



## **SUSTAINABILITY SUB COMMITTEE – 31 AUGUST 2016**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **1 Recommendation**

The Sustainability Sub Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Discuss and provide feedback on the draft Aberdeenshire Council Environmental and Climate Change Policy.**
- 1.2 Recommend the draft Aberdeenshire Council Environmental and Climate Change Policy for approval to the Policy and Resources Committee.**

#### **2. Background/Discussion**

- 2.1 In September 2013, the Aberdeenshire Council Environmental Policy was approved. In May 2015 the policy was reaffirmed through a re-signing of the document by the Chief Executive and Council Leader.
- 2.2 A new Aberdeenshire Council Environmental and Climate Change Policy has been drafted to enhance the previous Environmental Policy by including the Council's commitment to better mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- 2.3 The proposed Aberdeenshire Council Environmental and Climate Change Policy is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Any observations from Monitoring officers have been included in the report.

#### **3. Financial, Equalities and Staffing Implications**

- 3.1 No direct financial or staffing implications have been identified in this report.
- 3.2 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken once the final draft of the policy has been developed.

Stephen Archer  
Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by: Claudia Cowie, Sustainability & Climate Change Co-ordinator 25 July 2016

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# Aberdeenshire Council

## Environmental and Climate Change Policy



Aberdeenshire Council recognises that all of its functions and operations have an impact on the environment. The Council will therefore reduce its impact on the local and global environment by demonstrating clear leadership, providing high quality services, whilst preventing pollution, reducing waste and greenhouse gas emissions and saving energy and water. The Council will ensure compliance with all environmental and climate change legislation, guidance and best practice principles to fulfil its statutory environmental and climate change responsibilities.

As part of its commitment to acting sustainably and safeguarding the environment Aberdeenshire

Council will follow a precautionary approach to protect the environment and our outstanding natural surroundings. To mitigate and adapt to climate change we will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, improve our resilience to future climate predictions, conserve our natural resources, enhance bio-diversity and further improve the quality of life and the sense of well-being for all residents.

We will do this by working constructively with partners and by ensuring that in reaching properly balanced decisions, the full range of environmental, social, and economic aspects are taken into account over the short and long term.

### To meet this commitment we will:

- Maintain and develop systems and procedures that identify and manage the Council's environmental and climate change impacts.
- Provide a planning system that ensures all development is sustainable and take action to prevent pollution and minimise environmental risks.
- Reduce our use of energy, water and natural resources in support of zerowaste.
- Act in a way best calculated to reduce CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions by 44% of the 2010/11 baseline by 2020 from council buildings, operations and activities.
- Identify the risks and vulnerabilities from expected climate change and produce plans and actions to limit negative impacts and improve resilience.
- Lead by example and use our influence to raise awareness and understanding of environmental and climate change issues and actively encourage responsible practices.
- Develop and implement integrated, sustainable transport solutions and travel plans that meet the needs of employers, employees, residents and visitors, including staff journeys to, from and at work.
- Promote sustainable procurement throughout the supply chain and encourage innovative solutions to positively benefit the environment.
- Influence and support educational establishments to use the natural world and the sustainable development agenda across the curriculum to develop the environmental and climate change awareness of our children and young people.
- Conserve the natural and historic environment by protecting and enhancing landscape, bio-diversity and historic assets.
- Develop an approach to ensure that local environmental, social and economic issues relating to the health and fair treatment of people are considered while also strengthening Aberdeenshire as a Fairtrade Zone.
- Set formal objectives across all services and provide the necessary training, resources and performance review to ensure continuous improvement of overall environmental performance and embedded climate change action.
- Promote this policy and make it known to all staff, members, suppliers, contractors, partners and the public.

