

Report on	Conferences, Seminars & Training
Date of Meeting	28 January 2021
Reporting Officer	Philip Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	Eileen Forde, Member Support Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	Provide an update on seminars and conferences received. To seek approval for (i) elected member attendance and the payment of registration/ attendance fees and associated costs, as incurred and, (ii) council officer approvals.
2.0	Background
2.1	Costs associated will be set against 2020-21 member Conference, Seminar and Training allocations.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Approval for Consideration of Attendance by Elected Members</p> <p>There are occasions when it is beneficial to Members to attend training, conferences and seminars to better equip them in their role as elected representatives. Approval for attendance as detailed in Appendix A to this report is sought.</p>
3.2	<p>Officer Approvals</p> <p>There are occasions when it is beneficial to the council for Officers to attend conferences and seminars. Approval for attendance as detailed in Appendix B to this report is sought.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Costs to be set against Members 2019/20 conference/seminar/training allocation. Any costs incurred above annual allocation to be incurred by Member</p>

	Human: not applicable
	Risk Management: not applicable
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: not applicable
	Rural Needs Implications: not applicable
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Approval for attendance at the conferences, seminars and training by members and council officers as required.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix A Members Conferences, Seminars & Training
	Appendix B Officer Conferences & Seminars

Appendix A

Member Training

Provider/Course	Date & Time	Location	Costs	Attendee Requests

Conferences

Provider/Course	Date & Time	Location	Costs	Attendee Requests
NI Policy Forum Energy Conference	Monday 26 April 2021	On line	£185 + VAT	
IGPP Institute of Government & Public Policy – Energy & Sustainability of Public Sector	Thursday 13 May 2021	On line	£295 + VAT	

Next steps for energy policy in Northern Ireland

Morning, Monday, 26th April 2021

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA, Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly
- 9.05 **Policy priorities for the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy and setting a pathway 2050 climate and energy goals for 2050**
Thomas Byrne, Director, Energy Strategy, Department for the Economy
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 Break
- 9.35 **Approaches to meeting decarbonisation targets and the design of the Climate Change Bill**
Dr Inna Vorushylo, Project Lead, Zero-IN on NI Heat
- 9.45 **Commercialisation and the clean economic recovery - scaling up renewables deployment, developing emerging technologies, public and private engagement, and skills and R&D priorities**
Rachel Anderson, Chair, Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group
Senior representative, trade association
Senior representative, gas
Senior representative, legal
Senior representative, university
- 10.10 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.30 **Chair's closing remarks**
Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA, Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly
- 10.35 Break
- 10.45 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Member of the Legislative Assembly
- 10.50 **Competitive and affordable energy markets - widening the supplier base, fair tariff systems and consumer costs, and next steps for tackling fuel poverty in NI**
Professor Neil Hewitt, Head of Belfast School of Architecture & the Built Environment, Ulster University
Senior representative, energy supplier
Senior representative, consumer group
Senior representative, energy efficiency
Senior representative, consultancy
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.45 Break
- 11.50 **Improving whole-system resilience in NI - network capacity for distributed resources, non-generation technologies, and interconnection with ROI**
Terence Donnelly, Group Executive Chairman, Donnelly Group
Senior representative, system operator
Senior representative, distribution network
- 12.20 **Developing regulatory frameworks fit for the energy transition, market developments and a modernised energy system**
John French, Chief Executive, Utility Regulator
- 12.35 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Policy Forum for Northern Ireland closing remarks**
Senior Member of the Legislative Assembly
Jack Longman, Senior Researcher, Policy Forum for Northern Ireland
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Key areas for discussion:

the new Northern Ireland Energy Strategy to 2050:

