

## **SURREY CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY**

<b>Head of Service:</b>	Gillian McTaggart, Head of Policy, Performance & Governance
<b>Wards affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</b>	No
<b>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</b>	
<b>Appendices (attached):</b>	Surrey Climate Change Strategy

### **Summary**

In July 2019 Surrey County Council (SCC) declared its own climate emergency. It agreed a Surrey Climate Change Strategy (SCCS) in April 2020, a joint framework for collective action across the County including all 11 Surrey district and borough councils. This strategy sets out Surrey County Council's intended approach to delivering carbon reduction ambitions across the County.

This Council has been asked, alongside all other district and borough councils, to adopt the Surrey Climate Change Strategy, which includes targets across service areas including waste, transport, housing and land use. However, a number of the targets do not currently align with the Council's own Climate Change Action Plan adopted in January 2020.

This report provides details of the Surrey Climate Change Strategy and asks the Committee to note the strategy.

### **Recommendation (s)**

#### **The Committee is asked to:**

- (1) Note the Surrey County Council Climate Change Strategy.**
- (2) Agree to ongoing discussions and collaborative working with Surrey County Council and the other Surrey boroughs and districts on aspects of the Surrey Climate Change Strategy that align with the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.**
- (3) Agree that any proposed action or request for support outside the Council's Climate Change Action Plan be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.**

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### 1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 Surrey County Council (SCC) endorsed its Climate Change Strategy on the 28 April 2020. This strategy is a joint framework for collaborative action across Surrey's local authorities to reduce carbon emissions to net zero between now and 2050.
- 1.2 Surrey County Council has asked each of the 11 Surrey districts and boroughs to adopt the Surrey Climate Change Strategy. However, although many of the actions and targets within the Surrey Climate Change Strategy align with the Council's own values and Climate Change Action Plan adopted on 20 January 2020, a number of targets do not align. As such it is not considered appropriate to adopt this strategy.
- 1.3 Surrey County Council has since confirmed that the Council can participate in particular elements or actions of the Surrey Climate Change Strategy and does not have to adopt the full strategy.
- 1.4 The Council has begun to implement their own Climate Change Action Plan. The targets of which have been considered specifically for the borough of Epsom and Ewell.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 In recent years there has been a fundamental societal shift on the importance of tackling climate change, at both a local and national level.
- 2.2 Global climate change is a key concern, with the United Nations and the international scientific community highlighting the potentially severe global human, environmental and economic impacts that man-made climate change pose.
- 2.3 Nationally many councils have declared climate emergencies and are working towards the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050.
- 2.4 The Council has prioritised this issue by adopting its own Climate Change Action Plan (20 January 2020) which details actions to be completed over a 4-year period in order to combat climate change. The Council aims to be net carbon neutral by 2035 and this is proposed through a number of themes:
  - Theme 1 - Council Leadership and influencing others
  - Theme 2 – Improvements to the environment
  - Theme 3 - Council buildings and energy use
  - Theme 4 - Tackling and minimising waste
  - Theme 5 - Council Transport & switching to lower polluting vehicles

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### - Theme 6 - Use of Technology & information systems

- 2.5 The borough of Epsom and Ewell has seen its total emissions decrease from 363kt CO<sub>2</sub> to 240kt CO<sub>2</sub> over a 13 year period (as shown in Figure 1 below) with an overall decreasing trend. However, these emission reductions come at varying rates across different sectors, domestic emissions remaining the highest emitter in the borough (as shown in Figure 2 below).
- 2.6 The Council's Climate Change Action Plan will work alongside residents, the business community and other key partners to ensure we are actively seeking to mitigate and adapt to climate change in the most appropriate way.

