



REPORT TO:	POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL
DATE:	25 JUNE 2024
SUBJECT:	ENVIRONMENT POLICY
PURPOSE:	To seek approval for a new South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Environment Policy to underpin the Sub-Regional Strategy
KEY DECISION:	NO
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ELIZABETH SNEATH
REPORT OF:	Christian Allen; Assistant Director Regulatory
REPORT AUTHOR:	SARAH BAKER; GROUP MANAGER – CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	N/A
EXEMPT REPORT?	NO

SUMMARY

A new Sub-regional Strategy for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership has recently been adopted which includes the Environment as one of four key priorities. The development of an Environment Policy underpins the new Environment priority by providing a mandate for work to deliver the strategic aim. No previous Environment Policy was in existence for South Holland District Council but policies were in place in Boston and East Lindsey. A review of these policies has been undertaken and an aligned approach developed for the three Partnership Councils.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Policy Development Policy recommends adoption of the Environment Policy to Cabinet.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To provide the mandate for delivery of the new Environment priority contained within the Sub-Regional Strategy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not to adopt an Environment Policy.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The development of the new Sub-regional Strategy for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership in 2024 sets out a collective ambition for the three Councils and has at its heart the Environment as one of four sub-regional priorities.
- 1.2** South Holland District Council had no existing Environment Policy in place. East Lindsey and Boston did have Environment Policies in place to underpin their separate Corporate Strategies. The new Sub Regional Strategy therefore provide an opportunity to review and align a Partnership-wide approach to delivery of the shared ambition for the Environment of the Partnership.

2. REPORT

- 2.1** Climate change is widely considered to be one of the greatest challenges facing our society and it is recognised that the Partnership has a stronger voice and influence by working together.
- 2.2** The Council's Climate Change and Environment Team works across the three Councils to achieve environmental aims and objectives and has been responsible for implementing carbon footprinting assessments and monitoring, delivery of environment projects such as community orchard planting, the establishment of a South and East Lincolnshire Climate Action Network and delivery of multi-million pound programmes of home energy advice and capital works to improve the energy-efficiency of residents' homes.
- 2.3** Achieving the collective climate change and environment ambitions of the Partnership and meeting Net Zero targets however cannot be delivered by one team in isolation. It requires buy-in from all areas of Council operations from procurement through to service delivery and it is therefore important that guiding documents set out a clear plan for what considerations need to be part of decision-making activities.

- 2.4** The new SELCP Environment Policy (Appendix A) sets out the key themes and priorities that underpin the strategic aim of the Sub-regional Strategy.
- 2.5** This simple approach is designed to provide the basis from which to link to wider initiatives and funding proposals and provide the framework under which more detailed plans and strategies sit e.g. the Carbon Reduction Plan, Sustainable Products Policy and Climate Change Strategy.
- 2.6** Monitoring of the Environment Policy will be driven by the Performance Management Framework and Annual Delivery Plan as outlined in the Sub-regional Strategy given that the policy directly supports delivery of the Environment priority.
- 2.7** A broader approach to quantifying how the Partnership is delivering against its Climate Change and Environment ambitions is also currently being developed to evaluate progress across service areas and to enable a level of benchmarking against other authorities and organisations. The Environment Policy will be embedded as part of any agreed monitoring process.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1** The new Partnership Environment Policy sets out the aligned corporate ambition of the three Partnership Councils to deliver the Environment priority within the new Sub-regional Strategy.
- 3.2** The Environment Policy therefore provides a clear framework for embedding the climate change and environment agenda within the work of the three organisations.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

The Environment Policy will assist the Partnership in considering how both day to day service delivery and project innovations can both contribute towards delivery of the Environment priority within the Sub-regional Strategy.

IMPLICATIONS

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

There are no specific implications arising from the approval of the Environment Policy however it does need to be a document that is considered and noted across the Councils as part of standard decision-making practices to consider any potential impact of those decisions in achieving the Environment priority.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Development of this Environment Policy underpins the existing Sub-regional Strategy and delivery of the Environment priority within the Sub-regional Strategy.

STAFFING

None. This is a guiding document informing business as usual considerations alongside other existing policies.

WORKFORCE CAPACITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific implications arising from this. It is seeking to assist Officers by underpinning work towards the ambitions of the Sub-regional Strategy. Any specific projects outside of business as usual that may stem from consideration of the policy would be looked at separately from a resourcing implications perspective.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no constitutional or legal implications arising from this report however it does assist the Council in demonstrating a commitment to its current legal duties in relation to the natural environment and climate change.

DATA PROTECTION

None.

FINANCIAL

Approval of the Environment Policy does not in itself require any financial resourcing. However, some of the actions required to achieve the Environment Policy priorities may require financial support and individual business cases will be developed as and when a funding need is identified.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Approving this Environment Policy carries a low risk to the Council. More importantly, it will help to reduce the risk of this Council not meeting its current legal duties in relation to the natural environment and climate change by demonstrating a commitment to tackling the challenges faced.

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

Consultation has been undertaken with the relevant portfolio holders across all three Councils.

REPUTATION

Any reputational implications arising from this report are likely to be positive through the demonstration of a commitment to climate change and environmental considerations and embedding that within the wider understanding of delivery of Council services and operations.

CONTRACTS

None.

CRIME AND DISORDER

None directly however there are potential beneficial links to be made in terms of improving the natural environment and pride in place for residents.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

None.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The Environment Policy seeks to recognise and develop the role that the sub-region's green spaces have in connecting people to nature and supporting the health and wellbeing of residents.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Environment Policy provides the framework for delivery of the Sub-regional Strategy priority around the Environment. It should be used as the basis for considering the impact of all Council decision-making in relation to climate change and environment and will assist officers in understanding the role their particular service area has to play.

LINKS TO 12 MISSIONS IN THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

MISSIONS	
This paper contributes to the following Missions outlined in the Government's Levelling Up White paper.	
Health	The sub-region's green spaces and natural environment have a key role to play in connecting people to nature and supporting the health and wellbeing of residents. The Environment Policy will support consideration of this and help to build the co-benefits that can be achieved by working to deliver the corporate ambition.
Wellbeing	The sub-region's green spaces and natural environment have a key role to play in connecting people to nature and supporting the health and wellbeing of residents. The Environment Policy will support consideration of this and help to build the co-benefits that can be achieved by working to deliver the corporate ambition.

Pride in Place	Environmental considerations play an important role in helping to develop Pride in Place and how this is embedded within planning, project development and wider service delivery.
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ACRONYMS

SELCP – South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

SHDC – South Holland District Council

APPENDICES	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
<i>APPENDIX A</i>	<i>SELCP Environment Policy</i>

BACKGROUND PAPERS	
Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -	
Document title	Where the document can be viewed
<i>Sub-regional Strategy</i>	https://www.selcp.co.uk/SRS

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT
<i>A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.</i>

REPORT APPROVAL	
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