

# Strategy & Resources Committee Tuesday, 24 November 2020

## Climate Change Action Plan Report

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Publication status:	Open
Wards affected:	All.
Recommendations:	(1) That the Committee adopts the Council's Climate Change Action Plan as included in Appendix A.  (2) That the Committee receives an update on the development and delivery of the Action Plan in June 2021 and annually thereafter.  (3) That the Committee resolve to form a climate change task and finish group with terms of reference as set out at section 5.
Appendices:	Appendix 'A' – Tandridge District Council Climate Change Action Plan Version 1.
Background papers defined by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985	None.

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report asks Strategy & Resources Committee to adopt the Climate Change Action Plan (henceforth 'Action Plan') which appears at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The Action Plan has been produced in response to the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency in February 2020, which formally established its aim to cut its environmental impact and take steps to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.3 The Action Plan includes initial actions which will develop over time, such as undertaking scoping exercises and producing project plans and business cases for substantive actions which will be brought back for Councillor decisions as appropriate.
- 1.4 The Action Plan will remain a live document over the climate change motion's 2020 – 2030 target period, hence it will be reviewed in full annually and updated or amended,

if required, to take account of changes in legislation, new best practice, advances in technology or any other changes in circumstances.

- 1.5 Councillors are asked to consider forming a climate change task and finish group to inform the development of specific actions in the plan in order that a more developed version may be brought back to Committee in June 2021.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council has undertaken activities that serve to reduce its carbon footprint for many years. Its formal recognition of climate change began with a presentation and discussion on climate change in January 2020 This was followed by a motion adopted by Full Council in February 2020 for the Council to declare a climate emergency and establish its own climate change action plan.
- 2.2 The motion specified that the Council will establish its own climate change action plan, with targets to cut its environmental impact and become carbon neutral by 2030 and that the Council will engage with other councils in the South East, and its residents, businesses, and young people in the District to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- 2.4 An update report on the Action Plan was brought to Strategy & Resources Committee in September 2020. The report detailed activities the Council has undertaken to further its aims to tackle climate change since February and noted that, although work had begun on the Action Plan in February 2020, the occurrence and continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic significantly delayed progress.
- 2.5 A Councillor workshop was held on 27<sup>th</sup> October to discuss a draft version of the Action Plan.

## 3.0 Structure of the plan

- 3.1 The Action Plan (at Appendix A) focuses on the key priorities for the Council, several of which require scoping to gather sufficient data on potential project costs, implications<sup>1</sup> and impact on carbon emissions before a decision can be made to proceed. The proposed approach is therefore to adopt this initial version of the plan to provide officers with a mandate to conduct this work, and then return data on significant projects to Councillors to enable them to reach informed decisions.
- 3.2 It is proposed to bring an update to this Committee, with a fully developed action plan in June 2021, with annual updates thereafter. It is also proposed to establish a Member/ Officer Task and Finish Group to inform the development of the Action Plan (see section 5).
- 3.2 The Action Plan includes:
  - (1) Strategic Priorities informed by Surrey County Council's Climate Change Strategy, adapted as appropriate for Tandridge DC. These priorities reflect academic research, evidence and analysis and the inter-connected challenges posed to government at all levels. The priorities are:

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<sup>1</sup> Core implications to consider are financial, legal and national / local policy.



- (2) Actions the Council can take to directly or indirectly impact on its own emissions and those of the District and County, aligned to deliver the Strategic Priorities. The three primary categories for actions are:
- i. Category 1: Reducing emissions from the Council's estate and operations
  - ii. Category 2: How the Council can influence and encourage residents and businesses to reduce their emissions
  - iii. Category 3: How we work with other agencies to collectively reduce the carbon footprint of Surrey

While it will take time to develop business cases for some actions, there are other actions which can be 'quick wins' such as: creating a baseline Council carbon emissions report, conducting a feasibility study into the installation of electric vehicle charging points in the Council's car parks, and producing a climate change communications strategy.

#### 4. Steps to becoming carbon neutral by 2030

- 4.1 It is essential that the Council produces its first carbon emission report, as it cannot manage what it does not measure. The first iteration of the report,<sup>2</sup> for 2019-20, will be available by March 2021. It is mostly related to Category 1 of the Action Plan, and focuses on measures related to differing degrees of control the Council has over the listed emissions sources:

##### Scope 1 (direct)

<sup>2</sup> The carbon accounting tool the Council is proposing to use is the recently published Local Partnerships and Local Government Association tool. See: Local Partnerships (2020) *Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool*. Online available: <https://localpartnerships.org.uk/greenhouse-gas-accounting-tool/> [Last accessed 29/10/20].

- Gas consumption within the Council's owned buildings.
- Fuel consumption from Council owned/controlled vehicles

Scope 2 (indirect)

- Emissions from the generation of purchased electricity

Scope 3 (third-party)

- Emissions from energy consumed in buildings leased to a third-party operator or services procured from a third-party operator
- Emissions from business travel from non-Council owned vehicles
- Emissions from third party disposal and treatment of waste in council operations
- Emissions from the supply and treatment of water consumed by the Council's operations
- Emissions from procured goods and services

4.2 In the first Council emissions report, attention will be primarily dedicated to Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions as these are the areas which the Council can directly influence. These scopes do not include emissions that relate to some of the Council's key operations where it has no direct control, such as emissions from procured goods and services; water consumption; employee commuting; and leased assets. However, the Council will pro-actively seek to gather data on these emissions source, and subsequently reduce the carbon emissions from these areas.

