

## **Notes of a Meeting of the Climate Change Working Group - 3 December 2020**

### **Members Present:**

Cllr Morgan Rise (Chairman)  
Cllr Rodney Bates  
Cllr Vivienne Chapman  
Cllr Edward Hawkins

Cllr David Lewis  
Cllr Charlotte Morley

**In Attendance:** Cllr Sharon Galliford

**Officers:** Natalie Annalls, Keiran Bartlett, Tim Pashen, Jane Reeves and  
Jenny Rickard

### **18 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Robin Perry and Councillor John Skipper.

### **19 Notes of the Previous Meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on 3 September 2020 were confirmed by the Group.

### **20 Brief update on the progress priority actions in the draft Climate Change Action Plan**

The Working Group received an update on the progress of the priority actions of the Council's draft Climate Change Action Plan.

It was explained that as per the annex in the agenda pack significant progress had taken place on a number of actions in the Action Plan. It was highlighted that meetings had been arranged with key internal departments to tackle the key identified actions; including one to one meetings; with information due to be fed back to the Climate Change Officers' Group in January.

In addition to the named actions in the plan, it was also shared that a recent upgrade of the radiator valves and heating controls in Surrey Heath House would save approximately 53,657 KG of gas consumption per year. In addition it was noted that the associated cost savings would also mean that the works would pay for themselves within 2 years.

It was appreciated that there was a substantial project around the funding of electric vehicle charging points and the advertising of the location of charging points. It was noted that an item in respect of the funding of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in Deepcut would soon be heard by the Executive and that plans were afoot to feature a list of the locations of electric vehicle charging points within the Borough. The need for the Council to encourage the acceleration of a modal shift in relation to the use of electric car was underlined. However, the Group were informed this would also be naturally progressed by recent advances in the industry to move to a universal charging plug. In addition, as well as the addition of

new EV charging points, Members emphasised the need for good maintenance of existing charging stations such as at the Main Square Car Park.

A specific issue was noted in respect of the suitability of LED lighting on the Council's estate due to its effects on certain species of local bat populations. It was noted that there were lighting options, including blue LED Lighting, which didn't have negative impacts on such bat species. In addition it was agreed that Officers would check with Surrey County Council that potential impact on bat species had been considered in relation to their current roll out of LED lighting.

## **21 Update on joint working opportunities**

The Working Group received an update from Officers in relation to joint working opportunities on tackling climate change.

The Council was already working with the South East Energy Hub, which was a coalition of Local Enterprise Partnerships, in order to assist the Council in becoming 'bid-ready', for potential upcoming funding streams to decarbonise the Council's estate including Surrey Heath House. It was added that Enterprise M3 was due to release some specific grant schemes for Climate Change related projects.

The Council's officers were in frequent dialogue with Surrey County Council and other Boroughs and Districts in order to swap best practise including best procurement practises. Moreover Surrey County Council and Local Authorities had commissioned a suitability assessment that looked at land suitability for renewable energy and tree planting initiatives. As part of this study specific buildings would be examined for decarbonisation potential such as the theatre and main square car park.

Furthermore it was acknowledged that Surrey County Council had recently released a £100 million Community Projects Fund which could be used for sustainable community-led initiatives such as the installation of solar power on community buildings.

It was reported to the Group that Joint Waste Services (JWS) were reconsidering the way in which they measured their emissions; and Amey, itself had reiterated its ambitions to make its waste contract operations Carbon-neutral. Amey was already reporting its progress towards these goals to the Joint Waste Services Committee on a quarterly basis and JWS was already considering working with the contractor around initiatives such as bottle deposit schemes.

## **22 Update on grant funding streams recently released**

The Group considered an update to the latest Grant Funds which were available for Climate Change related projects.

Particular attention was paid to the central government Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS); which focussed on providing funding in order to make public buildings more energy efficient and to install low carbon heating measures, for example insulation, glazing, heating controls, and heat pumps.

Whilst Surrey Heath had missed the first phase of the scheme, the phase had been undersubscribed; and there was a significant chance of a successful bid for the second phase of the scheme when the Council had in-depth data on its buildings from its work, with the Energy Hub South East, to include in an application. In addition, it was acknowledged that there was also a £2 billion homes grant; £1.5 billion of which was for residents to provide Photovoltaic windows in their homes.

Whilst it was emphasised that many of these schemes had very tight timescales, Members noted as the Council would soon have an adopted Climate Change Strategy the authority would be in a better position when bidding for funding.

