



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

**Sustainability Strategy**  
**&**  
**Climate Action Plan**  
**2024 - 2028**

## Foreword

It is with great pleasure and a profound sense of responsibility that I present to you the Mid Ulster Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan. As Chair of Mid Ulster District Council, I am honoured to lead our community in addressing one of the most critical challenges of our time – climate change.

Climate change is no longer a distant threat but a reality that affects us all. We have witnessed increasingly frequent and severe weather events, rising temperatures, and changing patterns of rainfall, which have a profound impact on our environment, economy, and overall quality of life. In the face of these challenges, we are compelled to take bold, coordinated, and sustainable action.

The development of the Mid Ulster Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan has been a collaborative effort demonstrating our commitment and recognition of the urgent need to protect our environment and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come. This plan represents a roadmap towards a more resilient, low-carbon, and sustainable future for our district. It outlines a comprehensive strategy that encompasses mitigation and adaptation measures, setting ambitious goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing our capacity to withstand the effects of climate change.

The Mid Ulster Climate Action Plan focuses on 5 Action Areas:

- Community Leadership
- Resource Efficiency
- Sustainable Transport
- Natural Environment
- Green Growth

The success of the Mid Ulster Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan hinges on the active participation and collaboration of all stakeholders. It is a collective endeavour that requires the dedication of each and every resident, business, and organisation. Together, we can make a significant impact, not only for our community but also for the greater global effort to combat climate change.

Cllr Domonic Molloy

Chair of Mid Ulster District Council

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## 1. Executive Summary

Developing a 1.5°C compatible climate and energy action plan is a vital step for Mid Ulster District Council to respond to the current crises. The council has worked to form a fair strategy to identify and address its biggest sources of emissions and climate risks. The next few years are critical, and we must act now – keeping global temperatures within safe levels requires a commitment to start reducing emissions and aiming at climate neutrality. The good news is that we now have access to a wealth of knowledge, tools, and other resources to help do this, as well as the insights and experience of other local authorities, which have already published and are implementing 1.5°C climate action plans.

This document sets out Mid Ulster District Council’s Climate and Sustainability Action Plan from 2024 – 2028 and our commitment to establish a coordinated approach to achieving specified outcomes that consider sustainability and climate-related issues and their solutions through key decision-making. Mid Ulster District Council wants to be an example of leadership through the ambition to achieve net zero by 2050 with an interim target of achieving a 20% reduction in our carbon emissions by 2028.

To achieve net zero, following the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) recommendations<sup>1</sup>, we will have to reduce our total emissions in 2050 by at least 90% relative to our baseline year, 2019-2020. We must set the pathway to reducing our emissions as much as possible, and only then, offset any residual emissions remaining. The first stage of this Climate Change & Sustainable Development Strategy & Action Plan has involved the collection of energy data for establishing a baseline for carbon emissions at the operational level. The baseline year chosen was 2019 – 2020, as 2020 – 2021 would have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

<b>Our Carbon Footprint</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>
<b>Operational Emissions</b>	<b>6,013.15 tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>

The principles to develop this strategy follow the carbon management hierarchy (see image overleaf) that sets the foundation for a simple and effective framework for our council to use in order to meet emission targets set for 2028 and 2050.

Mid Ulster District Council is putting the resources in place to achieve success with meeting this goal. The Council recently went through a restructuring that brings sustainability, climate action, energy, waste management and biodiversity all together within the Environment Directorate for the first time. There are now two Officers with Sustainability as part of their roles and the Council has also allocated £500,000 per year over the next 4 years for climate action and transformation in the Capital Programme up to March 2028. The Council will continue to lobby central government and leverage all available external funding to enable the Council to fully deliver on its commitments in relation to Sustainability and Climate Change.

# Carbon Management Hierarchy



## 2. Our Vision

"Leading our community to create a sustainable and resilient future where environmentally friendly practices and collective efforts ensure a thriving rural community for generations to come."

## 3. Key Targets

We are committed to achieving that by 2050 through the following goals:

- Reducing the Council's operational emissions to Net Zero with an interim target of a 20% reduction by 2028
- Leading the way to a Net Zero District and supporting the local community in its journey to Net Zero
- Council staff and members becoming climate and sustainability literate
- Planning and developing sustainable and resilient assets
- Replacing the Council's vehicles and heating systems with zero / low-emissions versions

The Council's ambition for net zero will be to reduce emissions by mitigation first. To support this, after establishing a baseline of Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, we will aim for at least a 90% reduction in operational and supply chain emissions by 2050, in line with SBTi requirements for net zero<sup>1</sup>. The remaining 10% of residual emissions must be neutralised by the same year.

**4. Regional Profile**

Straddling two counties and stretching from Swatragh in the north to Fivemiletown in the south, the Mid Ulster District covers an area of 1714 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of over 148,500. The District, which includes the Sperrin Mountains in the west and Lough Neagh in the east, presents a diverse landscape of rural and urban communities.



## 4.1 Key Statistics:

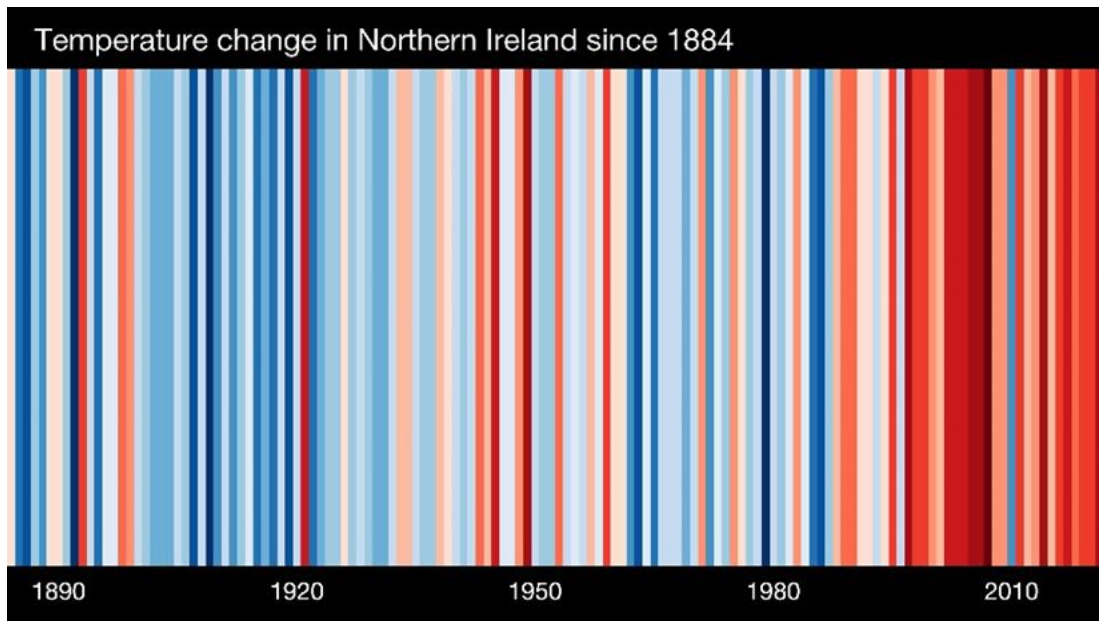
- We serve a population of 148,500.
- We cover an area of some 1714km<sup>2</sup>.
- By population, Mid Ulster is the 6th largest of the 11 councils.
- Mid Ulster's population grew by 9.7% between 2009 and 2019, making the district the 3rd fastest growing of the 11 councils.
- Around 70% of our people live in rural areas, with the remaining residents in urban settings.
- We have the highest proportion of children (0 – 15 years) at 23.3% of our population.
- Out of the 11 Council areas, Mid Ulster has the lowest proportion of population aged 65+ at 14.5%.
- Our working age population (16 – 64) is 62.1%.
- Mid Ulster is a centre of manufacturing and engineering.
- Manufacturing, construction, retail and agri-food are among our most significant economic sectors, accounting for 25% of our employment.
- Mid Ulster has the highest concentration of VAT-registered businesses outside of Belfast.

