

NIRIG response to Consultation on Lisburn & Castlereagh Draft Community Plan

23 March 2017

The Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG) represents the views of the renewable electricity industry in Northern Ireland, providing a conduit for knowledge exchange, policy development, support and consensus on best practice between all stakeholders. Committed to making a positive difference, we promote responsible development, support good community engagement and deliver low-cost electricity generation from sources such as onshore wind, tidal, solar and storage using our greatest natural resources.

NIRIG believes that renewable energy represents the single greatest opportunity for Northern Ireland not only in progressing to a low-carbon economy, promoting energy sustainability and improving security of energy supply, but also in providing a significant economic boost through job creation, commercial rates, community benefit and attracting inward foreign investment. Northern Ireland has an abundant, diverse and indigenous renewable energy resource which provides a sustainable economic opportunity for the country.

NIRIG recognises that a robust and efficient “plan lead” system will be key in the responsible development and the delivery of the wide-ranging economic, social and environmental benefits of Northern Ireland’s indigenous renewable resources.

We welcome that the Council aims to use their plan to *‘make life better now in a way that doesn’t compromise the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of future generations’*. Sustainable development is a core principle, and the Council also aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, partially through the outcome of developing and implementing home and business energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.

NIRIG strongly supports the adoption of sustainable development as a core principle and encourages the development of objectives specifically relating to the storage, generation and distribution of renewable electricity.

We specifically welcome the inclusion of the following in the Draft Community Plan 2017-2032;

“Develop and implement home and business energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.”
(Illustrative Actions 2017-2019, Pg.29)

We would encourage Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council to include and/or expand upon these actions in the final draft with specific measures particularly in relation to the development, distribution and storage of renewable energy.

We wish to thank Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council for the opportunity to engage on the draft Community Plan and look forward to further engagement as the plan progresses.

We further apologise for the late contribution.

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NIRIG Manager