

<b>Report on</b>	Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (NI) 2024
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Mark McAdoo, Assistant Director: Environmental Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Karl McGowan, Waste and Sustainable Development Manager

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>  If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To inform members on the new Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	The Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has recently notified all relevant public body organisations of their new obligations under the Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (NI) 2024. These regulations were required to be made under the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022.
2.2	Public bodies have a significant role to play in helping to achieve the greenhouse gas emissions reductions which Northern Ireland needs to make, and indeed are now required by law. They are also key in helping Northern Ireland to be climate-adaptable and resilient both for now and for future generations.
2.3	The Regulations put in place a climate change reporting framework for the specified public bodies which can enable informed and timely climate action. The aim of this is to make public bodies more sustainable and give them the opportunity to provide a positive example and exploit the opportunities that early and effective climate action can deliver.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Notification was received from DAERA on 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2024 that Mid Ulster District Council is listed as a specified 'Reporting Body' within the Schedule of the draft Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (NI) 2024, as having climate change reporting duties. The Regulations came into operation on 3rd May 2024.
3.2	A copy of the correspondence from DAERA along with related Q&A is included as an appendix. However a summary of the main implications are outlined below.

- There are two types of reports which Council will be required to provide under our reporting duties set by the Regulations, and these are; ‘climate change mitigation’ reports and ‘climate change adaptation’ reports. The regulations require publication of these reports on both the Council and DAERA websites.
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> ‘mitigation report’ must be submitted to DAERA by the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> and all subsequent adaptation reports will be on a 3-yearly cycle thereafter.
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> ‘adaptation report’ must be submitted to DAERA by the 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).
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> and all subsequent adaptation reports will be on a 5-yearly cycle.
  
- The 1<sup>st</sup> (4 year) adaptation report, and the subsequent 5-yearly adaptation reports are required to include:
  - The current and predicted impact of climate change in relation to the Councils functions; and
  - Proposals and policies for adapting to climate change in the exercise the Councils functions, including the timescales for implementing these proposals and policies. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and all subsequent 5-yearly adaptation reports are also required to include an assessment of the progress the Council has made towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in any of the previous climate change adaptation reports.
  
- The 1<sup>st</sup> mitigation report is required to include:
  - The amounts and sources of greenhouse gas emissions, in respect of the financial year beginning 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025; and
  - The Councils proposals and policies for reducing its emissions in the exercise of its functions, including timescales for implementing those proposals and policies.
  
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> and all subsequent 3-yearly mitigation reports are required to include:
  - The amounts and sources of greenhouse gas emissions in respect of each of the three preceding financial years i.e. the 2<sup>nd</sup> mitigation report, to be submitted to DAERA by October 2028, will include the amounts and sources of greenhouse gas emissions from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2028;
  - The Councils proposals and policies for reducing its emissions in the exercise of its functions, including the timescale for implementing those proposals and policies; and
  - An assessment of the progress it has made towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in any of its previous climate change mitigation reports.

<p>3.3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Regulations require that the 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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. This baseline will be used for assessing and reporting on progress. The Regulations also allow for an alternative baseline to be used e.g. the Councils current baseline year of 2019/20, however this will require agreement with DAERA.</li> </ul> <p>To help assist the Council meet its reporting duties under the Regulations, DAERA is not providing any additional financial support but will provide the following practical support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical, co-designed guidance on how to complete climate change reports.</li> <li>Co-development of a reporting template containing a list of climate change questions for your organisation to answer.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Provision of training on how to complete climate change reports to meet your reporting duties.</li> </ul> <p>3.4</p> <p>We have recently agreed with the DAERA Climate Change Public Body Reporting Team to participate in the co-design working group(s) to assist in the development of the reporting template, guidance and portal in relation to these Regulations.</p>
<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b>Other Considerations</b></p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <p>Financial:</p> <p>The regulations have no financial considerations at this time, however, the future climate change reporting requirements will result in additional costs to Council in terms of staff time, external consultancy / expertise, data collection and analysis.</p>
	<p>Human:</p> <p>As described above there will be additional staff time required for data collection and analysis across all Council departments. It should be noted that Council does not currently have a full-time dedicated staffing resource for Climate Change. These responsibilities currently form part of other officer roles which, whilst workable up until now, will not be adequate considering these new requirements. Consideration therefore needs to be given to the creation of a new role covering energy and climate change data collection and analysis if Council is to comply.</p>

	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>There will be the risk of reputational damage should the Council fail to comply with these regulations and/or be seen to be not making sufficient contribution to Northern Ireland's future greenhouse gas emission or climate change targets.</p>
4.2	<p><b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b></p> <p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications: None</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: None</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	Members are asked to note the content this report for information.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Letter to Specified Bodies re The Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations
6.2	Letter to Specified Bodies - Annex B (FAQs)
6.3	List of bodies specified in the Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations