

# ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Organisation: **Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce**

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## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

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### 1. Introduction

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce is committed to operating in an environmentally responsible manner and recognises the importance of environmental stewardship in supporting a sustainable regional economy. This Environmental Policy establishes the framework through which the organisation will identify, manage, and reduce its environmental impacts across all operational activities.

The Chambers operates as a membership organisation providing services including international trade documentation, professional training programmes, business events, networking forums, and advocacy services to the business community across Staffordshire. Our environmental responsibilities extend across our own operational footprint and our influence within the wider business community.

This policy reflects our commitment to the principles of environmental sustainability and demonstrates our recognition that businesses operating sustainably are more resilient, cost efficient, and better positioned to meet the expectations of customers, employees, and stakeholders. As a business support organisation, we acknowledge our responsibility to lead by example and encourage our members and partners to adopt sustainable practices.

The policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and service providers engaged by Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce. Senior management holds responsibility for the

implementation and maintenance of this policy, with accountability for environmental performance embedded throughout the organisation.

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## **2. Environmental Impact**

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce acknowledges the following key areas of environmental impact arising from our operational activities:

### **2.1 Office Operations and Energy Consumption**

The organisation maintains office facilities from which we deliver training programmes, host networking events, manage administration, and operate our business support services. These facilities consume electricity for lighting, heating, cooling, and the operation of information technology infrastructure including computers, servers, and telecommunications equipment. Natural gas is used for space heating during winter months. These energy sources represent our most significant direct environmental impact in terms of carbon emissions and resource consumption.

### **2.2 Business Travel and Transportation**

Operational delivery requires staff to travel within the Staffordshire region and beyond to deliver training, attend business events, conduct member consultations, and represent the organisation at external forums. Staff commute to office locations using personal and public transport. The organisation also arranges transport for events and engages external suppliers and contractors who travel to our facilities. Business travel contributes to carbon emissions through fuel consumption and represents a material environmental consideration.

### **2.3 Waste Generation**

Office operations generate waste materials including paper and card from training materials, business correspondence, event documentation, and general administrative functions. Packaging waste arises from supplier deliveries including training materials and office supplies. Digital waste is generated through the management of information technology infrastructure and periodic replacement of equipment. Whilst the organisation operates in a largely digital service environment, waste management remains a relevant operational consideration.

## **2.4 Water Consumption**

Office facilities require water for sanitation and catering purposes. Whilst not a primary environmental concern for the organisation, water consumption forms part of the overall operational impact assessment.

## **2.5 Supply Chain and Purchasing**

The organisation engages external suppliers for goods and services including training materials, office supplies, catering provision for events, technology services, and facilities management. Purchasing decisions influence the environmental practices of our supply chain and represent an indirect area of environmental responsibility.

## **2.6 Digital Operations and Data Infrastructure**

The organisation operates increasingly digital business support services including online training delivery, virtual networking events, and digital documentation management. Cloud based systems and data infrastructure require electricity and contribute to operational environmental impact, though with lower impact intensity than traditional office infrastructure.

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## **3. Commitments**

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce commits to the following environmental objectives and principles:

### **3.1 Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction**

The organisation commits to reducing energy consumption within our office facilities through the following actions:

We will conduct an annual energy audit of office premises to identify consumption patterns and efficiency opportunities. All lighting will be reviewed to identify opportunities for installation of LED technology where cost effective to do so. Heating systems will be maintained in accordance with manufacturer recommendations to ensure optimal efficiency. Staff will be encouraged through communication and awareness campaigns to adopt energy

conscious behaviours including switching off equipment when not in use, utilising natural ventilation where appropriate, and mindful heating and cooling management.

The organisation will investigate opportunities to source electricity from renewable energy providers where commercially viable alternatives exist and will track the carbon intensity of our energy supply. We will aim to increase the proportion of renewable energy in our supply mix over the review period.

Where organisational growth or facility changes occur, new office space or refurbishment projects will incorporate energy efficient design principles and specification of energy efficient equipment. Heating systems will be assessed for fuel source efficiency, with consideration given to lower carbon alternatives during maintenance and replacement cycles.

### **3.2 Business Travel Reduction and Sustainable Transport**

The organisation recognises that business travel is necessary for service delivery but commits to reducing unnecessary journeys and promoting sustainable transport modes:

A business travel policy will be maintained to encourage staff to use public transport for journeys where available and practical. Virtual meeting technologies will be utilised where appropriate to reduce the necessity for travel. Staff commuting arrangements will be reviewed and employees encouraged to use car sharing schemes, public transport, and active travel modes including cycling and walking where practical.

