

Environmental Policy



The Highways and Municipal Department of Gwynedd Council, provides a wide range of essential services. These include activities such as highway maintenance, Council fleet management and maintenance, refuse collection and recycling, landfill aftercare and waste treatment, street cleansing, manage and maintain cemeteries, managing crematorium and public grounds maintenance.

It is recognised that the operations of the Highways and Municipal Department do have a direct impact on the environment; and may on occasion be potentially detrimental. Our aim is to reduce or remove the negative impacts on the environment and increase the positive impacts and influences, whilst ensuring a consistent service and maintaining appropriate standards.

We are committed to continual improvement in our environmental performance. To fulfil this obligation, the Department will:

- Manage and monitor our significant environmental aspects through assessing the risks and carrying out inspections;
- Act in accordance with all relevant environmental legislation;
- Reduce the risk of causing harm to the environment;
- Minimise the amount of waste produced by the Department by promoting and enforcing the waste hierarchy – prevent, reduce, re-use, recycle;
- Manage and reduce our energy consumption through setting targets and putting strategies in place;
- Promote economically and environmentally efficient transport methods that will reduce our impact on the environment;
- Prioritise environmental considerations into existing and future Departmental policies in order to improve our environmental performance;
- Ensure that respective clients as well as any contractor, sub-contractor and supplier commissioned by the Highways and Municipal Department have adequate environmental management and sustainable development policies, practices and systems in place;
- Promote sustainable procurement and operational practices that also consider the environmental effect;
- To support the development of staff and ensure that they receive training in order for them to contribute to implementing our environmental system;
- Develop, implement and maintain an environmental management system that is certified to ISO 14001:2015.

Signed:

Steffan Jones
Head of Highways and Municipal
September, 2019

Y Cyng. Catrin Wager
Cabinet Member (Environmental)
September, 2019

Environmental Roles and Responsibilities

1. Head of Department

Heads of Department are responsible for the protection of the environment within their Department. They are accountable to the Chief Executive for ensuring that their Department complies with environmental regulations.

It is the responsibility of each Head of Department to:

- Ensure that the environmental policy, along with relevant environmental procedures are integral to the Departments' work, culture, values and performance standards and that competent advice on environmental issues have been acquired.
- Provide clear leadership to Senior Managers and staff on environmental protection and set and review targets improving environmental performance.
- Develop an open and sensitive culture which nurtures trust and promotes the participation and involvement of all staff.
- Ensure staff are appropriately represented and consulted on any matters that could affect the environment, and that arrangements are in place to ensure that environmental information flows into, within and from the Department.
- Hold a regular (6 monthly) Departmental Health, Safety and Environmental forum.
- Ensure staff training needs have been identified as appropriate to their role and duties and ensure a thorough training programme is in place (to include induction and refresher training,) and that staff at all levels are competent and capable to undertake their duties safely.
- Ensure that responsibilities for protecting the environment are clear within their Department.
- Ensure that all significant impacts arising from the work of their Department have been identified and that clear and documented procedures and risk assessments have been prepared
- Ensure that a departmental risk register is kept continuously under review.
- Ensure there adequate support staff, representatives and resources to effectively implement the environmental policy.
- Take account of environmental protection needs at the planning and design stage of any new plant, equipment, process or project.

- Ensure environmental considerations are considered and planned from the outset of any major development or project being managed by their Department so that risks are either eliminated or effectively controlled. Also, where appropriate, bring environmental issues to the Management Group for discussion and resolution.
- Nominate a responsible and suitable person to act as Site Manager for all sites under the control of their Department, and ensure that an effective system is in place for notifying the Property Service of any changes.
- Ensure that there are effective procedures in place within the Department to manage any contractors and / or partners undertaking work on behalf of the Department.

2. Service Managers

Managers are accountable for environmental protection within their Service and for promoting a culture of good environmental practice.

The responsibilities of Managers will include:-

- Leading by example; nurturing and maintaining good environmental practices at all times and ensuring sensible environmental management.
- Develop an open culture which breeds trust and promotes the participation and involvement of all staff with open lines of communication for staff to report on concerns.
- Ensure all staff are aware of incident reporting procedures; that incidents are investigated and that prompt corrective action is taken where necessary.
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient environmental risk assessments are undertaken in their area of responsibility. These should be recorded, shared with all relevant staff and regularly reviewed.
- Satisfy themselves that robust environmental protection standards are implemented and maintained.
- Ensure that staff receive specific environmental training applicable to their role. In particular, ensure that new staff are given adequate induction training and identify and monitor the refresher training needs of their staff.
- Identify partners and contractors working for/with the Service and ensure they have robust environmental protection systems in place.
- Monitor the need for further environmental measures, instruction and training.
- Communicate environmental issues effectively with all staff in the department and include environmental performance as a standing item in team meetings.