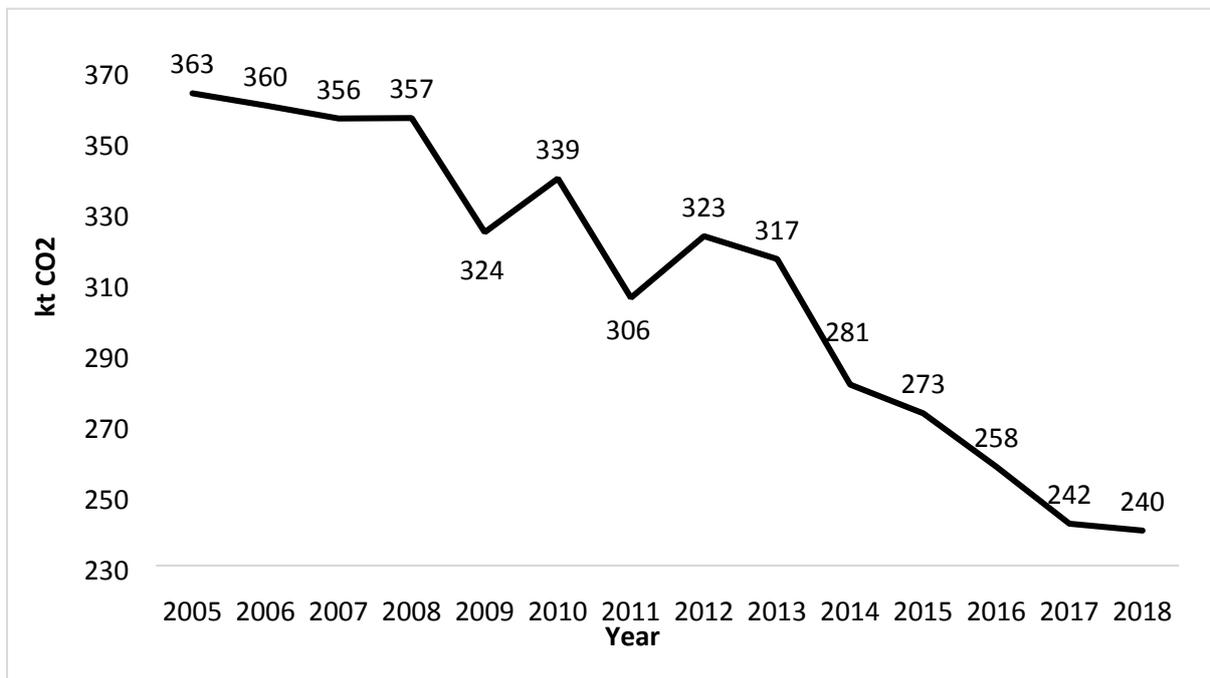


Figure 1 - Total borough emissions (2005-2018). Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018>

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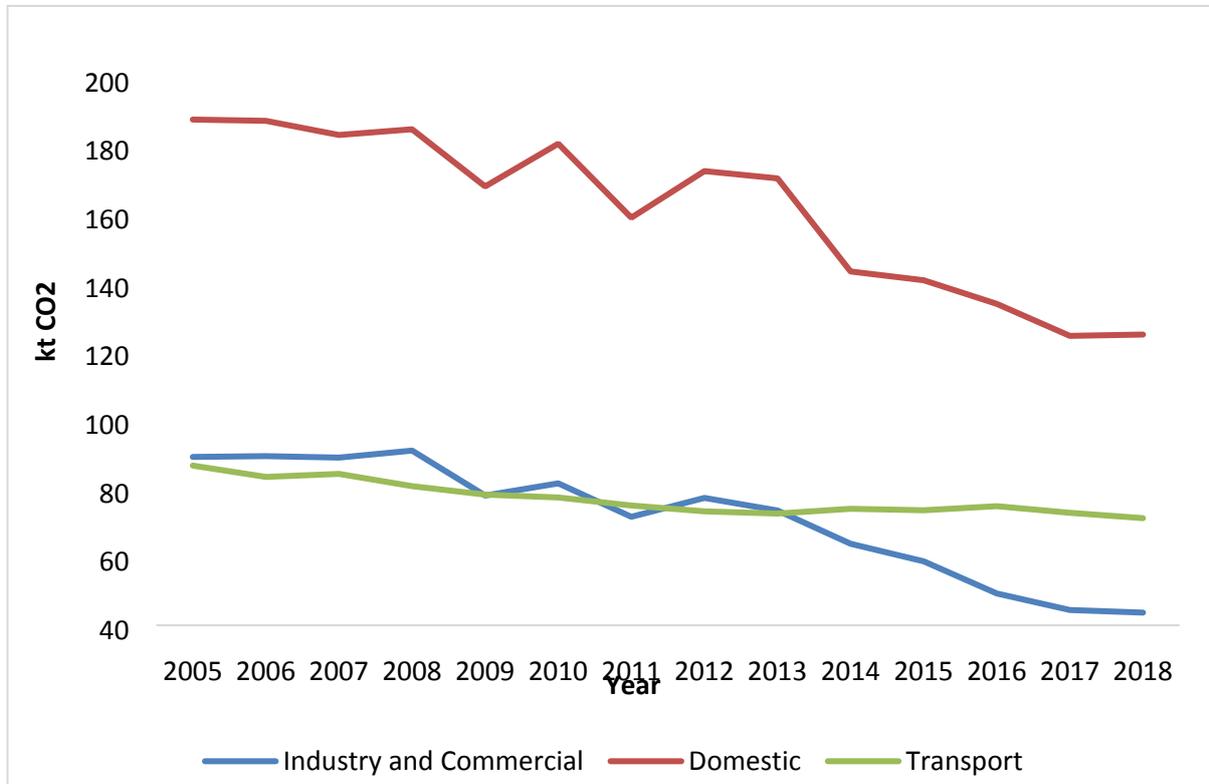


