

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Climate Emergency Forum (CEF) Terms of Reference Adoption</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>ES Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>11th June 2024</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>To be discussed In Committee YES/NO</b>	<b>No</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Improvement and Innovation
Outcome	A sustainable, accessible environment
Lead Officer	John Richardson

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	£0k
Included in Current Year Estimates	<b>YES/NO</b>
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

<b>Legal Considerations</b>	
Input of Legal Services Required	<b>YES/NO</b>
Legal Opinion Obtained	<b>YES/NO</b>

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

## 1.0 **Purpose of Report**

To seek Members consideration and approval/adoption of the 2024 updated terms of reference (TOR) for the Climate Emergency Forum (CEF).

## 2.0 **Background**

2.1 Members previously acknowledged the scale of the climate crisis and declared motions as follows:

**A: June 2019 motion** - *This Council acknowledges the scale of the climate crisis and the impact it will have on people and communities in Northern Ireland, resolves to establish an all-party working group on climate change resilience exploring how we can mitigate this crisis and protect our citizens from the existing and future effects of climate breakdown and; investigate measures the council can take to limit its impact on climate change. That Council establish a Working Group, the membership from Environmental Services Committee.”*

**B: June 2020 motion** - *Council therefore commits to: Declare a ‘Climate Emergency’ that requires urgent action.*

2.2 It was agreed to form an all-party working group from the ES committee who will be supported by officers to investigate issues raised. A climate emergency forum CEF was subsequently formed.

2.3 In May 2023 an internal audit was completed in accordance with the approved annual Internal Audit Plan for 2022/23. The audit report reviewed the Energy Management and Climate Change arrangements in place and made recommendations that Council should ensure that there are coordinated efforts within Council in relation to climate change including preparation for climate change (public bodies) reporting regulations. The adopted internal audit report (May 2023) is attached (Appendix 1).

2.4 A report item was presented to Members previously in December 2023 with these recommendations and for Members and to set a date for the next CEF, which subsequently took place on 18 April 24.

2.5 In conjunction with providing direction to develop a climate emergency strategy (CES), the CEF will assess, collate, report and recommend strategies to ensure that its Climate Change obligations (Statutory & Non-Statutory) are addressed, and performance monitored to support Governments target of zero emission by 2050 as per the 2008 Climate Change Act and to meet its obligations within the NI Climate Change Act 2022.

2.6 Officers have updated the previous CEF Terms of Reference (TOR 2021) and have now included the internal Climate Action Team (CAT) and CEF pathways. The new CEF TOR was presented to Members at the 18 April 2024 CEF meeting. The updated 2024 CEF TOR is attached (Appendix 2).

2.7 Audit recommended use of the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP) voluntary frameworks to assist Council in preparing climate adaptation and mitigations plans. NICCAP3 is still at the consultation stage and will be aligned with the DAERA statutory reporting responsibilities and this will be a useful tool as per audit recommendations.

2.8 NICCAP2 template has been completed by Officers and is attached in Appendix 3.

### 3.0 **Proposals**

3.1 Replacement of the existing terms of reference for the climate emergency forum to align with audit, strategic direction and statutory requirements. (new TOR attached, Appendix 2)

3.2 Submit NICCAP 2 completed template (Appendix 3).

### 4.0 **Recommendations**

4.1 It is recommended that Members approve and adopt the updated terms of reference for the CEF (Appendix 2).

4.2 It is further recommended that Members approve the completed NICCAP2 template and grant permission that this is submitted to Climate NI.

**Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council**

**Energy Management & Climate Change**

**May 2023**

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## Executive Summary

### Internal Audit Opinion / Assurance Rating

This internal audit was completed in accordance with the approved annual Internal Audit Plan for 2022/23. This report summarises the findings arising from a review of the Energy Management and Climate Change arrangements. The table below summarises the key areas of potential risk which were considered and reviewed (controls considered for each risk are detailed in Appendix B):

Risks Reviewed	Number of Recommendations and Priority Rating		
	1	2	3
There may be a risk that an appropriate framework is not in place to manage climate change issues, including the preparation for mandatory Climate Change Act reporting, leading to unclear climate change commitments, delays in addressing statutory climate change reporting obligations and damage to Council's reputation.	1	3	-
There may be a risk that the Energy Management strategy is not appropriately implemented leading to inefficient use of council resources and financial loss to the Council.	-	1	-
There may be a risk that energy costs are not consistently managed across Council Community centres.	-	1	-

Based on our audit testing we are able to provide the following overall level of assurance:

<b>LIMITED</b>	There are significant weaknesses within the governance, risk management and control framework which, if not addressed, could lead to system objectives not being achieved.
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Definitions of levels of assurance and the priority ratings for recommendations are included in Appendix A.

