

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Environment & Transportation Committee

approval noting

Ref AM/AM

Date 01/05/2019

Environment Strategy

From Andrew McPherson, Head of Regulatory Services & Waste Solutions

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Executive Summary

This report provides a copy of the Council's proposed Environment Strategy and background information to its purpose.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

1. Note the contents of this report;
 2. Approve the contents of the Environment Strategy.
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Supporting Documents

Council business plan to 2020	Improve Economic Opportunities and Outcomes.
	Improve the Health and Wellbeing of our Communities.
	Improve Relationships With Communities and the Third Sector.

Appendix 1	Environment Strategy
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1. Background

- 1.1 The Plan for North Lanarkshire was approved at Policy and Strategy Committee in February 2019. Supporting The Plan is the council's Strategic Policy Framework. This was approved at the Policy and Strategy Committee in September 2018 following an exercise to assess the strategies, policies, and plans that were in place to support achievement of the council's priorities. This exercise revealed an accumulation of individual strategies, policies, and plans had been created over the years with many out of date, duplicates of others, or not fit for purpose. Gaps identified included an overarching Environment Strategy.
- 1.2 Providing a safe and welcoming environment is central to a number of the key outcomes contained within the Plan for North Lanarkshire.
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2. Report

- 2.1 The purpose of the Environment Strategy is to bring all of these policies under the one document to ensure that all such policies take account of, and are aware of, common factors across the other strategies. This will ensure that the council maximises the impact in achieving its own priorities and also contributes to the overall national environmental objectives. A copy of the strategy is enclosed as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.2 The following policies will now be contained within the overall Environment Strategy:

Strategy / Policy / Plan	Key Contact	Statutory (Yes/ No)	Currently Available (Yes/No)	Review Date/ Date Available	Review Frequency
Active Travel and Access Strategy	Joanne Glennie	Yes	No	September 2019	5 Years
Air Quality Strategy	Mark Findlay	Yes	Yes	November 2021	3 Years
Biodiversity Action Plan	Laura McCrorie	Yes	Yes	August 2020	5 Years
Contaminated Land Strategy	Mark Findlay	Yes	Yes	August 2019	5 Years
Core Paths Plan	Hayley Andrew	Yes	Yes	April 2020	As necessary.
Food Growing Strategy	Hayley Andrew	Yes	No	April 2020	5 Years
Local Transport Strategy	Joanne Glennie	Yes	Yes	October 2019	5 Years
Woodland Management Plan	Hayley Andrew	No	No	April 2020	5 years
Carbon Management Plan	Lynda Stevenson	No	Yes	April 2019	3 years

- 2.3 The Environment Strategy will be monitored and approved through the council's Environment and Transportation and Policy and Strategy Committees and each sub-policy shall be approved and monitored at the relevant council committee.
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3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 Fairer Scotland

There are no unfair aspects contained within this report.

3.2 Equality Impact Assessment

There is no adverse impact on equality or diversity contained within this report.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Impact

There are no financial implications contained within this report

4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact

There are no HR/Policy/Legislative impacts.

4.3 Environmental Impact

The introduction of the Environment Strategy should deliver a more coordinated approach towards addressing environmental concerns/ improvements across the Council area.

4.4 Risk Impact

No significant risks are identified within this report.

5. Measures of success

- 5.1 That a more coordinated approach towards environmental improvements is delivered and this will be measured against the performance indicators within each of the policy areas.
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Andrew McPherson
Head of Regulatory Services & Waste Solutions



ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

LIVE
LEARN
WORK
INVEST
VISIT

Version control

Author	Andrew McPherson	Contact	mcphersona@northlan.gov.uk
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Date	1/5/2020	Version No.	2	Document status	Final
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Governance Committee	Environment and Transportation	date approved	
Review date	1/5/2019		

Strategic Alignment

The Environment Strategy supports a number of the council's priorities and ambition statements.

