

# Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**

16th November, 2022

## **MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following items will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 a.m. on Friday, 18th November, 2022.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

### **AGENDA:**

#### **2. Restricted Items**

- (e) Inquiry into Funding for Levelling Up (Pages 1 - 14)
- (f) Update on Special Meetings of the Area Working Groups – Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund Stage 1 Applications (Pages 15 - 68)
- (g) Update on Research into the Lived Experiences of Minority Ethnic Communities in Belfast (Pages 69 - 82)

#### **8. Equality and Good Relations**

- (b) Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish Language Week 2023 (Pages 83 - 84)

#### **9. Operational Issues**

- (d) Building Regulation Fees for Applications including Insulation (Pages 85 - 88)
- (e) A Future Network For All - NIE Networks RP7 Price Control Consultation (Pages 89 - 100)



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6  
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish Language Week 2023</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18th November, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Sarah Williams, Governance and Compliance Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present to the Committee the plans to mark Seachtain na Gaeilge in 2023.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the planned events to mark Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish Language Week in 2023.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<b><u>Background</u></b>
3.1	Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish Language Week is marked every year from 1st March until 17th March. Prior to COVID-19, the Council marked this by hosting events for schools in the City Hall. COVID-19 necessitated online events and content in 2021 and 2022. These events were always well attended and the feedback from participants was always excellent.

3.2	It is proposed to host two events in the City Hall in March 2023. One aimed at secondary school pupils discussing career prospects for students of Irish and an event aimed at primary school children facilitated by an external performer. It is also proposed that attendees at the primary schools' event will be given a book based on the performance.
3.3	In line with commitments in the Language Strategy Action Plan, these events will be highlighted in the Irish language media and through local media outlets. This event was noted by the Language Strategy Working Group at its meeting on 11th November.
	<b>Financial and Resource Implications</b>
3.4	This will be covered by existing budgets.
	<b>Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs Implications</b>
3.5	These events will support Council's compliance with equality, good relations and rural needs obligations.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Building Regulation Fees for Applications including Insulation</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18th November, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ian Harper, Building Control Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	At the People and Communities Committee meeting on 22nd September, it was requested that a report be brought back regarding the potential to waive Building Regulation inspection fees for applications which included the provision of insulation. A report was taken to that Committee on 8th November and was deferred for consideration by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the report and the potential to waive fees.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The installation of loft insulation under the Northern Ireland Building Regulations is considered a controlled element and, therefore, requires a Building Regulations application. As such, there is typically a £60 chargeable fee for each application.</p>

3.2	Cavity wall insulation is also a controlled element and requires a Building Regulations application but is specifically exempt from fees under the Building Regulations fees legislation. These are statutory fees set by the Department of Finance and collected by local councils to cover the cost of administration and facilitating the enforcement of Building Regulations
3.3	The processes involved in the administration and enforcement of Building Regulations involves processing applications and also the carrying out of Inspections to ascertain compliance with regulations. In reality fees collected for these types of works do not currently cover the costs involved in these processes.
3.4	In relation to both loft and cavity wall insulation, inspections are carried out by the Building Control Service to ascertain compliance with the regulations. For example, to ensure that there is adequate ventilation to the roof void to prevent condensation issues.
3.5	The Service has carried out some general analysis of the applications received over a four-year period (01/04/2018 - 31/03/2022) to include those which are solely for or include loft insulation as part of a range of measures. Over this period, it is estimated that on average approximately 1350 applications have been received per year which have included works and fees for loft insulation. Based upon the £60 fee due for these applications, this would equate to an annual fee income of £81,000.
3.6	Much of the works being carried out to insulate properties is done as part of government funded schemes. For example, the Department for Communities (DfC) Affordable Warmth Scheme involves BCC working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to provide efficiency measures based upon referral criteria. For this scheme, the Building Regulation fees are covered within the grant funding provided, so the homeowner or tenant is not out of pocket. The same would apply to other schemes and where maintenance contracts are in place.
3.7	Having analysed the applications received over the four-year period, it is estimated that over 90% of the applications relating to loft insulation are carried out within funded schemes or contracts.
3.8	As such, it is understood that in these circumstances the burden of paying the Building Regulations fees is not borne by the homeowner and they would not benefit from waiving the fee. Rather, they would be retained within the scheme or contract. Given that these operate across the 11 council areas, there would be no guarantee that fees that are waived would