The weaknesses identified during our audit have been brought to the attention of Management. The weaknesses outlined are those, which have come to our attention during the normal audit work and are not necessarily all the weaknesses, which may exist.

The content of this report has been discussed with officers and management to confirm factual accuracy. The assistance and cooperation received during our review is gratefully acknowledged.

## 1 Objectives

To ensure that:

- Coordinated efforts are underway within Council in relation to climate change including preparation for climate change (public bodies) reporting regulations.
- The Energy Management Strategy has been monitored, the outcome assessed and reported and the EMS fits with Council's wider climate change obligations.
- Consistent practice in managing energy costs for Community centres is applied across Council.

## 2 Background

Dealing with climate emergency requires acting on two fronts:

- Mitigation efforts to address the underlying problem by slowing or stopping the rise in fossil fuel emissions, which could irreversibly and catastrophically raise the Earth's temperature e.g., reducing carbon fuel emissions.
- Adaptation which is required to help withstand and minimize the effects of climate change that are already here or developing e.g. considering how to deal with increased flooding risks arising from changing weather patterns.

Causeway Coast and Glens District Council declared a climate emergency in May 2020. A decision was made that all Council new buildings would be net zero buildings, to take advantage at construction/design stages to assist with carbon reduction of the future organisation as opposed to costly retrofitting techniques which will be inevitable across the Council Estate, at a later date.

In 2018 CCAG developed and agreed an Energy Management Strategy (EMS) to control energy costs, be compliant with legislation, and promote awareness within Council of mitigation actions reduce the Council's own energy consumption. Two main areas were identified in which Council could aim to improve energy efficiency and reduce its own energy consumption and costs, Council owned property and Council's fleet of vehicles. 37 actions were identified to achieve these aims. The monitoring of this Strategy was last reviewed by internal audit in 2019/20. A lot has changed since the EMS was first developed. For that reason, Audit has been advised that Council plans to move towards a new and more comprehensive Climate Emergency Strategy (CES). A Climate Emergency Forum (CEF) was previously established by Council but is now dormant.

Energy management is only one aspect of the climate change transition process and there are a wider range of factors that Council, as a whole, needs to consider in relation to climate



change. In addition to the largely mitigation actions identified in the EMS Council must consider and quantify what adaptation is required to help withstand and minimize the effects of climate change that are already affecting the Council district.

The NI Evidence Report 2017 outlined many climate change impacts which are relevant to the responsibilities and services delivered by Local Government. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (Act) came into force on 6th June 2022 and sets targets for Northern Ireland to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, including a target for net-zero emissions by 2050.

DAERA co-ordinates the delivery of the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2 – 2019-2024 (NICCAP2). The programme had its legal basis within the UK Climate Change Act (2008). NICCAP3 – 2024-2029 now includes key features of the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 and will assess progress in preparing for climate change across 13 priority areas, integrating with the NICCAP2 priority areas. NICCAP includes specific actions to be undertaken by Local Government including every council having a published adaptation plan by 2024.

Section 42 of the Climate Change Act requires regulations to be made in regard to climate change reporting by public bodies. The Act requires these regulations to come into operation by 6th December 2023. Energy resilience and energy efficiency are key central aspects when considering delivery of specified carbon budgets to be set by DAERA. DAERA launched a consultation, in March 2023, on developing future regulations that will place climate change reporting duties on public bodies. The type of information that public bodies may be reporting to DAERA is likely to include:

- an assessment of the current and predicted impact of climate change in relation to the public body's functions, as a whole;
- proposals and policies, with associated timescales, that the public body is bringing forward for adapting to, or mitigating the effects of climate change; and
- assessments on the progress that the public body has made to implementing their proposals and policies.

All public bodies, including councils, will need to put a framework (clear roles and responsibilities, measured governance and adequate resources) in place, to support the collection and reporting of climate change data, in preparation for when the regulations required under Section 42 of the Climate Change Act (2022) are enacted.

### 3 Risks

This audit will consider what actions are underway within Council in relation to key aspects of the changing climate, consideration of Local Governments responsibility to climate change mitigation and adaptation and any preparation for climate change statutory reporting regulations e.g., Climate Change Act (2022) reporting on net zero emissions which are due to come into operation by 6th December 2023. This will focus on the risk associated with:

- Coordination of climate change activities and statutory reporting requirements for Council under the Climate Change Act (2022).

The audit will also review the arrangements in place within the Council in relation to the Energy Management Strategy, focusing on the main risks associated with:

- Adaption, implementation, and monitoring of the EM Strategy in response to wider climate change obligations

As Council's fleet fuel management was considered by internal audit in August 2020, this assignment will consider how Council is managing any risks related to energy costs in selected Council buildings and for the purposes of this Audit we will focus on:

- Energy costs associated with Community centres (17 Council owned Community Centres – 12 managed by Council and 5 managed by Community Groups)

### 4 Audit Approach

We conducted our internal audit work in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards ("PSIAS"). We planned and performed our work to obtain assurance over the operating effectiveness of arrangements in place to address the agreed risks. However, you should not rely on our work to identify all instances of fraud or error which may exist. The responsibility for these matters rest with management of the organisation.

