

# Covenant of Mayors Peer Learning Programme - Signatories' application form 2021

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.



The Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy is offering municipalities across Europe the opportunity to take part in peer learning exchanges that aim to increase authorities' capacity and knowledge to develop and implement long term strategies on climate and energy. **Applications are open until Friday 19 March 2021, 17.00 CET.**

## What is the peer learning programme?

The Covenant of Mayors peer learning programme has been designed to cater to the different needs of cities, regions, and provinces. In this vein, we are launching tailored programmes targeting cities at various stages of the climate adaptation and mitigation journey. These programmes will see cities undertake stimulating exchanges including activities such as:

- Exchanging ideas on how to adapt to climate change through nature-based solutions
- Learning how to co-create a climate pact with citizens and business
- Hearing from experts on how to successfully apply to competitive funding opportunities
- Getting tailored feedback and advice on their Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs)

Each of our programmes will ensure a tailored exchange between participants. In this vein, please be sure to **focus your responses on what you have to offer to your peers and what you would like to learn.** Note that it is possible to save a draft and return to the application later, should you need to consult with colleagues, for example.

Successful applicants will be offered a place on the programme that most accurately responds to their needs, challenges, and expertise as described in their application. **Note, applicants will not be able to select which programme they wish to apply for.** Rather, the Covenant of Mayors office will select and pair successful applicants according to their learning needs and expertise as described in their application.

## Enabling Resources

To ensure that participants can gain the most and ensure a successful journey through the peer learning programme, certain conditions are necessary. These include having appropriate financial and human resources to be actively engaged in the learning process. Should you not be able to fulfil the necessary requirements for human or financial resources, we will not be able to proceed with your application. Note that those programmes that require travel will be reimbursed up to a pre-defined limit\*. However, the Covenant of Mayors Office will not cover additional associated costs related to participating in the programme.

In addition, all participants are required to have at least B2 command of English, to ensure effective learning. **Please complete your application form in English.**

Successful applicants will be matched to the most appropriate programme according to the information provided. *Please be sure to provide as much concrete detail as possible in relation to your learning ambitions and expertise.* We strongly recommend that you focus your application on two to four learning objectives (maximum) and provide examples of successful practices you have implemented, as relevant, in order to clearly describe what you hope to achieve through the peer learning programme.

\*See the launch article for information regarding UK cities.

## **YOUR DETAILS**

### **City contact 1 (primary liaison)**

\* [First name] [Last name]

Cathy Burns

\* Email address

cathy.burns@derrystrabane.com

\* Position (job title)

Climate Programme Manager

\* Department

Environment & Regeneration

\* Phone number

+44 28 71 253253

### **City contact 2 (secondary liaison)**

\* [First name] [Last name]

Leo Strawbridge

\* Email address

leo.strawbridge@derrystrabane.com

\* Position (job title)

Energy Manager

\* Department

Environment & Regeneration

\* Phone number

+44 28 71 253253

\* **Name of local authority**

Derry City & Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council (through North West Regional Development Group)

\* Structure of local authority

- City / Municipality
- Metropolitan Area
- Group of cities

If you selected "Group of cities", please specify which authority will act as the lead

The lead will be Derry City & Strabane District Council (DCSDC)

DCSDC and Donegal County Council (DCC) form and lead the North West Regional Development Group (NWRDG). The NWRDG is a formal partnership of both Councils through which a wide variety of joint initiatives are delivered under the themes of Physical and Environmental Development, Economic Growth and Development and Social and Community Cohesion and Wellbeing. The NWRDG links to the governments in both Ireland and Northern Ireland through the North West Strategic Growth Partnership (NWSGP).

The North West has been a key component of the agenda for North-South Co-operation since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement and the establishment of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC). Originating with the North West Gateway Initiative, this level of co-operation was further endorsed in 2015 through the Fresh Start Agreement, the subsequent endorsement of the North West Strategic Growth Plan by the NSMC in July 2016, and the continued participation of Government Departments North and South in the NWSGP. The NWSGP is further referenced in the Northern Ireland Government New Decade - New Approach agreement of 2019 and in the Programme for Government in Ireland, 2020. The NWRDG and NWSGP provide the structures and jurisdictional remit required to work collaboratively on climate action and they have fully endorsed this application to the Peer Learning Programme for the North-West Region.

**\* Country**

Northern Ireland and Ireland

**\* Number of inhabitants**

- 0 - 50,000
- 50,000 - 250,000
- 250,000 - 500,000
- > 500,000

**\* Are you part of the Covenant of Mayors community?**

- Yes, I am signatory of the Covenant of Mayors 2030 objectives
- Yes, I am signatory of the Covenant of Mayors 2020 objectives and/or Mayors Adapt and I will renew my commitments before the start of the peer learning programme in June 2021
- No, I am not a signatory yet but I will commit before the start of the peer learning programme in June 2021

**\* Have you already participated to the previous twinning programmes of Mayors Adapt or of the Covenant of Mayors - Europe?**

- Yes
- No

**\* Are you currently implementing – or in the process of preparing an application to – an EU-funded project addressing climate mitigation, adaptation, or energy poverty?**

- Yes
- No

**YOUR STATUS**

We would like to understand where you are in the journey to developing or implementing your SECAP or implementing your SEAP.

\* Please select the below option that best describes the status of your preparation in regards to your **Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP)**:

- We have submitted and started implementing our plan
- We have already monitored and/or reported on achievements
- We do not have a SEAP

Please use this space to provide any other details you feel are relevant.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

Derry City & Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council are partners through the cross border North West Regional Development Group.

The partnership recently adopted a Statement of Intent on the Green Transformation of the Region. The overarching goal is to become a carbon-neutral region by 2045 by protecting, restoring and enhancing its precious natural heritage and biodiversity, and achieving strong economic growth through circular, zero-waste and resource-efficient initiatives. The statement is underpinned by a variety of ongoing and planned strategies and projects under the four areas of Green Infrastructure, Regional Energy, Climate Action and Sustainable Economy.

Through this the partnership is currently producing a cross border North West Regional Energy Strategy. The strategy sets out local measures to achieve net zero emissions by 2045 through decarbonisation, energy efficiency and renewable energy integration. The Regional Energy Strategy includes a roadmap of local measures aligned to central government and local carbon targets focused on five key themes:

- Smart Energy Management
- Energy Efficiency
- Low Carbon Heating
- Renewable Generation & Energy Storage
- Low Carbon Transport

The draft Regional Energy Strategy consultation was completed in February 2021 with the final document due for approval Summer 2021.

\* Please select the below option that best describes the status of your preparation in regards to your **Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP)**:

- Not yet signed the CoM 2030 targets and started to work on our plan
- Preparatory phase: not yet started or currently designing our plan/strategy
- About to submit our plan, including specific adaptation/mitigation actions developed
- Implementing our plan
- Already monitored and/or reported on achievements
- Submitted a plan that was sent back from the JRC with suggested revisions

Please use this space to provide any other details you feel are relevant.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

Through the North West Strategic Growth Partnership DCSDC and DCC are leading on the development of a cross border North West Climate Action Plan (NWCAP). The NWCAP will deliver transformational change through a strategic framework for climate action on a cross sectoral and regional basis.

The NWCAP will incorporate existing strategies such as the Regional Energy Strategy, and the Derry City & Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council Climate Adaptation Plans. The NWCAP will deliver collaboration and shared approaches and actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change across the North-West Region.

To affirm the region's commitment to addressing the challenges posed, the NWCAP will:

"Deliver climate action on a cross sectoral multi agency basis to achieve greater adaptation and resilience to the effects of climate change while leading by example to reduce emissions and mitigate against further global warming."

