

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

PURPOSE

Creating communities of inspiring places, homes and spaces that support more sustainable, low carbon futures, set within an environment where people want to live, work or visit is a key pillar of the North of Tyne Economic Vision. The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) and all three constituent Local Authorities declared a climate emergency in 2019 and NTCA is working towards becoming a net zero carbon organisation. This Environmental Policy sets out how we intend to minimise the impact of our activities on the environment, maximise the benefits of positive environmental action, and lead by example in sharing our learning. We will:

- Comply with, and where possible exceed the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and regulations.
- Baseline, monitor, and reduce our resource use by developing an Environmental Management Plan that will include a Green Travel Plan.
- Publicly report the 'auditable' carbon footprint of our organisation on an annual basis – this will include emissions that we can directly account for via our energy bills and business travel (Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 Emissions under the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Protocol). Where we are unable to further reduce our organisational emissions, we will offset these emissions using an accredited provider that only invests in verifiable offset projects in the UK. As far as possible these will be geographically located in the North of Tyne.
- Actively support fossil fuel divestment across the public sector while providing support to companies to encourage a just transition to the low carbon economy. We will not make unethical investments and will not invest in fossil fuel extraction.
- Phase out the use single-use plastic within our organisation and ban the use of single use plastic at all events we host and co-host.
- We will work in partnership with our staff, neighbours, constituent Local Authorities, and wider stakeholders to:
 - Regularly review the environmental impact of our activities to incorporate best practise in reducing organisational resource use, energy consumption and waste and maximise opportunities to improve environmental outcomes and share best practise.
 - Regularly review options to monitor, report and reduce the embedded and indirect carbon emissions that arise from organisational activities, for example through our purchasing and investment activities.
 - Embed climate change and sustainability into NTCA decision making and assurance processes to deliver a Devolution Deal that is green as well as inclusive.

- Establish a consistent and collaborative approach to commissioning and procurement activities to create, deliver and sustain social, environmental and economic benefits.
- Foster a culture of environmental awareness, continual improvement and innovation to help us minimise our environmental impact while creating an inclusive economy.

TO WHOM THIS POLICY APPLIES

This policy applies to all persons working for NTCA or on our behalf in any capacity, including employees at all levels, directors, officers, seconded workers, volunteers, agents, contractors, external consultants, third-party representatives and business partners.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and NTCA may amend it at any time.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY

The Mayor and Cabinet of NTCA have overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy with senior management; and managers have day to day responsibility to ensure compliance with our legal and ethical obligations.

The Policy & Performance Director has primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, monitoring its use and effectiveness, dealing with any queries about it, and ensuring internal control systems and procedures are effective in embedding sustainability and working towards becoming a net zero carbon organisation.

Management at all levels are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them understand and comply with this policy and are given adequate and regular training. Management at all levels will regularly review how NTCA can encourage and enable staff and all persons working on our behalf to develop and adopt behaviours and processes that improve our environmental impact and allow NTCA to lead by example.

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY

You must ensure that you read, understand and comply with this policy.

COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS OF THIS POLICY

Training on this policy, and on the risks our business and local area face from climate change and environmental degradation, will be provided as necessary. Training will also be provided on the co-benefits of climate action to embed climate change and sustainability principles across all areas of NTCA activity and decision making.

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

NTCA expects its employees and staff to comply with this policy. Any employee who breaches this policy may face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal for misconduct or gross misconduct.

NTCA may terminate our relationship with other individuals and organisations working on our behalf if they breach this policy.