	<p>be ringfenced for additional applications and measures to be installed in properties within Belfast.</p>
3.9	<p>The Service has discussed the waiving of Building Regulation fees with Legal Services who have advised that fees can be waived, but one of the conditions would be that any exemption from fees agreed should be time bound.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.10	<p>Based upon the analysis carried out for the four-year period it is estimated that on average £81,000 of fees have been paid per year in relation to loft insulation. If fees were to be waived for a determined period, the loss in fee income could be assumed to be a pro rata value of this annual estimate.</p>
3.11	<p>Any reduction in income has not been factored into the current year-end projections or the 2023-2024 revenue estimates and rates setting process.</p>
3.12	<p>Administering applications and carrying out Inspections of the works will still be required to fulfil the statutory duties outlined. The Service are currently experiencing difficulty in recruitment and retention of Building Control Surveyors with competition from private and public sector and reducing income for areas of work not considered rate borne activity may impact on Service delivery.</p>
3.13	<p>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</p> <p>There are no direct Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs implications.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>A Future Network For All - NIE Networks RP7 Price Control Consultation</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18th November 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Richard McLernon, Climate Programme Manager - City

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To update the Committee on the NIE Networks RP7 Price Control consultation which will inform spending during the period 2025 to 2031. Council officers have prepared responses to a number of the questions posed, these will be submitted on Monday 21st November on the understanding that they will be subject to Council ratification.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is requested to review the following summary and attached officer response, which will be subject to Council ratification.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	NIE has stated that the RP7 period (2025-2031) will be critical in enabling the changes in the electricity network necessary to achieve the goals set out in the Department for Economy's

	<p>(DfE) Energy Strategy and the recently enacted Climate Change Act and have set out a series of proposals for consultation, which will be submitted to the Utility Regulator in March 2023 to inform the budget setting process.</p>
3.2	<p>As an overarching principle we have welcomed the suggested additional investment by NIE into the network infrastructure with the aim of future proofing for the transition to net zero. We have caveated this by seeking to ensure there is no adverse impact on domestic and commercial customers through increased bills, given the current cost of living crisis and increased vulnerability for both business and domestic users. While cost increases to pay for specific actions may appear modest, cumulatively these may have a negative impact and should be examined through a cost-of-living lens before being implemented. NIE have acknowledged this within the consultation document, and we welcome the recognition of the cost-of-living crisis within the document and the references to protecting the most vulnerable in society. The NIE proposals are underpinned by stakeholder engagement which we have welcomed.</p>
3.3	<p>NIE proposes transforming their business model from Distribution Network Operator to Distribution System Operator which will involve a new focus on forecasting, flexibility and investing in infrastructure using the ‘touch the network once principle’ to avoid having to replace assets in an ad hoc manner.</p>
3.4	<p>The Council will produce a Belfast Local Area Energy Plan, with support from Energy Systems Catapult, which will be complete by the end of 2023. NIE has proposed that a resource be created within NIE to support local area energy planning and the Council has connected to NIE to ensure these workstreams are joined up. NIE have confirmed they will participate in and support the Belfast process. Accordingly, we have welcomed the creation of the local area energy planning team.</p>
3.5	<p>NIE proposes to add additional meters to the network to support increased monitoring of low voltage systems to ensure that issues can be addressed promptly and prior to outages developing. NIE also propose the distribution of meters to customers with smart meter functionality that can be activated at a later date in line with Department for the Economy Energy Strategy actions. We have welcomed these investments and proposed upgrades to infrastructure.</p>
3.6	<p>NIE has proposed the creation of an open data platform which we have welcomed. A resource such as this will be utilised through the Council’s future planning and to complement data analysis across the city.</p>