These figures can be translated into more resource consumption and their associated greenhouse gas emissions, which is relevant for decision-makers when planning for climate mitigation and adaptation measures.

## 5. What is Climate Change?

5.1 Climate change refers to long-term alterations in the average weather patterns and conditions in a specific region or on a global scale. It encompasses various interconnected phenomena and impacts, primarily driven by human activities and natural factors. The primary components of climate change are:

- **Global Warming:** One of the most well-known aspects of climate change is the increase in Earth's average surface temperature. This is often referred to as global warming. It is primarily driven by the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). These gases trap heat from the sun, leading to a gradual warming of the planet. Most of this warming of the climate has occurred during the last 35 years<sup>2</sup>. Indeed, 20 of the warmest years on record have occurred in the last 22 years, and the warmest four years have occurred in the last four years<sup>3</sup>. Since the late 19th century, average global temperatures have increased by approximately 1.0°C, with global warming likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if temperatures continue to increase at current rates<sup>4</sup>.



- **Extreme Weather Events:** Climate change leads to an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including hurricanes, heatwaves, droughts, floods, and wildfires. These events can have devastating impacts on ecosystems, communities, and economies.
- **Melting Glaciers and Ice Sheets:** Rising temperatures contribute to the melting of glaciers and ice sheets in polar regions. This results in rising sea levels, which can lead to coastal flooding and the displacement of communities.
- **Ocean Acidification:** The absorption of excess atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> by the world's oceans is causing ocean acidification. This has negative impacts on marine ecosystems, including coral reefs and shellfish.
- **Altered Precipitation Patterns:** Climate change can lead to shifts in precipitation patterns, causing changes in rainfall and snowfall, which can affect water resources, agriculture, and ecosystems.
- **Impacts on Biodiversity:** Rising temperatures and changing climate conditions can disrupt ecosystems and threaten biodiversity. Many plant and animal species may face extinction or habitat loss due to these changes.
- **Economic and Social Consequences:** Climate change poses significant economic and social challenges, affecting agriculture, public health, infrastructure, and food security. Vulnerable populations often suffer the most from these impacts.
- **Policy and Mitigation:** Addressing climate change involves implementing policies and strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This includes transitioning to renewable energy sources, improving energy efficiency, protecting forests, and adopting sustainable land-use practices.



It's important to note that while natural factors, such as volcanic eruptions and variations in solar radiation, can influence the climate, the current changes are primarily driven by human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas) and deforestation. The increased concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is causing the Earth's climate to change at an accelerated rate, with profound and wide-ranging consequences for our planet and future generations.

Mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects are essential to addressing this global challenge. The IPCC has warned that urgent action is needed to cut greenhouse gas emissions and limit warming to at least 2°C and preferably 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial values to avoid even more catastrophic impacts of climate change. Changing course to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees (°C) will require deep GHG emissions reductions in the near term. The advice from the CCC published in March 2023 recommends that targets consistent with the 2050 Net Zero target would be a 48% emissions reduction by 2030 and a 77% emissions reduction by 2040 against the baseline year of 1990. To achieve the CCC's updated Balanced Pathway for Northern Ireland it recommends as a minimum:

- Decarbonising electricity generation whilst meeting rising demand;
- New car/van sales to be zero-emissions in the first half of the 2030s;
- All new heating appliances to be zero-carbon by 2033, and by 2030 for properties off the gas grid, with a substantial improvement in the energy efficiency of buildings;
- A reduction in livestock numbers by almost a third and the widespread adoption of low-carbon farming practices; and
- Significant increase in peatland restoration and afforestation

## **5.2 Climate Change Impacts in Mid Ulster**

Predicted climate changes for Mid Ulster District Council area, based on forecasts for Northern Ireland, consider an increase in annual temperatures, rise in precipitations, and potential evapotranspiration. Besides that, particular attention must be given to the consequences of inter-annual variability and climate extremes, such as increased wind speed and storm frequency.

Three named storms affected the area within the space of a week in February 2022, with severe flooding problems and the record of one of the highest gust speeds in Northern Ireland at Lough Fea. Temperatures in the UK exceeded 40°C for the first time on record in the Summer of 2022. Extreme weather events are predicted to become more frequent and intense in the future, with significant summer and winter temperature rises in the coming decades. This means that summer rain is likely to become less frequent but could be heavier, increasing the risk of flash flooding due to a lack of ground capacity for absorption, incorrect land use management, and the absence of adequate drainage infrastructure. Floods will likely become a staple of warming winters as well.



Flooding of the River Moyola at Castledawson GAC February 2022 - Storm Franklin



Driver rescued from the Moyola River near Draperstown during storm Agnes September 2023



Bridge on the Iniscarn Road near Draperstown partially collapsed



Spread of Blue-Green Algae at Ballyronan Marina in Summer 2023



Fire at Cookstown Household Waste Recycling Centre in May 2020 during prolonged dry weather



Gorse fire on the Glenshane Pass in June 2018



Flooding at the Linen Green in Moygashel in 2015



Ice on Lough Neagh at Ballyronan Marina

Extreme weather events might also increase the likelihood of river flooding, changes in plants and animals' distribution and fluctuations in the phenology (lifecycle timing) of native species and cultivated ones. The latter, combined with water stress for crops, pressure on water supply and negative impacts on water quality, will have extreme consequences on food shortage and availability of food supply and will also affect human health and wellbeing.

Impacts by sector:

Sector	Negative Impacts
<b>Minerals and Other Natural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevated water tables and seasonality</li> </ul>
<b>Water Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower river flow in summer and turbulent flow after sudden heavy rainfall will impact water quality</li> <li>• More frequent intense precipitations exceeding the capacities of wastewater treatment plants, sewer systems and flood defences</li> </ul>
<b>Other Natural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased frequency and intensity of winter precipitations will change river basins, increment flooding and affect land use and the stability of exposed slopes</li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invasion of species replacing cold-adapted species</li> <li>• Increase eutrophication</li> <li>• Migrant species</li> <li>• Loss of species</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degradation of designated conservation sites</li> </ul>
<b>Construction and Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs for construction projects such as flood prevention schemes, drainage schemes, and water treatment plants for better quality of water discharge</li> </ul>
<b>Buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased rainfall and higher risk of flooding will damage buildings</li> <li>• Increased rainfall may interrupt outdoor construction work repeatedly, causing increasing costs</li> <li>• Some land can become unsuitable for development due to the risk of subsidence in the soil</li> <li>• Flooding can affect septic tanks</li> </ul>

### 5.3 The Strategic Context and Legal Duties

- 2006 – NI (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006, Section 25 – District Councils have a statutory duty to promote the achievement of sustainable development in the exercise of their functions
- 2008 – UK Climate Change Act (Amended 2019) – Sets legal targets for the UK to Achieve net zero emissions by 2050
- 2010 – NI Sustainable Development Strategy
- 2015 – Paris Climate Agreement of limiting global warming below 1.5 °C of pre-industrial levels
- 2015 – UN Sustainable Development Goals
- 2019 – UK Net Zero by 2050
- 2020 – NI Climate Emergency Declaration
- 2021 – Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework
- 2021 – Draft Green Growth Strategy for NI
- 2021 – Energy Strategy for NI - “The Path to Net Zero Energy”
- 2022 – Energy Strategy “The Path to Net Zero Energy” Action Plan
- 2022 – Climate Change (NI) Act
- 2022 – Draft Environment Strategy for NI
- 2023 – Circular Economy Strategy for NI (public consultation closed and not published yet)
- 2023 – Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies (under public consultation)
- 2024 – Mid Ulster District Council Sustainability Strategy & Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2028

## 6. Baseline Data

6.1 This Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan set the principles for carbon accounting and reporting for Mid Ulster District Council. An emissions baseline was established to regularly report on categories within the three scopes of emissions established by the GHG Protocol<sup>5</sup>.

