



**Staffordshire Leaders Board**

1 December 2022

**Staffordshire Sustainability  
Board – Progress in 2022**

**What is the Leaders Board being asked to do?**

- a) Discuss the successes of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board so far, and identify any other success of joint working in climate change and sustainability.

**Background**

1. Sustainability is one of the key issues facing Staffordshire. As democratically elected local leaders we are clear that we need to work together to agree a future vision and ensure we meet our ambitions.
2. Less than 2% of Staffordshire’s annual carbon footprint is produced by the Public Sector. However, collectively the councils could have an influence on a significant proportion of overall emissions. This collaboration is essential for the future.
3. The Staffordshire Sustainability Board was established in January 2022 to enable and facilitate change wherever possible, throughout the geographic area of Staffordshire as a whole. It features representation from all local authorities in Staffordshire, including a non-voting invite to Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and feeds its work into wider governance structures including each authority’s decision-making structures and the Staffordshire Leaders Board.
4. The Staffordshire Leaders Board, at its first formal meeting in June 2022, set out 6 key priorities for the year ahead. One of these is Sustainability, reinforcing the fact this is a clear and urgent priority for all members of the Board.
5. This paper outlines the Sustainability Board’s progress through 2022 and its key next steps. This will be discussed at the December 2022 meeting of the Staffordshire Leaders Board, as an opportunity to publicise the good work being done, and the agreed priorities for future work.





## Vision and Pledges

6. The Board has worked swiftly following the inaugural meeting held on the 19 January 2022 where the terms of reference for the Board were agreed. On the 7 March 2022 a joint vision together with ten base pledges were agreed with the recommendation that all members should seek formal approval through their decision-making processes. The joint vision states that:

- The Staffordshire Sustainability Board (SSB) is to facilitate the collaborative forum, to work together, as the democratically elected bodies in Staffordshire, to influence change and to encourage organisations and individuals to ensure that Staffordshire is net carbon zero by at least 2050 or before.
- The board will also work as a collective to address climate change adaptation measures that are within individual organisations' leverage, to influence and facilitate change with adaptation to climatic changes that are already locked in. Sustainability and habitat biodiversity will be reviewed throughout 2022 and shall be considered in a revised vision in January 2023.

7. To deliver this vision, the Board and its constituent authorities have agreed 10 pledges to help to progress this journey. Whilst it is recognised some of these pledges are internally focused they provide a strong signal to the Staffordshire community that actions will be lead from the front whilst at the same time helping shape the wider agenda to influence the 98% of carbon emissions that are emitted outside the public sector. The pledges are:

- 7.1. Baseline and Reporting – All Councils will prepare and publish an annual baseline analysis of their organisation's carbon footprint. All Councils will assess and publish progress in reducing their carbon footprint in October each year.
- 7.2. Carbon Literacy Training & Awareness – All Councillors and Senior Management Teams will undertake carbon literacy training to build corporate awareness of the issue and the Council's role in securing carbon reduction. All Councils will conduct a community impact assessment for key projects and proposals and include an assessment of Climate Change Implications in all key decision reports.
- 7.3. Ambassadors - All Councils will encourage members to act as climate change ambassadors, to encourage reduction in organisational carbon footprints and champion this in their own division/ward areas.
- 7.4. Green Travel Planning – All Councils will support and facilitate green travel by members, employees, and their communities





through promotion of green travel planning. Policy implementation on green transport and ways of working.

- 7.5. Communications – All Councils will contribute to a countywide communications group who will plan to deliver and manage a countywide Communications Plan, working together to drive our collective net zero visions forward, throughout the County.
  - 7.6. Green Energy – All the Councils will commit to procure 100% green energy supplies for their electricity as soon as existing contract commitments allow.
  - 7.7. Energy Reduction – By January 2023, all Councils will have established plans to reduce energy consumption across their estates.
  - 7.8. Low carbon fuelled fleet vehicles – Moving towards an aspirational zero emission operational vehicle fleet, the Councils will by 2025, establish a plan to move to low carbon fuels within their internal fleets by 2030.
  - 7.9. Waste & Recycling – By 2025 there will be a countywide waste strategy that all authorities will adhere to. This strategy will cover all aspects of the countywide waste operation, to reduce residual waste creation, increase recycling rates, promote composting of food waste at home and establish food waste collections throughout the County.
  - 7.10. Innovation and Technology – Working collaboratively with research institutions, businesses and partners the Councils will encourage both innovation and technology development, that will assist the delivery of our combined Net Zero visions.
8. Monitoring of these pledges is ongoing and the Staffordshire Sustainability Board will receive progress updates on a quarterly basis.
  9. The Staffordshire Sustainability Board offers a great opportunity to engage further with communities and businesses in Staffordshire. The pledges take into account that the local authorities within the SSB have a range of targets and approaches for reaching the vision, and that the pledges themselves can and will develop further over time. A major focus for 2023 will be around that key wider engagement.

### **Practical successes**

10. The Staffordshire Sustainability Board has made demonstrable progress against the vision and the 10 pledges through 2022.





11. Around 1 new residence is constructed per day in Staffordshire, most including gas boilers. Residential emissions as a whole make up 23% of Staffordshire's carbon emissions. The Sustainability Board has moved swiftly to begin a workstream around using our two tiers of local authority to jointly influence new residential development in the county, and seek opportunities to curb associated emissions.
12. To drive up the uptake of electric vehicles within the county, the Board has examined plans for a Staffordshire Electric Vehicle Strategy, which is being developed in partnership across both tiers of council, and will incorporate feasibility studies to form recommendations on the county's current and future needs. The intention is to take this to Staffordshire County Council Scrutiny in December and Cabinet sign-off in January 2023, with potential for all District / Borough Cabinet processes also.
13. A joint communications plan has been developed with the Staffordshire Sustainability Board in conjunction with all district and borough councils to help residents to understand where their carbon emissions are from and what they can do to reduce them. During 2023, a number of joint activities have been planned across the county to promote national awareness days, increase residents carbon literacy, run local events and launch a consultation to hear our residents' thoughts on climate change and the barriers they face to be greener.
14. The Sustainability Board's work programme is taking forward a range of new workstreams over the coming months, which look at limiting emissions both within Staffordshire and across our direct boundaries. On 28 November it will consider a paper on Active Travel and using available levers to drive this up in Staffordshire. In January the Board will look at Nature Recovery work and next steps, and in February will begin to look at ways that Taxi Licensing can be approached from the perspective of limiting carbon emissions.
15. A Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Climate Commission aims to bring together people and organisation from public, private and civic sectors to work collaboratively to drive forward climate action. The Climate Commission Board will have a diverse membership ranging including the NHS, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Keele University and the NFU. At the October Staffordshire Sustainability Board meeting it was resolved that the Board should join the emerging Staffordshire Climate Commission.
16. Staffordshire's changing climate is already having an impact on the local environment and the way we live our lives. In partnership with the District and Borough councils a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is under preparation. This plan will set a strong foundation to allow a consistent approach to climate change adaptation across the county.

### **Appendices:**

[Staffordshire Sustainability Board – Vision and Council Commitments](#)