3.7	<p>In relation to planning for climate change NIE proposes further adaptation of their infrastructure to prepare for increased flooding and heat. It is reassuring that NIE has carried out a hazard assessment and we would encourage further development of these to understand vulnerability and exposure for its assets in order to fully assess climate risk if that has not already occurred. Belfast has completed an Infrastructure Risk Assessment and would be keen to share and integrate the findings from this with any future risk assessment undertaken by NIE. Belfast will be developing a climate action plan in 2023 and would encourage active engagement of NIE to develop an integrated plan for adapting to climate change. In terms of extreme heat we encourage the integration of city climate evidence such as the Belfast Heat Map that identifies adaptive capacity of different electoral wards in the city and can help inform a targeted approach to reducing climate risk of different neighbourhoods and communities in the city.</p>
3.8	<p>Regarding increased flooding, we would also encourage engagement with the Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan for Belfast in terms of sustainable urban drainage opportunities at key sites, as well as the Living with Water Programme. Also refer to Belfast’s SUDs SPG and Tree Strategy in terms of development of its sites and infrastructure.</p>
3.9	<p>NIE is a partner on the One Million Trees Programme, and we would welcome opportunities to scope and identify sites in Belfast for increased tree cover in order to help mitigate flood risk, improve biodiversity, improve air quality and improve health and wellbeing. Strategic opportunities for increased tree cover in the city should be explored across NIE Estate.</p>
3.10	<p>NIE has proposed to seek allowances through the RP7 price control to spend on direct measures or initiatives to help those customers who are worst impacted by the energy Crisis. We have welcomed this measure and will work with NIE where appropriate to ensure that Belfast residents benefit from this approach.</p>
3.11	<p>NIE has requested that their proposed actions to improve environmental sustainability are ranked and accordingly we have suggested the following ranking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="331 1666 799 1695">1. Moving away from SF6 gas use.</li> <li data-bbox="331 1718 900 1747">2. Reducing our business carbon footprint.</li> <li data-bbox="331 1769 691 1798">3. Decarbonising our fleet.</li> <li data-bbox="331 1821 1177 1850">4. Helping reduce the environmental impact of our supply chain.</li> <li data-bbox="331 1872 715 1901">5. Reducing network losses.</li> <li data-bbox="331 1924 1066 1953">6. Quantifying and reducing embodied carbon footprint.</li> <li data-bbox="331 1975 1102 2004">7. Quantifying and improving biodiversity / Natural Capital.</li> <li data-bbox="331 2027 735 2056">8. Minimising waste to landfill.</li> </ol>

	<p>9. Replacing worst performing fluid filled cables.</p> <p>10. Reducing fluid leaked from fluid filled cables.</p>
	<b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b>
3.12	None.
	<b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications</u></b>
3.13	None.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	The NIE consultation report is available at <a href="#">RP7 Stakeholder Consultation WEB - Flipbook - Page 9 (paperturn-view.com)</a>
	BCC Consultation Responses.

