



Subject:	Update on COP26
Date:	22nd October, 2021
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
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Restricted Reports	
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"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a high-level overview of the COP26 arrangements and Belfast's involvement. The Council is sending a delegation to the event and, as such, is seeking retrospective approval for Lord Mayor to attend COP26 in the lead role. She will be accompanied by two Elected Members and one council officer.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. note the current arrangements for COP26 and activity planned both in Belfast and Glasgow; andii. provide retrospective approve for the Lord Mayor's attendance at COP26 on 10th and 11th November, as the lead of the Council's delegation.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>COP26 is the 2021 United Nations annual climate change conference which runs from the 1st to the 12th November 2021. COP stands for Conference of the Parties. Parties are the signatories of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - a treaty agreed in 1994 which has 197 Parties (196 countries and the EU). The 2021 conference, hosted by the UK, together with partners Italy, in Glasgow, will be the 26th meeting of the Parties, which is why it's called COP26. United Nations climate change conferences are among the largest international meetings in the world. The negotiations between governments are complex and involve officials from every country in the world as well as representatives from civil society and the global news media.</p>
3.2	<p>Activity at a COP takes place in two different zones - the Blue Zone and the Green Zone. The Blue Zone is for people registered with the UN body tasked with coordinating the global response to the threat of climate change – the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In the Blue Zone you might be part of a national delegation, work for the United Nations and related organisations & agencies or be a member of the media or not-for-profit observer organisation. In the Blue Zone, delegates from countries meet for both formal negotiations and informal consultations. They may also take part in meetings with other delegations to clarify their position and interests with the aim of reaching agreement or overcoming a negotiating deadlock. The UNFCCC will also host a range of events, including technical briefings, to support the negotiations process.</p>
3.3	<p>The Green Zone is for the general public. There will be a wide range of events, including workshops, art exhibitions and installations, as well as presentations, demonstrations of technology and musical performances for everyone to attend.</p>
3.4	<p>The Council's approach to COP26 involvement is multi-faceted, with activity planned in Belfast over the period of COP26 and in Glasgow on 10th and 11th November. Our aims are as follows:</p>
3.5	<p>AMBITION: Using the event as a catalyst for local action by Belfast anchor institutions, businesses and communities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining Global Campaigns to pledge climate action and set targets, to plan how targets will be achieved, to show that we are proceeding with climate action and to publish our progress. Belfast has signed up to four global climate campaigns: Race to Zero, Race to Resilience, Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and One Planet City Challenge. • Explaining COP26 to local businesses, communities and individuals (Video and website)

- Showing how BCC is playing its part in the run up to COP26 and the wider climate agenda (list of events and actions to date on website)
- Encouraging local businesses, communities and individuals to be part of the conversation and get involved (tweet us your #OneWeeThing)
- Creating a community and city that is well informed about climate change
- Offering residents a positive vision of the transition to an inclusive, net-zero, resilient economy
- Encouraging personal responsibility and motivate residents, businesses and communities to join the climate journey (#OneWeeThing)

- 3.6 **AWARENESS:** Showcase examples of good practice and innovative work in Belfast, including:
- Electric and hydrogen buses, Artemis ferry, Hydrogen generation by NIW, Research and innovation in Bio-Energy, Marine, renewable Energy, floating solar, intelligent energy systems, Green apprenticeships, Greenway, One Million Trees, Species rich grasslands and wildflower meadows, Danske Bank's new Carbon Neutral Mortgage, Sustainable Tourism, Linen Quarter sustainable district, Recycling Centres

- 3.7 **OPPORTUNITY:** to build partnerships to tackle climate change and promote inclusive green growth
- Continued partnerships with Glasgow City Council and other core cities on climate action planning and delivery and build new partnerships to exploit opportunities to support and finance inclusive green growth

3.8 **Belfast Focused Activity**

It was previously agreed that we would focus primarily on Belfast in our COP26 planned activity and, to that end, we have undertaken a number of actions:

- Supporting the Carbon Bus Tour, which is now complete.
- Funding for Podiem Business Sustainability Conference with 334 attendees, which is now complete.
- Development of a COP26 focused video which showcases local projects and people, aligned to the themes of the COP26 programme, for use on social media and as a 'climate asset' which can be used beyond COP26.
- Funding of the Common Purpose Northern Ireland Legacy Programme which this year has a climate theme

- Belfast partnership in the Core Cities Climate Investment Platform, which will launch an investment analysis report on the 21st October, with an in person event to follow on 11th November, during COP26.
- Funding of the RE(ACT) festival which is led by Linenquarter BID [RE\[act\] Festival | Festival for a Sustainable Belfast \(reactfestival.co.uk\)](https://reactfestival.co.uk)
- Belfast Climate Commission Youth Working Group Youth Summit on the 5th November in Belfast City Hall, which will feedback the results of a recent Youth Climate Survey hosted on BCC Yoursay Platform.
- BCC coordinated “Perspectives on adaptation” seminar – online session on the 8th November which forms part of the regional green zone activity, part funded by BCC and BEIS, through NILGA.
- Temporary Art installation – the Climate Unit and Culture Unit have funded a mobile art installation which will be developed by Threes Theatre Company, across the period of COP26.

3.9 Opportunities for Elected Members to engage with and support COP26 activities are being developed and will be presented to the Party leaders.

Glasgow Focused Activity

- A Belfast City Council delegation will attend COP26 on 10th and 11th November, with plans to attend several Green Zone events including those that Council has been involved in arranging – Climate NI ‘All together Now’ session on local government networking and adaptation.
- The delegation will attend the Glasgow City Council/UK100 Leaders and Mayors event on the evening of the 10th November.
- The delegation will attend the Core Cities ‘Enabling Net Zero Investment’ event on the 11th November.
- The Glasgow Food and Climate Pledge will be launched during COP26 – Belfast City Council has been invited to participate.
- There are ongoing discussions with Glasgow City Council, and networks which Belfast is part of including Resilient Cities Network, ICLEI, Core Cities, PCAN to explore opportunities for city to city discussions.
- To that end meetings are planned with Nottingham representatives and Manchester representatives, and with the leader of Glasgow City Council.
- Belfast have also been invited to participate in a Blue Zone event run by the Resilient Cities Network on the morning of the 10th November, which is focused on the link between nature and play, which has come about through our involvement in the Real Play Coalition.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linked to our city submission to the Carbon Disclosure Project which was made in July 2021 Belfast has now joined the Race to Zero and Race to Resilience Campaigns, which are connected to COP26. <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>3.10 There are no new financial requirements.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>3.11 There are no direct equality or good relations/rural needs implications.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None