



## Environmental Policy

**NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

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# Revision and Signoff Sheet

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## Reviewers

Name	Version Approved	Position	Organisation	Date
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## **1 Introduction: Our Commitment to the Environment**

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to safeguarding the environment. We have a responsibility to protect the community we serve, and to nurture the natural environment of our region. In this policy, we aim to develop a coherent strategy to ensure all our activities take cognisance of performing our functions without unduly affecting the environment.

By promoting this policy throughout the organisation, we aim to encourage and reward environmentally-sound activity, and also to minimise wasteful and damaging practices.

We intend that, as a result of this policy, the Service can operate more effectively and efficiently. Often, operating in a more environmentally-friendly way also means operating more cost-effectively – saving energy means saving money. We can then make better use of our resources to help the people in West Yorkshire to lead safer lives. This will help us to serve the public better in line with our aim to: “Provide an excellent Fire and Rescue Service working in partnership to reduce death, injury, economic loss and contribute to community wellbeing.”

## **2 Purpose**

This Policy describes West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Services approach to environmental issues. The policy has three main purposes:

Firstly, it is a signal of intent, to display to all concerned the commitment we have to minimising any negative impact we may have upon the environment.

Secondly, it provides details of the commitments we make in trying to improve the impact that we have upon the environment.

Thirdly, it is intended as a reference point. We intend that this document will be used to inform all of our day-to-day activities, and due account will be taken of the Environmental Policy when we develop and revise other Policies and Procedures – including Operations procedures.

## **3 Scope**

This policy covers all of the activity of the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and sets out a number of commitments which we believe will help us to serve the community better.

It is not intended that the policy will in any way limit or otherwise affect our legal obligations.

This policy will develop over time. The policy does not describe the precise actions we will take: it is intended as guidance rather than instruction. It is almost inevitable that further revisions will see this policy expand as we describe in greater detail the improvements and enhancements we have made.

## **4 Background**

The role of the Fire and Rescue Service is changing. The traditional goals of the service are – as we state in our aim to - “Provide an excellent Fire and Rescue Service working in partnership to reduce death, injury, economic loss and contribute to community wellbeing.”

As we go about achieving these goals, we need to be increasingly aware of the impact we have upon the environment. We need to minimise any negative impact we might have. Our historic duties and our

environmental aims are entirely compatible with each other. As our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) states: “The Service’s philosophy and vision is simple; fewer fires and other emergencies will result in fewer fire deaths and injuries, and reduce the impact on the local economy, our heritage and the environment.”

Most of the work we do has some impact upon the environment. Of course, this includes all of our operational work, such as attending fires, road traffic collisions and pollution incidents, and dealing with the after effects of these incidents and other events – such as extreme weather conditions.

Often we need to work with other organisations to ensure that the best interests of the environment are taken into account. For instance, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Environment Agency are guided by a signed agreement entitled “Local Working Arrangements”.

Additionally, we want to promote an awareness of environmental issues in non-operational areas: our Transport, Procurement, Property, Training and administrative functions all have a part to play in ensuring that we are as environmentally-friendly as possible.

For these reasons, we have created this Environmental Policy.

## **5 Our commitments**

### **5.1 Commitment 1**

**We aim to comply with, and observe the spirit of, all environmental legislation, regulation and other requirements.**

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is governed by legislation which means we must operate in a way which is sympathetic to the environment. This legislation includes:

*The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004*

*The Civil Contingencies Act 2004*

*The Water Resources Act 1991*

*The Groundwater Regulations 1998*

*The Environment Act 1995*

In all of our activity, we intend not only to fulfil our legal obligations, but also to promote clearly and actively, a positive attitude to the environment.

There are already examples of instances where our Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Operating Procedures (Ops Procs) make clear reference to the impact we have upon the environment.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Examples include:

Operational Procedure No. 3, “Decontamination Procedures For Personnel And Equipment” (“The process of cleansing should also take account of the potential damaging effects to the environment.”)

Standard Operating Procedure 4\_20, “Low Hazard Environmental Pollutants” (list of substances whilst presenting a low hazard to health have the potential to cause major environmental pollution)

## **5.2 Commitment 2**

**We want to ensure that everyone at West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service considers the impact their work has upon the environment.**

We have made this document available throughout our organisation. Obviously, we aim – at minimum - to fulfil our legal obligations. Beyond that, we also actively encourage all Service personnel to think in terms of how energy can be saved in a way that is not harmful to the business.

## **5.3 Commitment 3**

**We will review what we do, both operationally and non-operationally, to identify areas where we can operate in a more efficient, effective and environmentally-friendly way.**

This commitment works on two levels. Firstly, whenever a policy or procedure is reviewed, we will ensure that all environmental considerations are included within it. Secondly, we will ensure that operational debriefs specifically consider whether individual operations were carried out with the highest regard for the environment. The findings of each debrief will be used to inform future operational procedures and future versions of the Environmental Policy.

## **5.4 Commitment 4**

**We will develop an accompanying guide on Energy Conservation, to act as a guide for good practice throughout the organisation.**

To support this policy, we have developed a guide which will include a list of simple and practical steps to provide savings on water, heating and lighting. It is intended that this guide will be implemented by all personnel at their workplace to support effective use of resources.

## **5.5 Commitment 5**

**We will continue to look outside of our own organisation for ideas.**

We will continue to research environmentally-beneficial solutions which are cost-effective and practicable. We will work with partner organisations to find examples of good, effective practice which we can implement throughout the Service

## **5.6 Commitment 6**

**We will encourage our business partners - including contractors and suppliers - to operate in a way which is consistent with our Environmental Policy.**

We will explore ways in which we can ensure that our business partners are aware of our Environmental Policy and that our interaction with them supports the attitudes and beliefs which are at the heart of our policy.

## **5.7 Commitment 7**

**We will formally evaluate this policy initially after 12 months, and then every three years, or whenever we think there might be any significant improvements to make to the policy.**

We will review this document after 12 months to ensure it is fit for purpose. We will use it to help us plan for the future and incorporate new initiatives, to help us to continually improve the policy. The policy will include both long and short-term actions and related targets for the coming years.

## **5.8 Commitment 8**

**We will review, on an annual basis, the successes and failures of the policy.**

Each year, we will review how well we have done, and identify key achievements and areas where we feel we can improve. We will make our findings available upon request, and communicate them throughout the organisation.

## **5.9 Commitment 9**

**We will set up a cross-directorate Working Group to consider environmental issues.**

The working group will be made up of managers from all directorates. Each manager will be responsible for reporting on the environmental performance of their directorate. The group will meet regularly and will be used as a learning resource, with the opportunity to share examples of good practice, and will report major environmental issues to the Audit Committee on our effective environmentally friendly activities and performance.

The group will be chaired by Noel Rodriguez, Senior Corporate Resource Manager, and nominations for contributors will be sought from each department.

## **5.10 Commitment 10**

**We will set ourselves targets for reducing the amounts of energy we use.**

Each year we will set ourselves quantifiable reductions in energy use, and we will monitor progress against these targets.

