



## Service Area Factsheet

Above image: multi-sport 3G facility at the Melvin Sports Complex in Strabane. Photo by Derry City and Strabane District Council.

# Property and Asset Management

## How will property and asset management be impacted by climate change?

Our climate is changing. We each need to understand our role in addressing this challenge and work together to increase the resilience of our organisations and society. Cutting carbon emissions is vital as we must reduce the severity of climate change. However, it is equally important to begin preparing for the increase in extreme weather which we are already experiencing, and which is projected to increase substantially in intensity and frequency in the coming decades. We call this act of preparation 'Climate Adaptation.'

Local councils will play a pivotal role in the implementation of any measures, and so require a collaborative approach from different service areas in order to address the impacts of climate change. Every service has something to offer to increase resilience for the council and communities it represents, from overall strategies to daily decisions and management.

This brief is not designed to provide a comprehensive overview, but rather to initiate discussion on the role of property and asset management in addressing climate change impacts as part of a wider suite of documents for other services.

## What are the climate risks posed to property and asset management?

Strengthening the management of assets will be an important priority with climate change related issues. Extreme weather events (downpour, flood, windstorm, heatwave, drought, wildfire etc.) will lead to higher expenses tied to either the cost of damage and disruption, and the reduction in value of exposed property or the need to harden defences<sup>1</sup>. Predicted climatic changes can impact on management, planning and maintenance of council managed assets. Some possible risks to property and asset management include:

- Disruption to council property and fleet management from extreme weather and gradual climatic changes:
  - Increased costs and pressure on resources and council staff for maintenance, repair, recovery and replacement
  - Negative reputation for the council
  - Higher insurance premiums

- Structural problems to buildings could affect planning and development of surrounding areas (houses and/or businesses)
- Disruption to council services that use commercial vehicles.
- Road surface damage as a result of weather (either overheating or flooding) may impact the quality of fleet, and the services they provide.

## What actions could you take?

Effective planning for property and fleet management services must consider the impacts of climate change, which will create opportunity to save on costs, maintain the quality of the service, and manage the efficient use of resources. You could take action by getting involved with your council's adaptation planning process, which should outline short to long-term impacts, implications and recommended actions for property and asset management including:

- Consider climate change adaptation in your green procurement process.
- Include a comprehensive climate change related environmental risk assessment of council property in order to ensure effective maintenance and adaptive options.
- Ensure all new council development and asset replacements consider climate projections, climate risk and implement resilience measures.
- Work with relevant stakeholders to develop a coordination strategy for responding to extreme weather events e.g. use of council vehicles during emergency response.

## Additional Resources

Carbon Trust, 2012. Saving energy in local authority buildings: <https://www.carbontrust.com/media/196392/ctv028-local-authorities.pdf>

## References

<sup>1</sup>CRO Forum (2019) 'The heat is on Insurability and Resilience in a Changing Climate- Emerging Risk Initiative - Position Paper' Available online: <https://www.thecroforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/CROF-ERI-2019-The-heat-is-on-Position-paper-1.pdf>