- policy needs for creating a holistic strategy:
 - identifying long-term requirements for electricity, heat, decarbonisation and infrastructure
 - what is needed from policymakers to develop support mechanisms
 - tying goals to climate trajectories
- widening collaboration between public and private stakeholders:
 - the future scope of government-led initiatives
 - opportunities for working with industry to reduce project costs
 - strategies for encouraging private investment and improving confidence
- priorities for new renewables capacity and options for the future of conventional energy sources:
 - addressing challenges to onshore and offshore deployment
 - increasing the share of clean generation in the supply mix
 - setting pathways for transitioning to low-carbon gas
- NI as a leader in new energy technology commercialisation - R&D priorities and innovation opportunities for emerging forms of energy, and how to accelerate manufacturing facilities
- the *Climate Change Bill* and working towards achievable energy sector decarbonisation:
 - whole-energy system emissions reduction - policy and investment needs for power and heat decarbonisation, industry incentives and pollution limits, and encouraging behavioural change
 - a clean economic recovery in Northern Ireland - ensuring low-carbon investments are leveraged across industry recovery plans, and new jobs and skills are prioritised in green sectors
- next steps for creating a competitive and affordable energy market in Northern Ireland:
 - establishing quality consumer services and greater supplier activity - options for reducing market barriers, widening retailer participation, and enabling smart-led services
 - balancing clean tariff and incentive scheme needs with avoiding added consumer costs - rethinking Renewable Obligation structures, and setting generator payment certificates that are proportionate to climate benefits, and protecting vulnerable consumers
 - tackling fuel poverty - examining further supplier-led obligations for household improvements, accelerating insulation and smart demand management rollout, and scope for the future of regulated price control interventions
- creating a modern energy infrastructure system and regulatory framework for Northern Ireland:
 - the electricity grid - ensuring network capacity is appropriate for integrating distributed energy resources, and can utilise non-generation technologies like energy storage and EVs
 - supply and resilience security challenges - looking at enhancing supply and demand balancing, interconnector pairing with ROI, and the Single Electricity Market
 - an agile and modern regulatory system - including measures to facilitate innovation, set rates of return that work for both grid operators and consumers, and set rules that support the energy transition

The policy context: *Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 2050* - from the Department for the Economy, with a consultation held last year and the full publication due later this year, which is expected to outline:

- the way forward for the energy system - and what is required for setting achievable decarbonisation targets and an energy mix appropriate for electricity, heat and transport
- futureproofing - infrastructure and demand-side management developments that are appropriate for changing consumer behaviours and long-term pressures on the energy system
- *Discussion Document on a Climate Change Bill* - Northern Ireland's first approach at setting climate legislation, with objectives of the Bill centred around:
 - potential scope and priorities for establishing climate objectives and legislation tailored to NI needs
 - identifying policy and legislative options for accelerating the economy's low-carbon shift and achieving a clean economic recovery
- *NI Renewables Obligations (NIRO)* - Northern Ireland Audit Office examination of:
 - the NIRO scheme providing financial incentives for renewable energy generators, and whether it distorts consumer prices through taxpayer burdens
 - the value which NIROs have presented for renewable energy rollout and decarbonisation of retail energy supply, and how some unnecessarily high consumer costs can be reduced
- the Utility Regulator's price control periods for electricity and gas networks:
 - the final determination for SONI's 2020 - 2025 Price Control Setting, and the ongoing consultation on price control for gas transmission:
 - the regulator setting a lower rate of return for SONI's equity allowances for the next control period, while expanding investment for grid infrastructure decarbonisation and modernisation, and reduced energy costs for consumers
 - consultation on how equity allowances can also be lowered for gas transmission operators, while ensuring business operations remain protected and that consumers pay less for heating
- Continued operation of the Single Electricity Market - the retention of the SEM for the island of Ireland following the end of the UK-EU Transition Period, ensuring cross-border trading of electricity can continue between the energy systems of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland

Booking arrangements

This is a full-scale conference taking place **online***** [\[back\]](#)

- full, four-hour programme including comfort breaks - you'll also get a [full recording and transcript](#) to refer back to
- information-rich [discussion](#) involving key policymakers and stakeholders
- conference materials provided in advance, including speaker biographies
- speakers presenting via webcam, accompanied by slides if they wish, using the Cisco WebEx professional online conference platform (easy for delegates - we'll provide full details)
- opportunities for [live delegate questions and comments](#) with all speakers
- a recording of the addresses, [all slides](#) cleared by speakers, and further materials, is made available to all delegates afterwards as a permanent record of the proceedings
- delegates are able to add their own written comments and articles following the conference, to be distributed to all attendees and more widely
- [networking](#) too - there will be opportunities for delegates to e-meet and interact - we'll tell you how!
- video recordings - including slides - are also available to purchase

Full information and guidance on how to take part will be sent to delegates before the conference

To book places, please use our [online booking form](#).