IMPROVE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTCOMES

Ambition 2: Refocus our town centres and communities to be multi-functional connected places which maximise social, economic, and environmental opportunities

Ambition 3: Maximise the use of our marketable land and assets through improved development in business and industrial infrastructure

Ambition 4: Market and promote North Lanarkshire as the place to live, learn, work, invest, and visit

IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Ambition 15: Encourage the health and wellbeing of people through a range of social, cultural, and leisure activities

ENHANCE PARTICIPATION, CAPACITY AND EMPOWERMENT ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

Ambition 16: Transform our natural environment to support wellbeing and inward investment and enhance it for current and future generations

Ambition 17: Ensure we keep our environment clean, safe, and attractive

Consultation and Distribution Record

Consultation Process	The sub policies which support the overall strategy are subject to their own consultation exercises, the details of which are contained within the individual policies.	
Stakeholders	Contacts identified for each service	
	Mark Findlay	Regulatory Services and Waste Solutions
	Joanne Glennie	Environmental Assets
	Hayley Andrew	Environmental Assets
	Laura McCrorie	Environmental Assets
	Lynda Stevenson	Environmental Assets
Distribution	CMT	

Change record

Date		Author	
Change made			

foreword

I am delighted to present the Environment Strategy for North Lanarkshire. We ASPIRE that North Lanarkshire is **the** place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit and a key aspect of this will be to ensure that we have an environment that allows us to deliver on this ambition.

For the first time, the strategy brings together separate but related strategies, policies and plans to ensure a one council approach to the environment and that we continue on a route of inclusive growth.

In these challenging times, it is essential that the council recognises the importance that the environment plays in the day to day life of people who live, work and visit North Lanarkshire. This will include everything from the air we breathe to how we travel throughout the area and how we maximise the use of our green and open spaces.

Significant resources are deployed in the management, maintenance and construction of our environment and it is essential that these are deployed to deliver the best possible outcomes for North Lanarkshire's communities.

Michael McPake

Convener, Environment & Transportation Committee

introduction & context

1.1 North Lanarkshire Council

North Lanarkshire is Scotland's fourth largest local authority area and is ideally situated in the heart of Scotland with excellent transport links to the rest of Scotland and beyond.

We have a resident population of 339,390, and the most favourable estimate for population growth in 10 years, even before our significant growth targets are considered.

Our GVA (a measure of the value of goods and services produced) per head is £49,536 – one of the strongest and fastest growing economies in Scotland.

We have higher levels of employment with unemployment figures reducing from a high in 2012 of 11.2% to 4.6% in 2017.

We are not complacent, however, and have a vision that North Lanarkshire is the place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest, and Visit. We are improving the lives of everyone who lives, works, or visits here by driving inclusive economic growth, increasing skills, and generating jobs and training opportunities. We aim to ensure that the benefits of economic growth and prosperity reach all of our communities with a fairer distribution of wealth across North Lanarkshire.

Large scale regeneration and infrastructure projects are planned and we will put local people first to maintain and improve facilities, services, and supports. We will focus on the things that will significantly improve the quality of life and wellbeing of all our residents and the people who want to live, learn, work, invest, and visit here.

1.2 National Context

This century must see an urgent scaling-up of action to tackle global environmental challenges – climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, resource depletion and waste – to safeguard the wellbeing and prosperity of people around the globe, and the natural world we belong to. Current patterns of consumption and production are simply not sustainable. If everyone in the world lived as we currently do in Scotland, it would require the resources of more than three planets. We need to adapt to prosper – socially, economically and environmentally – within planetary limits: to work towards a world where no country uses more resources than the Earth can support and to replenish the natural systems that sustain us. This transformation will require commitment, collaboration, innovation and political leadership.

The approach we take to environment and climate change policies will play an essential role in our nation's success over the coming decades. It will protect the beauty and uniqueness of Scotland's landscapes and nature, which are precious in their own right. And it will create new opportunities to strengthen our economy, social wellbeing, health and equality. Our ambition is to continue to establish Scotland's place in the world as a country ready to lead global action to address current and future environmental challenges, and to collaborate with others as we do that.

In individual areas of environmental policy, Scotland already has strong, ambitious strategies in place.

- In 2018, the Scottish Government published its Climate Change Plan which details how they will continue to drive progress towards the currently legislated emissions reduction target of 80% by 2050. In response to the international Paris Agreement, they have made Scotland's existing climate legislation even tougher, setting a 90% emissions reduction target for 2050 and also that the earliest achievable date for reaching net-zero emissions is regularly reviewed. As soon as a target date for reaching net-zero emissions can be set credibly and responsibly, they will write that date into law.

- The Scottish Government have a pioneering Land Use Strategy (2016) with a strategic vision on how to realise the full potential of Scotland's land in ways that result in multiple benefits for our economy, environment and communities.
- Scotland has the most stringent air quality targets in the UK and the Government's Cleaner Air for Scotland Strategy (2015) sets out how we will reduce air pollution to protect human health and fulfil EU legal commitments by 2020.