5. Member/ Officer Climate Change Task and Finish group

5.1 It is proposed that a Task and Finish group be established, reporting to the Strategy and Resources Committee, with the following remit:

- i) To inform the development of the Action Plan, including prioritisation of actions and identification of timescales for delivery.
- ii) To review the carbon emissions report when produced and propose any further actions required in light of that report.
- iii) To inform the development of an update report to Strategy and Resources Committee in June 2021 at which point the Group will have completed its work.

It is suggested that the group constitute two Councillors from each of the three largest groups and one member from the Independent group. Three officers most relevant to the topics being discussed and the climate change lead officer, would also attend the group.

6. Funding the Action Plan

6.1 It is expected that several actions in the plan will be able to be incorporated into the Council's existing budgets, as they will form a part of its 'business as usual' activities. Many actions, such as improving the energy efficiency of the Council's buildings and making our vehicles more efficient, are already accounted for, as they represent natural evolutions in their own arenas, such as technical advancements, efficiency and cost savings, and responses to expected policy developments.

6.2 The Council will maximise the use of existing resources, prioritising projects which are cost beneficial or cost neutral, and where possible seek external funding and grants to

deliver initiatives. Opportunities for joint working with partners including other local authorities in Surrey will also be sought to reduce costs and share resources.

6.3 The Action Plan includes actions related to creative ways of funding the Council's climate change projects, such as by enabling members of the public to donate money to specific projects. Whilst not directly impacting the Council's Scope 1 and 2 emissions in the early stages of the plan period, scoping the feasibility of such schemes could prove helpful in the mid to long term.

6.4 Where expenditure is required outside of existing budgets, member feedback and approval to proceed with the project will be sought once the business case has been established.

## 7. Monitoring performance

7.1 The Council will monitor and publish reports on its progress annually. The action plan sets out the projects and strategies required to achieve carbon neutrality. At present many such projects require further scoping to ascertain specific carbon savings and determine appropriate performance indicators. However, the Council's carbon emissions report will be a key element of performance monitoring, alongside BEIS published District-level data. The action plan will evolve as projects are completed, new data becomes available and new challenges and opportunities arise.

## 8. Climate Change implications

8.1 The adoption of the Action Plan is an important step to enable the Council to progress its 2030 climate change target. The plan will serve as a road map to both identify key actions for the Council to pursue, and to measure its performance against.

## 9. Equality implications

9.1 The Action Plan contains potential for positive impacts to be realised for individuals and groups with protected characteristics, such as matters surrounding health, wellbeing, air quality, fuel poverty, and nature. Further as a common good, a reduction in carbon emissions is expected to benefit all residents. Equality impact assessments will be submitted on an individual basis as feasibility reports, business cases and projects come forward.

## 10. Any other corporate implications where applicable

10.1 The Action Plan will have implications for Council services such as assets, fleet management, ICT and housing. Relevant officers have been, and will continue to be, consulted in the development of detailed proposals within the plan.

## 11. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

11.1 The Council has limited financial resources and will need to consider any proposals and their cost appropriately.

11.2 There is likely to be significant government grants and funding available to help the country transition to address the issues of climate change and it is important the Council seeks out these opportunities and takes full advantage of them.

11.3 The issues of climate change may best be met by working together with partner organisations within Surrey and options for collaboration and partnership working should be explored to gain economies of scale and reduce costs.

## 12. Comments of the Head of Legal Services

### 12.1

There is no statutory requirement for Local Authorities to set climate targets, or produce a Climate Strategy or an Action Plan set out in the Climate Change Act 2008. Local Authorities are, however, obliged to be in keeping with the objectives of policies implemented by National Government through obligations set out in grant funding agreements, under regulatory arrangements such as through air quality reviews and monitoring under the Environment Act 1995 and national planning law including the Planning Act 2008 and in development of local plans under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, where the local planning authority must have regard to national policies.

12.2 The aim of the Climate Change Action Plan is to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council's activities and whilst in procurement the Council will seek value for money through intelligent procurement and tendering a critical part of the value for money assessment must be the degree to which the expenditure acts to reduce net CO2 and other greenhouse emissions. Accordingly, the Climate Change Action Plan will require continual review against any procurement activity in order to measure the effectiveness of the agreed actions.

12.3 Although there are no specific legal implications arising from this report but consideration will need to be given to individual actions and projects as they come forward, which Legal will assist with as required.

## 13. Conclusion

13.1 The Committee is recommended to adopt an initial version of the Council's Climate Change action plan, to provide officers with a mandate to begin work on scoping the feasibility, costs and timescales of priority climate change projects. The Committee is invited to consider forming a climate change task and finish group, to enable Councillors and officers to meet, discuss, and progress specific elements of the Action Plan, given its early stage of development.

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