

# London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

## Environmental Policy

***Council priority: The Council is committed to making Barking and Dagenham “Cleaner, greener and safer.”***

### **A Corporate Environmental Commitment**

The Council recognises that it has a significant impact on the local and wider environment. It is committed to the broader goal of sustainable development and an environmentally sustainable Borough

The Council as a major employer and service provider, is an agent for change to a more environmentally sustainable future. The Council can therefore lead by example and through its' links with the community and its' partners, influence others to adopt the broader aims of this policy.

#### **The Council will;**


As far as is practicable, prevent pollution and the cost to the environment from the services we provide and positively influence others through leadership, good example, best practice, education and awareness raising;

Establish 'local quality of life' indicators for the local environment and everyone who lives and works in the borough, and will measure and report our progress annually to ensure we continually improve our environment;

Strive to minimise the Councils' environmental impacts through implementing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change and complying with environmental legislation and where feasible exceed legal standards and to undertake continual improvement.

The Council will meet its' commitments through implementing an Environmental Action Plan with targets linked to Performance Indicators or specified outcomes.

As a public document this policy statement will be communicated to all of our employees, external partners and our stakeholders.



Leader of the Council



Chief Executive

# **Environmental Policy**

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 The Council recognises that it has an obligation to develop a structured and joined up approach to managing and monitoring its' impact upon the environment both in the local and wider context. With the environment, the Council has the following responsibilities:

- To protect and enhance the environment
- Make prudent use of resources
- Make provision for the future

1.2 The Council accepts that the 'environment' no longer sits within a Single Departmental responsibility and is a cross cutting, strategic corporate issue. It will influence many of the Council's external relationships;

- The Barking and Dagenham Partnership
- Neighbourhood Renewal Programme
- Community Forums
- Housing Area Forums

1.3 To address what is wide-ranging responsibility, the Council has agreed it first needs to demonstrate good environmental performance as a basis for dialogue with external partners and stakeholders, and to provide community leadership on this issue. The initial focus will be upon;

- Environmental management by the Council as a corporate body
- Engaging and consulting the local community about their aspirations for a better environment

## **2.0 The Environmental Action Plan**

2.1 In order to progress the Environmental Policy and to measure progress, an Environmental Action Plan has been developed to encompass actions being taken by the Council and the local Community about the environment. The Plan details a wide range of actions being taken over the next 5 years to 2006, which will be reviewed annually.

2.2 The key environmental issues facing Barking and Dagenham have been identified through community consultation, e.g. Community Priorities. Alongside this, strategic corporate environmental issues have been identified.

- 2.3 The areas of action have been broken down into the following;
- Corporate and strategic responses
  - Service led responses
  - Community led responses
- 2.4 The Environmental Action Plan provides a response to the Council's 2020 vision for the Borough and the Community Priorities, in particular;
- Cleaner, Greener and Safer
  - Rights and Responsibilities
- 2.5 The Environmental Action Plan includes actions to achieve the following;
- Introducing more environmentally friendly vehicles
  - Reducing litter
  - Introducing renewable energy use and greater energy efficiency
  - Introducing walk to school to reduce car use
  - Greening the Councils' procurement processes
  - Improving visual amenity
  - Maintaining green spaces for access to everyone
  - Increased composting and recycling
  - Planning the built environment
  - Tackling noise pollution

### **3.0 Performance Indicators**

- 3.1 To monitor progress, the Environmental Action Plan is linked to a series of existing Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) or specified outcomes. These PI's will be refined over time to more closely reflect the Council's and local community's aspirations for the environment with "Local Quality of Life Indicators." To complement this approach, the Council is investigating environmental reporting to complete the picture on progress. The ESSG will report annually to the Council's Executive about the Environmental Action Plan.

### **4.0 Responsibility**

- 4.1 The Council has identified the Head of Health and Consumer Services as the officer responsible for the corporate function of Environmental Sustainability. This officer reports to The Management Team and the Council's Executive and is supported by the Environmental Sustainability Steering Group (ESSG), with nominated officers from each Department.

4.2 The ESSG is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Environmental Policy through the Environmental Action Plan and Environmental Management Systems. A Corporate Framework illustrating this arrangement was approved in August 2001 by the Council's Assembly.

## **5.0 Strategic Issues**

5.1 In order to implement the Environment Policy, there are a number of strategic issues the Council will be addressing. These are;

## **5.2 Environmental Management Systems**

5.2.1 To be able to measure and manage the impact the Council has upon the environment, environmental management system (EMS) accredited to ISO 14001 will be implemented. Environmental Management Systems will become an essential tool for identifying specific environmental impacts in Service delivery. Pilot programmes are being run in two Council Departments, due to complete in September 2002 with external accreditation of the EMS. After which, an evaluation of the process will follow and the scope of implementation to each Department will be determined with a target for completion by December 2006.

## **5.3 Waste Minimisation**

5.3.1 In order to reduce its' resource consumption the Council will applying the waste minimisation hierarchy to its Services. This will be achieved as part of the EMS implementation using waste minimisation as a tool for improved environmental management and performance.

## **5.4 Procurement**

5.4.1 In order to be able to make progress in resource efficiency and minimise environmental impacts, the Council's procurement processes require review. The scope of this review will be developed during 2002 with a plan for 'green' procurement developed with the Council's Corporate Procurement Officer for April 2003.

## **5.5 Climate Change and Energy Efficiency**

5.5.1 The Council is signatory to the "Nottingham Declaration for Climate change." This is a key area for the improvement of resource efficiency by the Council. This work encompasses existing energy efficiency programmes and the Fuel Poverty Strategy. A Climate Change Plan is being developed for

December 2002, by the ESSG to identify targets for the Council for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, using renewable energy sources and reducing energy consumption.