As part of the Council's Climate Action Plan, we are committed to measuring our carbon footprint as part of a Carbon Management Plan. This will provide a clear indication of the sources of our emissions and allow us to monitor the progress made in reducing our emissions over time. Typically, 96% of carbon emissions from local councils come from their supply chain, with only 2% coming from the council's own operations and another 2% from indirect emissions from purchased energy. Councils supply chains are responsible for over 10% of UK carbon emissions<sup>6</sup>.

By 2025 we will have established a substantial comprehension of our Scope 3 supply chain emissions and be able to set out a quantifiable target as part of the review of this strategy.

### 6.2 Emissions from Council Operations

We established 2019-2020 as our baseline year for the operational emissions of the council. The total Scope 1 & 2 Emissions for the 2019-20 year was 6,013.15 Tonnes CO<sub>2e</sub> and a breakdown is shown in the chart below:

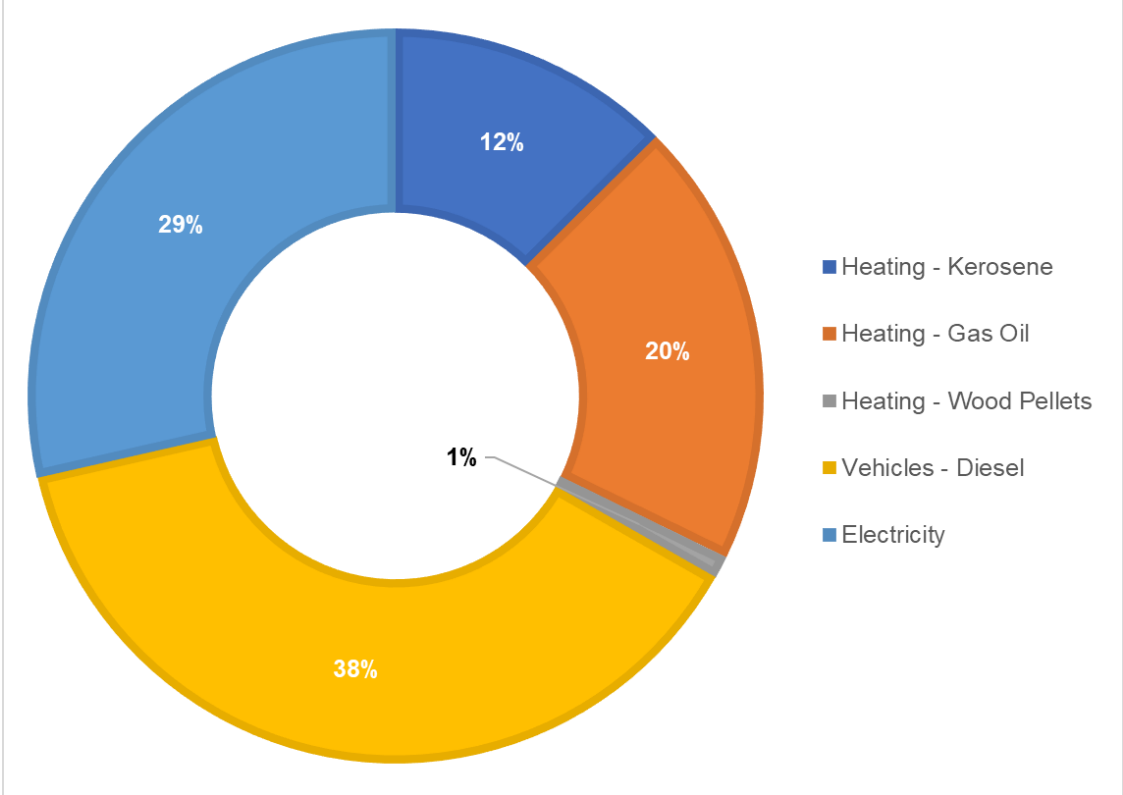


Figure 1 – Breakdown of Scope 1 & 2 Emissions in 2019-20

The largest source of emissions is vehicle fuel at 38% followed by heating fuel at 33% then electricity usage at 29%. The chart overleaf further breaks down the vehicle fuels used by the Council and where they were used. The largest use at 73% was for refuse collection vehicles. The Council used a total of 885,506 litres of diesel in 2019-20.

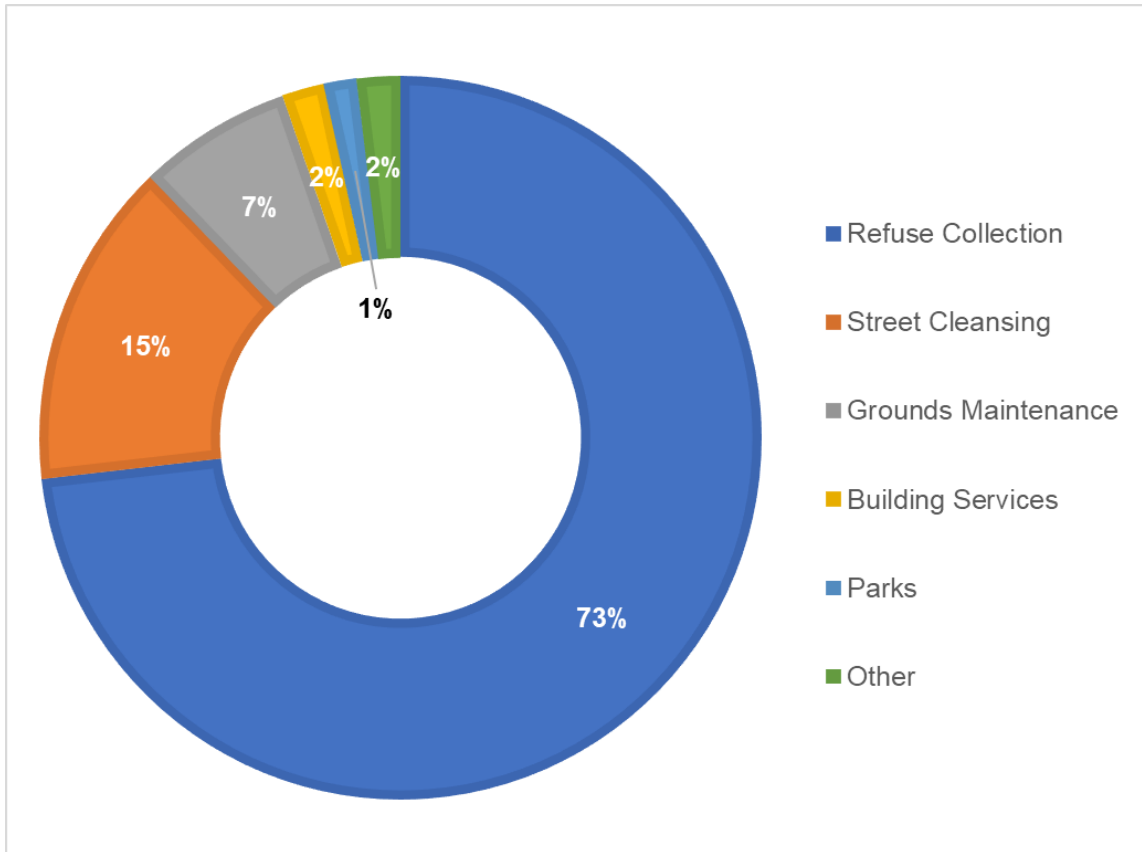


Figure 2 – Breakdown of Vehicle Fuel Use in 2019-20

The chart overleaf breaks down the heating oil used by the Council and in which facilities they were used. The four largest users are the districts leisure centres at Cookstown, Magherafelt, Dungannon and Maghera totalling around 61% of the Councils total use. These are generally the Councils largest buildings but also the heating of swimming pools is a major factor in their energy use. The Council used a total of 766,304 litres of heating oil in 2019-20.



