

Notice of Meeting

Surrey's Greener Future Task and Finish Group

**Date & time**

Tuesday, 29
October 2019 at
11.30 am

Place

G44, County Hall

Contact

Ben Cullimore
Room 122, County Hall
Tel 020 8213 2782
ben.cullimore@surreycc.gov.uk

Task Group Membership

Nikki Barton, Paul Deach, Jonathan Essex, Andy MacLeod (Chairman), Professor Richard Murphy, Becky Rush, Fiona White and John O'Reilly (ex-officio)

Role of the Task and Finish Group

Surrey's Greener Future Task Group will focus on Surrey County Council's recent declaration of a climate emergency and the actions the council needs to take to achieve [net zero carbon emissions](#) as soon as possible. The task group will also consider the role residents need to play in their local community and the wider impact of other public sector organisations and the private sector on the county's environment to develop a system-wide position.

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=802>

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 9 SEPTEMBER 2019

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- 8)

3 WITNESS SESSIONS

Areas to consider:

- Feedback and reflections
- Any outstanding issues
- Cabinet Member engagement

4 SCC EMISSIONS

5 DRAFT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT

(Pages 9
- 18)

Areas to consider:

- Feedback on initial structure
- Themes (discussion on level of detail and key points)
- Call for Action

6 DESIGN CHALLENGE

7 ACTIONS/NEXT STEPS

8 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Surrey's Greener Future Task and Finish Group will take place on 12 November 2019.

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY'S GREENER FUTURE TASK AND FINISH GROUP** held at 10.00 am on 9 September 2019 at Committee Room A, County Hall.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Date Not Specified.

Elected Members:

- Mr Paul Deach
- * Mr Jonathan Essex
- Mr Andy MacLeod
- * Professor Richard Murphy
- * Mr John O'Reilly
- * Mrs Becky Rush

In attendance

Rachel Crossley, Director of Strategic Commissioning
Grace Cox, Evidence and Insight
Ross Pike, Committees Business Manager
Katie Sargent, Environment Commissioning Group Manager
Huma Younis, Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies had been received from Paul Deach and Fiona White.

Professor Richard Murphy joined the group as a co-optee.

2 NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 05 AUGUST 2019 [Item 2]

It was agreed that minutes and agendas from all task group meetings should be made public.

3 WORK TO DATE [Item 3]

Witnesses:

Ross Pike, Committees Business Manager
Rachel Crossley, Director of Strategic Commissioning

Key points raised:

1. RP explained that the call for evidence was launched in August with a press release, social media engagement and telephone calls to various stakeholders. At 9 September 50 responses had been received in response to the call for evidence. The majority responders thus far were from private individuals.
2. The call for evidence runs till 15 September 2019. A project team will be co-ordinating the work of the task group. There is a proposed project timeline up until the council meeting.
3. RC- The design challenge had launched last week and there had been lots of publicity around this. There had been pop ups across the

summer talking to residents to raise awareness of the project. Discussions had taken place at the Health and Wellbeing Board last week and RC would be going to Surrey Heartlands System Board in two weeks to discuss how health organisations will respond to the climate emergency.

4. Conversations are taking place with the Surrey Environment Partnership on how they will support the county council and district and borough councils to work together on climate change moving forward.
5. The Insight work stream within the project is being delivered in partnership with Surrey University and will work on collating the baseline data for Surrey. A meeting is scheduled with RM to initiate the research.
6. RM queried if there was any ambition for the number of responses to the call for evidence. It was further commented that the timeframe for responses was tight and asked why this was so. RP explained that a target for a number of responses had not been set. It was added that timescales for the December council meeting had dictated the proposed work plan.
7. There had been a higher response to the call for evidence than other previous scrutiny work and a wide range of witnesses had been targeted to try and get a cross section and broad input.
8. JE- The task group should be called the Greener Future task group in all documentation.
9. BR- queried if other councils had been approached to ask what they are doing in response to the climate emergency. RP stated that discussions were taking place to identify those councils who are further ahead.
10. RC- speaking to LGA special interest group. RP will be meeting with democratic services contacts to discuss their approaches going forward.

4 CALL FOR EVIDENCE: INITIAL ANALYSIS [Item 4]

Witnesses:

Ross Pike, Committees Business Manager
Grace Cox, Evidence & Insight

Key points raised:

1. RP- to encourage responses consultation was divided into sections with multiple questions within each section. It was stated that it makes it slightly more difficult to run off data from this but hopefully easier for residents to complete.
2. GC- Transport and air quality- majority of comments were around infrastructure and reliability of transport. There were specific

comments about making buses electric, sustainable transport and lots of comments about cycle safety within responses.