## 23 APSE Energy Business Case

The Working Group considered a proposed resolution in order to recommend to the Executive: the Council's uptake of membership of the Local Authority Energy Collaboration (APSE) and APSE energy. Members were advised that the annual membership fee would be £4,669 per year (pro-rated for the first year); and that APSE Energy had four main functions in relation to Climate Change matters:

- a) An advocacy role and a role as a pressure group
- b) Provision of consultancy services and best practise guidance
- c) Facilitation of events including webinars and training
- d) Publications and materials; including newsletters, technical notes and briefings.

Questions were raised in respect of the membership fee breakdown; in particular the funding towards the annual Big Energy Summit Conference. Whilst it was reiterated that free admission for 2 Officers was a bonus to the membership rather than a substantial benefit of the membership fee, it was hoped in the future the conference would continue to be virtual in order to cut down on the carbon emissions of the event.

**RESOLVED that it be recommended to the Executive that the Council becomes a Member Authority of the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) and APSE Energy.**

## 24 Climate Change literacy training options

Members considered a report outlining the potential opportunities to facilitate Officers' climate change training.

It was summarised that the more in depth, detailed training option was provided by the Carbon Literacy project which came with an accreditation scheme and interactive resources in the form of a Carbon Literacy Toolkit. However it was emphasised that the training sessions were resource intensive to facilitate and were required to take place in small groups.

In contrast Surrey County Council had purchased an E-learning training package that were offered out to the Surrey Borough and Districts free of charge. The Training course was an interactive online training course which would be

completed individually and wouldn't take officers more than a hour to complete the foundation level of the course.

Whilst there was consensus that there was a necessity for as many Officers as possible to undertake climate change training, there was also an appreciated value in the more in-depth training provided by the Climate Literacy Project. It was thereby agreed that all Officers should be enrolled in Stage 1 of the Surrey County Council climate change training and a select group of Officers be asked to undertake the more intensive training from the Carbon Literacy project. It was noted that APSE could potentially provide facilitators for the group sessions of the Carbon Literacy Training and it was envisaged that such sessions would only be undertaken by key Officers and climate change champions.

## **25 Summary of the Local Plan Surrey Heath Climate Change Study**

The Working Group considered a report commissioned to AECOM which aimed explore how climate change objectives in respect of both mitigation and adaptation could be effectively addressed through the emerging Surrey Heath Local Plan.

Some of the key points of the commissioned report were highlighted to the Working Group:

- It was highlighted that there was a predicted 30% drop, when measuring against existing Surrey Heath Borough Carbon Dioxide production levels, which would result from the AECOM recommended measures to tackle carbon emission production via the Surrey Heath Local Plan in comparison to levels in a do nothing scenario.
- There was potential to use spatial strategy and site-use selection in order to optimise public transport and cycling opportunities; and initiatives that support bio-diversity and flood storage areas.
- The use of master planning and design in order to dictate orientation of new developments in order to harness renewable energy and natural lighting.
- The implementation of building emissions standards and the government future homes standards.
- A recommendation that drives towards the provision of renewable energy should be focussed on community-led schemes.

It was noted that the Council's Climate Change Strategy included the emissions data for the Council commissioned from AECOM. Following on from a request at the earlier meeting of the Working Group, Members were presented with a further, more in-depth breakdown of the origins of the Council's current Carbon emissions; which included a more precise breakdown of the Carbon Emissions created under the categories of procurement and office administration.

The Working Group discussed the potential to cut household carbon emissions by policy stipulating retrofitting and insulation provision on the application of household extensions. It was noted that whilst there were significant opportunities around new builds, there was a large question in respect of viability and eco-building extensions. In addition, it was advised there were significant difficulties in respect of the creation and implementation of retrofitting policies. In respect of mitigating the effects of Climate Change, decarbonisation of public buildings such

as the Windle Valley Day Care Centre would also involve the improvement of ventilation through buildings.

Discussion arose from the underlining of paragraph 12.1.3 in the conclusion of the report. It was emphasised that when considering the Council's Climate Change Policy and proposed action plan the Executive would need to weigh up the opportunities to tackle climate change-tackling with the costs and compromises in respect of the economy and development viability. It was established that there was a need to better understand these political considerations and that a short report outlining the trade-offs and compromises should be brought back to the Working Group in the future.

**RESOLVED that the Working Group to receive a short report outlining the compromises and trade-offs for Local Plan Climate Change objectives and policy approaches.**

## **26 Next Steps**

Members were advised of the plans for the next meeting of the Working Group. It was envisaged that the Working Group would consider the draft Climate Change Strategy with a view for recommendation of adoption by the Executive in March. The Surrey County Council Climate Change Strategy would also be considered for endorsement alongside the Surrey Heath Climate Change Action Plan.

It was noted that an update on the progress of all the actions in the Climate Change Action Plan would become a standing item for future meetings of the Working Group for the foreseeable future.