

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN YEAR 2 UPDATE

Head of Service:	Gillian McTaggart, Head of Policy, Performance & Governance
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Year 1 Climate Change Action Plan Year 2 Climate Change Action Plan Update

Summary

Climate Change is recognised as one of the leading global issues facing society today. This is shown through the Council's adoption of its ambitious Climate Change Action Plan in January 2020. This report provides an update on the targets and actions within the second year of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider and note the targets and actions contained in Year 2 of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan including those that were partially implemented in Year 1.**
- (2) Note new targets included to best facilitate a green recovery from COVID-19 pandemic.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Climate Change Action Plan since previously reported to the Committee in January 2021. It identifies those actions to be implemented in Year 2 including an update on those deferred from Year 1. Work across the Climate Change Action Plan has progressed in line with timescales set and it is anticipated that the targets set will be completed.
- 1.2 The action plan now incorporates work completed towards the Single Use Plastic (SUP) plan.

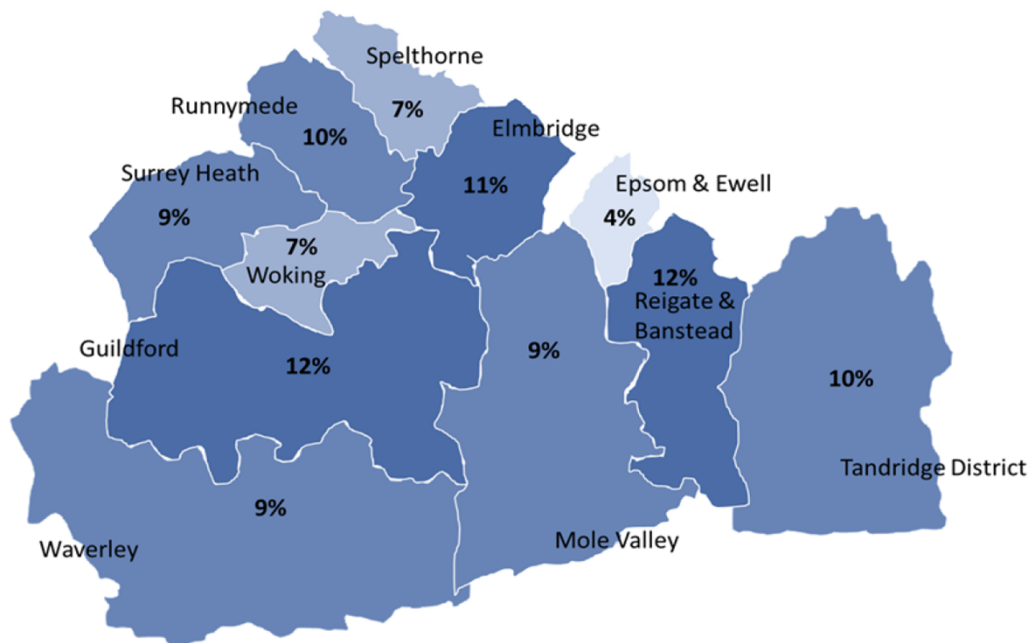
Environment and Safe Communities Committee

1 June 2021

- 1.3 The reduction of carbon emissions in both the Council and the Borough is a longer term goal and the Climate Change Action Plan will be developed over time to reflect changes in guidance and support a green recovery.
- 1.4 The Action Plan recognises that the commitment to climate change and the achieving net zero by 2035 is a long term commitment. The delivery of a number of themes within the action plan will span across years.

2 Background

- 2.1 The focus on climate change has increased in recent years. Global climate change is a key concern, with the United Nations and the international scientific community highlighting the potentially severe global societal, environmental and economic impacts that human-made climate change pose.
- 2.2 Epsom and Ewell Borough Council has committed to their Climate Change Action Plan. This was approved by this Committee and full Council on 20 January 2020 alongside the approval of the target, that the Council would be carbon neutral by 2035. According to the Surrey Climate Commission in 2018 Epsom and Ewell produced the lowest CO² emissions per person – it is important to continue to promote this in the efforts to become net zero across the borough.



- 2.3 The Climate Change Action Plan details actions to be completed over an agreed 4-year period (2020-2024) 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

Environment and Safe Communities Committee

1 June 2021

- Theme 3 - Council buildings and energy use
- Theme 4 - Tackling and minimising waste
- Theme 5 - Council transport & switching to lower polluting vehicles
- Theme 6 - Use of technology & information systems

- 2.4 The Council's response to Climate Change will be delivered by working with and 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 effective way.
- 2.5 In terms of Year 1 (included in Appendix 1) as reported to the Committee in January, 63% of the targets overall were delivered and 11% or 4 were partially completed. These items were therefore included in Year 2 of the Action Plan.
- 2.6 Furthermore, continual partnership work with organisations such as the Surrey Environment Partnership and regular meetings with other Surrey local authorities has led to alternate work that will further contribute to the Council's goal of becoming net zero by 2035.
- 2.7 This includes regular waste emissions reporting with the Surrey Environment Partnership in order to provide data in the future and accurately monitor the council's ongoing emission. The Council continues to work with other Surrey local authorities which in turn provide information on current schemes/grants available to residents and any available to Council to fund potential projects.