Our audit fieldwork comprised:

- Documenting the systems via discussions with key staff
- Consideration of the key risks within each audit area
- Examining relevant documentation
- Carrying out a preliminary evaluation of the arrangements and controls in operation generally within the Council
- Testing the key arrangements and controls
- Testing the completeness and accuracy of records

The table below shows the staff consulted with and Internal Audit would like to thank them for their assistance and co-operation.

Job Title
Director of Environmental Services
Head of Infrastructure
Energy Officer
Head of Sport and Wellbeing

## 5 Audit Findings

- 5.1 Risk 1 – There may be a risk that an appropriate framework is not in place to manage climate change issues, including the preparation for mandatory Climate Change Act reporting, leading to unclear climate change commitments and delays in addressing statutory climate change reporting obligations.**

### Issue 1 – Roles and Responsibilities

**a) Observation-** Council has an Energy Officer who was involved in the development of an Energy Management Strategy for Council (2018) and who is consulted on matters relating to energy management and occasionally relating to climate change. We were also advised of a number of initiatives taking place across Council related to climate change. Examples include a project looking at more sustainable options for Council’s fleet of vehicles, tree planting, the use of solar panels on Council buildings, environmental initiatives related to Council’s Community Plan etc. We also note that there are climate change related tenders under consideration in various operational areas relating to developing Energy Strategies & Action Plans, Climate Change reporting etc.

Although Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2020, and there are a number of climate emergency initiatives taking place, this is not happening in a joined-up manner. Climate emergency matters have not been assigned to any individual officer or group of officers.

**b) Implication-** The absence of clear roles and responsibilities in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including the preparation for mandatory Climate Change Act reporting, leads to uncoordinated climate change activities being considered in isolation across Council. This increases the risk of unclear climate change commitments, possible inefficiencies in approach, missing opportunities for economies of scale, possible delays in addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation, being ill-prepared for statutory climate change reporting obligations and possible damage to Council’s reputation.

**c) Priority Rating- 1**

**d) Recommendation-** Council should identify a climate champion (or champions) amongst its Councillors, and SLT should identify, or engage, a climate change officer. This

is necessary to ensure that there is leadership and clear understanding of who is responsible to:

- coordinate identification of Council’s climate goals (re mitigation and adaptation)
- ensure climate goals are interlinked with other Council priorities.
- ensure Council is considering climate change responsibilities attributed to local Councils in legislation and through regional and national initiatives such as NICCAP etc., and
- ensure Council has appropriate mechanisms in place to meet statutory (and possibly voluntary) reporting obligations.

Council should consider developing a cross Council working group to support the climate change officer and to ensure a coordinated approach across Council in responding to the declaration of a Climate Emergency.

**e) Management Response-** Agree. At the SMT meeting on 12 June 2023 it was agreed that Environmental Services Directorate will take the lead on Climate Change matters.

**f) Responsible Officer & Implementation Date-** Aidan McPeake - March 2024

## Issue 2 – Climate Emergency Strategy (CES)

**a) Observation-** As noted in the background section of this report a Climate Emergency Forum (CEF) was created with the ultimate ambition to support development of a CES. However, CEF no longer operates and the development of CES stalled. The aim for 2023/24 (if the draft Business Plan 2023-24 for Environmental Services is agreed) is to take forward actions relating to a CES development.

**b) Implication-** The absence of a Climate Emergency Strategy including details of how Council will manage climate change mitigation and adaptation, leads to uncoordinated climate change activities across Council. This increases the risk of unclear climate change commitments, possible delays in addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation, and being ill-prepared for statutory (and voluntary) climate change reporting obligations.

**c) Priority Rating-** 2

**d) Recommendation-** Council should put in place a plan to develop a CES. The CES should lay out a cohesive strategy on climate change initiatives for the coming years, what

<p>Council plans to do in terms of climate change mitigation and adaptation. The CES should be supported by more detailed and costed action plans.</p>
<p><b>e) Management Response-</b> Agree. Council will put in place plans to develop a Climate Emergency Strategy.</p>
<p><b>f) Responsible Officer &amp; Implementation Date-</b> Aidan McPeake – June 2024.</p>