As the region shares similar landscapes, climate threats, vulnerabilities and opportunities the NWCAP will ensure consistency of approach through working on a transboundary and collaborative basis.

It is also recognised that local authorities cannot address climate mitigation and adaptation in isolation, particularly as many issues and areas of vulnerability are beyond the remit of councils, therefore the NWCAP will work on a multi-agency and cross sectoral basis to led and coordinate climate action across the region.

The NWCAP will seek to coordinate and deliver the following on a regional basis:

- Decarbonisation & emission reduction
- Energy efficiency
- Climate resilience and adaptation
- Increased financial savings and economic benefits
- Environmental and social resilience

The NWCAP is currently in development phase with the final document to be produced in 2022.

---

## **PART ONE: MITIGATION**

In this section, we would like to hear from you about where you are in your mitigation journey.

\* 1.1. At what stage would you place your city in the mitigation work cycle?

- Preparatory phase: not yet started or getting started designing our plan/strategy
- About to submit our plan
- Implementing our plan
- Already monitored and/or reported on achievements

\* 1.1a. What are the objectives of your **mitigation** plan for 2030?

*Ex. reduction 40% of CO2 emissions by 2030*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

To reach net zero carbon emissions by 2045 in the North West Region.  
Interim carbon budgets and targets have yet to be set by our emerging plans and SECAP.

\* 1.2. What are the main **challenges** for you in relation to **mitigation**?

*at least 3 choice(s)*

- Municipal buildings, equipment, facilities
- Tertiary buildings

- Residential buildings
- Waste
- Public transport
- Private and commercial transport
- Municipal fleet
- Agriculture, forestry, fisheries (such as urban agriculture, food production)
- Public lighting
- Heating and cooling
- Renewable energy production
- Other

1.2a. For **each** of the above selected challenges, please provide further details

**\* Mitigation challenge 1**

*Please provide further details as to what the challenge is that you face*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

Public, Private and Commercial Transport

A carbon baseline completed for the North West Region in 2019 concluded that transport contributes 44% of all carbon emissions in the region amounting to approximately 1,500 ktCO<sub>2</sub>eq with Donegal in particular contributing almost two-thirds of the overall amount. Donegal, with its widely dispersed low density population, has a heavy reliance on private transport for both travel and freight. Public transport services within the county are limited. Public transport links to Dublin and Galway, whilst reliant on buses, are well developed and comprehensive.

Derry City and Strabane District is better served by public transport in particular in Derry City which also has the only train station in the North-West Region, albeit offering limited connectivity to Belfast.

However, across the North-West Region the private car is the most popular form of travel. A survey conducted in the Derry City and Strabane District area asked participants how easy or difficult it would be to make the journey to work in some way without the use of a private car and found that 56% of people would find it quite difficult or very difficult. Of those who it said it would be difficult, 64% stated that the journey was not possible on public transport, followed by 25% who cited poor connection options with the remaining 25% stating that the journey would take too long.

In order to address this challenge a number of approaches need to be taken which will include;

- Spatial planning to facilitate growth focused on a tiered settlement strategy;
- Develop better public transport services and infrastructure focused on serving areas of higher population density;
- Encourage active travel initiatives such as Greenways and other cycling infrastructure;
- Provide for better connectivity to encourage remote working;
- Decarbonise private, public and commercial transport.

**\* Mitigation challenge 2**

*Please provide further details as to what the challenge is that you face*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## Buildings

The Carbon Emissions Baseline analysis identified buildings (both commercial & domestic) as the highest percentage of carbon emissions at 50% of the total for the region of Derry City and Strabane District Council & Donegal County Council. The decarbonisation of this sector presents the region with two distinct challenges; inefficient housing stock and heavy reliance on fuel oil as the main source of heat. Energy Efficiency ratings for buildings typically range from a C to an E or F. A regional programme of deep renovation and the introduction of Smart Energy Control would potentially increase the Energy Efficiency Rating to B.

Social housing would benefit greatly from having access to innovative energy solutions. These may include solar PV cells, low-carbon heating such as heat pumps and LED light installations. It is therefore imperative that the North West Region invests in providing the social housing stock with these sorts of technologies, making them fit for purpose and future proof. If not properly addressed, social housing may fall behind in terms of technological advancement, leaving populations vulnerable in a low carbon economy.

Derry City and Strabane District Council area has access to a limited natural gas network, but the reliance of Fuel Oil as a heat source needs to be addressed on a regional level with limited alternatives other than the electrification of heat.

### \* Mitigation challenge 3

*Please provide further details as to what the challenge is that you face*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

### Agriculture, forestry, fisheries

In Northern Ireland agricultural emissions accounted for the highest percentage per sector in 2018 with 27%, while in the Republic of Ireland agriculture is the largest source of emissions, representing 34% total national emissions in 2018. Agriculture emissions are projected to continue to grow steadily by 4% between 2018-2030 to 21 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in the Republic of Ireland, which is mainly a result of an increase in animal numbers particularly for the dairy herd, crop areas and fertilizer use. The North-West Region contains extensive land cover: 605,452 hectares of natural assets comprised of:

- 45.6% Agriculture and Grassland
- 31.6% Peatland
- 10.1% Forest & Woodland
- 0.8% Coast

Given that agriculture and grassland constitutes 45.6% of the North West Region land cover there exists significant natural assets within which to affect change. Government policy in Ireland as expressed in the National Climate Action Plan recognizes the contribution of nature based solutions and land use changes in greenhouse gas abatement through improvements in farming practices and diversification of agriculture towards lower carbon intensive farming alongside the expansion of forestry planting and soil management. In Northern Ireland tree planting has primarily been driven by the private sector supported by a range of government grant schemes. However the NI Forest Service Strategy aims to expand planting rates of almost 1,700 hectares per year over fifty years, however current planting rates of 200 hectares per year are not sufficient to meet this long-term aim. Ireland has a target to expand forest cover from the current 11% of the land area of the country to 18% by 2050 - an average of 8,000 hectares per year. Given that only 10.1% of the North West land cover is forest and woodland, opportunities exist for expansion. In Donegal agriculture, forestry and fishing make up nearly 25% of total businesses operating. Derry City and Strabane has 97,080 hectares of farm land and 1,773 farms. In DCSDC, the number of farmers increased over the 2013 to 2018 period from 2,005 to 2,183 farmers. There has also been an increase in animal (cattle, pigs, sheep, poultry) numbers in the area. However when undertaking changes in the agriculture system such as allocating land for afforestation or set aside, the potential reduction in local food production and consequent need for imported produce should be considered, both in terms of local employment and emissions as a result of imports. The need for a just transition and adequate support for the agriculture, fishery and food production sectors to transform practices to a low carbon future is critical.

1.2b. Please use this space to provide any additional information you feel is relevant.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

\* 1.3. In what area has your city successfully implemented **mitigation** measures that could be considered **good practices** and could be shared with the CoMmunity:

*at least 3 choice(s)*

- Municipal buildings, equipment, facilities
- Tertiary buildings
- Residential buildings
- Waste
- Public transport
- Private and commercial transport
- Municipal fleet
- Agriculture, forestry, fisheries (such as urban agriculture, food production)
- Public lighting

- Heating and cooling
- Renewable energy production
- Other

**1.3a. Please provide further details for each of these good practices**

*Ex. About a specific project implemented; please include achieved or preliminary results (max. 1500 words in total)*

**\* Mitigation good practice 1**

*Please provide further details as to what this good practice measure is*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

**Municipal Buildings**

Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council are both partners in the smartrenew project which is part funded by the Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA) Interreg programme of 2014-2020. The main objective of smartrenew is to transfer and implement innovative renewable energy and smart storage solutions for housing and public buildings to 6 dispersed regions of the NPA, each with varying levels of renewable maturity – Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Norway. smartrenew will allow stakeholders in the regions to study successful and effective technologies and best practice that promote an increased and more efficient use of renewable energy. This will be facilitated by smartrenew through transnational knowledge transfer between stakeholders in each country comprising of academia, business, public authority, and citizens.

