

# Connected Voice

## Environmental Policy

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### Document details and review

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This policy will be reviewed annually

Signed: Lisa Goodwin

Date: September 2019

## **1. Environmental Policy Statement**

Connected Voice recognises that it has a responsibility to the environment beyond legal and regulatory requirements. We are committed to reducing our environmental impact and to continue improving our environmental performance as an integral part of our business strategy and operational methods.

This Environmental Policy aims to outline the measures Connected Voice will take to reduce, reuse and recycle office waste and reduce energy consumption within the organisation:

Connected Voice will aim to do this by:

- ✓ Minimising the use of all materials, supplies and energy used by the organisation
- ✓ Minimising waste produced in all areas of the organisation, reuse and recycle waste where possible and aim for waste-free processes
- ✓ Reviewing annually office recycling and sustainability actions at the Connected Voice Management Group
- ✓ Bringing up environmental issues with the landlord's agents
- ✓ Communicating this policy to all staff and volunteers to ensure that each individual concerned understands the environmental impact of their work and associated activities

## **2. Waste reduction**

To prevent pollution whenever possible by reducing emissions and discharges and minimising waste production by reusing or recycling waste as follows:

- ✓ Connected Voice staff will engage in the Newcastle Waste Commission initiative and put forward ideas to minimise waste
- ✓ Computers set to default to print double sided documents
- ✓ Photocopier set up with department codes to allow staff time to assess whether they really need to print off a document
- ✓ Decrease margin size to fit more printing onto one side of paper and avoid extra sheets of paper with one line of text
- ✓ Scrap paper used as desk jotters
- ✓ Confidential waste paper shredded and recycled by specialist company
- ✓ Envelopes re-used whenever possible
- ✓ Newspapers, magazines, cardboard and non-confidential wastepaper placed in Local Authority recycle bin for recycling
- ✓ Printer cartridges recycled by a local charity
- ✓ Use email to circulate information to staff and members
- ✓ Use cutlery and crockery which can be washed instead of disposable items
- ✓ Advertise furniture and equipment not being used by Connected Voice for use by other voluntary organisations

- ✓ Check if there is recycled furniture and equipment available from companies and voluntary organisations before buying new items
- ✓ Offer retired computers to staff
- ✓ Offer retired furniture to staff
- ✓ Staff will recycle folders and files and minimise the amount of new stationery ordered
- ✓ Reduce the use of plastic pens, pencils and folders
- ✓ Donate ICT equipment, cabling and telephones to local recycling company – WEEE approved
- ✓ Take small electrical equipment such as kettles to local disposal site
- ✓ Cardboard boxes and paper recycled by placing in Local Authority recycle bins in the rubbish compound of Higham House
- ✓ Bottles and plastic items are placed in Local Authority recycle bins in a nearby car park at Higham Place
- ✓ Provide kitchen bins for cardboard, paper, tins and plastic to be recycled
- ✓ Free to a good home box for staff to recycle unwanted items
- ✓ Clothing collections organised for asylum seekers and refugees
- ✓ Follow current best practice guidance e.g. in relation to use of plastics

### **3. Purchasing**

In line with the Connected Voice Purchase and Disposal Policy Connected Voice will consider the following when making a purchase:

- ✓ Products containing recycled material for office use where possible
- ✓ Remanufactured toner cartridges where possible
- ✓ Buying in bulk to reduce packaging waste
- ✓ Buying in returnable and refillable containers where possible and appropriate
- ✓ Check whether there is any second hand furniture available before purchasing new items
- ✓ Cleaning products which do not present a problem to humans or the environment and are biodegradable
- ✓ The environmental impact when purchasing equipment
- ✓ The environmental impact of computers, photocopier, lighting and other electrical equipment used around the office

### **4. Energy and water consumption**

Connected Voice is committed to reducing carbon emissions through efficient and responsible use of energy and water. To reduce energy and water consumption Connected Voice has considered the following to be good practice:

- ✓ Office lighting is low energy consumption
- ✓ Lights switched off in meeting rooms when not in use
- ✓ Lights switched off on days when there is sunlight
- ✓ Photocopier is turned off at night and has a power down setting throughout the day

- ✓ Computers and printers are turned off at night and have a power down setting throughout the day when not in use
- ✓ Consideration of energy consumption when ordering new electrical equipment
- ✓ Kettles are only filled with the amount of water required
- ✓ Heating system is thermostatically controlled
- ✓ Radiators thermostatically controlled and turned down to lower setting
- ✓ Dishes washed by hand with only the amount of water required
- ✓ Taps are not left running
- ✓ Plumbing is well maintained to avoid leakage of water

## **5. Sustainability**

To encourage sustainability Connected Voice has agreed, whilst still seeking value for money, to use:

- ✓ Fairtrade tea and coffee for staff and meetings
- ✓ Desks and furniture donated to recycling furniture service
- ✓ Local stationer for ordering supplies of stationery
- ✓ Community venues for meetings
- ✓ Community caterers and locally sourced food if possible

## **6. Transport**

Connected Voice encourages staff to:

- ✓ Cycle to work if possible and offers a Bike to Work salary sacrifice scheme as a benefit to staff
- ✓ Mileage allowance for employees who cycle to meetings
- ✓ Discounted corporate metro ticket to encourage employees to use metro system instead of car
- ✓ Car share for meetings wherever possible
- ✓ Use larger taxis to transport staff to meetings instead of using several cars
- ✓ Use bike racks in nearby car parks
- ✓ Keep car journeys to a minimum and to walk or use public transport whenever possible
- ✓ Use public transport for longer journeys
- ✓ Encourage visitors to use public transport by including information on the website about bus stations and metro stations
- ✓ Book venues for events near to public transport links

## **7. Leadership and influence**

Connected Voice as an infrastructure organisation has a part to play in influencing the voluntary and community sector to be more environmentally aware. This will include:

- ✓ Raising awareness of climate emergency and how it will affect local voluntary and community organisations
- ✓ Providing model environmental policies and advice on action plans
- ✓ Providing skill building sessions
- ✓ Producing a list of achievable actions
- ✓ Including statements about using public transport, bicycles and walking for participants at Connected Voice events
- ✓ Engaging with public sector partners, environmental voluntary sector organisations and universities to use their expertise for the benefit of members
- ✓ Being a voice for the sector and feeding into future plans for new developments and transport plans across Newcastle, Gateshead and other regions

## **8. General office environment**

Connected Voice will maintain a pleasant and effective working space in its office environment by:

- ✓ Maintaining and servicing all office machinery to optimum operating efficiency and longevity
- ✓ Bike racks provided in the underground car park of Higham House
- ✓ Connected Voice will continue to work with the landlord's agent to look at lateral solutions to improve recycling provision.