

Spelthorne Council Working Party on Climate Change

The Council resolved on 24 October 2019, to set up a cross party Leader's Working Group on 'climate change'. With a change in Leadership of the Council the responsibility for the Working Group was passed to the Cabinet Member for the Environment and reformed into a full Working Party on Climate Change. The Working Party will explore ways to cut Spelthorne Council's carbon and harmful emissions, with a target to make Spelthorne Council (including all buildings and services) carbon neutral at the earliest opportunity.

The Terms of Reference for the Working Party are set out in Appendix A to this report.

The Council's corporate plan sets out our key priorities of housing, economic development, clean, safe and sustainable environment and financial sustainability. 'Climate change' is intertwined with all these aspects. In terms of financial self-sufficiency, the 'climate change' agenda offers opportunities for the Council to reduce its costs and carbon emissions, by improving energy efficiency and looking at clean energy generation.

Objectives

- Building by example, setting the standards and reducing the need for high energy consumption in Council buildings;
- Reducing energy needs when adding alterations, developments, including residential, office and mixed or extensions to the Council's buildings and generally through Development Management in line with sound financial management;
- Reducing carbon emissions during the development process;
- Improving Air Quality and community health
- Considering the establishment of district energy networks systems or renewables for Council developments;
- Looking at meeting increased demand for renewable or low carbon energy to address the energy needs of a connected society;
- Delivering more sustainable transport in partnership with relevant authorities, switching the Council's own transport arrangements to more sustainable forms
- Working with partners to secure water security in terms of supply, quality, and flood risk/mitigation;
- Addressing the effects of potential future temperature extremes;
- Addressing adaptation to climate change and impacts on biodiversity including carbon sinks.
- Addressing the use of technology (teleconferencing, mobile devices, flexible working etc) to reduce the need for energy consumption (ie reducing mileage to attend meetings or reduce need for building space)
- Offering incentives to leading edge environmentally friendly businesses and business practices (for example helping them to move to more sustainable business practices)
- Working with schools, businesses etc to inform our residents of more sustainable ways of living
- Ensuring sustainability is central to our procurement criteria when purchasing goods and service

Appendix A Terms of Reference

The Spelthorne Working Party on Climate Change will consist of 10 members

The Terms of Reference for the Working Party are

1. To develop an **action plan** to deliver our target of carbon neutrality by 2050, by the end of March 2020 (building on the existing sustainability strategy).
2. To make recommendations to Cabinet on areas for improvement following a review of existing policies which can impact on 'climate change' and to identify, and make recommendations on, developing new environmental policies where required which will help move the Council and Borough towards carbon neutrality by 2050.
3. To report to Cabinet appropriate action plans and targets to deliver the Council's 2050 target of zero carbon emissions.
4. To monitor progress with delivering the action plans and achieving targets and report on progress to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.
5. To consider government and wider authorities' consultation on documents relating to 'climate change' and assist Cabinet in formulating its response.
6. For members of the Working Party to act as 'climate change' champions by leading by example and advocating action on climate change. The Council has an important community leadership role to play regarding the 'climate change' agenda.
7. To identify areas for further research and invite presentations, workshops and discussions with experts as appropriate to help inform the Council's policies and action plans.
8. The cross party Working Party will consider the best way of engaging with key partners and work closely with the Government, the Environment Agency, Surrey County Council, local businesses, residents and other partners across the county and Borough to meet the target of making the Borough carbon neutral by 2050.
9. To consider and formulate a communication strategy to promote the Council's activities on climate change.

Membership and Proceedings of the Working Party on Climate Change

1. The Working Party on Climate Change membership to comprise of 10 elected members, - 3 Conservative, 3 Liberal Democrat, 2 Labour, 1 Green Party member and 1 Independent.
2. The Cabinet Member for the Environment or appointee will chair the Group.
3. The Group will appoint its own vice chairman from within its membership.
4. The meetings of the Working Party will be internal and confidential to the Council. At the Chairman's discretion, some of the meetings will be open to all members of the Council to attend, particularly those to which outside speakers have been invited, to ensure wide engagement across the organisation.
5. The Working Party, has the ability to co-opt an external member to the Group, as required, to deal with, specialist areas. However, it remains the decision of the full Working Group as to what targets are recommended.
6. The Working Party will meet every quarter but potentially more frequently in the early stages of its work.
7. The role and success of the Working Party to be reviewed by the Chairman of the Group and Leader after 12 months or earlier if deemed appropriate.
8. The Working Party should aim to deliver a consensual view to Cabinet. Where this is not possible it should aim to report fairly on the divergent views of the group. Voting is not considered appropriate or necessary. Proactive and innovative suggestions are encouraged.
9. Liaison and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders is welcomed. The Working Party should seek a wide body of opinion to inform its considerations including exchanging views on pertinent matters and receiving suggestions as to how climate change can be addressed in areas over which Spelthorne Borough Council has control or significant influence.