

Calderdale MBC

Wards Affected All

Cabinet



Revision of the Council's Environmental Policy

Report of the Director of Public Health & Director of Regeneration & Strategy

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update and revise the Council's Environmental Policy Statement to align with the Council's Net Zero Target by 2038. Tackling the climate emergency is a key Council priority and this Policy will support the delivery of this ambition.

2. Need for a decision

- 2.1 Changes to the Environmental Policy Statement (see appendix) are recommended. Changes to Council Policy require Cabinet and Full Council approval.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended:

- 3.1 That Cabinet endorse the revised Environmental Policy Statement
- 3.2 That Cabinet recommend the revised Environmental Policy Statement to Council for approval

4. Background and/or details

4.1 The role of the Council Environmental Policy Statement and why revision is required

- 4.1.1 Calderdale Council's Environmental Policy establishes the environmental and sustainability principles that the Council must lead on and deliver against. The Environmental Policy Statement was last updated and agreed by Full Council in January 2019 and signed by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive.
- 4.1.2 On the 30th January 2020, Cabinet set new Carbon Dioxide reduction targets – to become Net Zero by 2038 with significant progress by 2030. This target applies both to the Council's own operations and to the wider Borough of Calderdale. The Council has made acting on the climate emergency one of its three cross-cutting strategic priorities alongside strong and resilient towns and reducing inequality. The Environmental Policy contributes towards these priorities:
- 4.1.3 Strong and Resilient Towns: Combating environmental and climate issues will help reduce the social and economic risks from extreme weather events such as flooding and heatwaves.
 - 4.1.4 Reducing Inequalities: There are socio-economic inequalities associated with environmental issues and climate change from how its effects will be disproportionately felt amongst society to access to clean resources such as air and water.
 - 4.1.5 Climate Emergency: The objectives within the Environmental Policy will all support the Council's target to be Net Zero by 2038. From reducing the impacts of travel to conserving resources through energy efficiency measures.
- 4.1.6 Calderdale's vision for 2024 is to be a place where you can realise your potential whoever you are. Calderdale aspires to a place where talent and enterprise can thrive. The Environmental Policy supports the Council's Net Zero Target which will protect Calderdale's distinctive environment and ensure a resilient future for all.
- 4.1.7 Past extreme weather events such as heatwaves and flooding notably Storm Ciara and February 2020 floods underscored the need to take action on climate change to protect the Borough from future extreme weather events. Events such as these cemented the Council's aspirations to be a leader in adapting to the impacts of a changing climate. The Borough needs to take urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions which are perpetuating climate change as well as adapting and enhancing resiliency. In doing so this will achieve progress to Calderdale's Net Zero target.
- 4.1.8 The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 shone a spotlight on inequality and compelled society to think about lifestyles and working in completely new ways. The restrictions that were put in place had a Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) reduction benefit from a reduction in travel and uptake of low carbon habits such as UK holidays, home cooking, walking and cycling in local areas. However, there has since been an emission rebound from a return to pre-pandemic lifestyles. This rebound has demonstrated the importance to continue to promote

sustainable lifestyles to enhance and accelerate these trends via public messaging and incentive schemes.

- 4.1.9 In 2021 following on from West Yorkshire Combined Authorities Emission Reduction Pathway, Calderdale Council commissioned a localised Emission Reduction Pathway to understand the steps required to meet the Borough wide Net Zero target by 2038. This work provided an analysis of actions that the Council and the Borough can take across the short (2021 to 2025), medium (2025-2030) and long (2030-2038) term. This study further highlights the importance of good environmental management and urgent action to meet global targets to limit impacts of global warming.
- 4.1.10 Reports in 2022 from the globally recognised scientific institution the International Panel on Climate Change: "*Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*" and "*Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change*" stated that this is the critical decade for securing a liveable, equitable and sustainable future for all. This continues to highlight urgent need to scale up environmental and climate change action to prevent run-away climate change.
- 4.1.11 The recommended amendments to the Environmental Policy Statement are to ensure it is up to date with Council ambitions and targets. The Environmental Policy underpins the Council's organisational responsibility and role in protecting, managing, and improving our environment which demonstrates the Council's internal commitment to tackling environmental issues. The Environmental Policy Statement is not intended to be a strategy document; however, Officers continue to work on a Borough wide Climate Action Plan establishing the difference we want to see, with actions, benefits and resource implications.

4.2 The Council's Environmental Management System

- 4.2.1 Calderdale Council has maintained an internationally accredited Environmental Management System (EMS) since 2010. An EMS is a framework designed to identify the Council's environmental impacts and reduce our environmental footprint. A key aspect of the EMS is internal audit of compliance and a senior environmental management review. The EMS offers a system for monitoring performance, giving a process for making sure management review is in place and that the Council is making continuous improvements.
- 4.2.2 Maintaining an up-to-date Environmental Policy Statement is a basic principle of an EMS. It lays out the foundational principles of environmental work, supports the internal environmental audits and is visible to the external world – including residents and suppliers. The Council's EMS system and Environmental Policy system underpin wider Climate Emergency work.

5. Options considered

The 2021 Environmental Management Review examined the Council's environmental performance over the last financial year and considered various options for improvement.