Where business travel is required, staff will be encouraged to use rail transport in preference to domestic flight or private vehicle travel where journey length and purpose make this practicable. Event delivery will be organised regionally where possible to reduce attendee travel requirements.

The organisation will track business travel metrics through expenses management systems and will communicate travel and carbon impacts to staff to promote awareness of individual and collective impacts.

### **3.3 Waste Reduction and Recycling**

The organisation commits to reducing waste generation and maximising material recovery:

All office locations will maintain segregated waste streams for paper, card, general refuse, and where appropriate, food waste. Waste reduction will be prioritised through reduction in

unnecessary printing, moving towards digital documentation systems for business correspondence and training materials, and consolidation of physical documentation where duplication exists.

All suppliers will be selected with consideration for packaging efficiency. Where suppliers provide goods in excessive packaging, feedback will be provided and alternatives explored. The organisation will work with catering suppliers to minimise single use items at events and conferences.

Office supplies will be sourced from suppliers operating responsible forestry and recycling programmes. Procurement will prioritise purchasing of recycled content products where quality and cost are equivalent to virgin material alternatives.

Equipment replacement cycles will be extended through proper maintenance, and end of life equipment will be disposed of through certified recycling streams rather than general waste. Where possible, redundant equipment in good working condition will be donated to charities or community organisations rather than discarded.

Staff will be provided with training and guidance on waste segregation and recycling practices, with regular communication to maintain awareness and encourage participation.

### **3.4 Water Conservation**

The organisation commits to reducing water consumption within office facilities:

Taps and toilet facilities within owned or leased properties will be maintained and any leaks will be repaired promptly. Where facilities require replacement or refurbishment, water efficient fixtures will be installed. Staff will be encouraged through awareness communication to adopt water conscious practices including not leaving taps running unnecessarily and reporting maintenance issues promptly.

### **3.5 Sustainable Procurement**

The organisation commits to considering environmental factors in supplier selection and purchasing decisions:

Where procuring goods and services, value for money assessment will include consideration of environmental factors including energy efficiency, packaging and waste implications, and supplier environmental practices. Suppliers will be required to operate responsibly and will be

engaged in dialogue regarding their own environmental management where applicable.

Catering for events will prioritise suppliers offering responsibly sourced food and minimal packaging. Where possible, seasonal and local sourcing will be preferred to reduce transportation impacts.

Training materials and business stationery will be sourced from suppliers operating environmental management systems. Digital delivery of training content will be prioritised over printed materials.

### **3.6 Environmental Awareness and Staff Engagement**

The organisation recognises that successful environmental management requires active participation from all staff:

Regular communication will be provided to staff regarding environmental objectives, performance metrics, and opportunities for individual contribution. Environmental considerations will be incorporated into employee induction and onboarding processes. Staff suggestions for environmental improvement will be actively welcomed and considered.

Notwithstanding our operational focus, the organisation commits to raising environmental awareness within the membership community through appropriate channels. Information on environmental best practice and support available to businesses seeking to improve environmental performance will be promoted through training, events, and advocacy activities where relevant.

### **3.7 Monitoring and Continuous Improvement**

The organisation commits to establishing systems for monitoring environmental performance and implementing improvements:

Environmental key performance indicators will be established and tracked over time. These will include energy consumption, waste generation rates, business travel frequency, and where practical, carbon footprint estimation. Performance data will be reviewed regularly and communicated to staff.

Annual review of this policy will assess progress against stated commitments. Where targets are not being met, root causes will be analysed and corrective actions implemented. Where opportunities are identified for enhanced environmental performance, these will be

incorporated into revised policy objectives.

The organisation recognises that environmental management is an evolving area and commits to reviewing best practice and adopting new approaches and technologies as they become available and cost effective.

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#### **4. Monitoring and Review**

This Environmental Policy will be reviewed annually by senior management on 22 May 2027 and thereafter on an annual basis. The review will assess:

The effectiveness of implemented environmental initiatives in reducing identified environmental impacts. Progress against key performance indicators and target setting. Feedback from staff regarding barriers to environmental performance and suggestions for improvement. Changes in operational circumstances including facility changes, staffing variations, or service delivery modifications. Evolution of relevant environmental legislation, regulation, and best practice guidance. Opportunities for enhanced environmental performance and continuous improvement.

The policy will be communicated to all employees, contractors, and relevant external parties. Updates and revisions will be documented and distributed promptly.

Responsibility for environmental policy implementation and achievement of environmental objectives rests with senior management, with specific accountability assigned as appropriate. All employees are expected to operate in accordance with this policy and to support environmental management objectives through their day to day work.

This policy will be reviewed in full on 22 May 2027 or sooner if significant changes to operational circumstances occur.

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#### **Document Approval**

This Environmental Policy is approved and effective from 22 May 2026.

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce

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