



Worcestershire County Council

# Sustainability Policy

2021

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[www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk)



# Worcestershire County Council Sustainability Policy

Protecting the Environment is one of the Council's core priorities as set out in our Corporate Plan Shaping Worcestershire's Future 2017 to 2022.

The Council has operated a Sustainability Policy for a number of years. Through the policy and the Corporate Plan, we promote the principles of sustainable development through:

- green economy
- action to tackle climate change
- protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- fairness and improving wellbeing

We aim to integrate these across all of our work to improve quality of life for all the County's diverse communities. We will strive to ensure that the decisions we make are for the long-term benefit of Worcestershire's communities and take into account the impacts on the local and global environment.

Through our Sustainability Policy we will play our part in delivering the United Nations international Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Adopted by all member states in 2015, the 17 SDGs provide a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030:

The United Nations introduced the international Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. Adopted by all member states, they set out 17 Global Goals to achieve by 2030 – a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

The Local Government Association (LGA) passed a motion at its annual conference in the summer of 2019 in support of the Goals and promoted the role of local government in delivering them.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



We will demonstrate our sustainability policy commitment by:

- Continuously improving our environmental, social and economic performance to maximise our positive impacts and minimise our adverse effects on the environment and society, whilst complying with all relevant legislation and regulations.
- Actively encouraging and monitoring responsible environmental, social and economic performance by our suppliers and contractors as well as raising awareness of and encouraging action for sustainability amongst staff, councillors, partners and the general public.
- Fulfilling our role as a partner to deliver against the objectives of national environmental policies, legislation and guidance.
- We will reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions (measured in tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e) from Council operations and activities to net zero by 2050, and put actions in place to ensure Council buildings and services are resilient to a changing climate, and support businesses and residents in Worcestershire to do the same.
- We will use resources in an efficient and effective manner to minimise our impact on the environment, and encourage others to do the same through leading by example.

In particular we will;

### **1) Promote sustainability at a strategic level within Worcestershire County Council**

- Develop ways to ensure strategies, policies and services for which we are responsible take account of their impact on local and global environmental, economic and social well-being
- Implement the Joint Impact Assessment (JIA) process which assesses all council projects and programmes in respect of environmental sustainability, data protection, equality and public health
- Raise staff and Member awareness, at all levels, on sustainability and climate change and their role in promoting and monitoring performance
- Facilitate cross directorate working on sustainability issues with support from the Council's corporate Zero Carbon & Sustainability Board and network of Zero Heroes (staff sustainability champions)
- Integrate equality of opportunity and respect for diversity into all aspects of Council activity
- Encourage citizen participation and involvement on issues that affect them

### **2) Lead by example in addressing the Council's operational impacts on the community and environment;**

- Continuously improve the Council's performance and strive to achieve best practice principles in the following areas:
  - Resource efficiency – energy, water, materials, supplies, assets
  - Reduce CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions from council buildings, operations and activities to net zero by 2050
  - Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and increase renewable energy opportunities
  - Reduce staff business travel by private car
  - Waste prevention, reduction, reuse and recycling
  - Sustainable building design for construction and refurbishment of council property
  - Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment

- Prevention of pollution
- Ensure services and assets are resilient to the impacts of climate change
- Through Council procurement, we will promote sustainability by:
  - including consideration of environmental, social and economic issues in procurement, commissioning and investment decisions, ensuring compliance with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012
  - seeking appropriate opportunities for local sourcing to support the local economy and reduce transport impacts
  - using recycled or renewable materials and supplies where possible
  - raising awareness of Fairtrade food and drink products, in line with the Council's Fairtrade Policy
- Raising staff awareness of environmental, social and ethical issues at work and at home

### **3) Promote sustainable development throughout the County;**

- Support Worcestershire's citizens to adopt more sustainable lifestyles
- Help to improve the environmental and social performance of Worcestershire's businesses
- Help to ensure the County is resilient to the impacts of climate change and the County's reliance on fossil fuels is reduced
- Encourage and support a thriving low carbon local economy working alongside Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

**Worcestershire County Council will report on progress through the annual Corporate Environmental Report and review this policy on an annual basis.**

Please contact us if you need this document in another format, or if you have any questions.

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