



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Sustainable Development Policy

Sustainable development has been defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' (Bruntland Commission 1987).

The purpose of sustainable development within an organisation is, facilitated by the consideration of economic, environmental and social factors together in its decision-making process and everyday operations.

The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (the Assembly Commission), understands that its activities have both direct and indirect economic, environmental and social impacts. It therefore aims to act responsibly in everything it does to help reduce these impacts and move towards a more sustainable future. To illustrate this, the Assembly Commission is committed to supporting the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, focusing on:

- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Responsive Consumption and Production
- Climate Action
- Life on land

The Sustainable Development Strategy will be supported by the Assembly Commission's environment policy, which is delivered through an environmental management system accredited to ISO 14001:2015. This is the internationally recognised standard for environmental management systems and it assesses the way an organisation:

- integrates environmental considerations into its management structures;
- handles its environmental impacts and continually improves its environmental performance in areas such as waste, energy and procurement; and
- achieves legal compliance with all relevant environmental legislation.

The Assembly Commission's Sustainable Development Policy has been informed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and focusses on four key themes:

- Governance for Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Communities
- Sustainable Consumption and Natural Resource Protection
- Climate Change and Energy

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### **Governance for Sustainable Development**

We will be recognised as an organisation which lives out its sustainability values in all our activities and integrates the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development within our governance arrangements.

We will:

- integrate commitments on sustainable development into all aspects of corporate policy and decision making as well as operations;
- keep corporate and individual staff behaviour in line with the Assembly Commission's policies and values;
- take informed, transparent decisions and manage risk appropriately;
- engage with all of our stakeholders and make accountability real; and
- comply fully with, and where possible exceed, all relevant environmental legislation and agreements.

### **Sustainable Communities**

We will engage with the people of Northern Ireland and like-minded individuals on all aspects of our work, including sustainable development. We will create a workplace where our people are valued, engaged, skilled and drive excellence in health and safety and sustainable development.

#### **Community**

We will:

- engage, involve and include the public so that participatory democracy is enhanced and they feel that they have a say in what the Assembly does;
- increase public awareness of the Assembly's role by educating the public on the working of the Assembly;
- communicate the meaning of sustainable development by making this policy and its progress available to the public; and
- work with partners to advance the pursuit of sustainable development within the local community and the wider public sphere.

#### **Our people**

We will:

- work in a way that supports our Corporate values and ensures equal opportunities;
- strive to create a workplace in which there is mutual trust and respect and where every person feels responsible for the performance and reputation of the Assembly;



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- strive to create a healthy and inclusive working environment through effective employee engagement programmes and the promotion of wellbeing;
- create a culture within the workplace that provides all staff with the opportunity to develop their full potential;
- strive to achieve a workforce which is representative of the society it serves;
- create and maintain a safe and healthy environment for Members, staff and visitors through the development of a positive health and safety culture;
- communicate and engage with staff and Members on sustainable development issues; and
- seek outcomes that will enhance staff and Members' wellbeing and quality of life.

### **Sustainable Consumption and Natural Resource Protection**

We will work with our suppliers to achieve 'more for less', through more efficient use of resources, considering life cycle impacts and delivering sustainable outcomes. We will responsibly manage our impact on the environment through the development and implementation of effective strategies for waste and resource management.

#### **Environmental impacts**

We will:

- reduce our impact on the environment, where possible, by adopting sustainable and environmentally responsible practices;
- protect and enhance the natural and built environment;
- actively improve the biodiversity of Parliament Buildings and the surrounding area; and
- actively reduce with a view to eliminating single use plastics in Parliament Buildings.

#### **Supply chain**

We will:

- work with our supply chain to deliver mutually sustainable solutions that deliver value for money and enhanced social value.

#### **Resource use**

We will:

- do 'more with less' by maximising resource efficiency throughout the Assembly's operations.



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## Climate change and energy

We will work to reduce our impact on climate change by minimising our use of energy and decarbonising our energy supply.

### Atmospheric Impacts

We will:

- actively reduce our use of energy and subsequent emissions of greenhouse gases from our operations through the implementation of effective energy efficiency and sustainable energy programmes.

**Edwin Poots MLA, Speaker**  
Chairperson of the Assembly Commission

**Lesley Hogg**  
Clerk/Chief Executive