

COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT & HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE

Item under consideration: UPDATE ON COUNCIL CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Date Considered: 24 March 2020

- 1 The Select Committee met virtually on 24 March to consider a suite of documents produced as a result of the council agreed call for action that followed the initial announcement of a climate emergency in July 2019. Members reviewed the emerging council strategy, the Greener Futures investment programme and the new Tree Strategy.
- 2 The Select Committee recognised the ambition behind the strategy and proposed investments and noted the need for continued support from central government if the council is to meet its target of becoming net zero carbon by 2050.
- 3 Given the current unprecedented events being experienced as a result of the coronavirus epidemic Members raised concern about the impact this could have on the ability of authorities to meet their targets on climate change.
- 4 The Select Committee discussed the importance of acting in partnership with colleagues in Surrey's district and borough councils, NHS and other organisations to realise the strategy's aims. Members agreed that some form of joint scrutiny would be required to ensure that the strategy was delivering across the county.
- 5 Particular focus was given to the area of transport and how Surrey's public transport network could be improved to increase patronage and reduce private car use.

Recommendations:

The Select Committee agreed the following:

- a) The Committee supports the current approach taken to develop the Climate Change Strategic Framework and Action Document
- b) The Committee supports the continuation of engagement of the council with district and boroughs with the intention to support joint endorsement across the 12 authorities
- c) The Committee encourages the continued development of the actions contained within the action plan document, to develop ownership, appropriate levels of funding and key KPIs for monitoring
- d) That the Committee investigate avenues for joint scrutiny with district and borough councils to review the impact of the climate strategy and continue its development

John O'Reilly
Chairman of the Communities, Environment & Highways Select Committee