### Issue 3 – Climate Emergency Plans

<p><b>a) Observation-</b> Council declared a climate emergency in May 2020 has actioned several climate change mitigating actions under the guidance of the Energy Officer and through the Energy Management Strategy. In addition, there are a variety of climate related initiatives in various parts of Council.</p> <p>DAERA co-ordinates the delivery of the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP) which includes specific actions to be undertaken by Local Government including every council having a published climate change adaptation plan by 2024. Currently Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council does not have an adaptation plan in place. As mentioned in the background section of this report independent assessment of future NICCAP's progress will be a legal requirement under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.</p>
<p><b>b) Implication-</b> The absence of an adaptation plan increases the risk of possible damage to Council's reputation.</p>
<p><b>c) Priority Rating- 2</b></p>
<p><b>d) Recommendation-</b> Council should consider preparing an adaptation plan in line with the NICCAP target of having adaptation plans in every Council by 2024. A Toolkit is available (free) from NI Adapts to all Northern Ireland public sector organisations which would be a good basis for developing an adaptation plan. The toolkit is available here <a href="https://www.niadapts.org.uk/the-toolkit">https://www.niadapts.org.uk/the-toolkit</a></p>
<p><b>e) Management Response-</b> Agree. We will investigate how best to develop an Adaptation plan.</p>
<p><b>f) Responsible Officer &amp; Implementation Date-</b> Aidan McPeake – December 2023</p>

**Issue 4 – Resources for Climate Emergency**

**a) Observation-** As noted earlier the Council declared a climate emergency in May 2020 and has actioned several climate change mitigating actions under the guidance of the Energy Officer and has introduced other climate related initiatives in various parts of Council’s activities. However, Council has not yet developed either an Adaptation Plan or a Climate Emergency Strategy (CES).

The cost of mitigation to reduce emissions or become net zero, or the costs associated with adaptation have not yet been estimated.

**b) Implication-** The costs to tackle climate emergency are likely to be substantial and may increase over time. In the absence of estimated costs to address the climate emergency or even to develop a CES there is a risk that Council will have insufficient financial resources available when it is required.

**c) Priority Rating- 2**

**d) Recommendation-** Council needs to identify and secure funding from existing resources and future national and regional programmes and mechanisms which support carbon reduction, energy efficiency, waste reduction, air quality, biodiversity, climate action partnerships, etc.

**e) Management Response-** Agree. We will investigate prospective funding to support climate change initiatives.

**f) Responsible Officer & Implementation Date-** Aidan McPeake – September 2024

**5.2 Risk 2 – There may be a risk that the Energy Management strategy is not appropriately implemented leading to inefficient use of council resources.**

**Issue 5 – Energy Management Strategy (EMS)**

**a) Observation-** (As noted earlier) Council has an Energy Management Strategy in place since 2018 and some discussion to merge this into a wider Climate Emergency Strategy (CES) has taken place but has not progressed.

Progress against the EMS has been reported as part of updates on individual actions at various junctures to various Environmental Services Committee meetings. The EMS contains 37 actions. We reviewed the latest spreadsheet (May 2023) recording progress against each of the 37 actions:

- 17 actions are noted as complete.
- 5 actions are in the latter phases of a planned number of phases e.g., Action 19 - phases 1-3 out of 4 complete.
- Significant challenges and/or lack of dedicated funding have been noted in the spreadsheet against 13 actions.
- 2 actions are not yet addressed.
- There are no target dates in the Spreadsheet.

It is noted that some of the actions planned in the EMS have been impacted by new legislation and/or technological development meaning they are less relevant, no longer relevant or require adjustment.

The 2022-23 Environmental Services Business Plan outlined plans for the EMS to be reviewed to consider the NI Energy Strategy 2050 Net Zero Carbon Target and aligned to Council CES targets and objectives. As noted earlier a Climate Emergency Forum (CEF) was created with the ultimate ambition to support development of a CES. However, CEF no longer operates and the development of CES stalled. The aim for 2023/24 (if the draft Business Plan 2023-24 for Environmental Services is agreed) is to take these actions relating to EMS and CES forward.

There is currently no summary evaluation of the overall impact or effectiveness of the EMS and the 37 actions it contains.

**b) Implication-** In the absence of an evaluation of the EMS there is a risk that unresolved actions and lessons learned to date are not appropriately considered in any future CES mitigation actions.

**c) Priority Rating- 2**



**d) Recommendation-** An evaluation of the EMS which would include details of what has been successful, what should continue to be pursued, what challenges were faced and what actions are no longer viable, affordable, or relevant should be developed and presented to management and Committee.

**e) Management Response-** Agree. An evaluation of the EMS will be undertaken and reported.

**f) Responsible Officer & Implementation Date-** John Richardson – December 2023.

### 5.3 Risk 3 – There may be a risk that energy costs are not consistently managed across Council Community centres.

#### Issue 6 – Community Centre energy costs

**a) Observation** - Council owns 17 Community Centres – 12 are managed by Council and 5 are managed by Community Groups. Council has Shared Management Agreements in place for all 5 centres managed by Community Groups detailing who is responsible for the various costs associated with the building. We were provided with 3 signed agreements, and we were advised that 2 will be signed following the completion of an ongoing review of utility consumption and costs. Another SMA is being developed for a 6<sup>th</sup> Community Group to take over the management of another Council owned Community Centre.

