

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

North Ayrshire Council fully acknowledges the impact which its activities have on the environment, recognises the influence which it can exert on others in relation to their activities and accepts without reservation that it has a major role to play in safeguarding and, wherever possible, enhancing that environment and hence the quality of life for this and future generations.

This firm belief is matched by a commitment to ensure environmental factors are an integral part in the decision-making process, to form closer partnerships with individuals, local groups, commerce and industry and to ensure that the Council and Community act jointly to develop the local priorities for environmental improvement.

Against this background, North Ayrshire Council formally accepts its responsibilities to the environment and hereby proclaims publicly that it will promote sustainable development by striving to meet the Environmental Challenges which have been established following widespread consultation.

CHALLENGES

CHALLENGE 1: TO INCREASE THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN ITS PROTECTION LOCALLY BY

- Raising awareness and understanding of environmental issues at every opportunity;
- Promoting the message that everyone can and should play a part in protecting their environment;
- Advocating the social and economic benefits of an improved environment; and
- Forming close links with all sectors of the community to encourage and support local environmental initiatives, to pool expertise and to maximise use of available resources.

CHALLENGE 2: TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT BY

- Achieving high standards in the design and use of materials for all new housing and other buildings in their surroundings while ensuring that they are in keeping with the local area and compliant with national regulations;
- Encouraging anyone altering existing buildings to maintain their individual character and that of the local area;
- Seeking to improve and preserve the existing building stock by means of the highest possible standards of refurbishment and maintenance;
- Optimising the balance of land use by encouraging the use of previously developed or neglected land and buildings; and

- Caring for locally significant monuments and buildings and archaeological resources.

CHALLENGE 3: TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BY

- Protecting and preventing loss of wildlife habitats, flora and fauna;
- Supporting the creation of new habitats and habitat networks in both the rural and urban environment through local biodiversity action planning;
- Conserving and enhancing the quality and character of the landscape;
- Promoting the value of ecosystem services, including green engineering technology; and
- Encouraging sustainable public access to and enjoyment of the outdoors.

CHALLENGE 4: TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE BY

- Aligning with the waste hierarchy for more environmentally beneficial methods of management that (i) reduce, (ii) reuse, (iii) recycle and (iv) recover waste;
- Fostering an environmentally friendly purchasing policy for goods and services;
- Pursuing action to reduce littering, dog fouling, graffiti, vandalism and fly-tipping in public places;
- Promoting and supporting waste prevention, minimisation and reuse; and
- Supporting the best practical environmental option for the treatment and disposal of non-recyclable waste; and
- Minimising our greenhouse gas emissions.

CHALLENGE 5: TO CONTROL ALL FORMS OF POLLUTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH RISK BY

- Cooperating with statutory bodies and using statutory powers;
- Monitoring the environment;
- Minimising, through planning, anti-social, industrial and trade noise affecting the community; and
- Investigating and acting on noise complaints;
- Identifying and securing suitable use of contaminated land sites;
- Ensuring safe drinking water supplies;
- Ensuring safe working and leisure environments;
- Securing food-safety standards and the safety of food premises;
- Ensuring good local air quality; and
- Investigating and acting on complaints about all public health nuisances and pests.

CHALLENGE 6: TO REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND PROMOTE ENERGY CONSERVATION BY

- Aligning with the energy hierarchy for more environmentally beneficial methods of management which (i) reduce consumption and demand, (ii) utilise energy efficient systems, (iii) use renewable energy sources and (iv) use low carbon technologies;
- Promoting effective building design and refurbishment; and
- Promoting good housekeeping;
- Minimising dependence on private motor vehicles by encouraging the use of public transport and active travel, including for everyday journeys; and
- Supporting the best practicable environmental option for our transport fleet.

CHALLENGE 7: TO PROMOTE GOOD HEALTH BY USING THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S INFLUENCE IN

- Encouraging healthy lifestyle choices;
- Tackling sub-standard housing;
- Reducing the fear of crime;
- Lessening the impact of poverty;
- Promoting the benefits of nature;
- Encouraging outdoor experiences; and
- Encouraging the provision of wholesome food supplies.

CHALLENGE 8: TO CHECK REGULARLY ON OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND MATURITY BY

- Having each service set itself targets and indicators within their service plans, covering the scope of their activities;
- Monitoring achievements in performance against targets;
- Having services report on these achievements;
- Producing a corporate report on an annual basis and making it available to the public; and
- Reviewing the policy and consulting the wider community on its application and effectiveness.

Cunninghame House
IRVINE
KA12 8EE
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