Donegal County Council implemented a number of pilot projects in its municipal buildings. In one pilot through improving insulation, the installation of heat pumps and a photo-voltaic array in lieu of an oil based heating system and commissioning a smart efficient heating management system CO2 emissions from the site were reduced by more than 50%.

**\* Mitigation good practice 2**

*Please provide further details as to what this good practice measure is*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## Waste

In Donegal waste management is led by Donegal County Council (DCC) through the Connacht Ulster Region Waste Management Plan. The vision of the regional waste plan is to rethink our approach to managing waste, by viewing our waste streams as valuable material resources which can lead to a healthier environment and sustainable commercial opportunities for our economy. DCC annually report on local performance against the plan targets of waste reduction, recycling, and composting.

A wide range of waste management services and facilities are provided in County Donegal, householders are provided with a kerbside waste collection service for general waste, recyclable waste and food waste were relevant. There are six Recycling Centres located in the County accepting a wide range of materials for recycling including dry recyclables, WEEE, batteries, tyres, waste oils, mattresses and other bulky goods. The Council manage a network of 70 Bring sites for the recycling of glass and cans and textiles at approx 40 sites. The Council also provide Home Compost units at a subsidised cost of €13 to householders. Other one –off campaigns also take place such as WEEE collections, ½ price Bulky Goods events, mattress amnesty's etc.

The Council also engage closely with the local community and have had successful partnerships with Tidy Towns groups, local community groups, the Council has partnered with the Donegal Men's Shed Network showcasing upcycling of waste materials and with Letterkenny Rotary and Bryson Recycling on the annual School Bikes Africa Campaign. The Council are also involved in the promotion of other waste prevention initiatives for national reuse month and initiatives with local schools. The Council is also involved in the Green Schools programme (known as Eco Schools internationally) and has a high percentage of schools actively participating in the programme with a small number of schools having achieved their 10th Green Flag which reflects at least 20 years of commitment to the programme.

DCSDC are leading the way in Northern Ireland with the only Zero Waste Circular Economy Strategy, the vision of which is that "resources are used for as long as possible, have maximum value extracted from them and are recovered and regenerated at the end of their service life to achieve a Zero Waste Circular Economy". The circular economy has a significant role to play in addressing climate change through reduced consumption, waste and emissions. Within the city of Derry over 3,522 tonnes of food waste was collected by over 52,000 households across the city (April 2018-March 2019). This food waste is turned into compost which is used in local parks, gardens and cemeteries. In 2017/18 recycling rates for DCSDC was over 40%.

### \* Mitigation good practice 3

*Please provide further details as to what this good practice measure is*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## Renewable Energy

The North-West Region is currently leading the way in terms of renewable energy, with it being one of the greatest contributors of renewable generation for the island of Ireland. This however may result in future pressures for the region to maintain this progress as it is viewed as a key area for both countries to meet their national targets.

The North West Region has potential for continued growth in the wind energy sector that would positively contribute to the renewable energy targets of both jurisdictions. In order to sustainably facilitate the future development of wind farms within the Ireland, Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines (Department of Housing Planning and Local Government) were published in December 2019. These guidelines set out how Development Plans must achieve a reasonable balance between responding to Government policy on renewable energy and enabling wind energy to be harnessed in a manner consistent with proper planning and sustainable development.

Renewable technologies provides a great opportunity to develop a low carbon economy within the North West Region that can support employment whilst improving future energy security.

This will accelerate the decarbonisation of the North West Region and help build a strong and sustainable low carbon economy which can both reduce carbon emissions and provide substantial economic benefits. It is important that a coordinated view of renewable technologies is taken to deliver a reliable and affordable energy mix for the North West Region.

1.3b. Please use this space to provide any further information as relevant.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

\* 1.4. In the context of the Covenant of Mayors peer learning programme, do you have specific **learning ambitions** in regards to the development or implementation of **mitigation** measures?

- Yes, for development of measures
- Yes, for implementation of measures
- Yes, both for development and implementation of measures
- No (*if no, please skip to the Part Two on Adaptation*)

\* 1.4a. In what area would you like to learn from another city?

*Please select all relevant options from the following or provide details*

- Municipal buildings, equipment, facilities
- Tertiary buildings
- Residential buildings
- Waste
- Public transport
- Private and commercial transport
- Municipal fleet
- Agriculture, forestry, fisheries (such as urban agriculture, food production)
- Public lighting
- Heating and cooling
- Renewable energy production
- Other

If "Other", please specify

Community & Stakeholder Engagement & Just Transition

- \* 1.4b. Please provide further information as to what your **mitigation learning ambitions** are; please ensure your responses are as concrete as possible and make reference to planned projects or specific ideas which you would like to focus on.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

As outlined in our mitigation challenges we have particular learning ambitions in the areas of transport, buildings and agriculture. The North West Region has an over reliance on private car use with limited public transport or rail networks. We have a particular interest in learning how best to deliver sustainable travel infrastructure including greenways, electric vehicles and public transport. We also wish to learn from best practice approaches to creating the behavioural change necessary to ensure a modal shift, this includes at an individual level as well low carbon options for public transport, industry and fleet such as projects to extend rail networks and decarbonise public fleet.

In order to address climate mitigation building challenges our learning ambitions include the opportunity to learn best practice approaches to retro-fitting residential, public and commercial buildings. This includes examples of where buildings have been made more efficient while using renewable energy sources. We are interested in how policy and practice can be changed through public and private sector collaboration in order to reduce building emissions across the region. This includes transformation of policy and mechanisms to encourage technical innovation within commercial and private buildings. We would be particularly interested in learning about sustainable settlements and the innovations put in place to achieve low carbon buildings, transport and waste management.

As agriculture forms a high percentage of greenhouse gas emissions in the North-West Region it is crucial that this is addressed in our mitigation ambitions. We are interested in the policy frameworks to encourage sustainable agricultural and land use practices and learning about the what has worked well in other regions. In particular we are interested in technical solutions to address agriculture emissions as well as solutions to improve the land use of the region in order to provide mitigation. This includes collaboration between the agricultural sector and public bodies as well as examples of afforestation and urban food production. As the agriculture sector is a large employer in the North West we are interested in how best to ensure a just transition and support our local farming community to diversify / adjust practices to reduce emissions. We wish to learn about how to ensure effective community and stakeholder engagement to deliver the behavioral change necessary to reduce emissions. This includes how best to engage with hard to reach groups and extend the climate conversation beyond traditional and 'usual' audiences to include local communities, businesses, industry and public agencies. We are interested in learning about effective partnerships to facilitate change across the general public, industry and public sector. We are also interested in best practice examples of a just transition approach to climate action particularly in areas of high social deprivation, rurality and across borders.

---

## **PART TWO: ADAPTATION**

- \* 2.1. At what stage would you place your city in the **adaptation** work cycle?
- Preparatory phase: not yet started or getting started designing our plan/strategy
  - About to submit our plan
  - Implementing our plan
  - Already monitored and/or reported on achievements

\* 2.1a. What are the main objectives of your **adaptation** plan?