A significant challenge in recent times for Community Groups managing Council Community centres has been the risk/uncertainty around energy costs while balancing the requirement to keep facility use prices at an affordable level for users. Council is in the process of consulting with Community Groups on this issue and are reviewing the energy usage/costs for each centre, and adjusting these for elements separate from the Community Group e.g., use of floodlights at one centre, hired out changing rooms at another etc. Based on the outcome of this analysis (currently being updated to reflect actual 22/2023 energy costs) options for Council paying a subsidy to these groups, towards energy and fuel costs will be presented in a report to Councillors in September 2023.

A lot of coordination across Council was required to obtain all the relevant information for this analysis to ensure it was useful and accurate.

**b) Implication-** In the absence of regular review and update of energy costs and SMAs there is a risk that subsidies become too low or overly generous in the future and/or that SMAs become outdated or ineffective in the future.

**c) Priority Rating- 2**

**d) Recommendation-** Council officers should ensure that an annual review of SMAs and energy costs for Community Centres is carried out. Now that a process has been developed to collate energy usage information for these buildings, to inform subsidies, this should be provided automatically to the respective operational officer in Sports and Community on at least an annual basis and trigger a review of subsidies and SMAs.

**e) Management Response-** Officers in Sport & Community Facility Management and Community Development will agree a timeframe for review of the agreed subsidy system for SMAs / Community Centres. In conjunction with Council's Energy Manager such a review will be timed to allow for adjustments of the subsidy if required and consultation with Community Groups – no later than one year from the implementation of the agreed subsidy to allow for accurate analysis of previous year's energy costs.

**f) Responsible Officer & Implementation Date-** Head of Sport & Wellbeing, on behalf of Community Development. Working Group to include SCFM team, Community Development Manager & Energy Manager. First meeting to be timetabled once Council approves proposed subsidy system (Quarter 3, 2023/24) with implementation of subsidy at an agreed time with SMA's, but no later than April 2024.

## Appendix A – Assurance Ratings

The framework for audit assurance is set out in DAO 07/16 and summarised below:

Level of Assurance	Definition
Satisfactory	<b>Evaluation opinion:</b> Overall there is a satisfactory system of governance, risk management and control. While there may be some residual risk identified, this should not significantly impact on the achievement of the system objectives.
Limited	<b>Evaluation Opinion:</b> There are significant weaknesses within the governance, risk management and control framework which, if not addressed, could lead to system objectives not being achieved.
Unacceptable	<b>Evaluation opinion:</b> The system of governance, risk management and control has failed or there is a real and substantial risk that the system will fail to meet its objectives.

The priority ratings are also set out in DAO 07/16. They are intended as guidance to help prioritise the impact and implementation of each finding identified, and recommendation made:

### Key:

Priority	Corresponding level	Definitions
1	High	Failure to implement the recommendation is likely to result in a major failure of a key organisational objective, significant damage to the reputation of the organisation or the misuse of public funds.
2	Medium	Failure to implement the recommendation could result in the failure of an important organisational objective or could have some impact on a key organisational objective.
3	Low	Failure to implement could lead to an increased risk exposure.

**Appendix B – Summary of Controls Reviewed**

Risk	Key Areas & Controls Tested
<p>There may be a risk that an appropriate framework is not in place to manage climate change issues, including the preparation for mandatory Climate Change Act reporting, leading to unclear climate change commitments and delays in addressing statutory climate change reporting obligations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council has a nominated officer(s) responsible for coordinating climate change matters across Council’s Directorates and operations e.g. liaising with DAERA on the ongoing consultation regarding developing future regulations that will place climate change reporting duties on public bodies, advising on climate change initiatives under consideration, ensuring synergy of climate change initiatives across Council etc.</li> <li>• Council has a cross Council plan in place to address climate change matters, coordination of climate change activities and statutory Climate Change Act (2022) reporting.</li> <li>• Council has clear objectives and targets in relation to climate change and its Management and staff clearly understand their responsibility in this regard.</li> <li>• Climate change plans and initiatives are supported by appropriate budget estimates.</li> <li>• Climate change plans and initiatives are subject to appropriate governance arrangements.</li> <li>• Council has considered the costs of climate change activities &amp; reporting and identified appropriate funding.</li> </ul>
<p>There may be a risk that the Energy Management strategy is not appropriately implemented leading to inefficient use of council resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance against the targets and planned activities in the EMS were/are monitored and reported upon on a periodic basis.</li> <li>• The effectiveness of the EMS has been assessed and reported to management and Council.</li> <li>• The EMS has been reconsidered to reflect wider climate change obligations.</li> </ul>
<p>There may be a risk that energy costs are not consistently managed across Council Community centres.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council has an agreed policy on managing the energy costs of all 17 of Council owned Community Centres</li> <li>• Council has a clear policy or plan which identifies ways to make better decisions concerning energy use and consumption at Community Centres</li> <li>• Council has a standard/template agreement in place with Council owned Community Centres which are Community Managed.</li> <li>• The agreement covers responsibility for energy efficiency and energy costs.</li> <li>• The relevant community organisations have signed up to the agreements.</li> </ul>

