



DRAFT Environmental Policy

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V2	Draft		2024

Introduction

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council declared a climate emergency in January 2020 and made commitments including the following:

- to work towards making Bletchley and Fenny Stratford carbon neutral by 2030
- to work with Milton Keynes City Council towards assisting that council in realising the aspirations of making Milton Keynes the World's Greenest City (making Milton Keynes carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050)
- to act as a voice for the community and to lobby for action on climate change
- to deliver these goals through all relevant town council strategies and plans.

The town council is committed to transforming Bletchley and Fenny Stratford into a cleaner and greener town, with healthy and active residents and a high quality built and natural environment. The aims of this policy are to set out the town council's broad objectives to

- reduce its own negative impact on the environment whenever practical and affordable
- protect and enhance the local environment directly and by influencing others.

The town council recognises the importance of sustainable development as defined in the Brundtland Report (Our Common Future, 1987), ie development which "meets the needs of today's society without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own needs" and seeks to promote sustainable development not least through its comments on planning applications and development of neighbourhood plans.

Scope of the policy

The town council will affect the environment through its services and policies, compliance with laws, regulations and best practice and the choices made in buying goods and services. The council will also seek to affect the environment through its role as a community leader.

The policy will apply across all existing council operations and all new undertakings, actions and services (including those delivered for us by others) will be assessed in terms of their environmental impact.

Environmental policy statements

General environmental statement

The town council will:

- comply with all relevant environmental legislation and where possible exceed these requirements
- manage water and energy with a view to minimising its consumption
- work to ensure its operations minimise pollution of land, air or water
- manage and improve the ecology and biodiversity of assets
- act positively to reduce the production of waste and promote recycling
- provide training and information to educate staff and councillors
- act to promote awareness of climate change and sustainability practices within the wider community

Detailed Environmental Statements

1 Energy and water use

The council will act positively to reduce the consumption of energy, water and other natural resources at all premises and property belonging to the town council. The council will maximise the efficiency of our existing heating systems and work towards the appropriate generation and use of renewable and low carbon energy. The council will minimise vehicle miles driven on council business and support use of public transport, walking and cycling.

2 Vehicles and equipment

The council will ensure its own vehicles and equipment are serviced and maintained to a high standard. The council will require suppliers to provide assessments of the environmental impact and life cycle analysis of vehicles and tools and high levels of environmental sustainability will be a consideration in product choices.

3 Recycling and conservation

At its own premises the council will encourage the recycling of wastepaper, cardboard and plastic and, where practical, glass and other materials. The council will also encourage and promote recycling within its area. The council will also encourage and promote initiatives to

keep the public realm free from litter, fly-tipping and dog waste as part of its commitment to having a clean and green town.

The council will minimise its printing and use of paper and continue its “digital first” communications commitment for dissemination of information. (The council will continue production of a quarterly printed newsletter which will be capable of being recycled.)

Before disposal of any council equipment or property consideration will be given to re-location or reuse before disposal. Waste electronic equipment and waste electrical items will be disposed of in accordance with current WEEE regulations.

4 Sustainable procurement

The council will seek to minimise environmental damage cause through the transportation of goods by sourcing materials and services locally so long as the requirements for best value and quality can be met in line with adopted procurement and financial regulations.

5 Sustainable events

The council will seek to minimise the use of fossil fuels at events where practicable, eg use of solar generators etc. The council will also seek to avoid single use plastic items and make appropriate arrangements for recycling and waste management.

6 Sustainable travel

The council will promote and support the use of public transport and active travel, eg walking and cycling and consider removal of barriers to using these forms of transport when undertaking business.

The council will encourage councillors and officers to share transport when a car journey must be made on council business.

7 Biodiversity and green spaces

The council will seek to protect and, if possible, enhance the quality and quantity of green infrastructure and open spaces within Bletchley and Fenny Stratford.

In its own activities the council will consider conservation and promotion and protection of local biodiversity particularly regarding management of land (eg allotments, community orchard) and delivery of any landscaping related services.

8 Built environment

In commenting on individual planning applications the council will support:

- i site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats
- ii appropriate applications for renewable energy
- iii design, layout and use of materials that encourage energy and water efficiency
- iv measures to encourage active travel or to remove barriers to active travel
- v

In commenting on planning policy matters the council will have regard to the importance of sustainable development and its commitment to achieving a carbon neutral Bletchley and Fenny Stratford by 2030.

9 Awareness and partnerships

The council will promote awareness of environmental issues within the community eg through use of social media, council newsletters and events.

The council will initiate and support projects and partnerships which contribute towards the council's wider environmental goals.

Audit and Review

The town council will undertake regular (annual) audits to measure the council's activity and progress against the broad objectives detailed in this policy. These will be reported to the Environment and Planning Committee which will identify additional measures and projects to be considered by full council for inclusion in the annual delivery plan.