Figure 2 - Emissions in borough by sector (2005-2018) Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018>

- 2.8 A full progress report on the Climate Change Action Plan is due to be presented to the Environment and Safe Communities Committee in January 2021.
- 2.9 The current and ongoing COVID-19 situation has required a review of the Climate Change Action Plan as the Council develops their response to managing the impact on the authority. Service delivery plans that include the Climate Change Action Plan were reviewed by a number of members during the COVID recovery process who determined that a number of actions would be deferred to Year 2 of the Plan.
- 2.10 A number of deliverables have already been completed including:
- the appointment of an Environment and Sustainability Officer;
  - signposting information on the Council website in relation to climate change to promote behavioural changes;
  - a move to 100% renewable energy in council buildings from 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

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- 2.11 A number of members working on COVID response decisions agreed a set of principles for COVID recovery which included a green recovery. Work relating to climate change will continue to adapt in order to align with COVID-19 guidance and the priorities of the Council.

### 3 Surrey Climate Change Strategy

- 3.1 Surrey County Council has developed a Climate Change Strategy (see Appendix) which was endorsed by its Cabinet on the 28 April 2020.

- 3.2 Surrey's Climate Change Strategy sets out eight themes to achieve net carbon neutrality across the county by 2050. This includes:

- **Theme 1 - Organisation Emissions** - This focuses on actions to reduce emissions associated with the activities and estate of Surrey's local authorities.
- **Theme 2 – Transport** - deliver and promote an integrated, accessible, affordable and reliable public active (walking or cycling) transport system across the County.  
**Theme 3 - Energy Generation** - The strategy sets a target of delivering 15% of the county's energy from solar PV by 2032 and seeks to develop localised smart energy systems that provide low carbon energy to local businesses and residents.
- **Theme 4 - Housing and Planning** - To create low carbon, healthy homes for our residents that reduce emissions, have lower running costs and improve the wellbeing of our community.
- **Theme 5 - Buildings and Infrastructure** - To drive forward the transition to a zero carbon built environment, through the pursuit of lower operational energy use, increased supply of renewable energy to Surrey's buildings and reduced embodied carbon.
- **Theme 6 - Waste, Resources and Circular Economy** - Rethink our current approach to waste, to create a system that seeks to prioritise the reduction of waste creation, encouraging innovative approaches to waste reutilisation and recycling.
- **Theme 7 - Land Use and Food Systems** - Develop a land use framework for Surrey focused on increasing accessible green spaces, and woodland cover in appropriate locations in line with national targets and sustainable farming practices
- **Theme 8 - Industry and Green Economy** - Pursue the transition to clean growth, through the decarbonisation of all major sectors and investment in the development of clean technologies and industries that create jobs and improve the quality of life for our residents.