## Appendix C - Limitations and responsibilities

### Limitations inherent to the internal auditor's work

We have undertaken this review subject to the limitations outlined below:

#### Internal control

Internal control systems, no matter how well designed and operated, are affected by inherent limitations. These include the possibility of poor judgement in decision-making, human error, control processes being deliberately circumvented by employees and others, management overriding controls and the occurrence of unforeseeable circumstances.

#### Future Periods

Our assessment of controls is for the period specified only. Historic evaluation of effectiveness is not relevant to future periods due to the risk that:

- The design of controls may become inadequate; or
- The degree of compliance with policies and procedures may deteriorate.

### Responsibilities of management and internal auditors

It is management's responsibility to develop and maintain sound systems of risk management, internal control and governance and for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud. Internal audit work should not be seen as a substitute for management's responsibilities for the design and operation of these systems.

We endeavour to plan our work so that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting significant control weaknesses and, if detected, we carry out additional work directed towards identification of consequent fraud or other irregularities. However, internal audit procedures alone, even when carried out with due professional care, do not guarantee that fraud will be detected.

Accordingly, our examinations as internal auditors should not be relied upon solely to disclose fraud, defalcations or other irregularities which may exist.



## **Terms of Reference    Update Jan 2024**

### **Climate Emergency Forum CEF**

#### **Strategic Context**

Council has declared a climate crisis / emergency and has acknowledged the impact it will have on people and communities in Northern Ireland and required the formation of this Climate Emergency Forum (CEF). In conjunction with providing leadership, the forum will assess, collate, report and recommend strategies to ensure that its Climate Change obligations (Statutory & Non Statutory) are addressed and performance monitored to support Governments target of zero emission by 2050 as per the 2008 Climate Change Act and to meet its obligations within the NI Climate Change Act 2022

#### **Terms of Reference (TOR)**

An audit on Energy Management & Climate Change was completed in May 2023, and was subsequently presented and adopted by the Audit Committee in June 2023. It noted that in addition to the largely mitigation actions identified in the EMS Council must consider and quantify what adaptation is required to help withstand and minimise the effects of climate change that are already affecting the Council district. The audit recommendations include the development of a cohesive Climate Emergency Strategy (CES) amongst its recommendations. An initial road map is attached appendix 1 below.

The NI Climate Change Act 2022 (NI CCA) is now in force and places Statutory Obligations on Public Bodies in relation to their functions only. (Councils included).

The CAT shall assess the current need within Council across all of “its functions” in relation to climate change to ensure – that firstly Member awareness of statutory requirements and secondly - to secure a pathway (statutory and non-statutory) to meet climate change all of the organisation’s function – which will then be taken to the CEF.

The CEF Members shall be ES Committee Members, Council’s Climate Action Team (CAT) and external agencies / specialists when necessary. Council already has an Energy Management Strategy (Specific to Estates only), which contains quantum’s of energy consumption by fuel type and already compares this with central government targets as of 2015. Since the time of the EMS adoption, central government targets have changed as a result of the legislation change to the Climate Change Act 2008 which was updated in June 2019 – and thus central government legislative target is now 100% reduction of Co2 emission as opposed to the previous 80% reduction - hence the term “Net Zero”.

Appendix 1 shows the flow of the TOR

The forum actions include;

1. Establish and approve revised TOR.
2. The CEF shall assess the climate change need across Council functions all climate change aspects to ensure - firstly Member awareness of statutory

requirements and secondly - to secure a pathway (expectations) to meet climate change need across these functions.

3. Assess resource and cost impacts and agree climate change responsibilities.
4. In line with NI CCA 2022 Climate Change targets and 5 year milestones together with KPI's with timings to track and react to decarbonisation target progress within the following SIX areas
  - Transport
  - Heating
  - Renewables
  - Smart Technology
  - Efficiency
  - Power
5. Forward recommendations for Council decision and approval
6. Assess and access funding responsibilities on investments and consultancy services – including green transport (EV & Hydrogen), heating, smart technology and renewables.
7. Consult with NI Executive agencies to assess harmonisation to ensure scope of the CEF is complementary and not in parallel to the Executive agencies' responsibilities.
8. Agree a reporting / communicating methodology and update programme to Council secure a decarbonisation political commitment pathway – every 1yr interim updates & 5yr updates.
9. Ensure the impending pathway to statutory legislation (published by DAERA) is met or improved upon (NI CCA 2022).
10. To ensure climate change ethos is communicated and integrated in all Council functions and policies.
11. The forum shall revise and update the existing EMS and transform to the Climate Emergency Strategy (CES) from the above actions thereby securing the resource / funding necessary and the political commitment.