3. Nature and countryside- respondents made clear points towards the importance and necessary maintenance of trees and wildflowers.
4. Carbon reduction and energy- respondents made clear points towards the need for renewable energy and increased energy efficiency, opposed to the use of fossil fuels and energy wastage. Responses around upgrading buildings and using alternative energy sources such as solar panels.
5. Waste minimisation and recycling- Respondents who commented on recycling and waste minimisation held the view that there is too much confusion surrounding items which can or can't be recycled. Responses pointed to the need to increase recycling services and provide more education on this topic.
6. With regards to key priorities for the council- 20/48 mention transport followed by education 11/48. The most common challenge referred to by respondents was the issue of finance.
7. RP- the responses to date reflected public opinion and no more specific evidence had been submitted to date to support these views. Responders have tried to include examples but these were also quite limited.
8. BR- asked if we could have another push through councillors to get more consultation submissions.
9. RP- agreed to share electronic copy of public consultation with members.
10. JE- we need to tell people the things we will not be doing as part of our work. Our work plan needs to show how we will meet the scale of the change. The biggest challenge is getting public acceptance of the scale of challenge.
11. RP- responses to the consultation will be published and this was made clear on the call for evidence webpages.
12. RM- surprised dietary change was so low down the list of responses as this could have a significant impact on emissions. RM also explained that a lot of air quality is about pollution and whilst there are positive health impacts from reducing pollution, we need to differentiate this from carbon emissions. Mr Prashan Kumar from the University of Surrey is an air quality expert who can help us with this work.

Actions:

- RP to share hard copy of public consultation with members of the Task Group.

5 WITNESS SESSIONS [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Katie Sargent, Environment Commissioning Group Manager
Ross Pike, Committees Business Manager
Rachel Crossley, Director of Strategic Commissioning

Key points raised:

1. KS updated the group on the draft themes included in the agenda and draft set of witnesses whom had not yet been contacted but offer a flavour of whom we could engage with.
2. We already have some council strategies in place but will include these in our project focus.
3. JE- suggested the following changes:
4. With waste minimisation and ethical purchasing grouping to refer to the circular economy. Will be hosting a conference on Saturday and have proposed 5 themes, transport, waste and resources, countryside including food and farming, buildings and energy.
5. Proposed there should be a separate target for in-house as Surrey County Council may be able to become net-zero on an earlier date than the county as a whole.
6. It was suggested there should be a theme around budget i.e. revenue and capital. What are quick wins, capital expenditure and revenue implications and if this should be included within all the themes discussed.
7. BR- queried if we should set up commitments for the council, business and residents similar to the approach within London's 1.5C plan.
8. JE argued need to have a plan to sum up the level of ambition required and quick change required. We need to explain what we will do in-house, identify things we can do and the levers to help us to do this. We need to be very clear about council's strategy and we should do this as a separate category from the other five themes.
9. BR- need to have some information around possible future policy changes i.e. driverless cars because this will impact our work.
10. JOR- queried if we can produce our own carbon emissions data and stated that we should have a witness session on how Surrey can go zero. It was explained by officers that this data was available.
11. RM- argued that zero carbon emissions should be the overarching principle for all five themes.

JE proposed themes for task group to focus on-

- Transport
- Countryside including land use
- Waste- resources and circular economy
- Energy- split in two:
 - o buildings and infrastructure
 - o energy and energy generation

12. JOR- queried on transport if there were any local authorities that have fundamentally changed their transport services whom we could talk to.

It was suggested that Nottingham and Bath were good examples of authorities whom had done this.

13. It was commented that the group needed to ensure local plans were joined up with county plans. In terms of the Transport theme, we need to think about LEPs and the support they could provide us.
14. RP- hope to begin witness sessions by end of September.
15. BR- need to concentrate on what the possibilities are rather than what we already know.
16. It was commented that we need to focus on the solutions that allow us to have a plan.
17. The task group need to look to have a model and structure so people can contribute to a holistic plan.
18. The task group agreed that officers re-look at the witnesses to engage with and focus more specifically on people or organisation who have experience of building sustainable plans.
19. Agreed to have officers at witness sessions to support with technical detail raised at sessions.

Actions:

- To provide the Task Group with carbon emissions data for the council
- Update the climate change themes template as per task group discussions
- For Democratic Services to review Local Authority transport strategies for Nottingham and Bath

6 FORWARD PLANNING [Item 6]

Will need to agree witness session themes in the next few days and will send to Members for sign off.