- Regularly liaising with the Department's Environmental Assistant who will offer guidance and support.
- Report to the Head of Department any concerns regarding Health, Safety, Welfare and Environment that have been identified.

3. Managers / Supervisors / Team Leaders

Staff who supervise or have responsibility for employees, trainees, contractors or members of the public have a duty to support managers in managing the environment within their supervisory work area.

They will carry out the following duties:

- Provide effective leadership to their staff and support improvements to environmental performance.
- Ensure that environmental issues are taken into account at the design stage of new initiatives and projects.
- Continually assess the risks to the environment in their area of responsibility and ensure that significant hazards are adequately addressed.
- Where risks cannot be immediately or wholly eliminated, ensure that reasonable action is taken to reduce the risk to the lowest level practicable. These actions should be recorded on an environmental risk assessment form and brought to the attention of those affected.
- Ensure that incidents in their area of responsibility are reported promptly to the Health, Safety, Welfare and Environment Unit and ensure that incidents are investigated and reasonable action is taken to prevent recurrence.
- Ensure that all employees in their area of responsibility receive appropriate environmental training with regards to protecting the environment. Ensure they have sufficient knowledge, skills and information to carry out their work without affecting the environment.
- Ensure that they and their staff are kept up-to-date with all relevant environmental information.

4. Site Managers

Central to the Council's efforts to improve the condition and use of its buildings and land within site boundaries and ensure they operate safely and efficiently without posing a risk to the environment is the role of Site Managers: individuals who keep an eye on the Council's buildings and land in order that they are maintained in a safe, clean, tidy and attractive condition that does not pose a threat to the protection of the environment, as well as being suitable for the needs of staff and customers.

The responsibilities of Site Managers will be to:-

- Lead by example; nurture and maintain a positive culture to protect the environment at all times.
- Manage any devolved maintenance / servicing budget where applicable. This does not include any budgets managed by Property Services.
- Act as initial contact point, or ensure that another suitable person has been designated as the initial contact point, and take responsibility for day-to-day issues relating to the property.
- Ensure that environmental risk assessments are undertaken and revised and ensure compliance with the arrangements to manage the risks linked to the building, the site and its use.
- Ensure that the Property Services / Blue Box files are kept up-to-date.
- Ensure that Management Plans e.g. waste management plans relating to waste stored on site are implemented. And emergency preparedness plans relating to the environment are implemented on site.
- Arrange grounds maintenance, environmental protection should be considered during this task.
- Support the Council's efforts to reduce energy use and ensure arrangements are in place to record the use of energy on site and to send this information to the Property Service monthly.
- Ensure any contractors they use are competent to undertake the work safely, do not have a negative impact on the environment and produce risk assessments on the work and comply with Gwynedd Council's Contractor management procedures.
- Ensure that Gwynedd Council environmental and safety procedures are followed.
- Ensure that site inspections take place regularly and are recorded on the relevant log sheet e.g. monthly site inspections.

- Attend any training provided for site manager including refresher.
- Promptly reply to requests for information by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit or Property Services.

5. All employees

It will be the responsibility of all employees to:-

- Take reasonable care for the protection of the environment by what they do, or do not do at work.
- Co-operate with all managers and supervisors on environmental matters.
- Familiarise themselves with and act in accordance with the environmental Policy any procedures which have been issued to them or otherwise brought to their attention.
- Attend training provided for them and act in accordance with the training provided or any other verbal and documented instructions given to them.
- Follow safe operating procedures and instructions and not misuse or damage equipment.
- Familiarise themselves with the environmental emergency preparedness plans in their department, participate in training and follow procedures in the event of an emergency.
- Report to their Line Manager as soon as possible any concerns they have about an environmental matter or a situation they feel could cause harm to the environment.
- Assist in maintaining high standards of housekeeping in their workplace.
- Report all environmental incidents or near misses immediately to their Line Manager using the HS11 form. This must be done as soon as possible after the incident. This includes reporting any incident involving a non-employee whilst on Council premises or sites or affected by Council activities which come to their attention.
- Ensure they are aware of how to undertake a work task allocated to them, and how to use equipment they are required to use, and if they are uncertain on any aspect of their duties to ask a supervisor or manager.
- Assess any substantial hazard that could arise during a work process (i.e. dynamic assessment) and ensure that they do not carry out work that could cause a detrimental effect on the environment.
- Make constructive suggestions to their Line Manager on any aspects of environmental protection.

6. Environmental Support

The Head of Department will give consideration to nominating support officers to assist with the implementation and promotion of environmental performance within the Department. In general, support staff will:

- Have received training in NEBOSH Environmental Management, equivalent to certificate or diploma level.
- Act as a contact point on environmental matters within the service or specific sections of the service.
- Assist the Department Head to raise awareness of environmental matters within the Service and promote environmental performance improvements.
- Attend meetings where required.