### **Membership**

Climate Emergency Forum Chair (Chair of the ES Committee Meeting)

ES Committee Members

Climate Action Team (CAT)

Council Borough Town Teams

Business Support – Members Services – minutes /schedules / reports / meetings

External partners (when necessary) –BEIS, LGCAN, Climate NI, NILGA, DAERA

Specialist/s when required.

NI Councils – when necessary

### **Meeting Frequency**

Quarterly Feb, May, August & Nov



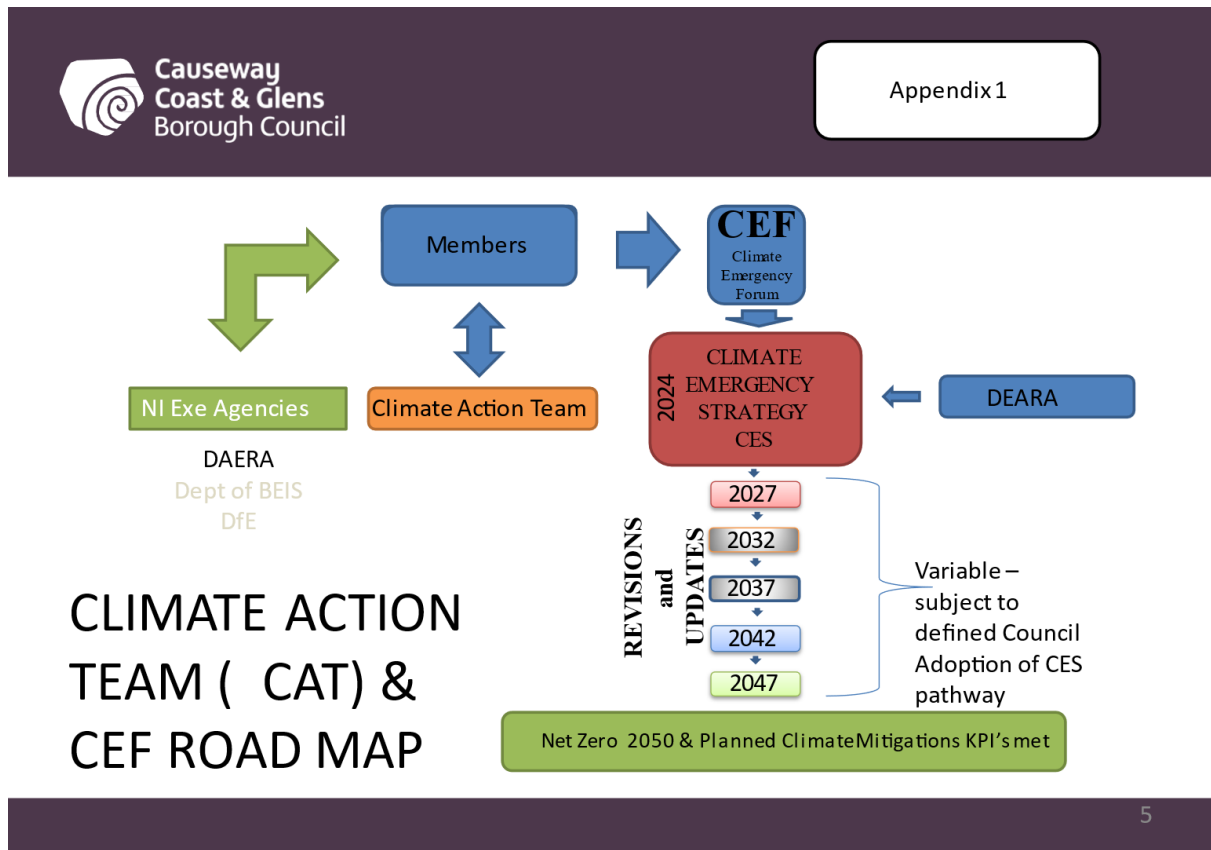
**Date of first meeting Feb 2024 – date to be co-ordinated**

Key

NILGA – NI Local Government Association

LGCAN – Local Government Climate Action Network

CC&GBC – Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council



## Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-24 (NICCAP2)

### End of Programme Review

#### Why am I being contacted?

We are contacting you because your organisation contributed to the ‘Civil Society and Local Government’ chapter of the NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-24 (NICCAP2). We are now undertaking an end of programme review of NICCAP2, to understand the final status of your submitted work. The information you provide will be reported to DAERA and published on their website as part of a NICCAP2 end of programme progress stock take. Separately, the information will also help feed into the third NI Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2024-29 (NICCAP3) which is required to contain an assessment of progress made in previous adaptation programmes.