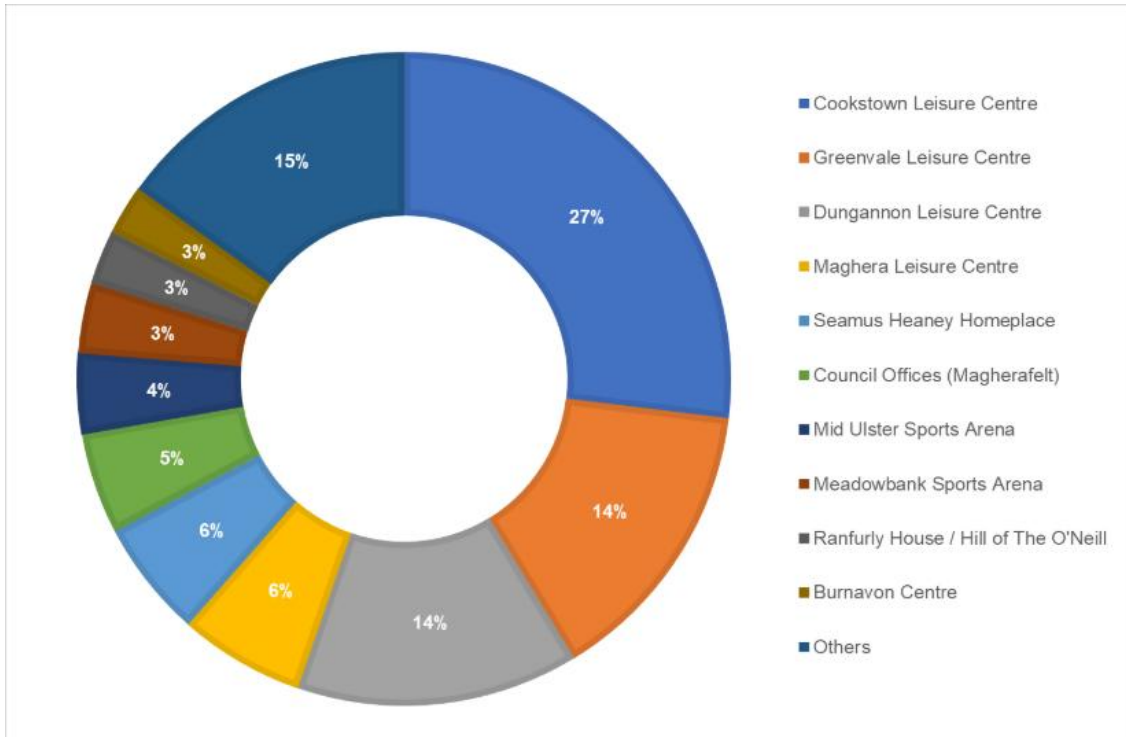


Figure 3 – Breakdown of Heating Oil Use in 2019-20

The chart below breaks down the electricity used by the Council and in which facilities it was used. The largest users again tend to be the districts leisure centres and sports facilities due to their large heating and lighting requirement. The Council used a total of 6.717 GWhrs in 2019-20.

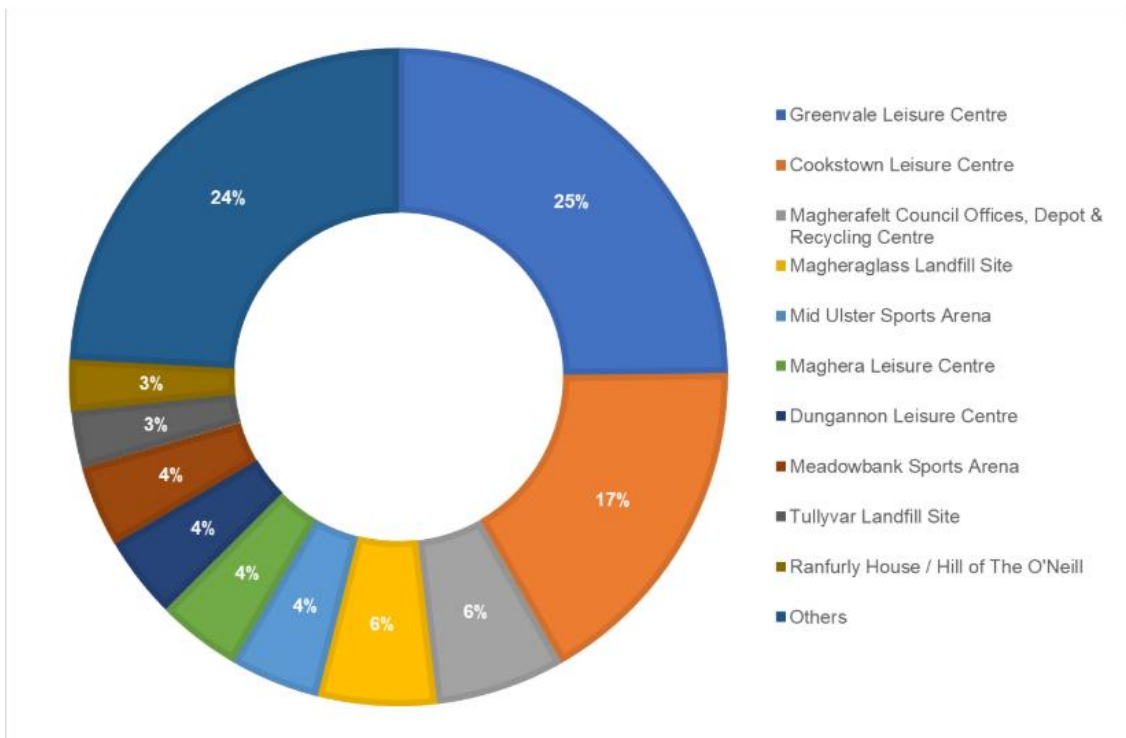


Figure 4 – Breakdown of Electricity Usage in 2019-20

### 6.3 Mid Ulster District Area Emissions

The UK Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) published the UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2019 report detailing the estimates CO<sub>2</sub> emissions broken down by Council District and by sector. This report shows that Mid Ulster district area is the largest emitter of CO<sub>2</sub> out of all the 11 local Council areas, emitting 1,948.9 tonnes in 2019. However, total emissions have fallen by around 20% between 2005 and 2019. Per capita emissions also fell from 19.6 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2005 to 13.1 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2019, a fall of around 33%.

