

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN – UPDATE

Head of Service:	Victoria Potts, Head of Place
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached): Appendix 1- Climate Change Action Plan: Progress Review	

Summary

This report provides an update on the progress of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan

Climate Change is now widely seen as one of the most important and urgent global issues.

Recognising the Council's role in helping address the serious and accelerating impact of climate change on the environment and people's lives, the Council approved an ambitious climate change action plan at its meeting on 20 January 2020.

There is a strong commitment to mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change across the Council. Some progress has been made against a number of targets over the past year.

An update on progress of the Action Plan is set out in Appendix 1.

There are some significant relationships between the Council's Climate Change Action Plan and its Biodiversity Action Plan.

Work will continue during 2022 to review, deliver and monitor the Climate Change Action Plan.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider and note the progress made on the delivery of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan over the past year, a period which coincided with the continued COVID-19 pandemic, the publication of IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) in July – August 2021 and COP26 in November 2021.

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- (2) Note that the Environment and Sustainability Member Working Group has been established to monitor and review actions of the Council to deliver the climate change priorities set out in the Action Plan.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 This report outlines the progress over the past 12 months in delivering the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.
- 1.2 2021 has by no means been a typical year and the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted significantly on the delivery of all Council priorities this year including this Action Plan. During 2020 some areas of work were accelerated where opportunities arose, especially in the use of digital technology which could not have been imagined when the Action Plan was agreed on 20 January 2020 at Full Council. Following the departure of our temporary Climate Change officer in 2021 work has slowed. However, as set out in Appendix 1, there has been significant progress against targets set out in the action plan. A new permanent Climate Change officer has started with the Council in January 2022.
- 1.3 The Council's Annual Plan for 2021/22 was agreed by Full Council 30 September 2021 and set out the priorities of the Climate Change Action Plan that would be focused on in 2021/22.
- 1.4 This report outlines the progress and positive actions that have been made against the priorities set out in the action plan. The actions and responsibilities in the plan have not been updated since the report was last presented to this committee in June. However, a progress column has been added to the document in Appendix 1. A Member working Group has been set up to review the plan and any recommended amendments will be considered by this committee at a future date.

2 Background

- 2.1 In recent years there has been a fundamental societal shift regarding the importance of tackling climate change, at a local, national and international levels.
- 2.2 Global climate change is a key concern with countries across the world. The international scientific community published the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) in the Summer of 2021, highlighting the potentially severe global societal, environmental and economic impacts that human-made climate change pose. This was followed by the international negotiations and agreements reached at COP26 to mitigate the impacts of climate change, reduce the use of fossil fuels and keep global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees or less.

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- 2.3 A cross party task and finish group was established to oversee the development of the Council's first Climate 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.
- 2.4 The Climate Change Action Plan details objectives 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
 - Theme 6 - Use of technology & information system

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None arising from this report

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 There are no implications in terms of crime and disorder.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arising from this report

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None arising from this report

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None arising from this report

4 Financial Implications

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4.1 Where future initiatives which have budgetary implications not included in the Environmental and Safer Communities Committee budget, they will be reported and considered by the Strategy & Resources Committee in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

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

5 Legal Implications

5.1 Legal officer's comments: none arising from the content of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

6.1.1 Green & Vibrant and supports the delivery of the Four Year Plan

6.2 **Service Plans:**

6.2.1 The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:**

6.3.1 Climate Change is key priority throughout the Action Plan and number of targets included to help reduce emissions throughout EEBC

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

6.4.1 Sustainability considered in all targets – positive implications only.

6.5 **Partnerships:**

6.5.1 Surrey Environment Partnership.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Full Council Climate Change Action Plan 20 January 2020
- Environment and Safer Communities Committee: Climate Change Action Plan Update. 26 January 2021
- Environment and Safer Communities Committee: Climate Change Action Plan Year 2 Update. 1 June 2021

Other papers:

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- Climate Change motion to full Council 23 July 2019