## NIE Consultation RP7 - Summary of questions

<p><b>General question on approach and strategy</b></p>	
<p><b>Q1.</b> Do you think we are taking the right approach to and have the right strategy for RP7. All thoughts and comments are welcome.</p>	<p>We note that the strategy is based on stakeholder engagement feedback and reflects regional strategies such as the Energy Strategy and Climate Bill. The emphasis on supporting the most vulnerable and seeking to maintain costs at existing levels while facilitating the transition to net zero is welcomed.</p>
<p><b>Facilitating net zero through a flexible and integrated energy system</b></p> <p><b>Q2.</b> We are interested in your views on our scenarios of future customer behaviour. Do you think they are realistic? Do you think our 'best view' scenario reflects the likely changes in the RP7 period?</p>	<p>The best view scenario highlights 300,000 EVs by 2030 and 120,000 Heat Pumps by 2030. Do these figures dovetail with The Path to Net Zero Energy, NI Energy Strategy? It would be essential to ensure that the grid is able to match the ambitions of the NI Energy Strategy and the numbers in the Best Case Scenario are concluded scientifically to meet these ambitions. Both the Future Energy Scenarios of the NI Energy Strategy in 2050 of 'Power Play' and 'Flexible Fit' as per The Path to Net Zero Energy require significant electrification of heat through Heat Pumps. We also support the proposed connection of EV and HP to the NI grid with the option for these to be energy assets (i.e. selling electricity back to the grid)</p>
<p><b>Q3.</b> Do you agree with the mobilisation of an NIE Networks Local Area Energy Planning team to support wider stakeholders including local authorities and councils in their journey to net zero? If so, what type of support should the team provide?</p>	<p>Yes, we agree with this suggestion. It should be noted that Belfast City Council plan to commission a Belfast Local Area Energy Plan. As part of this process, we will establish a regional energy consortium (comprising primary stakeholders - including network operators, local authorities, business and community energy groups) to shape a net zero vision for Belfast and guide the LAEP. Roger Henderson has indicated that Tim Cox will be the key NIE point of contact on this Consortium. For more information, please contact the Climate Unit within Belfast City Council.</p>
<p><b>Q4.</b> Do you think we are being ambitious enough with our proposal to fit monitors on 50% of our LV network or should we aim for higher?</p>	<p>The additional costs for fitting monitors on the LV network is very modest. Data will become a more and more essential resource to decarbonising. As this rolls out, this data should help design the future network. A decarbonised system will be a 'prosumer' model in which data will be key. Due to the modest costs involved and the importance of data, a higher target may be justified.</p>
<p><b>Q5.</b> What do you think of our "Open Data Portal"?</p>	<p>We welcome access to open data which may inform future planning by Belfast City Council.</p>
<p><b>Q6.</b> Do you agree with our 'Flexibility First' approach?</p>	<p>Yes, this is an essential approach. This reduces the amount of capital investment and will encourage the Prosumer model on the demand side that will be a critical component in the path to decarbonisation.</p> <p>At a customer level, barriers to generating CO<sub>2</sub>e free electricity and exporting this to the grid must be removed. When these barriers are removed, this will assist in</p>

	customers maximising the opportunity to decarbonise their own sites from their on-site generation as well as export decarbonised electricity to the grid.
<b>Q7.</b> Do you agree with us including wider societal impacts in our decision making between FLEX and conventional reinforcement?	Yes
<b>Q8.</b> Do you agree with our approach of going further, faster, with FLEX markets?	Yes
<b>Q9.</b> Do you agree with our proposed RP7 innovation principles?	As a small advanced economy Northern Ireland has the ability to roll out innovative solutions more quickly than others and so should take advantage of this opportunity.
<b>Q10.</b> On top of your feedback on our approach to innovation in RP7 we want to understand what you feel is an appropriate scale of allowance. In RP6 our innovation allowance amounted to approximately 2% (approx. £6m) of our total Network Investment Plan. Do you feel that a similar percentage would be appropriate for RP7? This would represent an allowance of approximately £20m.	We support the funding of innovation however would suggest there should be no impact on commercial customers given the current cost of living crisis and economic difficulties many are currently experiencing.
<b>Q11.</b> In respect of assessing where to invest in the network, do you agree with our proposed approach of including only LI5 sites in our base line plan for RP7? Should we be going further?	If it is possible to go further without impacting on business customers, we would encourage that approach. Failing that, we support the proposed approach of including only LI5 sites. We welcome the recognition that investment in grid development needs to be affordable to drive decarbonisation, that NIE currently accounts for 3.7p of the 28p/kwh charged to customers and that this 3.7p is set by the Utility Regulator and is not expected to rise due to the anticipated increase in consumption.
<b>Q12.</b> Do you agree with our proposal to replace all 5kVa transformers as soon as possible during RP7?	Yes.
<b>Q13.</b> Regarding the building of new substations or upgrading existing substations, which can be a lengthy process and can in some cases take several years, we would welcome your	Option 3 is our recommended approach to ensure maximum future proofing of the network.