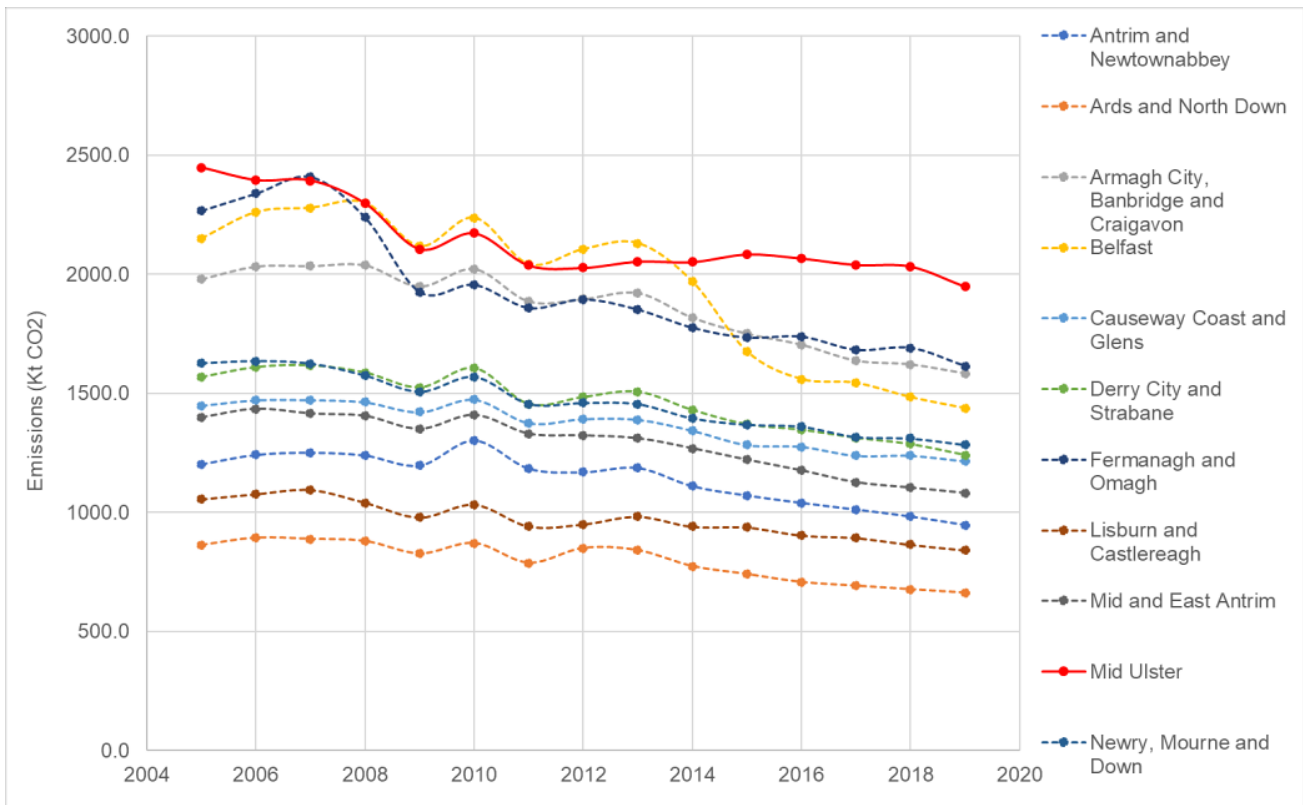


Figure 5: Total Local Authority Territorial CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 2005 - 2019  
 Source: UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2019 (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy)

The largest emitter was from industry at 41% of the total emissions and this reflects the importance of manufacturing, construction and agri-foods within our district.



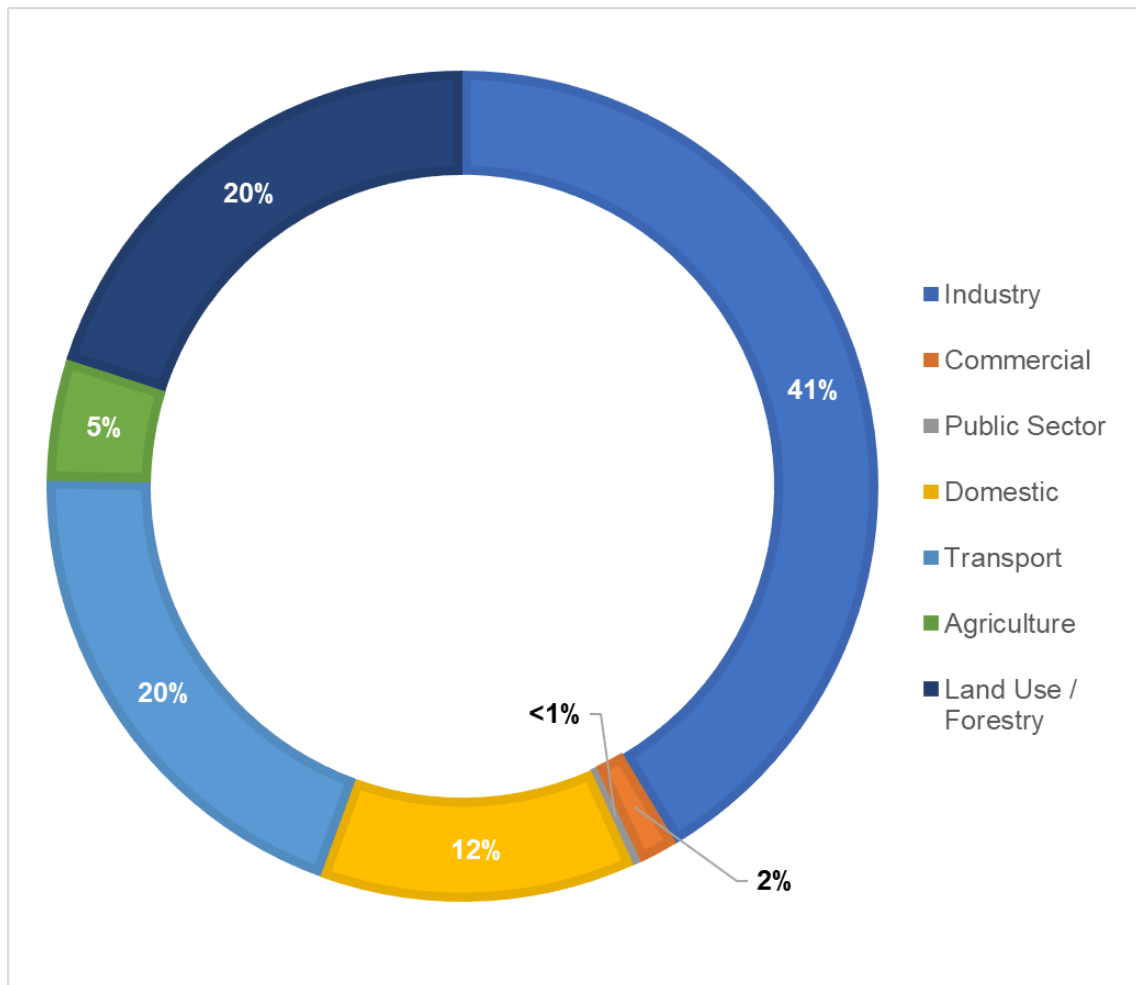


Figure 6: Breakdown by Source of Mid Ulster District CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 2019  
 Source: UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2019  
 (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy)

#### 6.4 What Have We Done So Far?

- Planted over 33,000 trees with the help of the Forest Expansion Scheme at three former landfill sites (Tullyvar, Magheraglass and Ballymacombs)
- By achieving a recycling rate of almost 60% at least 35,000 Tonnes CO<sub>2e</sub> is saved per annum from the Council's Scope 3 emissions.
- Made progress on the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP) by completing Steps 1 and 2 of the NI Adapts Adaptation Planning Toolkit and now progressing to Step 3 of the Adaptation Plan by developing drafts of the risk register
- 67% of schools in the District have achieved at least one Green Flag Award since registering
- Four electric-powered vans were purchased to encourage alternatively fuelled vehicles into Council's fleet and a trial of a hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) powered refuse collection vehicle has been agreed.
- Several events to increase climate awareness were coordinated and facilitated by the Council including the On the Road to Net Zero information and networking session as part of the Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2022.

- Successfully gained funding from Innovate UK Fast Followers Scheme as a partner Council in the Driving Net Zero Transformation in Mid South West Region Project. The project will help local business overcome non-technical barriers on their road to net zero through engagement of a Net Zero Officer.
- Supported the development of a Mid Ulster collaborative decarbonisation cluster partnership, involving four leading Mid-Ulster companies, facilitated by the Centre for Competitiveness, to help enable them to eliminate the use of fossil fuels in their businesses.

## 7. What Are We Going To Do?

7.1 Mid Ulster District Council is aware of its leadership role and is committed to pursuing it to tackle climate change by investing in climate action that can bring several opportunities.