*5000 character(s) maximum*

The vision, aims and objectives of the Derry City & Strabane District Council adaptation plan are:

Vision

"Derry City & Strabane District Council is prepared for and resilient to the effects of climate change, creating a safe and sustainable region for all"

Aims

- Increase capacity to respond to climate change ensuring resilience of our services, people, operations, assets and estate to the impacts of climate change.
- Raise awareness of the impacts of climate change across the City & District to deliver effective adaptation.
- Lead by example and work collaboratively to ensure resilience and deliver climate adaptation.

Objectives

- Ensure governance and resources of Derry City & Strabane District Council are adequate to deliver adaptation planning and actions, and work with others to strengthen the resilience of the District, within North West region.
- Increase awareness and understanding of climate change contributing to the ability of Council and communities to adapt.
- Ensure a robust understanding of climate change impacts and Council adaptation options.
- Mainstream climate adaptation into policies and plans and prepare Council staff for the effects of climate change.
- Prepare for & address the impacts of climate change ensuring protection of Council assets, property and infrastructure.
- Ensure continued service delivery and maintain Council operations and resilience to climate change.
- Prioritise Green Infrastructure for climate adaptation within Council property.
- Identify and address the impacts, risks and opportunities of climate change to local heritage assets, collections, cultural programs, festivals and events.
- Ensure that all new built developments and land uses across the District will be designed and built to adapt to Climate Change.

The vision of Donegal County Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy is:

"A County that understands how climate change will affect the region, our communities, heritage, economic prosperity and well being and actively working together to reduce our exposure to climate risks and to capture new opportunities."

The objectives are:

- Engage  
Improve education, awareness-raising and capacity on climate change, adaptation (and mitigation), impact reduction and early warning across the Local Authority departments, businesses, communities and individuals.
- Plan  
Integrate climate change measures into policies, strategies and planning, as well as the identification of areas at risk to inform planning and decision-making.
- Adapt  
Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity and develop and implement co-ordinated responses to climate risk where needed.

Goal 1:

Increase the Resilience of Critical Infrastructure & Buildings to Climate Change by Planning and Implementing Appropriate Adaptation Measures Land use planning & development control plays a central role in preparing Donegal for a changing climate. Effective local planning and measures to protect existing infrastructure is essential to minimise future vulnerability and improve resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Goal 2:

Increase the Resilience of our Natural & Cultural Capital to Climate Change by Planning and Implementing Appropriate Adaptation Measures Climate change will affect the natural and cultural environment through temperature rise, extreme weather events and sea level rise. However, the natural environment, greenspaces and green infrastructure also have an essential role in offsetting some of the predicted impacts of climate change.

Goal 3:

Increase the Resilience of Water Resources & Flood Risk Management to Climate Change by Planning and Implementing Appropriate Measures Climate change will affect the Water Resources and Water Quality and a changing precipitation pattern with more extreme rainfall and sea level rise will lead to increased incidence and impacts from fluvial, pluvial and coastal flooding. Understanding and managing these risks will be critical to developing a Climate Ready Donegal.

Goal 4:

Increase Resilience of Community Services to Climate Change by Planning & Implementing Appropriate Adaptation Action, and Promote Opportunities. Donegal County Council deliver vital local services that are central to the quality of life for the people, and are a key provider of economic and social development in the county. We must lead the way on Climate Adaptation through Engaging, Planning and Adapting or services, enable communities to reduce exposure to climate risks and to capture new opportunities.

\* 2.2. What are the main **challenges** for you in relation to **adaptation**?

*at least 3 choice(s)*

- Extreme heat
- Extreme cold
- Flooding
- Storms
- Sea level rise
- Landslides
- Extreme precipitation
- Droughts
- Forest fires
- Other

2.2a. For each of the above selected challenges, please provide further details.

\* Adaptation challenge 1

*Please provide further details as to what the **adaptation** challenge is that you face*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

Analysis of climate risk across the North West Region indicates that extreme precipitation, and flooding are major adaptation challenges. Climate impact profile analysis reveals that since between 2000-2020 there have been 13 instances of extreme precipitation and flooding across the region. The most significant event occurred in August 2017 when 63% of monthly rainfall fell in a 9 hour period leading to severe river and surface water flooding damaging infrastructure, homes and businesses across the North West Region. The DCSDC area alone suffered in excess of £12 million worth of damages. Over 400 homes and businesses were affected, main roads were closed for 3 days, 5 bridges were washed away and 89 required repair, 210 roads were affected, local agriculture was affected with livestock drowned, land damage and erosion, the City of Derry Airport was closed for 2 days, a 1 in 3,000 year landslide event occurred and 2,900 meters of flood defenses were damaged.

Given that climate models for the UK and Ireland predict more extreme weather events including extreme rainfall and wetter winters the risk of flooding across the North West is set to increase.

In DCSDC the designated risk has been defined as "Risk to Council personnel, communities, infrastructure, ecosystems and Council assets, services and operations from increased precipitation and flooding." In DCC the designated risk is, "Increased incidence of heavy rainfall events, flooding and more severe storms with direct, and indirect, impacts on property, infrastructure, wildlife, community and economic function."

The risk of flooding presents challenges to public agencies in terms of providing emergency response, supporting communities and businesses and undertaking costly repairs. In the medium to longer term adaptation measures are required to increase preparedness, ensure resilience of infrastructure and better plan and design our places to withstand the increased likelihood of flood events in the future.

#### \* Adaptation challenge 2

*Please provide further details as to what the **adaptation** challenge is that you face*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

Extreme heat leading to forest or gorse fires and drought is an identified risk and challenge for the North West region. Between 2000-2020 there have been 7 instances of extreme heat leading to drought and at times forest/gorse fires throughout the region. The extreme heatwave of June / July 2018 was the warmest recorded June since 1910 with mean temperatures 2.1 degrees celsius above the 1981-2010 average. This led to 54 consecutive days without rainfall, damage to farmlands, water shortages, hospital admittances and forest/gorse fires. Further impacts included:

- Water conservation measures were put in place with a small number of areas issued with water restrictions.
- Road surface melt.
- Increased demand for air conditioning.
- Loss within the agricultural sector.
- Increased usage of natural and built amenities contributing to congested roads and parking, increase in littering in public spaces and damage to heritage sites.
- High river temperature and low water levels severely impacted fisheries.
- Severe algae blooms on some piers and slipways.
- Increase in tourist numbers.

Given that climate models for the UK and Ireland predict more extreme weather events including extreme heatwaves the risk of severe impacts across the North West Region is set to increase.

In DCSDC the risk has been designated as; "Risk to health, well-being, productivity, assets and ecosystems from increased temperatures."

In DCC the risk has been designated as "Increased temperatures with impacts on human well-being, including heat stress and expanded vectors for mosquito-borne and other diseases."

The risk of extreme heat presents challenges in terms of emergency response to deal with the immediate health risks, water shortages and increased numbers in outdoor sites as well as the medium to longer term impacts on habitats and biodiversity, infrastructure, heritage and communities.

\* Adaptation challenge 3

*Please provide further details as to what the **adaptation** challenge is that you face*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

Analysis of climate risk across the North West highlights that storms are a particular challenge to be considered. There were over 12 recorded storms affecting the North-West Region throughout the period 2000-2020 with an increased intensity in recent years. This has led to damages to infrastructure such as road and rail, buildings, heritage sites and power and communication network failures. Storms present a serious risk to life with emergency response required on a number of occasions. DCSDC designate the storm risk as; "Risk of storm damage to infrastructure and Council assets, services and operations and risk to Council personnel."

The challenge presented includes the need for emergency response during and after a storm and carrying out any repairs required. In the medium to longer term public agencies are required to better plan for storms to ensure community resilience, protect infrastructure and ensure minimal damage and disruption.