<p>opinion on which option presented at the end of page 32 we should adopt in RP7.</p>	
<p><b>Maintaining a safe, reliable and resilient network</b>  <b>Q14.</b> Do you agree with our position of maintaining the reliability of the network? Would you accept a reduction in network reliability to reduce your electricity bill in the short term?  For context, a £50m reduction in capital spend would result in an approximate £1.90 saving on the average annual domestic electricity bill during RP7. For our commercial customers this represents an annual decrease between £7.50 for a small business and £118 for a medium business.</p>	<p>Yes, we agree with maintaining the reliability of the network and would be averse to accepting a reduction in network reliability to reduce our electricity bill in the short term.</p>
<p><b>Q15.</b> Our plan is to further reduce CMLs associated with faults on our network in RP7 to help offset the increased average duration of outages due to planned work on the network. To do this we propose including allowances within our RP7 baseline costs to install automated devices on our overhead line network. Are you happy that we include allowances in our plan to help minimise the impact of planned outages?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>Q16.</b> Do you agree with our approach of targeting the top 6 worst performing circuits only or should we aim to eradicate all existing worst served customers in RP6?</p>	<p>Yes, however we feel NIE should retain the ambition to eradicate all existing worst served customers should this become possible without impacting adversely on domestic and commercial customers.</p>
<p><b>Q17.</b> Our current proposals for RP7 include investment to improve the number of customers that we can keep on supply following a HILP event and move closer to the</p>	<p>Yes, we support this proposal in order to improve access to supply in the event of an HILP event.</p>

<p>GB average. Do you agree that we should invest in this area?</p>	
<p><b>Q18.</b> Do you think we are going far enough to adapt our network for climate change in RP7?</p>	<p>It is reassuring that NIE has carried out a hazard assessment and we would encourage further development of these to understand vulnerability and exposure for its assets in order to fully assess climate risk if that has not already occurred. Belfast has completed an Infrastructure Risk Assessment and would be keen to share and integrate the findings from this with any future risk assessment undertaken by NIE. Belfast will be developing a climate action plan in 2023 and would encourage active engagement of NIE to develop an integrated plan for adapting to climate change.</p> <p>In terms of extreme heat, we would encourage the integration of city climate evidence such as the Belfast Heat Map that identifies adaptive capacity of different electoral wards in the city and can help inform a targeted approach to reducing climate risk of different neighbourhoods and communities in the city.</p> <p>Regarding increased flooding, we would also encourage engagement with the Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan for Belfast in terms of sustainable urban drainage opportunities at key sites, as well as the Living with Water Programme. Also refer to Belfast’s SUDs SPG and Tree Strategy in terms of development of its sites and infrastructure.</p> <p>NIE is a partner on the One Million Trees Programme and we would welcome opportunities to scope and identify sites in Belfast for increased tree cover in order to help mitigate flood risk, improve biodiversity, improve air quality and improve health and wellbeing. Strategic opportunities for increased tree cover in the city should be explored across NIE Estate.</p>
<p><b>Meeting the needs of our Customers</b></p> <p><b>Q19.</b> Do you think we should seek allowances through the RP7 price control to spend on direct measures or initiatives to help those customers who are worst impacted by the energy crisis? For example, we could seek funding to provide solar panels for such customers. If you do think we should consider initiatives such as</p>	<p>Yes, given fuel poverty (proportion of households spending more than 10% of their income on fuel) is 80%, this should be a priority. NIE should be ambitious in helping those most vulnerable in society – understanding their needs, the resources required, and establishing a programme that addresses these or seeks resources to do this.</p>