Actions:

KS to update the climate change themes template as per task group discussions and sent an updated copy to members by 13 September 2019.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 7]

To be confirmed. This would take place before the first witness session.

Meeting ended at: 11:25

Chairman

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Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee

XX November 2019



Surrey's Greener Future Task Group Final Report

Purpose of report:

To provide the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee with a detailed report on the findings and recommendations of the Greener Future Task Group which was set up to consider the council's role in tackling climate change.

Acknowledgements:

Members would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have taken time to share their experiences with the Task Group which has helped to shape the findings of this review.

Any errors, factual inaccuracies or inconsistencies contained within the report are the responsibility of the Task Group alone and not of those who contributed their knowledge, insight and experiences to the formation of this report.

Recommendations:

The Greener Future Task Group recommends that the Council:

- i. Approves the Call For Action (Annex 3).
- ii. Agrees to create a zero carbon board and officer delivery group to develop more detailed action plan and targets to deliver the Surrey County Council commitments, aiming to be net zero as an organisation by 2030.
- iii. Allocates sufficient investment within the Medium Financial Term Strategy to support climate change programmes and initiatives, reviewing this on an annual basis.
- iv. Seeks to work together with Districts and Boroughs through the Surrey Environment Partnership to develop and deliver a joint zero carbon strategy and action plan.
- v. Commits to continuing to support the emerging Surrey Climate Commission.
- vi. Supports the ambitions within the Environment Bill and calls on government for increased powers and resources to enable local authorities to lead on delivering on the commitment for the UK to be net zero by 2050.

Introduction:

Context

1. Climate change is occurring earlier and more rapidly than expected. The world's leading climate scientists have warned there is only 12 years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5C. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a landmark report in October 2018 highlighting that even half a degree beyond 1.5C would significantly worsen the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people.
2. People across the world are becoming more concerned about climate change, with mass demonstrations taking place over the last year and an increase in media attention around the causes and impacts of climate change. In response to the growing concerns and recognition of the need to act, the UK Government declared a climate emergency earlier this year and made a commitment to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The commitment to the environment was re-stated in the recent Queen's Speech with the Environment Bill being introduced through parliament, which includes a number of measures that will increase local authorities' powers to address environmental challenges in local areas.
3. The County Council has recognised how important the environment is to residents and the [Community Vision for Surrey in 2030](#) include a clear ambition that *'Residents live in clean, safe and green communities, where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities'*. Tackling climate change is a key part of this ambition.
4. At its meeting on 9 July 2019, the County Council declared a climate emergency and made a commitment to work closely with the Government, the Environment Agency, our Borough & District colleagues, local businesses, our residents and other partners in meeting this ambitious target; and deliver a strategy in 2019/20 involving a task group that clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target including actions that will be taken.
5. To initiate this work, the select committee agreed to set up a task group to identify the key principles of a draft 'environment call for action' through engagement with residents, staff and partners and recognise which environmental responsibilities are the most important for the people of Surrey and what action needs to be taken to address these.

The Task Group

6. A Task Group was established by the Communities, Highways and Environment Select Committee in July 2019 with a focus on Surrey County Council's recent declaration of a climate emergency and

the actions the council needs to take to achieve net zero carbon emissions as soon as possible. The task group also agreed to consider the role residents need to play in their local community and the wider impact of other public sector organisations and the private sector on the county's environment to develop a system-wide position. Following the conclusion of its scrutiny, the Task Group would make recommendations to the Council in response to its original motion, recommending a Call for Action that the council could adopt and proposals on how this might be taken forward with partners across Surrey.

7. The Terms of Reference for the Greener Future Task Group are attached as **Annex 1** to this report and provide a detailed outline of the scope and remit of the Task Group.
8. The Membership of the Task Group was agreed as the following:
 - Andy MacLeod (Chairman)
 - Paul Deach
 - Jonathan Essex
 - Becky Rush
 - Fiona White
 - John O'Reilly (ex-officio)

Nikki Barton subsequently joined the task group in October 2019.