2.2b. Please use this space to provide further information as to your adaptation challenges as relevant.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

Separate climate data exists for the two jurisdictions in the North West Region, however, the averages show:

- Increased winter temperatures and rainfall
- Increased summer temperatures
- Reduced summer rainfall
- Increased frequency and intensity of storms.
- The timing and spatial distributions of precipitation is changing.
- Rising sea levels

According to the UK Climate Projections 2018 these trends are set to continue for the North West Region with: "A greater chance of warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers". (Met Office 2019)

Predictions for the North West indicated an increase of average temperatures of 2°C in both summer and winter for the period 2020-2039. (The chance of a summer heatwave like 2018 is around 50% by 2050, and 90% by the end of the century).

Average winter precipitation is likely to increase by up to 10% for the period 2020-2039 and a further 24% for period 2041-60, while summer precipitation will decrease by up to 10% for the same period.

In addition, sea levels have increased by 3mm per year with Northern Ireland locked in to at least 11cm sea level rise over the next 80 years.

We can also expect to see:

Reductions in the frequency of frost and snowfall

An increase in the duration of the growing season (phenological cycle)

Increases in the frequency and intensity of coastal inundation and erosion.

The impacts of climate change will continue and the onus is on public and civic society to lead by example through measures to adapt and mitigate against further global warming.

The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland (Murphy, 2016) highlights that adapting to climate change is most challenging in close proximity to boundaries. The report states that on the island of Ireland border regions are among the most vulnerable to the hydro-climatic hazards such as flooding mainly due to a lack of joined up thinking and action around shared environmental issues and climate adaptation.

Additional climate risks and challenges identified by DCC and DCSDC include:

"Risk of intense cold periods affecting infrastructure, communities and Council assets, services and operations."

"Changes to our natural ecosystems, including the distribution and abundance of pest plants and animals, and loss of climate sensitive native species."

"Ocean warming and acidification, with impacts on the health - of our marine - ecosystems, including our fisheries resources."

"Sea-level rise and inundation of low lying communities and habitats."

\* 2.3. In what area has your city successfully implemented **adaptation** measures or developed actions to increase the resilience of the following sectors, and that could be considered **good practices** to be shared with the CoMmunity.

*at least 3 choice(s)*

- Buildings
- Land use planning
- Agriculture and forestry
- Water
- Tourism
- Environment, green areas, and biodiversity
- Health
- Other

2.3a. **Please provide further details for each of these good practices**

Ex. about a specific project implemented. Please include achieved or preliminary results (max. 1500 words in total)

\* Adaptation good practice 1

*Please provide further details as to your **adaptation** good practice*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

The adaptation plans of both Derry City and Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council include specific objectives and actions in relation to buildings.

"Increase the Resilience of Critical Infrastructure & Buildings to Climate Change by Planning and Implementing Appropriate Adaptation Measures."

"Prepare for & address the impacts of climate change ensuring protection of Council assets, property and infrastructure."

Within DCSDC a specific heritage asset risk analysis report has been completed with particular emphasis on local heritage buildings of importance. This has led to recommendations to be implemented by property management teams and local interest groups. In addition a wider program of buildings risk management is underway within both council areas. This will inform management plans and future maintenance and upgrades with an emphasis on climate impacts and projections.

A detailed Climate Risk and Opportunities Assessment has been undertaken for 2 major infrastructure projects in DCSDC. The Derry City Centre Central Riverfront and Strabane Town Centre Regeneration projects include plans for numerous public and private buildings. The risk analysis seeks to future proof such developments against climate impacts and will inform the design and location of such buildings providing a blueprint for future development across the North West Region.

\* Adaptation good practice 2

*Please provide further details as to your **adaptation** good practice*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## Land Use Planning

The Donegal County Council climate adaptation plan recognises that effective local planning and measures to protect existing infrastructure is essential to minimise future vulnerability and improve resilience to the impacts of climate change. The Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy , together with the Regional Development Strategy (RDS 2035) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS), collectively require Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC) to ensure that all developments are undertaken with the objective of furthering 'sustainable development'. DCSDC is currently preparing its new statutory Local Development Plan (LDP 2017 - 2032). This LDP is being prepared to take account of the RDS, the SPPS and other government strategies. The LDP seeks for all developments requiring planning permission to contribute to 'sustainable development', and be assessed against the principles of non-contribution. This includes in the areas of adapting to Climate Change, improving Health & Well-being, supporting Sustainable Economic Growth, enhancing Shared Space, Ecosystem Services, protecting the Natural and Historic Environments, and promoting Good Design & Place-making. The Draft Local Development Plan 2032 General Development Principles state that developments should demonstrate how they

"mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience."

Climate disruption is already having diverse and wide ranging impacts on Ireland's environment, society, economic and natural resources. Collectively, the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Northern and Western Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and the Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024 promotes the use of green construction materials (low carbon cements, insulation with lower embodied CO<sub>2</sub>, timber from sustainable sources, etc.), reductions in anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, and delivering green jobs to the economy.

In addition a cross border Land Use Planning network of council officers has been established to ensure collaboration on planning issues.

The councils also worked with the University of Harvard schools of architecture and design to explore land use planning in relation to climate change on a cross border context, the findings of this study is due for dissemination in 2021.

At a practical level numerous flood relief and protection schemes have been delivered across the North West Region supported by the two councils.

### \* Adaptation good practice 3

*Please provide further details as to your **adaptation** good practice*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

#### Environment, Green Areas & Biodiversity

Derry City and Strabane District Council have launched a Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan providing a framework for a new approach within the north west. GI is an interconnected network of multi-functional green and blue spaces, which provide multiple environmental, economic and social benefits, linked throughout the urban and rural landscapes. It is mostly comprised of green spaces that are vegetated areas (for example, woodlands, parks, natural habitats, allotments and playing fields) and blue spaces are our waterways (for example, rivers, loughs, canals, lakes and ponds). The GI Plan Vision is that; "By 2032 the environmental, economic and social benefits of Green Infrastructure are valued and maximised by all"

The GI Plan provides a framework for nature-based solutions to climate change with the thematic objective that:

"GI will be maximised to mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change." The GI Plan is being delivered through a wide stakeholder partnership including public agencies and non-government organisations.

Within the Derry City & Strabane District Council adaptation plan the objective is to prioritise green infrastructure for climate adaptation within council property while in the Donegal County Council adaptation plan the goal is:

"To increase the Resilience of our Natural & Cultural Capital to Climate Change by Planning and Implementing Appropriate Adaptation Measures. Climate change will affect the natural and cultural environment through temperature rise, extreme weather events and sea level rise. However, the natural environment, green spaces and green infrastructure also have an essential role in offsetting some of the predicted impacts of climate change.

A number of practical actions have been delivered across the North West to adapt our environment and biodiversity to climate change. This includes habitat creation, invasive species control, and supporting biodiversity through natural pollination projects. In addition parks management and biodiversity plans are being updated to include climate change impacts and deliver appropriate adaptation measures.

A cross border nature based solutions project is currently underway involving a GIS mapping exercise of land cover, urban environments and habitats in order to identify opportunities for adaptation within the natural environment across the region.

2.3b. Please use this space to provide further information as relevant.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

\* 2.4. In the context of the Covenant of Mayors peer learning programme, do you have specific **learning needs** in regards to the development or implementation of **adaptation** measures?