Once submitted, this will be taken as a confirmed booking and will be subject to our terms and conditions below.

You can also pay in advance by credit card on 01344 864796. If advance credit card payment is not possible, please let me know and we may be able to make other arrangements.

Options and charges are as follows:

- Access to *Next steps for energy policy in Northern Ireland* (plus a permanent record of proceedings) is **£190** plus VAT per delegate;
- Concessionary rate places for small charities, unfunded individuals and those in similar circumstances are **£85** plus VAT. Please be sure to apply for this at the time of booking.

If you find the charge for places a barrier to attending:

- please let me know as concessionary and complimentary places are made available in certain circumstances
- typical eligibility: individual service users or carers not supported by or part of an organisation, full-time students, unemployed and fully retired people with no paid work, and small charities
- concessions are not offered to businesses, individuals funded by an organisation, or larger charities/not-for-profit companies.

Please note [terms and conditions](#) below (including **cancellation charges**). [\[back\]](#)

Energy and Sustainability in the Public Sector 2021

Starts

13th May 2021, 9:00am

Location - Online via our live, interactive platform

9:00am Online Registration

9:30am Chair's Welcome Address

9:40am Keynote Address: Investing In Making The UK A Global Leader In Green Technologies Using A Ten Point Plan

- Setting firm foundations to bring together ambitious policies, significant new public investment and mobilise private investment
- Positioning the UK to take advantage of export opportunities presented by low carbon technologies and services into new, global emerging markets
- Delivering the Government's commitments to address climate change and cut emissions
- Key policy impacts and milestones for delivering each element of the ten-point plan
- Setting out key future strategy and legislation such as the energy white paper, National Infrastructure Strategy, Net Zero Strategy and Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy

The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, President COP26, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (invited)

10:00am Keynote Address: Supporting Governments And Local Authorities In Building A Sustainable Future

- Mitigating the effects and impacts of climate change by taking urgent action to cut carbon emissions
- Developing a credible and deliverable carbon reduction programme in local authorities
- Utilising a bespoke climate emergency local energy plan to take an integrated and long-term approach to decarbonisation locally
- Harnessing the economic benefits of decarbonisation through the creation of low carbon jobs and businesses and financial savings for residents, businesses and the council
- Providing sustainable travel by improving transport infrastructure and reducing emissions

Stew Horne, Head of Policy, Energy Saving Trust

10:20am Keynote Address: Developing A Collaborative And Cooperative Global Energy Innovation Community

- The increasing importance of innovation as we work towards achieving a net-zero economy
- The Innovation Measurement Framework: using a live and transparent dashboard to monitor innovation projects for the energy networks
- Developing a pioneering Innovator and Industry Charter to significantly strengthen engagement between the global innovation community and the UK energy networks
- Launching the Deployment Hub to bring together innovative products and services that have the potential to contribute to industry partners' business challenges
- Case study examples of current innovation projects in energy and utilities

Denise Massey, Managing Director, Energy Innovation Centre (EIC)

10:40am Questions And Answers Session

11:05am Break and Networking

11:35am Keynote Address: Using Government Funding To Finance Energy Efficiency Projects To Meet Government Green Targets

- Addressing the importance of taking action to address climate change as a core priority despite the impact of Covid-19 to the UK economy
- Using peoples' changes in working habits as a result of the pandemic to encourage change to benefit the environment
- Using the Public Sector Low Carbon Skills fund to help eligible public sector bodies develop bids and deliver projects for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme
- Using the Low Carbon Skills Fund to engage specialist and expert advice to identify and develop energy efficiency and low carbon heat upgrade projects
- Assessing eligibility for applications to the Grant Scheme and navigating the application process