To continue with its environmental commitments the Scottish Government recently published their 'Developing an Environment Strategy for Scotland' discussion paper. The purpose of this paper was to start discussion on how Scotland will develop a strategic approach on environmental policy to protect and enhance Scotland's environment, safeguard natural capital and continue Scotland's leading role in addressing environmental challenges. In particular the Government outlined the following six draft outcomes which it would aspire to achieve the following.

1. We are a climate leader and play our full role in limiting global temperature rise to well below 2°C.
2. We are a zero waste, resource efficient nation.
3. Our biodiversity is protected and enhanced, supporting healthy ecosystems.
4. Our air, freshwater, seas and soils are of excellent quality.
5. Everyone can access, enjoy and connect with nature.
6. The global footprint of our consumption and production is sustainable.

It is important therefore that the local ambitions of the council reflect these national ambitions where appropriate.

1.3 Local Context

At a more local level, the Environment Strategy will deliver on a number of priorities and their underlying ambition statements as detailed in the Plan for North Lanarkshire.

Improve economic opportunities and outcomes

Ambition 2: Refocus our town centres and communities to be multi-functional connected places which maximise social, economic, and environmental opportunities

Ambition 3: Maximise the use of our marketable land and assets through improved development in business and industrial infrastructure

Ambition 4: Market and promote North Lanarkshire as the place to live, learn, work, invest, and visit

Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities

Ambition 15: Encourage the health and wellbeing of people through a range of social, cultural, and leisure activities

Enhance participation, capacity, and empowerment across our communities

Ambition 16: Transform our natural environment to support wellbeing and inward investment and enhance it for current and future generations

Ambition 17: Ensure we keep our environment clean, safe, and attractive

1.4 Strategic Planning

The Council has a number of strategies, action plans and policies which all contribute to the development and protection of the environment within North Lanarkshire. It is imperative that we ensure all of these plans and policies are not implemented in isolation. The purpose of the Environment Strategy is to implement these policies under one strategic approach to ensure that all take account of, and are aware of, common factors and that this is reflected within the individual documents. This will ensure that North Lanarkshire maximises the achievement of our priorities and also contributes to the national environmental objectives detailed above.

To ensure the North Lanarkshire place based approach is delivered, a North Lanarkshire [Local Development Plan](#) is being prepared and the following strategies and plans will be developed and implemented.

<p>Active Travel and Access Strategy</p>	<p>The revised Active Travel and Access strategy will bring together the current Cycling and Walking Strategy and the Access Strategy. It will define our outlook on active travel and access as well as giving an outline for activities, implementing improvements and encouraging modal shift to active travel.</p> <p>It will help deliver partnership working with SPT, Sustrans and Central Scotland Green Network Trust and help share information across sections and departments as well as partners and stakeholders.</p> <p>The information will also feed into the Local Transport Plan which the authority are obliged to undertake and will help the authority and the Scottish Government, meet its sustainable travel objectives as laid out in their National Transport Strategy, Long Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2020, NPF3, Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, The National Walking Strategy and the regional Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan.</p>
<p>Air Quality Strategy</p>	<p>Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues, because areas with poor air quality are also often the less affluent areas.</p> <p>The annual health cost to society of the impacts of particulate matter alone in the UK is estimated to be around £16 billion. The council is committed to reducing the exposure of people in North Lanarkshire to poor air quality in order to improve health. The Air Quality Action Plan has been produced as part of our statutory duties required by the Local Air Quality Management framework. It outlines the action we will take to improve air quality in North Lanarkshire.</p>
<p>Biodiversity Action Plan</p>	<p>The Biodiversity Action Plan details the actions required across North Lanarkshire to safeguard vulnerable species and protect and enhance key habitats at an ecosystem scale.</p>