- Yes, for development of measures
- Yes, for implementation of measures
- Yes, both for development and implementation of measures
- No (*if no, please skip to Part Three on Ambition and Long-Term Vision*)

\* 2.4a. In **what topic would you like to learn** from another city? Please select all relevant options from the following or provide details

- Extreme heat
- Extreme cold

- Flooding
- Storms
- Sea level rise
- Landslides
- Extreme precipitation
- Droughts
- Forest fires
- Other

\* 2.4b. Please provide further information as to what your **adaptation learning ambitions** are; please ensure your *responses are as concrete as possible* and make reference to planned projects or specific ideas on which you would like to focus.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

Our aim is to ensure greater adaptive capacity, preparedness and resilience of the North West Region to the effects of climate change, to that end our learning ambition is to learn from others in the implementation of adaptation measures. The characteristics of the North West region presents challenges and opportunities in terms of climate change which differ from urban areas due to; our extensive coastline, disperse settlement patterns, high level of natural heritage & conservation areas, as well unique groundwater systems which present diverse exposure and vulnerability factors.

We are particularly interested learning about the implementation of adaptation solutions to manage the effects of extreme heat and drought with an emphasis on risk reduction and emergency management planning, water supply, management and Infrastructure. We would like to learn from best practice examples that have implemented innovative solutions for buildings, both public and private as well as designs for public spaces that consider cooling and water management. We are also interested in adaptation measures to support biodiversity during heat waves and drought within urban, rural, waterways and marine settings. We seek examples of collaboration across communities and agencies to manage the health risks associated with increased heat and drought.

As regards flooding and extreme precipitation we are interested in learning about innovative green and grey solutions in the design and implementation of flood protection and management as well as retrofitting of public and private buildings for flood protection. We are interested in partnerships that deliver community and business resilience to flooding with a particular emphasis on capacity building and emergency response. We are also interested in learning about best practice approaches to adapting to sea level rise in terms of coastal erosion, tidal river level increase, land losses and habitat loss. We are particular interested in how to protect coastal communities, marine businesses, coastal heritage sites and coastal biodiversity from increasing sea levels and would like to hear about innovative solutions that are sustainable and cost effective.

We would like to learn about innovative approaches to working collaboratively to deliver practical adaptation measures as well as financial and regulatory mechanisms to support this.

---

### **PART THREE: AMBITION & LONG-TERM STRATEGY/VISION**

This section focuses on your ambition and specifically the development or implementation of a long-term vision / strategy.

\* 3.1. What is the status of development of your long-term vision/strategy?

- Preparatory phase: we intend to develop a long-term strategy or vision or a plan for climate neutrality but have not yet started;
- We have integrated our long-term strategy or climate neutrality ambition in our SECAP;
- We are implementing our long-term strategy or climate neutrality ambition through our SECAP;
- We are implementing our long-term strategy or climate neutrality ambition but this is not (yet) integrated in our SECAP;
- We are not currently developing or implementing a long-term strategy;
- Other

\* 3.1a. Have you set long-term mitigation targets beyond 2030?

- Yes
- No

\* If yes, please specify the targets with related year and baseline

Net Zero Carbon by 2045 across the North-West Region

\* 3.1b. What **topics** will be addressed in your **long-term strategy/vision**? Please select all relevant below options:

- Carbon neutrality
- 100% energy produced by RES
- Energy poverty
- Climate adaptation
- Private sector commitments
- Local climate pacts
- Other (if other, please specify)

\* 3.1c. Please give further details on the selected options; please be as concrete as possible and refer to specific projects or measures as relevant.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

The North West Regional Energy Strategy aims to provide a strategic rationale and direction for DCSDC and DCC to achieve their vision for a Net Zero emissions Energy sector in the North-West Region by 2045. The strategy roadmap proposes real reductions in annual carbon emissions, whilst encouraging the growth of a low carbon economy, improving the security of supply and minimising the environmental impact of all future activities. This strategy recommends a Whole Energy System approach and provides a holistic view on the consumption and management of energy throughout the region. A wide variety of local measures have been recommended as potential opportunities to encourage the adoption of renewable Low Carbon Technologies (LCTs) both for the consumption and generation of energy within the North-West Region. Working with a wide range of stakeholders including the private sector, the measures include objectives and actions in the areas of smart energy management, renewable generation and energy storage, low carbon transport, low carbon heating and energy efficiency. The Regional Energy Strategy also seeks to address energy poverty and ensure a just transition.

The long term climate adaptation strategy involves building upon the existing individual plans to develop the wider North West Climate Action Plan adaptation priorities. This includes the aim to ensure greater adaptive capacity, preparedness and resilience of the North-West Region to the effects of climate change and develop thematic strategies and action plans for regional preparation and adaptation to identified climate hazards through:

- Risk Reduction and Emergency Management Planning
- Water Supply, Management and Infrastructure
- Built Environment Adaptation
- Transport and Infrastructure Adaptation
- Energy Supply Resilience
- Natural Systems, Land Management & Agricultural Resources Adaptation
- Heritage & Culture Adaptation
- Tourism Adaptation
- Community Action and Capacity Building
- Business & Private Sector Action and Resilience

Through the North West Climate Action Plan we aim to create the partnership and governance structures to work together delivering consistency, efficient and effective delivery of climate action across the region. This collaborative structure and the North West Strategic Growth Partnership will co-design and approve the final North West Climate Action Plan (NWCAP) forming a climate pact and commitment to action. The NWCAP will serve as a tool for local government, agencies, sectors, and other local planners and practitioners. The plan will identify vulnerabilities, prioritized actions, and integrated policy initiatives creating a clear path forward for the region. To affirm the region's commitment to addressing the challenges posed, the NWCAP will:

“Deliver climate action on a cross sectoral multi agency basis to achieve greater adaptation and resilience to the effects of climate change while leading by example to reduce emissions and mitigate against further global warming.”

\* 3.2. Have you previously applied to and/or won any of the following sustainability awards or commitments?

- European Green Capital Award
- European Green Leaf Award
- Green City Accord
- Covenant City in the Spotlight
- No, we have not previously applied to an award or commitment
- No, we have not won an award though we have applied
- Other

\* 3.2a. Do you have plans to or are you in the process of preparing an application to any of the following sustainability awards or commitments:

- European Green Capital Award
- European Green Leaf Award
- Green City Accord
- Covenant City in the Spotlight
- No, we are not preparing to apply to a sustainability award but we plan to in the future
- No, we are not preparing to apply to a sustainability award and do NOT plan to
- Other

\* 3.3. What are the main **challenges** you face in the development or implementation of your **long-term strategy/vision**, if any:

- Lack of technical expertise for the development of the strategy/vision
- Lack of examples/good practices to transfer in the strategy/vision
- Difficulties in the involvement of policy makers / relevant stakeholders in the development of the strategy /vision
- Involvement of different departments within the city administration
- Challenges in securing funds for the implementation
- Difficulties in the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the actions
- Other

\* 3.4. In the context of the Covenant of Mayors peer learning programme, do you have specific **learning ambitions** in regards to the development or implementation of a **long-term vision/strategy** for your city?

- Yes
- No

\* 3.4a. If yes, in what topic would you like to learn from a peer? Please select all relevant options from the following or provide details:

- Planning or implementation of mitigation measures
- Planning or implementation of adaptation measures
- Planning or implementation of a local climate pact
- Technical expertise for the development or implementation of a strategy
- Involvement of internal stakeholders (other city departments and policy - makers) in the planning of a long-term strategy
- Involvement of internal stakeholders ( other city departments and policy - makers) in the implementation of a long-term strategy
- Involvement of external stakeholders in the planning of a long-term strategy
- Involvement of external stakeholders in the implementation of a long-term strategy
- Other

\* 3.4b. Please provide further information as to what your learning ambitions are; please ensure your *responses are as concrete as possible* and make reference to planned projects or specific ideas for the development or implementation of your long-term vision on which you would like to focus.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

We aim to achieve cross border and cross sectoral collaboration on climate action through a strategic framework for collaborative and coherent action across the North West Region. We intend to lead by example through; 'Thinking global acting local'.