Jo Mills, Assistant Director of Programmes, Salix Finance

11:55am Case Study: Tackling The Climate Crisis Through Green Transport And A Zero-Emission Zone

- Putting in place a zero-emission zone in the city centre by summer 2021 and covering the entire city centre by 2022
- Investing in active travel and public transport and overhauling the council's fleet of vehicles

- Holding a citizens' assembly on climate change to gauge the views of residents and businesses
- Enabling the rise of new sustainable transport businesses operating in the city
- Promoting electric vehicle (EV) uptake by local businesses and the public and installing public charging facilities

Councillor Tom Hayes, Deputy Leader, Oxford City Council

12:15pm Case Study: Conserving And Managing Green Infrastructure Assets To Enable Sustainability And Resilience Of Rural And Urban Environments

- Tackling the human impact on natural systems to reverse global declines in biodiversity and ecosystem health
- Reversing the trends of environmental impacts associated with the loss of biodiversity
- Developing conservation and management strategies in order to build resilience and ensure sustainability
- Carrying out research on a range of themes associated with green infrastructure
- Case study examples of project in peatland conservation, wetland agriculture, invertebrate conservation and urban green infrastructure

Speaker, University of East London

12:35pm Questions And Answers Session

12:55pm Lunch And Networking

1:40pm Case Study: Developing An Action Plan And Target To Achieve Net Zero For Carbon Emissions By 2030

- Developing and implementing a structured carbon management plan and securing funding by Government agency SALIX
- Purchasing 100% renewable power for internal use and switching the petrol and diesel ground fleet to electric vehicles (EVs)
- Retrofitting buildings across the estate to boost energy efficiency and ensuring all energy supplied to its 15,000 homes is renewable
- Achieving a 55% reduction in the amount of carbon emitted by each resident between 2008 and 2018
- Cutting energy bills and boosting air quality through decarbonisation

Councillor Kevin Maguire, Cabinet Member for Safe and Sustainable City Environment, Norwich City Council

2:00pm Case Study: Using Low Carbon And Renewable Energy To Meet Energy And Sustainability Targets

- Developing a whole institution approach to the Climate Change Strategy vision to be carbon neutral by 2040

- Using a mixture of low carbon and renewable technology on campus including gas combined heat and power (CHP) and solar photovoltaics (PV)
- Renewable energy generation: procuring electricity through renewable sources which are REGO certified
- Solar energy: building a solar farm generating more than 1,4000,000 kWh of electricity a year and saving an estimated £200,000 a year in electricity costs
- Using gas-fired combined heat and power (CHP) plants as the main source of heat for heat networks

Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, University of Edinburgh

2:20pm Case Study: Developing A Best Practice Approach To Meet National Policy Requirements On Sustainability And Carbon Reduction

- Working together with local partners in regional healthcare networks to drive the sustainability agenda more effectively across the system
- Empowering and motivating staff to take action for a better working life and greener NHS
- Ensuring all aspects of sustainability are captured in a flexible and integrated model that can be tailored to suit any NHS organisation
- Creating a Business Travel Plan and launching a Travel Bureau to assist staff and managers to reduce their business mileage and providing low emission pool cars
- Harnessing the positive effects of being more sustainable on mental health

Jim Thomas, Head of Logistics, Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust (invited)

2:40pm Break And Networking
3:00pm Chair's Summary And Close
3:00pm Consultation

Cost per delegate £295 + VAT

Mid Ulster District Council can receive 7 online discounted tickets. Online exclusive discount for this event ends Friday 29th January at 5pm. Simply use the code ESPS2021 at the checkout -

Approval - Conferences

Conference & Seminar	Date	No. of Attendees	Location	Attendance Fee (Yes/ No)
NI Planning Conference	11/2/2021	1	E Conference	Yes
PWC Annual VAT Conference	3/3/2021	1	Webex	Yes