



## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

### 1 Introduction

1.1 This policy describes a set of principles about how the Town Council manages its day-to-day operations in an environmentally sustainable way and will be accompanied by an Action Plan, drawn up by staff, detailing how the policy will be implemented.

1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Motion adopted by the Council in March 2019 acknowledging a Climate Change Emergency, which sets out our commitment to put carbon reduction and environmental sustainability considerations at the heart of every action and decision the Council takes.

1.3 It should also be read in conjunction with the Council's Land Management Policy which sets out how we manage the natural environment for which the Council is responsible.

### 2 Policy

2.1 Stonehouse Town Council recognises that its day-to-day operations impact both directly and indirectly on the environment.

2.2 We aim to protect and improve the environment through good management and by adopting best practice wherever possible, seeking to prevent pollution to land, air and water and reduce our use of water, energy and any other natural resources.

2.3 We will work to integrate environmental considerations into our business decisions and adopt greener alternatives throughout our operations in a process of continual improvement as "green" technology itself improves and develops.

2.4 The precautionary principle requires that, if there is a strong suspicion that a certain activity may have environmentally harmful consequences, it is better to control that activity now rather than to wait for incontrovertible scientific evidence. This principle will be considered in any project or activity being undertaken by the Council, but also any new development or technology being proposed or consulted on by other bodies.

2.5 In order to discharge its responsibilities the Council and its staff will:

#### 2.5.1 Management

- monitor the continuous improvement in our environmental performance and carry out regular audits of the environmental management system

- comply fully with all relevant legal requirements, codes of practice and regulations at International, National and Local levels
- provide suitable training to enable employees to deal with their specific areas of environmental control
- provide adequate resources to control environmental risks arising from our work activities

#### 2.5.2 Risk Management

- minimise and where possible eliminate risks to the environment, and, where possible, take measures to enhance the environment, through selection and design of materials, buildings, facilities, equipment and processes
- identify and manage environmental risks and hazards and ensure that emergency procedures are in place at all locations for dealing with environmental issues

#### 2.5.3 Waste

- minimise air pollution, landfilled waste, and waste sent to incineration from the Council's operations.
- manage its waste in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy by minimising waste and reusing and recycling wherever possible
- minimise waste and increase recycling within the Council's buildings and operations.
  - In council-owned facilities that are used by the community, each hirer will be asked to remove all waste from the building when they leave in order to encourage them to reduce their production of waste. Recycling containers will be made available to enable the recycling of glass, plastic, cans and paper and there will be an ample supply of crockery, glasses and cutlery to enable hirers to use what is available and thus cut down on the use of disposable products.
  - At Council-run events we will avoid using disposable items and reuse and recycle wherever possible. For functions, we will provide recycling bins for glass, plastic, cans and paper.
  - We will keep a watching brief on segregated collections from the office, and implement such collections as soon as practicable.

#### 2.5.4 Energy

- purchase our gas and electricity from renewable energy suppliers and factor in the benefits of CO2 neutrality even if there is a cost increase.
- seek to find funding and ways to improve the environmental performance of all council-owned buildings by measures such as:
  - Improved insulation
  - Solar PV panels (with battery backup where appropriate)
  - "Grey water" harvesting and reuse
  - Light wells
  - Ground or Air-sourced heat pumps
  - Adoption of "Passivhaus" principles for ventilation and insulation
  - Motion-sensor controlled lighting & Solar shading

- Responsibly and renewably sourced building materials
- electric vehicle charging bay(s)

#### 2.5.5 Transport

- improve the environmental efficiency of staff transport and travel
  - Councillors and staff should use public transport or walk / cycle when travelling on town council business when feasible, and will only be paid private car mileage expenses when these methods of travel are not possible, due to personal circumstances, availability, safety or other considerations.

#### 2.5.6 Water

- seek to ensure that water is used efficiently.
- regularly check the efficiency of water taps, along with the avoidance of any water leakage.

#### 2.5.7 Stakeholders

The Council will:

- bring this Environmental Policy Statement to the attention of all stakeholders and involve customers, partners, clients, suppliers and subcontractors in the implementation of our objectives
- only engage contractors who are able to demonstrate due regard to environmental matters
- promote environmentally responsible purchasing

Contractors should:

- source materials from sustainable supplies
- use recycled materials where possible

2.6 This Environmental Policy will be reviewed at least annually and revised as necessary to reflect changes to the business activities and any changes to legislation.

2.7 Any changes to the Policy will be brought to the attention of all stakeholders.

**Reviewed: 15<sup>th</sup> Feb '21 (Minute Number : TC2558)**

**Review Date: Feb 2024**