<p>Carbon Management Plan</p> 	<p>Climate Change is the most significant issue facing our planet. The Carbon Management Plan (CMP) details the council's climate actions in terms of mitigation, adaptation and sustainability. The actions and activities contained therein, contribute to a targeted reduction of the council's greenhouse gas emissions. The CMP's primary focus is on the council's non-domestic emissions however it contains a snapshot of activities associated with the council's social landlord function, acknowledging the positive impact the domestic sector can have on our overall emissions. The CMP is the lead document for the council's overall emission reduction target.</p>
<p>Contaminated Land Strategy</p> 	<p>Under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the council has been given duties and responsibilities regarding contaminated land in its area. In summary, the council's duties under the legislation are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inspect the district for land that may be contaminated • inspect individual sites which may be contaminated and • ensure the appropriate action is taken to remediate the land. <p>The Contaminated Land Strategy details how we will fulfil its duties under the above legislation and in turn protect human health and assist in the regeneration of such sites.</p>
<p>Core Paths Plan</p> 	<p>This plan was originally published in 2011 and provides a basic framework of paths, giving the public reasonable access throughout North Lanarkshire and links to support a wider network of paths and all other areas of land and inland water over which access rights (under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003) are applicable.</p>
<p>Food Growing Strategy</p> 	<p>This is a new statutory requirement of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. The document will identify land that could be used for allotments and community food growing spaces, will identify how NLC intends to increase the provision of these and will also highlight the benefits of 'Growing Your Own'.</p>

<p>Local Transport Strategy</p>	<p>The Local Transport Strategy document details how we intend to deliver on national objectives at a local level, and provides an action plan for meeting local challenges and objectives.</p>
	<p>The transport strategy has four objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To stimulate business and the economy and develop North Lanarkshire as an attractive place to invest, work and do business. • To provide equal opportunities and enhance the choice, accessibility and availability of transport, particularly for those in deprived areas and those with limited access to the transport network. • To promote safety in the community and enhance actual and perceived safety when travelling on the transport network. • To protect North Lanarkshire’s natural and built environment and to improve the health of its population. <p>This document is currently under review and the council is awaiting details of the Regional Transport Strategy and new Transport Bill which will inform the final revised document.</p>
<p>Woodland Management Plan</p>	<p>This is an entirely new plan and will detail how woodlands within North Lanarkshire will be managed during the period 2020-2025.</p>
	
<p>Single Use Plastic Action Plan</p>	<p>An entirely new plan to reduce our reliance on single use plastic.</p>
	

The above plans and strategies will retain their particular nomenclature for reasons of convention and statutory status but will be sub policies of the Environment Strategy. Each is at a different stage of issue or development, however the table below provides details as to when the individual documents are due for revision/ publication and integration into the overall Environment Strategy.

Strategy / Policy / Plan	Statutory (Yes/ No)	Currently Available (Yes/ No)	Review Date/ Date Available	Review Frequency
Active Travel and Access Strategy	Yes	No	September 2019	5 Years
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Woodland Management Plan	No	No	April 2020	5 years
Carbon Management Plan	No	Yes	April 2019	3 years
Single Use Plastic	No	No	November 2019	2 years

Copies of all available sub policies are accessible on the council's website.

1.5 Oversight and Impact Assessments

1.5. Governance

The Environment Strategy will be monitored and reported through the Council's Environment & Transportation Committee and each sub-policy shall be approved and monitored at the relevant council committee.

1.5.2 Performance Indicators

Within each sub-policy there will be a range of indicators that will allow performance against the outcomes of the strategy to be carefully monitored. As in 1.5.1 details of this performance shall be reported at appropriate intervals to the relevant council committee.

1.5.3 Equalities and Fairer Scotland

The principle of equality of opportunity cuts across all themes of the Environment Strategy and indeed the work of the council. Our corporate commitment to equality is outlined within the council's Single Equality Scheme, which sets out our approach to meeting the duties laid out by the Equality Act 2010.

An equalities impact assessment (EQIA) has been completed to assess the impact of the strategy on these groups. The assessment concluded that the impact assessment carried out did not produce any significant issues to warrant further actions.

The outcomes of this strategy will also not have any effect on the Fairer Scotland framework.

Under the Fairer Scotland Duty all sub-policies will actively consider how we can reduce inequalities caused by socio economic disadvantage. The Woodland Management Plan, for example, will seek to improve accessibility to parklands to ensure no one is more disadvantaged than others in accessing our parks and greenspaces.

1.5.4 Risk Management

Each sub-policy will be subject to standard risk assessment.

1.5.5 HR and Legislative

Each sub-policy will comply with any relevant legislative requirement.

1.5.6 Environmental

Each sub-policy will have its own specific focus to directly impact on the environment.

This document can be made available in a range of languages and formats, including large print, braille, audio, electronic and accessible formats.

To make a request, please contact Corporate Communications on 01698 302527 or email: corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk

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