3 Climate Change Action Plan Year 2

- 3.1 In developing the Year 2 Action Plan we have taken into account those areas that were deferred or those partially completed in Year 1, due to challenges in taking it forward or because they have longer terms implications. The Year 2 Action Plan and update is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.2 Following this a full review and update on Years 3 and 4 of the current plan will be brought to the next committee in January.

Environment and Safe Communities Committee

1 June 2021

4 Update on partially completed actions from Year 1

Those actions reported that were partially completed were;

- 4.1 **Develop and deliver a Local Plan and associated policies that contribute positively and demonstrate the Council's commitment to climate** - the Local Plan is essential in delivering the Council's Four Year Plan, linking closely with the Green and Vibrant priority. The new Local Plan includes site allocations relating to green initiatives. This is a longer term goal that will be implemented over a number of years. A timetable for such will be detailed and is connected with the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee. Areas which will help to develop sustainability initiatives within the Local Plan include 'decarbonising' new homes by improving energy efficiency and moving to cleaner ways to heat homes. The new timetable for the local plan has been approved.
- 4.2 **Encourage more sustainable transport options for visiting the Town Centre and trips to Schools** - encouraging sustainable transport options for visiting the Town Centre and trips to schools also has a longer term aspect and this will remain as part of the Action Plan.
- 4.3 **Promote take up of new electric pool car** - Promoting the use of the electric car is a shorter term goal but has been impacted by the pandemic with less officers using the cars. The level of take up will continue to be reviewed in Year 2 and will encourage an increase in usage.
- 4.4 **Tackle use of single use plastics at Council operated buildings and venues** - tackling single use plastics has been included within the Action Plan for Year 2 and will also be a longer term goal across the four years. Many of the initial initiatives to remove plastics from Council buildings were completed but this may have changed as a result of the Pandemic and government guidance.

A full post pandemic audit will be undertaken at each venue to identify the position and any future actions required. The use of single use plastics within the markets is being monitored and discouraged. A number of reusable bags were disseminated in marketplace to residents to reduce waste.

5 Additional Targets

- 5.1 Four additional targets have been added to the Climate Change Action Plan to reflect the Council's commitment to facilitating a green recovery. These include:
 - Provide details to residents relating to how they can best help provide a green recovery
 - Increase resident engagement through an online questionnaire for residents/local groups to complete surrounding the best ways to tackle Climate Change

Environment and Safe Communities Committee

1 June 2021

- Annual reporting of DEFRA Local Authority Emissions (released June each year) - these are borough emissions which are released annually and were distributed via E-borough insight this year.
- Increase communication relating to Single Use Plastics and promote reusable materials within Council owned buildings.

6 Deferred Targets

- 6.1 Two targets have been deferred to Year 3 due to impact of the pandemic. This included facilitating a new car club scheme and the introduction of a Library of Things. These will be reported as part of Year 3 of the Action Plan.

7 CO² Emissions

- 7.1 The Council's CO² emissions have been reducing in recent years by seeing its total emissions decrease from 363kt CO² to 240kt CO² over a 13 year period from 2005-2018. Annual energy usage within council buildings will continue to be monitored in order to promote a reduction in usage over time. The highest areas of emissions are buildings and transport.
- 7.2 100% of the Council's electricity supply is renewable and therefore produces no CO². The supplier detailed that this switch, in line with the Council's electricity usage could reduce carbon emissions by a forecasted average of up to 208g per kWh and we will continue to monitor this. As building usage returns to normal, further energy efficiency measures will be considered. The Projects Team will be assessing feasibility of options within our buildings.
- 7.3 The Council is also reviewing Scope 3 (supply chain emissions) by ensuring that sustainability is considered throughout our procurement procedures. Officers purchasing on behalf of the Council should be aware of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) which incorporates single use plastic policy and the Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 7.4 Furthermore the impact on CO² emissions from our transport has also reduced significantly through the reduction in staff using their cars on business and all meetings held remotely. For instance, the calculated CO² emissions from EEBC's grey fleet was 6.70 tonnes, it is anticipated that this will be dramatically reduced as a result of the pandemic.
- 7.5 Carbon capture also plays a role in reducing our emissions and we are currently capturing this data. Nonsuch Park and Epsom Downs account for 37% of Council owned or managed open space with a further 527ha of space over 62 sites to be assessed.

