

Report to	Executive Panel
Date	19 June 2023
Lead Officer	Stuart Millington, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Environment)
Contact Officer	Tim Christensen, Environment and Climate Change Manager
Subject	Environmental Strategy 2023-2030



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 Following a discussion with Members in three Environmental and Sustainability working group meetings, an Environmental Strategy for the period 2023-2030 has now been developed. It consolidates our existing legal and policy commitments relating to environmental management, and sets out how we propose to meet them.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) note the content of the report; and
 - ii) endorse the proposed Environmental Strategy for the period 2023-2030 for approval at the Full Authority meeting on 17 July.

BACKGROUND

- 3 Three Working Groups for Fire Authority Members have now taken place; on 14 March, 4 April and 2 May 2023. During these meetings, Members were given a presentation by the Environment and Climate Change Manager, introducing the concept of an Environmental Strategy, outlining recommendations for what should be included, and finally presenting a draft text for comment and review.
- 4 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies to consider the long-term impacts of decisions in a number of ways. The relevant duties to the preparation of an environmental strategy for the Service fall under the heading 'A Resilient Wales':
 - 1) **Biodiversity and Soil** Maintain and enhance the natural environment through managing land appropriately to create healthy functioning ecosystems
 - 2) **Natural Green Space** Support social resilience and community well-being
 - 3) **Knowledge of Nature** Increase awareness of the importance of a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems

- 4) **Water and Air Quality** Support ecological resilience, making the environment healthier for wildlife and people
- 5 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets out an ambition for the Welsh Government to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in Wales to net zero by the year 2050.
- 6 In accordance with this duty, the Welsh Government has prepared a series of interim carbon budgets, including under Carbon Budget 3 (CB3) an ambition for the Welsh public sector to be net zero carbon by 2030.
- 7 The Service is a signatory to the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group (EESG) Sustainability Charter, which sets out the following relevant commitments:
 - 1) Work towards net zero carbon emissions through improving the energy efficiency of our estate and sustainable business and personal travel.
 - 2) Improve resource efficiency and adopt circular economy approaches to reducing waste and save money.
 - 3) Restore and enhance local biodiversity through considered management of our estates.
 - 4) Adapt to inevitable climate change through proactively managing our ability to respond to extreme weather events and changes to service demand.
 - 5) Take action to avoid or mitigate pollution of water courses.
 - 6) Minimise our reliance on fossil fuels by actively seeking to generate renewable energy at our sites, and through the adoption of greener technologies and fuels for our fleet.

INFORMATION

- 8 As a Fire and Rescue Service, it is important that we recognise the importance of protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations. Our actions have a direct impact on the environment and we have a duty to reduce our environmental footprint and promote sustainability in all areas of our operations.
- 9 The proposed Environmental Strategy outlines our commitment to reducing our environmental impact. This will include implementing sustainable practices in our daily operations, reducing our carbon emissions, and promoting environmental awareness amongst our staff and members of the community.

- 10 The Strategy sets out a number of detailed plans to be developed over the coming financial year, detailing specific measures and timescales for implementation in a number of areas, including procurement, fleet, and our station estate.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	Direct implication for agreeing the steps towards meeting one of the Authority's long-term improvement and well-being objectives
Budget	The proposed Environmental Strategy will have implications for both capital and operational budgets within each financial year to calendar year 2030.
Legal	Supports compliance with improvement planning, well-being and environment legislation
Staffing	No known impact on staffing levels
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	The impact of specific actions on these aspects will be assessed at the appropriate point in their development
Risks	Reduces the risks of legal non-compliance and of failing to budget and plan appropriately