To this end we seek best practice examples of the following:

- Creation of partnership and governance structures working together identifying new approaches to ensure consistency, efficient and effective delivery of climate action through an agreed climate pact. This includes engaging with external stakeholders to become involved in the development and implementation of the strategy.
- Development of consistent and credible climate evidence, measurement and monitoring Systems (Including climate data, impact, cost benefit analysis of projects) and information sharing platforms
- Regional adaptation and mitigation policy guidance
- Production of design and planning guidelines to ensure resilience and mitigation e.g. public realm and local authority masterplan design codes, land use practices, ecosystem based approach
- Strategies for coordinated emission reductions and carbon offsetting
- Development and implementation of sustainable and resilient food systems
- Targeted advice and guidance to business and communities at risk of flooding, storms, sea level rise and extreme heat
- Successful nature based solutions projects
- Coastal erosion mitigation and management
- Regional wildfire management and response programmes
- Cultural and built heritage climate action
- Conservation, biodiversity and habitat climate action projects e.g. projects to address habitat fragmentation to enable species adaptation and transition
- Sustainable transport projects
- Local authority carbon management plans
- Building retrofitting programmes
- Housing stock emission control
- Renewable energy projects
- Low carbon public and private fleet
- Local authority systems and operations, employee policies & initiatives
- Green rating systems for infrastructure e.g reduce emissions from road construction, maintenance, and agency operations

We recognize the need for effective stakeholder engagement to create behavioural change across the region and as such are interested in examples of capacity building and mobilization of communities for climate action. We wish to learn how to effectively co-design and co-implement approaches to citizens engagement on climate action to include a communications programme, engaging with the community to stimulate action through informed decision making.

We hope to access expert technical guidance on the development of our long term strategy and learn from those who have developed and implemented their respective plans.

---

## **PART FOUR: JUST TRANSITION AND ENERGY POVERTY**

A Just Transition is essential to ensure that we transition towards a climate-neutral economy in a fair way, leaving no one behind. In the 2030 framework of the Covenant of Mayors, in addition to taking action to

mitigate climate change and adapt to its unavoidable effects, signatories commit to providing access to secure, sustainable, and affordable energy for all.

\* 4.1. What are the main **challenges** for your city to secure a **just transition**? Please select all those that apply from the below list:

- Providing employment or re-skilling opportunities in new sectors or those in transition
- Securing energy-efficient housing
- Implementing minimum energy efficiency standards in buildings
- Providing access to clean, affordable and secure energy
- Targeting support for climate-resilient investments and jobs
- Attracting public and private investors
- Providing support for SMEs and start-ups
- Improving access to sustainable public transport options
- Assisting householders in energy poverty through direct involvement in decision making
- Assessing the socio-economic impact of energy and climate measures taken by the municipality
- Other (if "Other", please specify)

\* If "Other", please specify.

Agriculture & Oil Suppliers

4.1a. Please use this space to provide any additional details as relevant.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

4.2. In what area has your city successfully implemented measures to ensure a **just transition** that could be considered **good practices** and could be shared with the CoMmunity? Please select all relevant options from the below or provide details:

- Providing employment or re-skilling opportunities in new sectors or those in transition
- Securing energy-efficient housing
- Implementing minimum energy efficiency standards in buildings
- Providing access to clean, affordable and secure energy
- Targeting support for climate-resilient investments and jobs
- Attracting public and private investors
- Providing support for SMEs and start-ups
- Improving access to sustainable public transport options
- Assisting householders in energy poverty through direct involvement in decision making
- Assessing the socio-economic impact of energy and climate measures taken by the municipality
- Other

4.2a. **Please provide further details for up to 3 of these good practices**

*Ex. About a specific project implemented. Please include achieved or preliminary results (max. 1500 words in total):*

### Just transition good practice 1

*Please provide further details of the good practice*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council were partners on the Renewable Energy Network (REN NET) Project funded under the INTERREG IVA Programme completed in 2015 and led by the North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCBG), the pre-cursor of the North West City Region. In terms of good practice results, the project established a formalised business network for small businesses working in the renewable energy and green economy fields, with the aim of increasing vitality and profitability for those companies. A network was established in each of the participating Council areas of Donegal, Derry/Strabane, Limavady and Magherafelt each having 15-20 members meeting on a monthly basis. REN NET members were provided with support and training to help them reach the targets of the project which include: finding new opportunities within the green economy, increase in profits, finding new suppliers, increase in export sales, develop new products/services, enter new areas of work, prospects for collaboration/networking on joint initiatives among network members e.g. joint tendering, opportunities to meet and learn from experts in the sector and chance to participate in best practice trips. Baseline statistics were established as to the breadth and scope of the sector in the region, its outputs and the number of key players involved, the number of businesses involved and their profitability. A web site was developed for the project with an on-line forum giving advice, contacts, information and new developments within the sector. Research and collaboration initiatives were undertaken within the network and internationally in order to develop innovative new products, technologies and practices. Six best practice visits were undertaken by group representatives over the 3 year period.

### Just transition Good Practice 2

*Please provide further details of the good practice*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council were also partners on the SECURE Project. SECURE or Smarter Energy Communities in Northern & Arctic Regions is an innovation project funded under the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014-2020 with a budget €1,842,591. The ERNACT network of regions was the lead partner of the project and it worked together with Donegal and Leitrim regions (Ireland), Derry City & Strabane (UK), Nova Scotia (Canada), Faroe Islands, North Karelia (Finland) and Västernorrland County (Sweden) to develop smarter communities. The project aimed to transfer and implement innovative energy solutions for housing and public infrastructure across the Northern Periphery and Arctic regions. Some of the key outputs of this project were to create 5 Smarter Energy Communities, 15 energy solutions applied to retrofit 24 houses, increased efficiency by 5% in 3 buildings and installation of alternative energy sources in 3 public infrastructures.

### Just transition Good practice 3

*Please provide further details of the good practice*

*3000 character(s) maximum*

4.2b. Please use this space to provide any links to further information related to your good practice examples.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

4.3. In the context of the Covenant of Mayors peer learning programme, do you have specific **learning ambitions** in regard to the development or implementation of measures for a **just transition**?