- **Economic benefits by** creating new job opportunities and stimulating local economic growth. For instance, investing in renewable energy projects can bring in revenue for the local authority and create jobs in the installation and maintenance of the infrastructure.
- **Energy savings by** reducing our energy consumption and saving on utility bills by investing in energy-efficient technologies, such as LED lighting, smart building systems, and electric vehicles.
- **Enhanced resilience by** investing in climate action measures to help us become more resilient to the impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events, floods, and heatwaves.
- **Health benefits by** promoting active transport and implementing green spaces, we aim at improving air quality and public health.
- **Reputation and leadership by** taking concrete steps to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainable practices embedded in any decisions.

Analysis shows that the Mid Ulster area's baseline (Scope 1 and 2) emissions have fallen by 49% since 2000 due to a combination of increasingly decarbonised electricity supply, structural change in the economy, and the gradual adoption of more efficient buildings, vehicles, and businesses. With full decarbonisation of UK electricity by 2045 and taking into account economic growth (assumed at 2.5% p.a.), population growth (assumed at 0.1% p.a.) and ongoing improvements in energy and fuel efficiency (assumed at 1% p.a), the PCAN-University of Leeds model projected that Mid Ulster District Council area's baseline (Scope 1 and 2) emissions will fall by a further 49% by 2050, or by a total of 74% between 2000 and 2050.

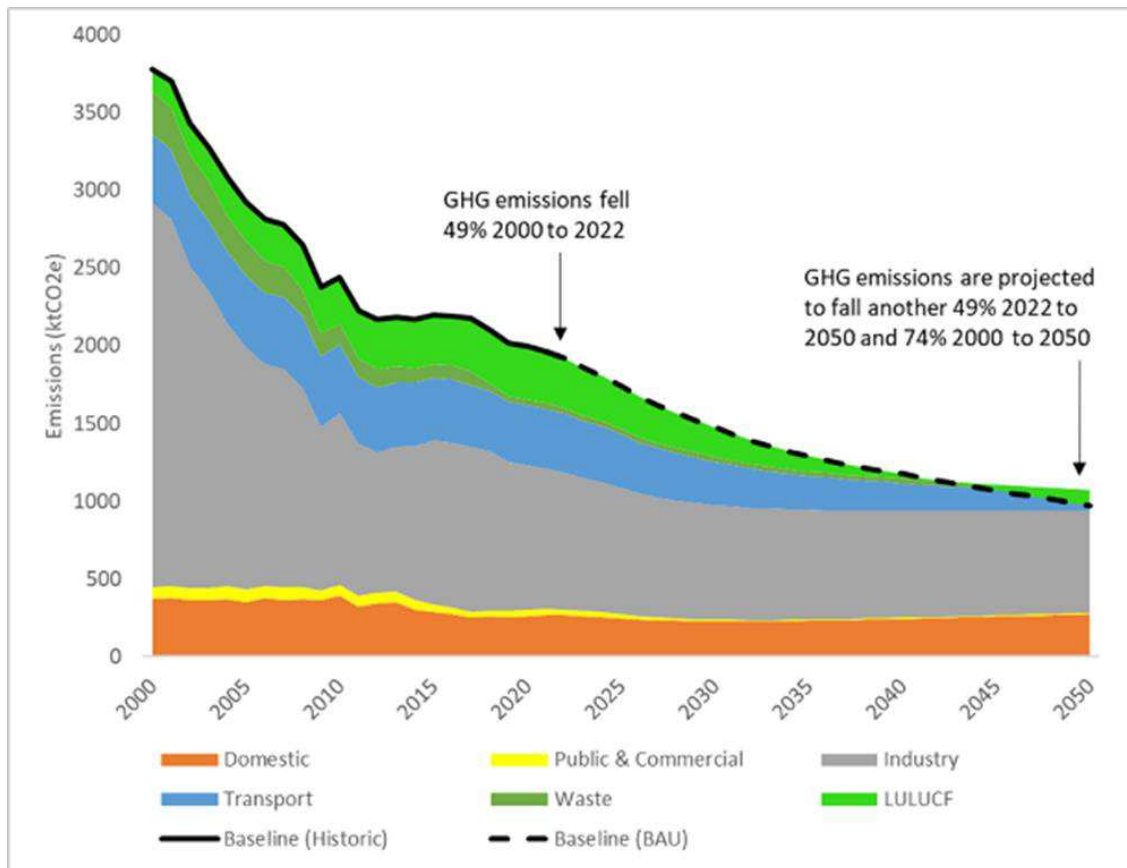


Figure 7: PCAN-University of Leeds model projections

For Mid Ulster to make its fair contribution towards the Paris Climate Agreement, the report from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research recommended to:

- Stay within the 8.7 million tonnes (MtCO<sub>2</sub>) of carbon dioxide emission budget for the period 2020-2100.
- Initiate an immediate programme of CO<sub>2</sub> mitigation to deliver cuts in emissions averaging a minimum of 14.1% per year to have a Paris-aligned carbon budget. This includes collaborative climate action with other local authorities.
- Reach zero or near zero carbon no later than 2040, when 95% of the recommended carbon budget is emitted, and low-level CO<sub>2</sub> emissions continue at a diminishing level to 2100.

## 7.2 Our Strategic Action Plan

To support our commitment to achieving net zero by 2050, this strategic plan has been developed to facilitate the integration of sustainability in all our decisions and support our existing operational policies and plans. In line with the Corporate and Community Plan Themes, MUDC has identified 5 Action Areas to succeed in the journey to net zero and to empower the Council's staff and the community.

- **Action Area 1 - Community Leadership** – By empowering and supporting local residents and organizations in taking an active role in combating climate change, we can create a more resilient, sustainable, and vibrant community. Through collaboration, engagement, and shared responsibility, this Council aims to achieve our climate goals while nurturing a strong sense of collective purpose among our citizens.
- **Action Area 2 - Resource Efficiency** - By maximising the efficient use of natural resources and materials, we not only reduce our carbon footprint but also create a more sustainable and resilient community. Through a comprehensive approach that engages individuals, businesses, and local government, we can collectively work towards a future that is more resource-efficient, prosperous, and environmentally responsible.
- **Action Area 3 Sustainable Travel** - By providing and promoting environmentally friendly transportation options, we empower residents to make greener choices. Together, through a combination of infrastructure improvements, education, incentives, and community collaboration, we can create a healthier, more liveable environment for all.
- **Action Area 4 – Natural Environment** - By preserving and enhancing our natural environment, we are better equipped to withstand the impacts of climate change, such as flooding and extreme weather events. This resilience is integral to maintaining the safety and vibrancy of our communities.
- **Action Area 5 – Green Growth** - Our plan acknowledges the importance of stimulating economic development while minimising environmental impacts and carbon emissions. Through collaboration, investments, and strategic planning, we can build a future where economic prosperity and ecological responsibility go hand in hand.

Through initial data collection to establish an emissions baseline, specific actions have been identified to achieve the agreed outcomes of the action plan. Alongside these, expertise from key council directorates, the development of climate and sustainability-related skills and the engagement of the entire council's staff and community have been identified as being necessary to enable the pathway to net zero.

### 7.3 Sustainable Development Goals

When formulating our Sustainability and Climate Action Plan we have tried to align our actions with the Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all. They were adopted by all United Nations Member States in September 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs build on the success of the Millennium Development Goals and encompass a wide range of social, economic, and environmental development objectives. There are 17 SDGs, each with specific targets, designed to be achieved by 2030. The goals are interconnected, recognizing that progress in one area often depends on progress in others. The 17 SDGs are as follows:



1. No Poverty: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. Zero Hunger: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
3. Good Health and Well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4. Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5. Gender Equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
6. Clean Water and Sanitation: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7. Affordable and Clean Energy: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

8. Decent Work and Economic Growth: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.
9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation.
10. Reduced Inequality: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
12. Responsible Consumption and Production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
13. Climate Action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
14. Life Below Water: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.
15. Life on Land: Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.
17. Partnerships for the Goals: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

The SDGs are a framework for addressing a wide range of global challenges, including poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, and climate change. They provide a common agenda for governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals to work together to create a more sustainable and equitable world. Achieving these goals by 2030 requires concerted efforts, resources, and collaboration at local, national, and global levels.

