

Annex B. City of York Council Environmental Policy.

Introduction

This Environmental Policy sets the broad goals the council is working towards in improving its own environmental performance. This policy represents the first step in the establishment of an environmental management system (EMS) for the council. An EMS establishes the framework within which environmental performance is first measured to assess a baseline, from which an improvement programme is designed. The improvement programme concentrates on improving the aspects from the baseline that have a significant environmental impact.

The Environmental Policy supports the environmental strand of the council's Sustainability Strategy. This policy is a separate document due to the specific requirements of the environmental management system.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FOR CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

At the City of York Council we are committed to enhancing the natural and built environment and to improving the quality of life in York, now and for future generations, through the principles of sustainable development. We have embodied these principles within the Council's Corporate Strategy (2006-2009) and provide more detail within the Environmental Sustainability strategy. In partnership with the wider community, the 'Without Walls' community strategy provides the Sustainable Framework for the City.

We recognise we are a significant employer in York and our activities have impacts on the environment. We need to manage these impacts, reducing our negative effects and maximising our positive effects on the environment. We will aim towards good environmental practices and to safeguarding the local, natural and global environment in partnership with the whole community.

We are committed to the implementation of an Environmental Management System. This will provide the framework within which we will manage our environmental impacts, reduce pollution and continuously improve our environmental performance. We will regularly review this document to ensure its ongoing effectiveness. It is our policy within the City of York Council to:

Environmental Management

- Establish an environmental management system to identify, manage and improve our significant environmental impacts.
- Ensure requirements of environmental legislation, regulations and Corporate Environmental policies are being met.
- Undertake regular review of the Council's environmental performance

Environmental Awareness & training

- Raise environmental awareness of council staff, encouraging environmentally responsible behaviour
- Provide training to staff to ensure effective implementation of the EMS.

Purchasing

- Develop a comprehensive environmental purchasing policy which seeks to minimise the environmental impact of the goods and services we purchase
- Work in partnership with our supply chain suppliers to minimise the environmental impacts of our supply chain

Energy

- Support the Governments energy policy/regulations in promoting energy efficiency measures and achievement of the UK's carbon emission targets
- Encourage the design and refurbishment of buildings to a standard that minimises energy consumption. Promote and encourage an increase in methods of renewable energy production within the city.

Water

- Minimise the use of water within council buildings and promote responsible water management and conservation

Waste

- Reduce, reuse, recycle internal council waste (waste produced within council buildings and activities)
- Increase waste reduction, reuse and recycling of waste within York, and actively work towards decreasing the tonnage of biodegradable waste and recyclable products going to landfill.

Transport

- Implement actions to minimise the environmental impact of staff travelling to, from and at work. Actively support walking cycling, and public transport as the travel hierarchy for staff where practicable.
- Actively support the reduction of environmental impact of fleet vehicles and in doing so achieve an acceptable balance between measures to improve local air quality and measures to reduce CO₂ emissions and climate change.
- Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport

Sustainable Development

- Apply Sustainable Development appraisals to all new policies and projects within the council
- Incorporate consideration of impacts on Sustainability in all council reports
- Actively support the use of REAP (Resource Energy Analysis Programme) policy profiling tool in council policies and decision making as a method to reduce resource and energy consumption.

Natural environment

- Maintain, restore and enhance the biodiversity of York in line with the York Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Continue to support the Governments Regional Forestry Strategy for Yorkshire and sustain and improve the management and increase in York's tree and woodland cover
- Improve the city's rural landscape and cityscape in order to enhance overall amenity.
- Ensure the retention, enhancement and creation of publicly accessible open space for the enjoyment and well being of residents, businesses and visitors.

- Steer landscape designs to positively relate to the local environment and micro-climate and to respond to the existing and future needs of the community through the planning and design processes.

The built environment

- Actively promote and encourage sustainable design, construction and management practices in all development within the city.
- Promote best practice in the stewardship and maintenance of council owned/managed listed buildings
- Ensure council developments integrate the consideration of archaeological matters into the development process and strategic planning process in York.

Air Quality

- Implement, monitor and continually review the measures in the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) to ensure nitrogen dioxide concentrations within the existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) are reduced
- Ensure local air quality issues are fully integrated into development and strategic planning processes in York.