

A significant development over the past year by the Office of Veterans Affairs has been the 'Review of Veterans Services' across the UK. The outcome presented a strategic vision on how improvements might be made nationally and regionally. In Northern Ireland, the review acknowledged the need to centralise the Veterans Welfare Services. The outcome was the reorganisation of the UDR Aftercare Service, which now incorporates all regimental badges including the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, and is identified by its new title, Veteran Welfare Services NI.

Locally I am grateful to council for the distribution of promotional material, and the use of the council website in promoting the roll out of veteran support services. It was also a privilege to be able use City Hall, Bangor Castle to host the AGM of the Regional NI Veteran Support Committee.

I am also pleased to report that we are actively engaging with the SEHSCT with a view to exploring the viability of a pilot mental health awareness strategy for veterans. Council have also been exploring avenues of support for veterans in our own staff and we are increasing awareness of employment opportunities across the district for veterans.

Looking forward it is important that Council continues to maintain the momentum of support for veterans in the Borough and strives to help increase the capacity of existing veteran charities and support services. I would encourage Members to contact me for any further information and to refer veterans to the information provided on the Council website."

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council note this report.

### VETERANS CHAMPION ARDS & NORTH DOWN 2023/24

#### **National / Regional Activities**

- UK Network Support : Newcastle, England
- NI Veteran Support Training x2 : NI Veterans Commissioner, Belfast
- Defence Gardens NI, Coleraine & Belfast
- Veterans Cross-Border memorial Islandbridge, Dublin

### **Borough Activities**

- Peninsula Veterans, Ballywalter
- Irish Guards Association, Bangor
- Veteran Services Outreach, Newtownards
- UDR Greenfinch 50th Anniversary, Bangor
- Beyond the Battlefield Consultation, Portavogie
- AGM NI Veteran Support, Bangor
- Armistice Gathering, Comber
- 'Hounds for Heroes' (Assist-Dogs): Newtownards
- Christmas Hamper Project : Comber ACF
- Mental Health First Aid : Fresh Minds, Castle Espie
- SEHSCT / GP Mental Health Pilot : City Hall, Bangor
- Veteran Welfare Services NI, Holywood
- Statutory Partnership Outreach VASP, Bangor

### **Preview 2024/25**

- Baxter Hut Restoration
- Veteran Football event
- Soldiers & Airmen's Scripture Readers
- Office Veterans Affairs Strategy
- Tri Services Rugby
- Employment Workshops
- GP Mental Health Service
- Greypoint Fort
- Veterans into Logistics HGV
- Breakfast Clubs

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### Unclassified

ITEM 9a

### **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	14 May 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	11 April 2024
File Reference	NOM 190 - NIO Consultation on Water Charges
Legislation	'-
Section 75 Compliant	Yes ⊠ No □ Other □  If other, please add comment below:
Subject	NOM 190 - NIO Consultation on Water Charges
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Letter from DfI

### **BACKGROUND**

The following Notice of Motion was agreed by Council at its meeting in February 2024:

"That this Council writes to the DFI Minister to voice its objection to the DFI consultation on water charges and any attempt to introduce water charges to Northern Ireland."

A letter was sent from the Chief Executive on 13 March 2024 and a reply was received on 16 April 2024. A copy of the reply is attached.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

If is recommended that the Council notes the attached response.

### From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure JOHN O'DOWD MLA



Mr Stephen Reid Ards and North Down Borough Council Town Hall The Castle Bangor BT20 4BT Room 708 Clarence Court 10-18 Adelaide Street BELFAST BT2 8GB

Telephone: (028) 9054 0540

Email: <u>Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk</u>

Your reference: SR/cd/CS13.2.2024, item 6a

Our reference: COR-1259-2024 17 April 2024

Mr Reid, a chara,

#### **OBJECTION TO WATER CHARGES**

Thank you for your letter dated 13 March 2024 voicing the objection of Ards and North Down Borough Council to the Dfl consultation on water charges and any attempt to introduce water charges to Northern Ireland.

I note Ards and North Down Borough Council's objection and can assure you that I will not be introducing domestic water charges.

Is mise le meas,

JOHN O'DOWD MLA Minister for Infrastructure

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#### Unclassified

ITEM 9b

### **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Corporate Services Committee
Date of Meeting	14 May 2024
Responsible Director	Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Head of Service	<b>'-</b>
Date of Report	29 April 2024
File Reference	NOM 191 - Deep concern at the poor state of the roads across ANDBC
Legislation	'-
Section 75 Compliant	Yes □ No □ Other □  If other, please add comment below:
Subject	NOM 191 - Deep concern at the poor state of the roads across ANDBC
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Letter from Dfl

#### **BACKGROUND**

The following Notice of Motion was agreed by Council at its meeting in February 2024:

"That this Council writes to the Department of Infrastructure to once again express our deep concern at the poor state of roads across Ards and North Down.

Council further requests that DFI changes their policy in relation to the depth of potholes that are required to be repaired back to 20 millimetres from the current 50 millimetres in order to improve the quality and safety of our roads network."

A letter was sent from the Chief Executive on 13 March 2024 and a reply was received on 29 April 2024. A copy of this letter is attached.

### Unclassified

### **RECOMMENDATION**

If is recommended that the Council notes the attached response.

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### From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure JOHN O'DOWD MLA

Stephen Reid
Ards & North Down Borough Council,
Town Hall,
The Castle,
Bangor BT20 4BT

Room 708 Clarence Court 10-18 Adelaide Street BELFAST BT2 8GB

Telephone: (028) 9054 0540

Email: <u>Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk</u>

Your reference: SR/cd/CS13.2.2024, item 6b

Our reference: COR-1267-2024

26th April 2024

Stephen, a chara,

### POOR ROAD CONDITIONS

Thank you for your letter of 13 March 2024 expressing the council's concern regarding the condition of roads in the council area and also to ask that my Department amend the current policy in relation to potholes.

I recognise that many roads are in need of repairs and I understand your frustration at the current situation. However, in the current fiscal environment I can only work within the financial envelope provided to my Department. That has had a significant impact on the ability to deliver our essential maintenance functions. Constrained budgets have also impacted on my Department's ability to fill staff vacancies resulting in understaffing across many of its functions.

Whilst my officials and maintenance crews have worked very hard to maintain the road network, they have, nonetheless, been forced to concentrate only on the highest-priority repairs. To be clear, this is not a position that any of us want to be in and does not represent good maintenance practice.

In response to this situation, I recently addressed the Assembly to announce the allocation of an extra £1million to target areas of highest priority with small scale resurfacing schemes, designed to repair areas that have suffered the most and where localised repairs are less effective.

Further to that, I announced an additional £8.1million of funding for my Department's Structural Maintenance Programme to deliver additional resurfacing schemes and continue to address the poor condition of our road network.

My Department has been operating in a difficult financial environment for a number of years due to underfunding and austerity by the British Government. The value of our infrastructure cannot be overstated, and I will continue to work with Executive colleagues to ensure appropriate investment is made.



The level of repairs that can be carried out in future financial years will ultimately depend on the 2024-25 final budget determination for my Department. I hope that critical services and infrastructure such as our roads are provided with the investment we need.

Is mise le meas,

JOHN O'DOWD MLA

**Minister for Infrastructure**