

Health and Wellbeing Board

1. Reference Information

Paper tracking information	
Title:	Surrey's Greener Future: Local action for global impact
Related Health and Wellbeing Priority:	Priority One
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Sponsor:	Cllr Tim Oliver
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Related papers	IPCC Special Report (SR15): https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/

2. Executive summary

2.1 Surrey's Community Vision for 2030 contains the shared ambition that "*residents live in clean, safe and green communities, where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities*". This ambition reflects the fact that Surrey's residents have consistently raised concerns about how we tackle climate change with a clear desire to preserve their county for future generations.

2.2 This paper sets out a programme of work, developed by the County Council, which would help to achieve this ambition. It also proposes ways in which the County Council is seeking to work with its partners to address the climate challenge, and in so doing enable people and organisations to ensure Surrey is safe, free from pollution and has open, green spaces to enjoy in the future.

3. Recommendations

3.1 This paper recommends that Health and Wellbeing Board members:

- Consider their response to Surrey County Council and other Surrey local authorities declaring a climate change emergency, including the option of declaring climate emergencies on behalf of their own organisations (if they have not already done so)
- Work with Surrey County Council to support the Surrey's Greener Future initiative by
 - i. supporting and/or participating in the community design challenge;
 - ii. submitting evidence and ideas to the call for evidence (and potentially taking part in subsequent witness sessions);
 - iii. helping to develop an evidence base that will inform Surrey's collective response to the climate challenge; and
 - iv. engaging in a strategy review process that will determine how we can work together more effectively.

4. Reason for Recommendations

- 4.1 A global issue like climate change affects us all and we all – public services, partner organisations, local businesses and residents – have a role to play in responding to the challenges it brings. By working together, the County Council believes we will get the best out of our collective capacity and resources: improving the environment in Surrey while also contributing to a global change.
- 4.2 The Greener Future initiative will help to deliver Surrey’s Community Vision for 2030 and the aims of our Health & Wellbeing Strategy by helping people to lead healthy lives.

5. Detail

- 5.1 The UK Government has committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, and on 9 July 2019 Surrey County Council adopted a corresponding motion, through which it resolved to:
 - i. commit to working closely with the Government, the Environment Agency, Borough and District colleagues, local businesses, our residents and other partners in meeting this ambitious target;
 - ii. 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;
 - iii. write to the Government asking them to confirm what support will be made available to local authorities to help achieve this goal; and
 - iv. declare a ‘Climate Emergency’, and commit to actions to support businesses and all local authorities in their work to tackle climate change by providing a strong unified voice for councils in lobbying for support to address this emergency, and sharing best practice across all councils
- 5.2 At the time of writing this report, Elmbridge Borough Council, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Guildford Borough Council, Woking Borough Council and Mole Valley District Council had also declared climate emergencies, with other local authorities in Surrey considering their position.
- 5.3 Further to the Government’s commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions, DEFRA has published a paper that summarises its ambitions for the forthcoming Environment Bill and sets out some implementation considerations. It will be important to align the Greener Future initiative with work to develop the bill.

6. Challenges

- 6.1 For Surrey to achieve net zero carbon emissions, a genuinely collaborative approach is required, with individuals and organisations sharing collective responsibility. The principles at the heart of the Green Future approach are therefore designed to ensure the work is system wide, ambitious, long-term in its impact and genuinely co-produced by partners and residents.
- 6.2 There is some urgency to this work, as indicated in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published on 8 October 2018. The report outlines the risks to the planet if temperature increases by more than 1.5°C and warns that without significant action we could exceed the temperature within 12 years.

6.3 In light of the above, this work will need to progress at pace. However, this urgency should be balanced with the need to move forward in partnership and in so doing determine the most effective collective approach to becoming carbon neutral.

7. Timescale, delivery plan and next steps

7.1 Since declaring a climate emergency on 9 July, the County Council has started thinking about this work in three different ways, which have translated into three connected and complementary strands of work (to run at the same time):

- i. A cross-party **scrutiny** task group of county councillors will test what the 2030 Vision ambition means to Surrey residents, businesses and partners in order to draft a 'call for action'.

A call for evidence runs until 15 September, following which the councillors on the scrutiny task group will be running a series of witness sessions, which will enable a range of stakeholders to share their views on our climate emergency.

In December, the findings of the task group will be presented back to the County Council, setting out the draft 'call for action', which in turn will be supported by the emerging insight work and the outcomes of the community design challenge.

- ii. An **insight** workstream – being undertaken in conjunction with the University of Surrey – will ensure the right research and data are informing Surrey's approach and identify what more we need to do to become carbon neutral.

In order to keep the work targeted and manageable, the scope of this work will be limited to achieving net zero carbon emissions in Surrey, also reflecting the focus of the motion passed by Surrey County Council on 9 July and the corresponding UK target.

The member-led task group and design challenge workstreams provide the opportunity to explore wider environmental issues with residents and partners as appropriate.

The insight work will produce an evidence base that will help us to understand:

- how close Surrey is to being carbon neutral at present;
- how effective Surrey's current strategies are (across the whole county);
- what more we should do; and
- where we need to strengthen the data and evidence we are using to guide individual and collective actions

Between August and November 2019, two corresponding strands of work will provide an initial view of where Surrey is on its journey to becoming carbon neutral:

- Work to produce a baseline will identify and bring together existing data (also identifying any gaps) in order to give us the 'as is' picture
- At the same time, a proposed Surrey-wide strategy review aims to identify what organisations across the county are currently doing in order to become carbon neutral

The process of building an evidence base will be iterative – e.g. we will need to fill gaps in our knowledge having identified them – and work will therefore continue beyond November 2019. The aim is to have built a robust and comprehensive evidence base by summer 2020, which will then be available for organisations in Surrey to inform their work in future.

It will be crucial to work with colleagues in district and borough councils, the health system and other partner organisations to ensure this work realises its full potential. To that end, conversations have begun to determine how existing networks, such as the Surrey Environment Partnership and Sustainability Network, can help to take this work forward.

- iii. A **community design challenge** will enable local residents, communities and businesses to be innovative in developing and implementing ideas that will tackle climate change and other environmental issues.

Through September local people will be invited to share their ideas about how Surrey's communities could respond to the climate emergency, either online or by taking part in a local innovation workshop.

Ideas will be tested against the emerging findings from the insight work and support will be provided to enable shortlisted participants to develop and prototype their ideas through October and November.

In order to make these ideas a reality, it is hoped that a range of partners will collaborate to bring together the required resources and expertise.

8. Conclusion

- This report sets out Surrey County Council's proposed response to the climate emergency, and its commitment to working with partners and Surrey's communities
- In line with the recommendations, the members of Surrey's Health and Wellbeing Board are invited to share their views on this suggested programme of work, and on the opportunities to work together to ensure Surrey can achieve net zero carbon emissions