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- 3.3 The Council can only work in collaboration with Surrey County Council on seven of these themes as 'organisation emissions' will be dependent on the individual authorities. Within each of the remaining seven broad areas a number of targets have been produced, of which only some are appropriate for the Council to adopt.
- 3.4 To enhance the opportunity for joint working Surrey County Council has developed an online portal, which it has made available to climate change officers. This portal includes details of individual targets of the Surrey Climate Change Strategy, which will be reviewed in order to confirm compatibility with the Council's own Climate Change Action Plan.
- 3.5 A number of the targets set by Surrey County Council in its strategy have already been reviewed in terms of alignment (see Appendix). For example, the Council had a quarter average of 55.74% recycling waste. The Surrey Climate Change Strategy, however, sets a target of 75% reuse/recycling by 2030 which is higher than the Government waste strategy target of 65% by 2035. Individual targets would need to be reviewed before any agreement by the council was formally adopted. A review of the Council's alignment with the targets is included in the appendix detailing which are compatible.
- 3.6 The Surrey Climate Change Strategy also covers strategic priorities not covered by the boroughs and districts such as investing in infrastructure to increase the uptake of walking, cycling and public transport e.g. ultra-low emission zones.
- 3.7 Surrey County Council is seeking to confirm each of the borough and district Councils' stance on its strategy. It is understood that other local authorities within Surrey, including Mole Valley District Council, have currently declined to sign up to the strategy and are producing ongoing feedback for Surrey County Council.
- 3.8 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was delayed partner engagement from Surrey County Council which meant that local authorities did not receive sufficient time to comment on the strategy before it was formally adopted by Surrey County Council on the 28 April 2020. A Surrey Climate Change Officer network has been developed to discuss opportunities for collaborative working and has offered boroughs and districts the ability to express concerns and discuss ideas relating to the strategy.
- 3.9 The Council is actively responding to climate change through ongoing emissions monitoring. The Council currently uses statistical data from The Department of Business, Industry and Strategy (BEIS) which is released annually and currently offers data from 2005 until 2018, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 above. However, detailed carbon accounting for each borough within the county has also been commissioned from Leeds University and published as part of the SurreyClimate Change Strategy. Climate Change Officers across the county have been informed that this is available for use within local authorities.

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- 3.10 The data from Leeds University is useful in providing a detailed insight into borough specific emission information that will enable the Council to tackle certain sectors in relation to climate change. This report, which is available to climate change officers, projects potential emission reductions based on a number of reduction options.
- 3.11 As part of a working partnership a key benefit to lobby or discuss in relation to central government funding. A pick and mix approach can be taken to this enabling the Council to work on key elements of Year 1 in the Climate Change Action Plan e.g. safe cycle routes.

### 4 Risk Assessment

**4.1 Legal or other duties** – there are no legal implications as we are currently only noting the strategy.

4.2 Impact Assessment

4.2.1 Impact assessment

There are no equalities implications as a consequence of this report.

4.3 Crime & Disorder

4.3.1 Not applicable

4.4 Safeguarding

4.4.1 Not applicable

4.5 Dependencies

4.5.1 Not applicable

4.6 Other

4.6.1 Not applicable

### 5 Financial Implications

5.1 Currently, signing up to the Surrey Climate Change Strategy does not have any financial implications.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the content of this report.

### 6 Legal Implications

6.1 None arising from the content of this report.

6.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** None arising from the content of this report.

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### 7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: Green and Vibrant, Smart and Connected, Well Managed Council.
- 7.2 **Service Plans:** Climate change is detailed in EEBC Service Delivery Plan through the introduction of the Climate Change Action Plan.
- 7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** The core basis of this strategy is to make Surrey carbon neutral by 2050. EEBC will continue to work jointly with all Surrey Local Authorities to develop the response to climate change.
- 7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** Sustainability is noted throughout the Surrey County Council Climate Change Strategy and the EEBC Climate Change Action Plan.
- 7.5 **Partnerships:** Surrey Environment Partnership

### 8 Background papers

- 8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

**Previous reports:**

- Epsom and Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

**Other papers:**

Surrey Climate Change Strategy (Surrey County Council).