9. In order to reduce the impact on the environment through unnecessary travel and accommodate the different work commitments of the Task Group, the Members agreed to adopt an agile working approach. This meant a focus on using technology where possible to enable remote working and encouraging the use of video conferencing. The Task Group also agreed that they would work in smaller sub-groups where appropriate in order to cover a larger number of stakeholder sessions in the short timeframe.
10. The Task Group initially met on 5 August 2019 to agree their work programme, proposed key lines of enquiry, the methodology for interacting with witnesses. At this meeting it was agreed that the committee would adopt a call for evidence approach over the summer which would then be followed by a more detailed programme of witness sessions with key officers within the council, external experts and councils seen as leading the way on tackling elements of climate change.
11. This report provides detail of the key themes and discussions that have taken place over a five month period. Views collated from witness sessions have been considered by the group and a set of recommendations have been agreed for consideration by the Select Committee, Cabinet and Council in November/December 2019.

Engaging with Key Stakeholders

Process for engagement

12. The Task Group has met numerous times since it was first established, hearing evidence from a diverse range of stakeholders in an effort to understand the full range of issues that contribute to climate change.
13. As explained in the introduction the Task Group had an initial meeting on 5 August 2019 to consider the scope of the work and agreed key lines of enquiry.
14. The following key lines of enquiry were agreed by the Task Group:
 - What does the term 'environmental responsibilities' mean to residents, staff and partners?
 - What is the council's current approach to reduce carbon emissions and how effective has this been?
 - What are Districts, Boroughs, Town and Parish Councils doing to address their environmental responsibilities and how do we best work with them?
 - From the evidence available both nationally and internationally, what is seen to contribute most effectively to becoming carbon neutral?
 - What does the research tell us about behaviour change required in communities – what would have the greatest impact?
 - How environmentally sustainable are the council's current policies?
15. The Greener Future Task Group wanted to consult residents to gain an understanding of their concerns for Surrey in relation to climate change and to gain a resident perspective on how the Council itself can work to reach net zero carbon.
16. Various methods were used to engage with stakeholders. The democratic services social media Twitter account was used to put out calls for evidence to residents. A call for evidence was also sent to the [need the details]... An email was sent from the Chairman of the Task Group to all County Councillors twice asking for contributions and suggestions of any organisations and groups the Task Group should make contact with to support this piece of work.
17. The consultation ran from the 14 August 2019 to 15 September 2019 and received 142 responses via the survey with 15 responses sent to the democratic services email, making a total of 157 responses. Out of the survey responses, 19 (13.38%) responded as an organisation and the remaining 123 as individuals.
18. The information received via the call for evidence was collated and analysed for the task group and helped to identify a number of working themes for the task group to structure the remainder of its work around. These themes were:
 - Energy

- Building, development and infrastructure
- Waste, resources and the circular economy
- Countryside, food, farming, water and land use
- Transport
- Surrey County Council

19. Following the broad call for evidence, the Task Group undertook a series of witness sessions, focussing on three key groups:
- SCC officers with a key role within the themes above
 - External Experts working in this field
 - Councils identified as leading the way in tackling elements of climate change
20. Through a range of meetings, visits, telephone calls and video conferences, the Task Group heard the views of xx stakeholders, as detailed in **Annex 2**. For a small Task Group with limited resources, Members were satisfied with the number of stakeholders that came forward and appreciative of the generosity of others in putting time aside to share this knowledge and expertise.

Key themes emerging from the Key Lines of Enquiry
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To discuss with the task group how we structure this section – assume via the themes as per the below:

Energy

Building, development and infrastructure

Waste, resources and the circular economy

Countryside, food, farming, water and land use

Transport

Surrey County Council

Call For Action

21. Climate Change is a complex issue and it is easy for the scale of it to be overwhelming, with residents often feeding back that they want to make changes but are not clear on what is needed. In order to provide clarity to this issue and a focus for councils, partners and residents to work together, most leading Councils have adopted some form of call for action or statement of intent around climate change. To be effective, it is a simple set of statements, which are easy to read and understand – providing a framework against which more detailed action plans can be developed.
22. It is recommended that this approach is adopted by Surrey County Council and the Task Group has developed a Call For Action as part of its work over the last five months, which looks at what the Task Group feels the County Council should prioritise within the organisation, with partners and businesses and encourage residents to do in support. The Call for Action is attached at **Annex 3**.

