

Environment and Sustainability Committee



27 June 2023

Title	Climate Change Working Group
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Sandy Muirhead Group Head Commissioning and Transformation
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	Clean and Safe Environment
Recommendations	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To agree the continuation of a climate change working group to focus on monitoring of actions towards carbon neutrality and to assess initial ideas on measures to address climate change before submission to the Environment and Sustainability Committee. • To agree the Terms of Reference • To agree member representation at the Greener Futures Partnership meetings
Reason for Recommendation	As climate change issues permeate all of the Committee's remit in some form the Committee need to consider how the working group can continue to play a role in managing the Council's approach to climate change.

1. Key issues

- 1.1 Climate change, mitigation and adaptation are, and will be, significant issues affecting the future of Spelthorne. We need to both reduce the Council's and Borough's carbon footprints and adapt to future climatic changes, especially the increased risks of flooding and heat.
- 1.2 Therefore, the issues of climate change need to be addressed in all the Council does and particularly within the role of the Environment and Sustainability Committee.
- 1.3 Prior to the Committee system the Council had a Working Group on climate change since 2019 which gathered information and started to focus on actions to reduce our carbon footprint. This was revitalised in June 2021 and continued operating within the Committee system under the auspices of the Environment and Sustainability Committee. It has guided the development of

the Council's climate change strategy and action plan
<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/21048/Climate-Change-Strategy-2022-2030>.

- 1.4 Moving forward the continuation of the group will help monitor reductions in our carbon footprint and have an “audit function” in checking we are “doing the right thing” to both reduce carbon and ensuring we put in adaptation measures to address future climatic changes. It has provided guidance on spending from the Green Initiatives Fund to ensure robust proposals are brought forward for agreement to the Environment and Sustainability Committee to assist delivery of the climate change action plan.
- 1.5 It has also acted as a body to produce forward-thinking, cutting-edge ideas to help reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. It provides the opportunity for ideas to be presented informally to the climate change working group, who do an initial evaluation before anything comes to the Environment and Sustainability Committee.
- 1.6 It is suggested the task group is kept small to undertake these tasks - comprising of 7 members.
- 1.7 If continuation of the working group is agreed the terms of reference also need to be agreed (Appendix A).
- 1.8 Surrey County Council has developed a Greener Futures Strategy and delivery plan which covers the whole of Surrey
<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/community/climate-change/what-are-we-doing/greener-futures-climate-change-delivery-plan-2021-to-2025>. Boroughs and Districts were part of its development and in May 2022 the Environment and Sustainability Committee agreed to support the strategy. There are regular climate change officer Borough and District meetings but also member/senior officer meetings under the title of the Greener Futures Partnership Board whereby members can receive updates on progress and suggest ways of ensuring the delivery plan is implemented. Therefore, a member needs to be identified to attend the Board.

2. Options analysis and proposal

- 2.1 Not to have climate change working party may make it difficult for the Environment and Sustainability Committee, given its wide remit, to remain focused on ensuring that we are achieving genuine carbon reduction in the Borough.
- 2.2 **Recommended** The preferred option therefore is to continue with a Working Group to undertake an audit function on our carbon reduction achievements, assist in delivering the strategy and to develop ideas which maximise our move to net zero carbon and address adaption issues.
- 2.3 **Recommended** To approve the proposed Terms of Reference (Appendix A)
- 2.4 **Recommended** to appoint a member representative to attend and participate in the Greener Futures Partnership Board.
- 2.5 Not to do so would potentially exclude us from opportunities, including funding, and learning on climate change and adaptation across Surrey.

3. Financial implications

3.1 None at this stage but further Green Initiative Fund bids will be brought forward.

4. Other considerations

4.1 None.

5. Equality and Diversity

5.1 Climate change could impact groups differently and therefore addressing the issues of climate change will help mitigate effects on particular groups.

6. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

6.1 The subject matter will move the Council along its sustainability journey.

7. Timetable for implementation

7.1 Meeting dates to be agreed if Working Group to continue.

Background papers:, There are none.

Appendices:

Appendix A, Proposed Climate Change Working Group 2023-2025 Terms of Reference.