- Yes
- No (if "no", please move to the next part)

\* 4.3a. In what topic would you like to learn from another city? Please select all relevant options from the following or provide details

- Providing employment or re-skilling opportunities in new sectors or those in transition
- Implementing minimum energy efficiency standards in buildings
- Providing access to clean, affordable and secure energy
- Targeting support for climate-resilient investments and jobs
- Attracting public and private investors
- Providing support for SMEs and start-ups
- Improving access to sustainable public transport options
- Assisting householders in energy poverty through direct involvement in decision making
- Assessing the socio-economic impact of energy and climate measures taken by the municipality
- Other

\* 4.3b. **Please provide further information as to your learning ambitions**

Please ensure your responses are as concrete as possible and make reference to planned projects or specific ideas for the development or implementation of measures for a just transition on which you would like to focus.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

Derry City & Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council seek to work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders across the region to deliver climate action where no community is disadvantaged in the roll-out of this transformative agenda. We aim to reduce the poverty gap and ensure that no person and no place is left behind; this entails measuring climate action success by overall advances in social and environmental value, including job creation, poverty reduction and sustainable use of natural resources. To this end we hope to learn from others in the Peer Learning Programme across the following core areas:

- Provision of strategic support and encouragement to education, training providers, business and industry
  - to support a green transformation and lever maximum opportunities for all within the climate action agenda
- Projects that work with the agriculture and fisheries sector to explore alternative low carbon production opportunities
- Project that deal with the issue of food security and food poverty and produce a sustainable food system
  - by enhancing ecosystem services that are fair, healthy, sustainable and climate friendly
- Initiatives that stimulate demand for green goods, services and technologies
- Effective community and stakeholder engagement programmes e.g. Citizens Assembly / Youth Climate Group & Green Business Forums
- Jobs-led not growth-led Covid-19 recovery plans that embed community wealth building principles into recovery
- Projects that support 'just transition' of local communities and sectors e.g. agriculture, food, energy
- Projects that deliver a socially just use of land and property e.g. Redeployment of derelict buildings and land banked by large scale developers to community organisations for community farms, renewables

and

housing; creation of public-community land trusts to acquire and develop these assets for climate action

- Progressive procurement of goods and services to support climate action

---

## **PART FIVE: FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

- \* 5.1. Has your city previously provided support to other cities in the development phase of their SECAPs?

*i.e. in relation to projects*

- Yes  
 No

- \* 5.2. Does your city have experience that could be considered a good practice in project development?

*Ex. in terms of access of innovative funding streams*

- Yes  
 No

- \* 5.2a. Please use this space to provide details of this good practice experience, making reference to the project itself.

*3000 character(s) maximum*

Donegal County Council participated as partner in two innovative EU funded projects that implemented green and sustainable solutions for the treatment of leachate from landfill sites. The objective of the ANSWER project was to develop the use of Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) willow for the bioremediation of a range of effluents including municipal wastewater, landfill leachates and industrial effluents. In parallel with this project the overall goal of the WaterPRO project was to develop eco-efficient tools and models for good water quality management. This pilot site has now been operating successfully for more than 5 years and the council is developing similar solutions at two other closed landfill sites so that energy consumption can be substantially reduced and water quality improved. Donegal County Council has hosted many visiting agencies at Churchtown Landfill Site that have wished to witness these innovative processes.

Derry City & Strabane District Council led the development and delivery of the Collaborative Learning Initiative Managing and Adapting to The Environment a €1.3m INTERREG VB transnational project from 2017-2020.

The CLIMATE project brought various stakeholders together to deliver programmes across four different regions; Northern Ireland, Sweden, Republic of Ireland and the Faroe Islands. The transnational partners brought a blend of practitioners, policy makers, statutory agencies as well as academia together which offered the opportunity for shared learning and knowledge transfer. The project saw the development of local authority adaptation planning models. DCSDC is also involved in the following projects: SMARCTIC Project. 'Smart energy management in remote Northern, Peripheral and Arctic regions' project aims to increase the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions in housing and public infrastructures in remote, sparsely populated areas.

We are six project partners and five associated partners from Europe and Atlantic Canada that are working together to:

1. Provide a Smart Energy Management Model (SEMM) suitable for NPA communities.
2. Build & test the effectiveness of new smart energy solutions.
3. Increase NPA's communities innovation capacity to deliver energy solutions.
4. Disseminate findings outside of the partnership.

DCSDC are developing a "Virtual Power Plant" to maximise the potential of usage of installed renewable

energy in its buildings by transferring excess energy to other sites using virtual wires.

STARDUST is an EU Horizon 2020 Smart Cities project, which brings together advanced European cities, thus forming into a constellation of “innovation islands” – exemplary models of smart, highly efficient, intelligent and citizen-oriented cities. Solutions for refitting buildings, electric mobility, energy efficiency and energy districts with open city platforms for citizen and stakeholder engagement will be implemented and validated, enabling them to be replicable for other cities.

**The following questions are only relevant to small municipalities with fewer than 50 000 inhabitants or for groupings of cities in which each city has less than 50 000 inhabitants.**

Please skip to the next section if this does not describe your situation.

5.3. Does your city have fewer than 50,000 inhabitants or are you part of a grouping of cities where every city has less than 50,000 inhabitants?

- Yes  
 No

**PART SIX: WHY YOU ARE APPLYING TO THE PEER LEARNING PROGRAMME**

Successful applicants will be offered a place on the programme that most accurately responds to their needs, challenges, and expertise as described in their application.

**6. Please use this space to summarise why you have chosen to apply to the peer learning programme.**

*i.e. how do you think the peer learning programme could help you achieve your plans/objectives?*

*5000 character(s) maximum*

Derry City and Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council believe the peer learning programme offers us a valuable opportunity to learn from European best practice to achieve our ambitions to “Deliver climate action on a cross sectoral multi agency basis to achieve greater adaptation and resilience to the effects of climate change while leading by example to reduce emissions and mitigate against further global warming.” Through our existing cross border collaboration and structures such as the North West Regional Development Group and the North West Strategic Growth Partnership we will continue to work with all relevant stakeholders to deliver climate action. We will galvanise our strategic collaborations with governments, academia, the private sector, statutory agencies and our communities to create and implement climate action. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought into sharp focus society’s relationship with nature, both in terms of our damaging impact and our reliance upon green, blue and open spaces for both psychological and physical wellbeing. As the North-West Region begins to emerge from the pandemic, it has the opportunity to deliver the change necessary to address the climate and ecological emergency which remains critical to the Earth’s future.

Our overarching goal is to become a carbon-neutral region by 2045 by protecting, restoring and enhancing its precious natural heritage and biodiversity, and achieving strong economic growth through circular, zero-waste and resource-efficient initiatives. This is currently supported by a range of strategies and projects under the four areas of Green Infrastructure, Regional Energy, Climate Action and Sustainable Economy. We recognise that greater integrated solutions are required that involve collaboration and innovative thinking and that pursuing climate action requires innovation (including new technologies and methodologies), large-scale deployment (diffusion), and system reconfiguration (including behaviour change and ensuring a just transition). We also recognise that the decarbonisation agenda requires ways of working that are untraditional and innovative, and which is circular, innovative and place-based, delivering equality of

opportunity, and utilises technology and science in a way which delivers on environmental and humanitarian outcomes. We believe that the Peer Learning Programme offers opportunities to learn from others in the areas of collaboration and innovative climate solutions.

We aim to establish a Regional Energy Agency to drive the implementation of the regional energy strategy and achievement of critical mass in terms of transition. This will include exploration of good practice in relation to a range of sustainable energy models, the potential for both local production and consumption as energy sources capable of supporting both industrial and domestic energy transitions and developing energy infrastructure to meet these demands, therefore the Peer Learning Programme is the necessary framework and networks to assist us in identifying energy best practice.

We aim to protect and enhance the region's biodiversity and environmental heritage (natural, built and archaeological) to respond to the impact of climate change and to develop innovative approaches to future-proofing its precious environmental assets and believe the Peer Learning Programme will allow us to learn from others in this regard.

It is crucial to the successful realisation of our ambitions that we learn from others, as well as share our own examples of best practice in order to ensure knowledge transfer and wider climate action. We hope to build relationships with other regions and cities in order to share information, expertise and experiences that will help inform and shape our trajectory towards climate resilience and carbon neutrality. We also believe that involvement in the Peer Learning Programme will offer opportunities for collaboration, partnerships and project development leading to collaborative funding bids.

We strongly believe in the value of developing and maintaining connections with knowledge networks to support transformation, and utilising good practice to capture and interpret data to allow for the implementation of place-based innovations to underpin climate action.

## Contact

heather.brooks@eumayors.eu