#### Background to NICCAP2

Northern Ireland’s second [Climate Change Adaptation Programme \(NICCAP2\)](#) was published in September 2019 and it covers the period 2019-2024. The programme contains the NI Government response to the risks and opportunities identified for Northern Ireland in the Second UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 (CCRA2), setting out actions which address priority areas. The [mid-programme review](#) was completed in 2022 to monitor the progress of submitted actions, with the end of programme review to be delivered in 2024.

NICCAP2 also contains a chapter which sits outside government, titled ‘*Civil Society and Local Government Adapts*’. The chapter was written by Climate NI, in conjunction with outside government stakeholders and was the first of its kind in the UK. Inclusion of this chapter in NICCAP2 was the first attempt to report on how Civil Society and Local Government sectors contribute to the national priority areas for action on climate risk and adaptation.

#### What do we need from you?

We are contacting you because participants in the NICCAP process agreed to provide an end-programme review to update on progress. We have attempted to make this process as short and easy as possible. On the page below you will find two tables populated with information submitted by your organisation in 2022. Please fill in the columns on the right-hand side to provide an updated RAG status and 150-word short description of progress:

1. **Table 1 – Strategic Actions:** This relates to the SOLACE-backed actions on 1.) *Developing an adaptation plan by 2024* and 2.) *Accounting for adaptation in your local development plan*.
2. **Table 2 – Additional Actions:** This will only be populated if your council submitted additional council-specific actions.

2024 RAG Status Key -Please update your project’s status according to the updated colour code.		
Colour	Description	Notes
	A. The action was fully achieved within the NICCAP2 lifespan.	
	B. The action showed a good level of progression, in line with expectations, but will require delivery into the next adaptation programme (2024-29).	
	C. The action was progressed, but not sufficiently to meet expectations. Further work is required to improve delivery progress (2024-29).	As per red - detail on why it wasn’t sufficiently progressed would be useful.
	D. No progress was made against the action, or the action has been stopped.	For red, it would be useful to understand why, i.e. lack of funding, staff resources, change of direction

**Table 1: Strategic Actions**

Table 1: Strategic Actions					
	Mid Programme Review			End of Programme Review	
Council	Strategic Action	2022 RAG Status	Previous Justification for RAG Status	2024 RAG Status	Justification for RAG Status (Max 150 words)
Causeway Coast and Glens	Development of Climate Adaptation Plan	N/A			Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council acknowledged the scale of the climate crisis in 2021 and agreed to establish an all-party Working Group to investigate issues raised. The Climate Emergency Forum (CEF) was formed and comprised both members and officers and meets quarterly. In 2022 Council made the decision that going forward, that all new buildings will be built to meet the net zero carbon emissions standard. In June 23, Council formed a Climate Action Team (CAT) which comprises officers from each directorate working together to assess the current need within all Councils functions, highlighting the necessary resources required to meets it's new climate statutory requirements and secure a pathways to meet climate change – both mitigation and adaptation actions. In 2024 Council are recruiting a new Climate Change Lead Officer who will co-ordinate and manage Councils climate change responsibilities both statutory and non-statutory initiatives across all of it's functions.

	<p>Account for Climate Adaptation within Local Development Plan (LDP)</p>	<p>N/A</p>		<p>When deciding on planning applications, the Council will continue to apply existing legislation, regional planning policy and guidance so as to ensure that all development proposals across the Borough are undertaken in a sustainable manner, embedding mitigation and adaptation to climate change, where relevant.</p> <p>The Council is preparing its own Local Development Plan (LDP) that will take account of regional legislation, policy and guidance relating to mitigation and adaptation to climate change. When adopted, the LDP will govern all planning decisions, guiding development proposals across the Borough in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>The Council’s Planning department continues to collate and contribute to, the overall Council input into DfI’s Annual Reporting on its “Sustainable Water:</p> <p>A Long-Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015-2040)” Implementation Plan.”</p>

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Thank you for taking time to complete this report, please return to Brandon Andrews by **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024**.

[brandon@climatenorthernireland.org.uk](mailto:brandon@climatenorthernireland.org.uk)

Table 2: Additional Actions				
Mid-programme review			End of Programme Review	
Project Title	2022 RAG Status	Mid-programme Review 2022 Progress Update (previous description for RAG score)	2024 RAG Status	Justification for RAG score (Short description of updated timeline, outcomes, link to further information)
None Submitted	N/A	N/A		