- 5.1 Preferred Option: An up-to-date Policy Statement is produced which is in line with current Council priorities. The Director of Regeneration & Strategy (as the nominated senior manager lead) shall be given delegated authority to make minor adjustments to the Environmental Policy Statement in future, providing these are in line with Council policy and clearly recorded and evidenced via the EMS change process.
- 5.2 As above, but without delegated authority. This option would bring the policy up to date, but it would mean that minor policy amends needed in future (for example, changing the date on the policy; adding reference to any future corporate priorities which may be agreed by Cabinet and Council) would trigger the need for the policy to return to Cabinet for these amends to be rubber-stamped. This option would meet our immediate needs but would increase the need for reports as future revisions are likely.
- 5.3 A third option would be to retain the existing policy with its out-of-date references to superseded strategies. This would present a disjointed approach and is not recommended.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 Approval is sought to endorse the revised Environmental Policy Document. Although there are no immediate financial implications arising specifically from the report, endorsement of the policy has the potential to require further revenue or capital funding to deliver the required outcomes.
- 6.2 Further work will need to be undertaken at the appropriate point to determine the impact of the endorsement of the policy on the Council's revenue or capital budgets.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the content of the report. Any initiatives or projects undertaken which seek to contribute to the Policy would be considered and legal advice sought at that time.

8. Human Resources and Organisation Development Implications

- 8.1 No current human resource and organisation development implications.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 The Environmental Policy Statement was extensively revised before being adopted in January 2019. Guidance and feedback on rewording proposed within this Cabinet Paper has been led by the EMS Annual Review (involving the Directors of Public Health and Regeneration and Strategy, the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Strategic Housing Delivery Manager).

10. Environment, Health and Economic Implications

- 10.1 The Environmental Policy Statement will provide a framework for a variety of Climate Emergency actions which will deliver Environmental, Health and Economic improvements.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 There are numerous equality benefits including addressing inequality associated with climate emergency impacts, from flooding to intergenerational equity, access to clean air and effective public transport systems.
- 11.2 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed. However, due regard to equality will continue to be considered and equality impact assessments will be undertaken as relevant.

12. Summary and Recommendations

- 12.1 Tackling the Climate Emergency is a key Council priority and contributes to achieving our target to be Net Zero by 2038. The Council's Environmental Policy Statement alongside the development of a Climate Action Plan will support the delivery of this ambition.

For further information on this report, contact:

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The documents used in the preparation of this report are:

1. Environmental Management Review Minutes (August 2021)
2. Element Energy (2021) Emission Reduction Pathway. Available:
<https://www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/sites/default/files/Calderdale-Emission-Reduction-Pathways.pdf>
3. IPCC (2022) Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Available from: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-ii/>
4. IPCC (2022) *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change. Contribution of Working Group III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Available from: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-3/>

The documents are available for inspection at: by email request to Emily Farman

Appendix 1: Over page.

Environmental Policy Statement

Tackling the climate emergency, creating strong and resilient towns and reducing inequality are key priorities for Calderdale Council. As one of the largest employers, consumer and service providers in the area, the Council recognises its responsibility, role and influence in building a sustainable future. This environmental policy will contribute to the delivery of our key priorities by committing to protect and enhance the environment.

The Metropolitan Borough of Calderdale covers an area of 36,346 hectares with a population of approximately 211,400 residing in both urban and rural areas. This policy will be central to the Council's Environmental Management System which covers a wide range of Council services and assets from Chief Executive Directorate, Regeneration and Strategy Directorate, Public Services and Public Health. Calderdale has an exceptional environment in the heart of the Pennines which makes it a great place to live, work and visit with kindness, resilience and talent at the heart of our communities.

Policy Commitments:

- To enhance and safeguard the environment
- To fulfil the organisation's legal compliance and other obligations
- To prevent pollution of the environment
- To continually improve environmental performance

To fulfil the commitments the Council will:

- Ensure that Cabinet, Corporate Management and supervisory staff are fully aware of this policy and have responsibilities for its implementation. We will support employees by providing due regard to equality and ensuring reasonable adjustments are considered
- Ensure that environmental issues are given adequate consideration in the planning and delivery of day-to-day service.
- We will work with suppliers, contractors and in partnership with the wider community to improve environmental standards.
- We will maintain and continuously improve an Environmental Management System meeting the ISO 14001 standard for environmental management.
- We will report on our environmental performance against our targets and objectives via the Environmental Management System

In addition, this policy will support the Council's target to be Net Zero by 2038 with significant progress by 2030 to limit the impacts of global warming to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels as an urgent local and global environmental issue.

Environmental Objectives

Priority Area	Objective
Tackle Climate Change	<i>Reduce the Council's own CO₂e emissions in line with Net Zero target by 2038 with significant progress by 2030</i>
	<i>Support the Borough to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with Net Zero target by 2038 with significant progress by 2030</i>
Air Quality and Transport	<i>Improve Air Quality in the Borough</i>
	<i>Support the growth of sustainable and active travel</i>
	<i>Reduce the environmental impact of corporate travel</i>
Waste and Recycling	<i>Reduce, recycle and compost waste from households</i>
	<i>Reduce, recycle and compost waste from Council services</i>
Biodiversity and Natural Flood Management	<i>Protect and enhance biodiversity across the Borough</i>
	<i>Improve Natural Flood Management</i>
Local Planning	<i>Use planning powers and influence to enable thriving and sustainable towns, places and developments</i>

People, Communities and Green Economy	<i>Engage and support local people, communities and businesses to reduce their environmental impact</i>
Energy	<i>Improve energy efficiency and choose low carbon alternatives to decarbonise</i>
Water	<i>Prevent pollution of water resources from Council activities</i>
Sustainable Food	<i>Support Calderdale in becoming a good food Borough where everyone, today and in the future, has equitable access to sustainable and healthy food.</i>

Please visit the Council's climate emergency webpage for information on actions the Council is taking to achieve these objectives. This will not be an exhaustive list.

This policy will be reviewed annually. Published {enter date}