

CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT
17th September 2025

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: Council Activity Update and Action Tracker

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR: Environment

PRIORITY: SUSTAINABILITY

1. SUMMARY

Panel Overview 2025/26

- 1.1 This note highlights the topic for this Panel meeting as well as a Council Activity Update, and Action Tracker Review (at Appendix A) for the Cabinet Panel on the Environment.
- 1.2 The Cabinet Panel aims to select topics which will enable open discussion that may lead to recommendations to Cabinet from the relevant Executive Members or Director, regarding actions that they believe the Council should be taking to address climate and environmental issues.

Panel Meeting: 17th September 2025

- 1.3 This Panel meeting will include an update on council activity pertaining to sustainability, review of the action tracker, and receive a presentation from the Letchworth Heritage Foundation on their design principles and sustainability.

2. STEPS TO DATE

- 2.1 Cabinet approved the establishment of the Cabinet Panel for the Environment at the 27th June 2019 meeting. The amended terms of reference were tabled for the Full Council meeting on the 4th June¹. The Constitutional Amendment Report of the 18th April 2023² recommended that this Panel be the only remaining panel going forward.
- 2.2 By way of update to the Panel, we have been involved in the following work:
- 2.3 **Contributions to the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP)**
- 2.4 The third round of Solar Together has closed. Over 650 residents have registered and 113 have accepted offers for Solar PV, and a further nine for battery storage only. North Herts also has one business accepted for battery storage. 47 installations have so far been completed in North Herts, totalling 496 panels.
- 2.5 The Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy has launched. North Herts Council have provided final endorsement for the strategy and further details on delivery and governance will be made available soon. The strategy is available to view at [Building Retrofit | HCCSP](#).

¹ [Appendix B - Revised Terms of Reference for Cabinet Panel on the Environment.pdf \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Constitutional amendment report 18.4.23.docx \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

2.6 Local Nature Recovery Strategy

- 2.7 Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are statutory spatial strategies which will agree priorities for nature recovery and propose actions to achieve these priorities. These strategies are legislated for in The Environment Act 2021. Development of the LNRS for Hertfordshire is being led by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), working in conjunction with the district councils and other stakeholders. The Strategy will contain a local habitat map and a written statement of biodiversity priorities. The public consultation was open throughout the summer and closed on 8th September. More information on the strategy consultation can be found here: [Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy public consultation | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

2.8 Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS)

- 2.9 The project to decarbonise our leisure facilities is progressing. For the second phase of decarbonisation, an updated feasibility assessment has been produced looking at the interventions proposed for Hitchin Town Hall and North Herts Museum, District Council Offices and the learner pool at North Herts Leisure Centre. The next steps are currently being discussed.

2.10 Climate Engagement

- 2.11 The North Herts engagement hub for climate change and sustainability, the Climate Hive, now has 612 subscribers. The Hive is now hosted on a new platform with new features, including an updated email bulletin. We continue to keep residents up to date on the latest surveys and consultations, eco events, national environment days, the Cabinet Panel for the Environment, and council activity.

2.12 Sustainability Strategy 2025-2030

- 2.13 The new Sustainability Strategy 2025-2030 is now available on the website. It was approved at Cabinet in July. Details of action and our aims, as well as our response to the public consultation held in March, are available to view at: [Sustainability strategy | North Herts Council](#). We have also update our webpages to reflect the broader areas of focus for the strategy and included a section for people to keep up to date on sustainability.

2.14 Sustainable Communities Grant

- 2.15 The Sustainable Communities Grant, funded by UKSPF, launched and was open to applications until 14th September. The team have been responding to queries from community groups and businesses about the eligibility of projects. The team will be assessing applications during the second half of September. The criteria and application form can be found here: [Sustainable Communities Grant | North Herts Council](#)

2.16 September Sustainability Briefing

- 2.17 The latest Sustainability briefing is available to view on the website at: [Keeping you updated on Sustainability | North Herts Council](#). This edition includes available funding rounds including those relating to energy efficiency and some upcoming events.

3 INFORMATION TO NOTE

- 3.1 Our Environment inbox is a means for members of the public or organisations to provide suggestions/presentations for the panel's consideration. The address is - EnvironmentPanel@north-herts.gov.uk
- 3.2 The Panel could choose to accept suggestions from outside the meeting including:
- Suggestions by Members of the public or organisations either at the meeting or by email.
 - Recommendations from Council, Cabinet or any other Committee.
 - Suggestions by any Member of the Council.
 - Suggestions by any Officer of the Council.
- 3.3 The Panel will seek to ensure that consideration of agenda items minimises additional burdens on staff resources. Wherever possible, requests are made for the presentation of documents already in existence rather than the production of new documents specifically for the Panel. Suggestions from outside sources, as detailed in paragraph 3.2 will only be placed on the work programme if agreed by one of the alternating Chairs or at a meeting of the Panel.
- 3.4 Attendance from external bodies and members of the public is actively encouraged.
- 3.5 This is a non-decision-making advisory body and therefore this or any notes/reports to the Panel do not include a recommendation on a key Executive decision and have not been referred to in the Forward Plan. However, recommendations for action from the Panel for consideration by Cabinet may do so. This will therefore need to be borne in mind for any recommendations of the Panel.

4 NEXT STEPS

- 4.12 Other topics for consideration and inclusion in the Panel's work programme will be considered at each meeting. Discussion will help ensure that the most appropriate items are taken forward to the work programme.

5 APPENDICES

- 5.12 Appendix A – Work Programme and Action Tracker 2025/26

6 CONTACT OFFICERS

- 6.1 Georgina Chapman, Policy & Strategy Team Leader, 01462 474121
Georgina.Chapman@north-herts.gov.uk
- 6.2 Reuben Ayavoo, Policy & Community Manager, 01462 474212
Reuben.Ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk
- 6.3 Ellie Hollingsworth, Policy & Strategy Officer, 01462 474220
Ellie.Hollingsworth@north-herts.gov.uk