7.4 The Councils Sustainability and Climate Action Plan is presented overleaf:

## Action Area 1: Community Leadership

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
1	Form a cross-departmental team to deliver the Sustainability & Climate Action Plan and to disseminate information throughout the Council	# of sustainable and climate-related actions adopted and implemented (from policies to climate integration in decision-making)	All Departments (Cross-Departmental Team)	Short	High	4,13,16,17
2	Provide/promote climate awareness sessions/training for staff / Councillors / community groups / schools using free training provided by LHLH and Sustainable NI	# of community groups / schools trained and achieved Carbon Literacy Accreditation	Environment	Short	Medium	4,5,10,13,16, 17
		# of staff / Councillors trained and achieved Carbon Literacy Accreditation	Organisational Development, Strategy and Performance			
3	Promote staff awareness on the use of reusable bottles and other similar reusable items and review policies to ban the use of single-use items at internal and external council events	# of reusable water bottles issued	Environment / All	Short	Medium	3,12,13,14, 15,16
		# of initiatives launched e.g. Refillution / Plastic Promise etc.				
4	Continue the support and promotion of Fair Trade among the Council's staff and within the District	# of initiatives to promote Fair Trade	Environment	Short	Medium	1,2,5,10,16,
		# of businesses awarded with Fair Trade certification				
5	Use the Climate Change Working Group as a Forum to underpin more proactive/engaged discussions and climate actions by involving community groups, business groups, academics and NGO's	# of meetings and actions approved by the Climate Change Working Group	Environment	Short / Medium	Medium	4,16,17
		# of outside groups involved				

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
6	Educate staff on using sustainable products for meetings, corporate events etc, aiming to achieve zero waste from Council promotional activities	# of awareness activities undertaken on sustainable events / promotional products	Environment / All	Short / Medium	High	4,12,17
7	Promote and increase educational initiatives on sustainability, resource efficiency, biodiversity and sustainable food production among council staff and the community	% of district schools running environmental education programmes	Environment	Short / Medium	High	4, 6,7,11,12, 13,14,15,17
		# of council staff involved in these initiatives				
8	Continue to support the Eco Schools Programme and develop further educational programmes for schools/ community groups etc..., linking Waste, Energy, Litter, Biodiversity etc., to Climate Change	# of educational programmes developed	Environment	Short	Medium	4,13,14,15,17
		% of schools / Community groups involved				
		# of Green Flags Schools				
9	Provide support to businesses to begin their journey to net zero	# of businesses supported on their journey to Net Zero	Chief Executive / Environment	Short	High	4,8,9,16,17
		# of workshops planned in collaboration with key partners				
10	Promote the one-stop-shop for energy advice and support for businesses and public. Signpost incentivised financial support for energy-saving measures.	# of Energy advice visits carried out	Community and Place	Medium	High	1,7,10,11,12, 13,16,17
		# of businesses supported				
		% increase in users of one stop shop				



## Action Area 2: Resource Efficiency

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
11	Use green energy tariffs for some or all the electricity purchased	% of electricity from renewable sources	Environment	Short	High	7,11,12,13
12	Review swimming pool temperature levels / other swimming pool energy efficiency measures	% Reduction in heating oil / electricity expenditure	Communities and Place & Environment	Short	High	7,11,12,13
		# of assessed energy-saving equipment like pool covers etc...				
13	Conduct comprehensive energy audit of all Council facilities supported by energy efficiency programmes	# of assessed energy-saving equipment like thermostatic control valves, variable pumps, smart LED lighting, room thermostats, etc...	Environment	Short	High	7,11,12,13
		# of smart meters in Council-owned buildings				
		# of buildings with improved energy performance rating				
		% Reduction in heating oil / electricity expenditure				
14	Commit to the sustainable consumption of resources across the Council estate.	% reduction of waste generated within the Council estate and its area	All	Medium	High	7,8,11,12,13
		% of waste sent for reuse / recycling / energy recovery / landfill				
		# of Recycling & Reuse Initiatives developed				
		% reduction in water consumption				
		% reduction in energy consumption				

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
15	Develop a Carbon Management Plan, setting new ambitious annual reduction targets for energy consumption and improving the energy performance of council facilities	# of initiatives to reduce direct use of fossil fuels in own operations	Environment	Short / Medium	High	7,11,12,13
		# of facility carbon reduction plans developed				
		% of GHG annual reduction (Scope 1, 2 & 3)				
16	Digital Transformation Strategy – increasing the use of digital technology to replace paper resources & minimise travel.	# of Council Services making the transfer to digital	Corporate Services and Finance / All	Short	Medium	9,11,12,13
17	Investigate the installation of rainwater harvesting systems to water plants / wash vehicles at Council Depots	# of projects delivering new/improved green infrastructure	Environment	Medium	Medium	6,9,11,12,13,14
		Reduction in water use / m <sup>3</sup> of Rainwater collected for reuse.				
18	Introduce annual energy / carbon measurement reporting requirement for all Council facilities and publish the energy performance of each building and their annual monitoring reports	# of assessments of energy use / carbon footprint	Environment	Medium	High	7,9,11,12,13
		% of GHG annual reduction (Scope 1, 2 & 3) from established baseline				
		# of Council buildings assessed & certificated published / displayed				
		# of initiatives to promote low-carbon behaviour change				
19	Undertake a review and implement recommendations to reduce food waste and food miles at all Council facilities	% of food waste production and reduction at Council facilities	Communities & Place	Short	Medium	2,12,13
		% of food miles reduction				
		% of locally produced food used in Council facilities				

### Action Area 3: Sustainable Travel

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
20	Develop infrastructure to support the replacement of the Council's fleet with alternative fuel vehicles (e.g. electric and HVO initially) and the use of electric vehicles by staff.	# of electric vehicle charge points at Council facilities	Environment	Short	High	9,11,12,13,16
		# of alternative fuel vehicles in Council fleet				
		# of staff using electric vehicles				
21	Work with other organisations to develop the infrastructure required to support the districts journey to Net Zero such as more electric vehicle charging points (e.g. the ORCS project).	# of electric vehicle charge points within the Mid Ulster District Council area	Environment	Medium	Medium	9,11,12,13,16,17
22	Review the Councils Travel & Subsistence Policy to minimise non-essential travel and to promote and incentivise active travel, use of public transport, car sharing and the use of online meeting technology. The policy should encourage the use of salary sacrifice schemes such as the Electric Car Scheme and the Cycle to Work Scheme.	# of incentives and supporting measures that encourage staff to reduce travel or travel more sustainably	Organisational Development, Strategy and Performance	Medium	High	3,8,9,10,11,12,13,16,17
		# of staff using the Cycle-to-Work scheme				
		# of staff using the Electric Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme				
		# of bicycle friendly facilities installed such as bicycle stands, bike sheds and shower facilities at work				
		% reduction in business commuting by air / car				
		% increase in business travel by public transport				

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
23	Review of greenway routes within the district and lobby the Central Government to deliver a more integrated public transport network and create more cycle paths / greenways etc...	# of improvement solutions like increased capacity of Park & Ride services and use of low carbon or carbon zero transport	Communities and Place / Planning	Medium	High	3,8,9,10,11,12,13,17
		increase in # of greenways and low-traffic routes available				
24	Develop Hybrid / Agile Working guidance note / protocol and promote the use of technology that helps reduce carbon footprint e.g. remote meetings	% Reduction in staff commuting miles	Organisation Development, Strategy and Performance	Short	High	3,5,9,10,11,12,13,16
25	Investigate the feasibility of using robotic lawnmowers/trimmers as a greener alternative to petrol run mowers	Feasibility Report Produced and trials undertaken	Environment	Short	Low	3,9,11,12,13
26	Continue the Councils air monitoring scheme and enhance public awareness of air quality	Review and provide updated information about Air Quality on the Council website	Communities and Place	Short	Medium	3,11
		Liaise with Department for Infrastructure (Roads) and Translink through two Air Quality Multi-agency stakeholder meetings per year				
27	Develop an MUDC Active Travel Masterplan	Active Travel Masterplan Produced	Communities and Place	Short	Medium	3,11