System-wide Approach

23. Surrey is a two-tier area with the County Council and the 11 Districts and Boroughs sharing powers and responsibilities to tackle climate change. A number of the districts and boroughs in Surrey have also declare a climate emergency and it is clear that there is a collective ambition across the public sector to act now to reduce emissions.
24. In September 2020, the Leaders and Chief Executives of Surrey's 12 local authorities recognised this shared ambition and agreed to work together to combat climate change. A working group has been set up to provide oversight of and leadership for work to develop a Surrey-wide strategy and common targets that will help Surrey achieve net zero carbon emissions.
25. In addition, the Surrey Waste Partnership recently agreed to extend its remit to broader issues around the environment and has been re-named as the Surrey Environment Partnership. This partnership - Surrey's 12 Environment portfolio holders (with officer support from the Joint Waste Solutions team) – will be well placed to connect work across Surrey's local authorities and to drive the development of the strategy and common targets. It is hoped that the Greener Future 'call to action' will provide a helpful framework for developing a Surrey-wide approach.
26. It will be important to engage all sectors of Surrey's communities in this work, including residents, health, business, education and voluntary, community and faith organisations. A number of cities

have adopted a climate commission approach to coordinate this with evidence that this is helping to deliver improved outcomes. Modelled on the Leeds Climate Commission, the recently established Surrey Climate Commission has the potential to provide overarching, apolitical system leadership, through both its core group (of which Surrey County Council is a member), and the broader steering group that will have representation of all key stakeholders. The Task Group would encourage the County Council to continue to contribute to the emerging work in this area and look at how the Climate Commission might take a more prominent lead role in future.

Conclusions of the Task Group:

27. Throughout the course of its work, the Task Group have received a valuable amount of evidence from witnesses covering a broad range of issues. The Task Group would like to thank all who have taken time to engage with the group and share their experiences.
28. Climate Change is a complex and far-reaching issues and the Task Group chose to group its work by theme in order to provide clarity and structure as well as a focus for questioning witnesses. The evidence heard at witness sessions has helped the group formulate a series of recommendations for consideration by the Select Committee, Cabinet and ultimately Council.
29. The recommendations agreed by the Task Group are based on evidence gained about the causes of climate change, experts views on the best ways to tackle this and the ability of the council to intervene. It is recognised that this is the start of Surrey's journey to tackle climate change, with the work of the Task Group providing the basis for the call for action to be approved by Council. Following Council's consideration in December, further work will be needed by officers to develop a more detailed action plan against this, as outlined in the recommendations.
30. From the evidence received it is clear that **MORE TO ADD HERE FOLLOWING A STEER FROM THE TASK GROUP ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND EMPHASIS THEY WANT TO MAKE**
31. The Task Group is confident that the recommendations contained within this report will help focus the council's effort in tackling climate change and provide a strong platform for taking forward this work with partners, businesses and residents across Surrey as only through collective action will the county be able to be net

carbon zero. The Task Group hopes that the County Council will fully support these recommendations and looks forward to continuing to work in support of this important issue.

Next Steps

32. The Task Group's report will be considered by the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee on 22 November 2019 with a report submitted to Cabinet on 26 November 2019 and recommendations to Council on 10 December 2019.

Report author: Andy MacLeod, Chairman of the Surrey's Greener Future Task Group

Report contact:

Contact details:

Sources/background papers:

IPCC Report

Community Vision for Surrey in 2030

Annexes:

Annex 1- Surrey's Greener Future Task Group Terms of Reference

Annex 2 – List of Witness Sessions

Annex 3 – Call for Action

CALL FOR ACTION: SURREY'S GREENER FUTURE

Surrey County Council...	With Partners and Businesses...	As Residents...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be zero carbon for our own organisational emissions by 2030. 2. Consider climate change at the centre of the work we do and in any decision that is made. 3. All SCC's electricity delivered through a green energy supplier by 2020. 4. The council's vehicle fleet will be zero emissions. 5. We will use our buying power and influence in our supply chain to require and incentivise environmentally responsible commissioning 6. Work with pension funds and other investors to divest from fossil fuels and increase investment in energy efficiency, low carbon transport and low carbon heat solutions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Commit to measure, report on and set long term targets to reduce both our direct and indirect emissions. 8. Improve our communications and engagement on climate change. 9. Work with staff to drive behavioural changes that help reduce business emissions, for example, travel less. 10. Improve transport links and active travel infrastructure to reduce car use. 11. Enable electric transport with infrastructure and incentives 12. Introduce a zero emission bus fleet across Surrey by 2030 13. Plant 1.2M trees by 2030. 14. Require all new developments to leave the natural environment and biodiversity in a better state than before. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Live and breathe reduce, reuse, recycle in our daily lives. 16. Look to walk, cycle or use public transport instead of driving where possible. 17. Switch energy suppliers to a green tariff for electricity and gas. 18. Encourage low carbon dietary choices. 19. Play an active role in the decisions we make about climate change and help deliver the necessary changes.

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