Environment and Safe Communities Committee

1 June 2021

- 7.6 Tree coverage and planting have been reviewed in recent months using data from the 'National Tree Map'. Currently, the Borough has approximately 30% tree cover and in our open spaces that rises to 43%. Both figures are considerably above the UK average of 13% and future tree planting continues to be reviewed in order to provide the most appropriate options for the borough. Tree planting will also be considered throughout the development of Year 3 of the plan.
- 7.7 The Surrey Carbon Baseline study has recently been issued by the Surrey Climate Commission providing an initial carbon footprint analysis. This details a range of emission data and will help to calculate baseline data in the borough. Headline figures include:
- *Epsom and Ewell was responsible for 3.4% of emissions generated by Industry and Commercial activity in Surrey (2018).*
 - *Epsom and Ewell accounts for 0.5% of Surrey emissions due to land use by District/Borough.*
 - *50% of Surrey's Carbon emissions are due to travel with 66% due to car usage.*
 - *However, Epsom and Ewell create 8% of its emissions from residents travelling to work.*

8 Overall progress

- 8.1 A detailed version of Year 2 of the Action Plan is included within Appendix 2 and provides an update where it is available. A subsequent update will also be provided to this committee in January.

There are a number of ongoing work streams that the Council have shown real sustainable positive improvement from across the plan, these include:

- 8.1.1 Working with a partner to implement public electric charging points. The Feasibility Study was completed in January which identified a number of suitable sites in Epsom and Ewell. The contracts are being reviewed and installation work should commence this year. This scheme would provide residents with 9 proposed EV charge points (including up to 24 individual chargers) across the borough.
- 8.1.2 Improved engagement with residents has taken place with through increased communications on climate change issues including single use plastics and energy efficiency schemes available to certain vulnerable residents. New articles are due in upcoming e-Borough insight issues relating to how residents can best help provide a green recovery and the importance of green jobs in the borough in the future.

Environment and Safe Communities Committee

1 June 2021

- 8.1.3 The Council has also supported Active April to encourage residents to use the car less and use means of active travel more i.e. walking, cycling etc. This has been promoted across social media platforms for residents as a reduction of just 10 miles per week (16km) will save the planet between on average 2.7-2.9kg of CO² emissions.
- 8.1.4 Provide practical help to vulnerable and disabled people to improve energy efficiency in their homes– this has occurred via the Green Jump Surrey scheme with upwards of 60 referrals from October-Dec 2020 alone for EEBC residents to installers for energy efficient technology.
- 8.1.5 Increase recycling by private companies in the borough – schemes planned throughout the year to promote recycling across EEBC including a mixed recycling bin campaign to reduce contamination risk.
- 8.1.6 The Climate Change page on the council website is updated regularly with useful links and updates in relation to the environment and sustainability.
- 8.1.7 The Council are seeking to adopt the anti-idling powers under regulation 63 (3) of the Road Traffic Regulations 2002 to enable officers to require vehicle engines to be switched off and issue a fixed penalty notice as outlined in the report to this Committee on the 26 January 2021. A timetable is waiting to be agreed for this project. Following the approval of such, signage will be introduced in the borough.
- 8.1.8 A plan for future communication with the public has been produced including monthly themes in order to provide seasonal climate change advice and information.
- 8.1.9 Collaboration with Surrey County Council has taken place on a project in which residents can apply for collective solar panel schemes at a reduced price. Further details of such will be distributed in the coming months for installation this year.
- 8.2 The reduction of carbon emissions in both the Council and the Borough is a longer term goal and the Climate Change Action Plan will be developed to reflect changes in guidance and support the recovery from the pandemic.

9 External updates

- 9.1 In terms of large scale legislation, once the proposed Environment Bill reaches an advanced stage the Council will take the necessary steps to meet requirements which include biodiversity net gains on new developments and conservation covenants.

Environment and Safe Communities Committee

1 June 2021

- 9.2 Work continues with external councils in order to ensure EEBC is at the forefront of available knowledge/funding relating to climate change.

10 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

10.1 Impact Assessment

10.1.1 This report outlines the Council's approach to Climate Change and the risks faced locally and globally

10.2 Crime & Disorder

10.2.1 N/A

10.3 Safeguarding

10.3.1 N/A

10.4 Dependencies

10.4.1 The Council will work in partnership to deliver a number of actions.

10.5 Other

10.5.1 The delivery of the Local Plan is subject to consultation as detailed in the Local Plan timetable.

11 Financial Implications

11.1 Where future initiatives have a budgetary implication, they will be reported and considered by the Strategy & Resources Committee in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

11.2 Feedback from the Finance Peer review recommended that "given the Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2035, assess the costs of delivering this plan both in terms of revenue and capital."

11.3 As such, work will be progressed to assess the indicative cost of delivering the Climate Change Action Plan, which will then be reported back to Environment and Safe Communities Committee by January 2022 at the latest.

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

12 Legal Implications

12.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

Environment and Safe Communities Committee

1 June 2021

- 12.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

13 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 13.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: Green and Vibrant and supports the delivery of the Four Year Plan.
- 13.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 13.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** Climate Change is key priority throughout the Action Plan and number of targets included to help reduce emissions throughout EEBC.
- 13.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** Sustainability considered in all targets – positive implications only.
- 13.5 **Partnerships:** Surrey Environment Partnership, Surrey Climate Commission

14 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Climate Change Action Plan

Other papers:

- Council Climate Change Action Plan Update – Environment and Safe Communities Committee 26 January 2021
- Full Council Climate Change Action Plan 20 January 2020

Other papers:

- Enforcement Against Cars Idling – Environment & Safe Communities Committee 26 January 2021