<p>this, how ambitious should we be?</p>	
<p><b>Q20.</b> Do you think that we should be fitting a new innovative device aimed at deterring birds from roosting on overhead lines in areas known for bird fouling issues? As a customer, would you be happy that the costs to resolve bird fouling issues are spread across our customer base and ultimately reflected in your bill?</p>	<p>No strong view on this however welcome the effort to address the issue within RP7.</p>
<p><b>Q21.</b> Do you think a 'low regrets' type of approach should be considered for metering in RP7?</p>	<p>Yes, this appears best placed to future proof for the introduction of smart metering.</p>
<p><b>Q22.</b> With regards to meeting the needs of our customers –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any Customer Measures or Commitments that we might have missed, and if so, what else would you like us to consider and why?</li> <li>• Are there any specific customer metrics that NIE Networks should be measuring performance against on during RP7?</li> <li>• Do you consider that a Customer Satisfaction Incentive metric should be introduced to drive improvements in customer service in RP7?</li> <li>• Are there any gaps/areas that you feel are missing from the plan?</li> </ul>	
<p><a href="#">Preparing our business for a digital and environmentally sustainable future</a></p> <p><b>Q23.</b> With regards to our environmental considerations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please rank your priorities in each of our Environmental Action Plan commitments 1-10.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Moving away from SF6 gas use. (the ranking of this depends on the cost and amount of SF6 gas as this has an extremely high GWP).</li> <li>2. Reducing our business carbon footprint.</li> <li>3. Decarbonising our fleet.</li> <li>4. Helping reduce the environmental impact of our supply chain.</li> <li>5. Reducing network losses.</li> <li>6. Quantifying and reducing embodied carbon footprint.</li> <li>7. Quantifying and improving biodiversity / Natural Capital.</li> <li>8. Minimising waste to landfill.</li> </ol>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reducing our business carbon footprint.</li> <li>2. Decarbonising our fleet.</li> <li>3. Moving away from SF6 gas use.</li> <li>4. Reducing network losses.</li> <li>5. Quantifying and reducing embodied carbon footprint.</li> <li>6. Helping reduce the environmental impact of our supply chain.</li> <li>7. Minimising waste to landfill.</li> <li>8. Quantifying and improving biodiversity / Natural Capital.</li> <li>9. Replacing worst performing fluid filled cables.</li> <li>10. Reducing fluid leaked from fluid filled cables.</li> </ol> <p>• What do you think of our Environmental strategy? Are there any areas missing?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Replacing worst performing fluid filled cables.</li> <li>10. Reducing fluid leaked from fluid filled cables.</li> </ol> <p>The most effective environmental consideration is to facilitate the targets for renewable electricity and the use of EVs and Heat Pumps.</p>
<p><b>Q24.</b> With regards to the enablers identified –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you agree that these commitments are necessary enablers of transformational change in the RP7 period? Do you support their inclusion in our RP7 business plan?</li> <li>• Are there any other necessary enablers that we might have missed, and if so, what else would you like us to consider and why?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Cost of investment</b></p> <p><b>Q25.</b> Our vision is to provide an electricity network that is capable of facilitating Northern Ireland’s overall plan to address climate change, which aims to achieve net zero carbon and affordable energy by ending our society’s reliance on fossil fuels and associated price volatility. In this context, we would welcome stakeholder feedback on our analysis of the monetary impact of our</p>	<p>The areas of investment identified throughout the report appear to be appropriate. We would encourage minimal impact economically on those most vulnerable in society and commercial and domestic customers given the cost-of-living crisis and ongoing economic uncertainty.</p>

proposals and the benefits it will bring to our customers and wider society.	
<b>Managing uncertainty</b> <b>Q26.</b> Do you agree with our principles for managing uncertainty in RP7?	Yes.

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