## Action Area 4: Natural Environment

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
28	Phase out the use of peat-based compost and replace it with only peat-free compost in all Council's managed areas	% increase in the Council's purchase of peat-free materials derived from wood fibre and bark, green compost, wool, coir, etc.	Environment	Short	Low	11,12,13,15,16
29	Review and implement the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan to protect our biodiversity. Biodiversity action plans to be completed for all Council sites/buildings/properties	# of site specific Biodiversity Action Plans developed	Environment	Short	High	3, 11,13,14,15,16
		% increase in land area managed for biodiversity				
		# of protected wetlands; peatlands; bog lands; Special Countryside Areas; Areas of Special Scientific Interest; etc.				
		# of initiatives to increase staff and public awareness on biodiversity action				
30	Protect and enhance open spaces/parks to increase biodiversity, tree coverage and area of wetlands, allotments, community gardens, community orchards.	m <sup>2</sup> of new parks and urban green spaces, forest, wetlands and other natural habitats developed	Communities and Place / Environment	Short / Medium	High	1,2,3,11,13,14,15
		m <sup>2</sup> of new community growing space developed				
		# of biodiversity projects / initiatives on Councils land				

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
31	Fully implement All Ireland Pollinator Plan	m <sup>2</sup> of Council land made pollinator-friendly	Environment	Short	High	11,14,15,16,17
		# of initiatives to promote the plan among private landowners				
32	Expand the 'Managed for Biodiversity' scheme	# of semi-natural grasslands and road verges in the scheme	Environment / Communities and Place	Short	Medium	11,14,15,16
		m <sup>2</sup> of land area managed for biodiversity				
33	Administer the Small Grants Scheme in partnership with LHLH to create or enhance community /shared spaces.	£ of funding granted by the Council / LHLH	Environment	Short	Medium	5,10,11,16,17
		# of projects funded				

## Action Area 5: Green Growth

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
34	Revise the Procurement Policy to incorporate social value, sustainability and climate action.	New Procurement Policy Approved through Council	Corporate Services and Finance / All	Short	High	8,12,16
35	Promote shopping locally / sustainably to support wealth being retained within the local community through initiatives such as Community Wealth Building and the Mid Ulster Gift Card Scheme.	# of businesses participating on the Mid Ulster Gift Card Scheme	Chief Executive	Medium	Medium	8,11,12,17
		£ spent locally using the Mid Ulster Gift Card Scheme				
36	Introduce a sustainability screening tool for all capital projects to promote the highest standards of energy performance and encourage the use of sustainable building methods in Council new builds / renovations	% of projects screened for sustainability using this tool	Environment	Short	High	12,13,16
		# of staff trained in using the screening tool				
		# of sustainable design and building techniques adopted				
		# Tonnes of carbon reduced as result of any sustainable methods adopted				
37	Provide additional industrial land to assist Mid Ulster's high energy businesses decarbonise their manufacturing processes with a focus on new green innovation technologies.	# of partnerships engaged	Chief Executive	Medium	Medium	8,9,11,13,16,17
		# of business cases progressed in partnership with Invest NI				

Action No.	Action (how we will achieve this)	Performance Measure (indicators of success)	Responsible Directorate	Term	Priority	Sustainable Development Goals
38	Promote designs with pedestrians in mind and promote the protection of trees and encourage new planting / private green space within developments. Ensure development protects and enhances our natural heritage in relation to biodiversity.	# of sustainable planning awareness initiatives undertaken with Council staff and others	Planning	Medium	High	3,4,11,12,13,16,17
39	Contribute to The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland' - Planning for Sustainable Development (SPPS)	Outcome of The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland' - Planning for Sustainable Development (SPPS)	Planning	Medium	High	6,7,8,9,11,12,13,14,15,16,17
40	When conducting building energy surveys identify opportunities for the installation of renewable energy where possible across the Council estate to promote and integrate sustainability and resilience into energy plans.	# of new projects implemented	Environment	Long	Medium	7,9,11,12,13,
		# of units of biomass fuel used				
		# of units of energy generated (Landfill Gas, Wind, Solar)				
		% of electricity generated in-house				
41	Leverage outside funding to support the delivery of the Sustainability Strategy & Climate Action Plan objectives.	# of projects in development / being progressed	All	Medium	Medium	8,9,16,17
		£ of funding secured				
42	Council will seek to ensure sustainability is included as a factor in its various grant schemes.	# of grants assessing sustainability as part of its evaluation process	Community & Place	Short	Medium	5,10,11,16,17



## 8. Monitoring and Reporting

8.1 The responsible Directorates will continually monitor the progress of their actions within the Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan. This monitoring will be reported biannually to the Climate Change Working Group, consisting of 10 representatives from the main political parties in Mid Ulster. This will allow us to check progress against our climate aims and make changes where necessary. We will review and update the plan after four years while further developing our evidence base to support action planning and prioritisation of resources.



## 9. Glossary

BEIS – Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Blue carbon – Carbon captured by the world's ocean and coastal ecosystems.

BREEAM – Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method. This is an internationally recognised, science-based suite of validation and certification systems for a sustainable built environment.

Carbon Sequestration – This includes enhancing natural processes like afforestation and reforestation, as well as the use of technologies that capture and store carbon, such as carbon capture and storage (CCS) systems.

CCC – The Climate Change Committee advises the government on emissions targets and reports to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Circular Economy - keeping resources in use for as long as possible, extracting the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recovering and regenerating products and materials at the end of life.

Climate Adaptation – Refers to the actions, strategies, and measures taken to reduce the vulnerability of ecosystems, communities, and individuals to the current and anticipated impacts of climate change. It involves adjusting and preparing for the changing climate conditions to minimize the adverse effects on people, property, and the environment.

Climate Mitigation – Refers to efforts to reduce or prevent the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) into the atmosphere to limit global warming and its associated impacts. Mitigation strategies aim to lower the drivers of climate change, primarily through reducing GHG emissions and enhancing carbon sequestration.

CO<sub>2</sub>e - CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. This is a metric measuring all greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, allowing them to be expressed as a single number for simplicity.

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. An intergovernmental body of the United Nations established in 1988 to advance scientific knowledge about climate change caused by human activities.

GHG / Greenhouse gases – Gases including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases which contribute to the greenhouse effect and enhanced global warming.

ktCO<sub>2</sub> – Kilotonnes of Carbon Dioxide

Nature Based Solutions – Methods of mitigating climate change using natural ecosystems e.g. carbon sequestration via restoration of peatlands or degraded habitats.

Net Zero – Reducing greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, with any residual emissions being offset by sequestration methods such as via forests and oceans.

Passivhaus – A performance-based set of design criteria for very low energy buildings, which can help create buildings which use around 90% less energy than standard UK buildings

Scope 1 Emissions – Direct emissions that result from our own operations, such as combustion of fossil fuels in our own vehicles and emissions from building heating boilers or from on-site power generation.

Scope 2 Emissions – Indirect emissions associated with the generation of electricity, heat, or steam purchased and consumed by the Council.

Scope 3 Emissions – are a broader category of indirect emissions that are a consequence our activities but occur from sources not owned or directly controlled by us. These emissions encompass a wide range of sources and can be the most challenging to quantify. They often include emissions from the entire supply chain, including suppliers, transportation, and distribution of products or materials, employee commuting and business travel.

SuDS – Sustainable drainage systems mimic natural drainage processes to reduce the effect on the quality and quantity of run-off from developments and provide amenity and biodiversity benefits

## 10. References

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