

Cabinet Meeting on Insert Date

Staffordshire Sustainability Board – Vision and Council Commitments



Cllr Simon Tagg, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change said,

“Local authorities in Staffordshire are in the singular position of only being responsible for a small proportion of the county’s overall carbon emissions, but clearly able to set the tone and influence others as we move towards a cleaner future.

“The County Council has already begun its journey, reducing its own emissions by a quarter in a single year, and working with Staffordshire’s district and borough authorities allows greater opportunities, scope for collaboration and the ability to deliver on becoming a net zero county.”

Report Summary:

This report provides an update on the successful formation of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board (SSB).

The formation of SSB was one of the actions in the County Council’s approved Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2), where the overarching aim of the Board is to facilitate collaborative working to enable successful transition to a Net Zero County, as defined within Staffordshire County Council’s climate emergency declaration.

This SSB was formed by the Staffordshire Leaders Board and is made up of elected members from all of the councils within the geographical area of Staffordshire at County, District and Borough level.

The first meeting of the SSB was in January 2022 and it was agreed that all of the councils should adopt a unified vision and that we should also commit to a fundamental pledge that identifies first, solid steps to set a strong foundation for continued positive climate action.

The SSB requested that all of the member councils would put forward the appended document to their respective Cabinets for approval by June 2022.



Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet – Wednesday 15 June 2022

Staffordshire Sustainability Board – Vision and Council Commitments

Recommendation(s) of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Members to note the formation of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board, which aims to enable successful collaborative working on climate change and sustainability, across Staffordshire.
- b. Members to agree and approve the adoption of the Staffordshire Sustainability Boards – Vision and council commitments

Report of the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background

1. The Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2) contains 33 specific actions and was approved by Cabinet in October 2021.
2. One of the key actions under Behaviour Change was the establishment of a countywide Sustainability board, to set the strategic direction in ways of working with our District and Borough council colleagues, with a view to working more collaboratively towards our Net Zero goal and our climate emergency declaration.
3. Although the sum of all the collective Councils' carbon emissions is estimated at less than 2% of the 5.8M tonnes of carbon emitted by Staffordshire every year. There are a number of levers that the Councils have a degree of influence over, to enable change and the reduction of carbon emissions on a County wide basis.
4. The SSB was formed by the Staffordshire Leaders Board and has a membership of elected members from the County, Districts and Boroughs, who have climate change as a responsibility within their portfolios.

5. Supporting this board is a group of senior officers, with representation from all the councils, they meet independently and feed back to their members.
6. With the successful formation of the Sustainability Board in January 2022, a strategic vision and outline of commitments was needed to demonstrate direction and to harmonise individual Council climate change objectives, on the journey towards “Net Zero”.

Vision and council commitments

7. The Vision and council commitments report is attached as Appendix 1.
8. The document sets out the strategic vision that the SSB will adhere to and recognising that this vision may change within the short term, a 12-month review of this vision has been suggested.
9. Within the report the context of the scale of the situation ahead of us is framed and it is highlighted that only a very small percentage of Staffordshire’s overall carbon emissions are attributed to the collective councils.
10. It is recognised that at certain times we may need to invite external specialist knowledge to the board, to facilitate knowledge transfer where we do not have access to a particular resource within our organisations or from representation on the board.
11. The report details 10 council commitments that will form the basis of a strong foundation pledge to the successful formation of the SSB.
12. These commitments will ensure that all of the councils represented on the SSB have common goals, this will facilitate clear and collaborative discussion and actions, working towards our collective Net Zero commitments.

Legal Implications

13. The council has a legal obligation to become Net carbon zero by 2050.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

14. The SSB have agreed that in order to push forward this agenda a dedicated climate change officer should be appointed to assist the SSB

achieve its goals. It has also been agreed that the cost will be shared equally across the nine partners.

15. Budget from SCC will be provided through our climate change budgets with the provision made in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Climate Change Implications

16. Actions that are a product of discussions from the SSB will have a positive contribution to the reduction of carbon emissions within the County. Not all reductions in carbon emissions will be attributed to the Councils emissions but should be attributed to Staffordshire as a whole, through the levers that the Councils have within their influence.
17. Wherever possible potential carbon emission reductions that may happen as a product of actions from the SSB, will be quantified and reported back to the board as an indication of performance, which may be referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for evaluation.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Staffordshire Sustainability Board – Visions and council commitments.

Contact Details

Assistant Director:	Clive Thomson, Assistant Director for Connectivity, and Sustainability
Report Author:	James Cartwright
Job Title:	Sustainability Manager
Telephone No.:	01785 277253
E-Mail Address:	james.cartwright@staffordshire.gov.uk