

Energy Strategy

FIVE YEAR PLAN 2023/28



The next Five Years – our priorities



Effective & Responsive Council

We have **listened** to the views of residents, business and partners to set these priorities. We will continue this positive engagement through the implementation process, and we will **advocate** on behalf of our community on issues outside our direct control. We will increase how we **work together** with other Local Authorities, partners, businesses and the voluntary sector – we recognise more can be achieved by working together. **Customer service** will be at the heart of everything we do. We will harness the opportunities of **technology** to deliver efficient and effective services. We will **spend public money wisely** and attract resources and investment into the borough as a whole.

Environment

To enhance and improve access to the borough's cherished **green spaces and natural environments** for the enjoyment of generations to come, balancing our commitments to housing delivery and economic growth. We are committed to tackling **Climate Change**, working with communities and partners.

Health & Quality of Life

To nurture the **strong sense of community across the whole borough**, fostering a sense of respect and consideration. We aim to ensure everyone can access a **safe, quality home** to meet their needs. We will take a positive approach to **supporting** all sectors of our community, including those who are most vulnerable. We will promote **active and healthy lives** for all and a rich programme of **cultural and community events**.

Economy

To invest in our **towns, villages and communities**, supporting our **existing businesses and attracting new ones**. We will promote the unique identity for our whole borough and its places and work with partners to improve to the borough's infrastructure including **transport** infrastructure.





Contents

1 Introduction

2 The Challenge Ahead

3 Our Vision

4 The Council's Use of Energy

5 Supporting Residents & Businesses

6 Generating Renewable Energy



I Introduction

Surrey Heath is one of the best places to live in the country. Our beautiful countryside, excellent civic amenities, and thriving town centres give the council the opportunity to grow prosperity and improve the quality of life for people across the borough. However, in common with many other areas across the UK, an increase in energy costs across 2022 presented a fiscal shock to Surrey Heath Borough Council.

UK energy prices rose significantly over the course of 2022, and while they have since significantly fallen, they are still roughly 50% higher than before the Ukraine war. As the world economy transitions away from carbon-based fuels and the UK becomes more reliant on electricity as a source of power, predicting the price of energy becomes more difficult and may lead to further price shocks, like those seen in 2022. This has consequences for Surrey Heath: Poor energy performance in the older housing stock in the borough impacts on the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents. Energy costs are also a major drag on the performance of our businesses. The Council's own services are not immune – every additional penny spent on energy, is one which is not spent on providing services for our residents. Reducing our energy consumption, results in less money spent on energy and protect the Council from potential future price shock. This, coupled with the Council's commitment to net-zero emissions by 2030, provides a strong argument for action.

On the 9 October 2019 the Council declared a Climate Emergency and pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030 across its own estate and operations. The declaration was in recognition that climate change is happening and that action needs to be taken now. Reflecting this, the Council's 5 Year Strategy contains a goal to reduce carbon emissions by 70% by 2027. As such, an Energy Strategy has been developed to provide the long-term vision and direction we need in order to support our residents and businesses, and to meet our own commitments. Our Energy Strategy will help to ensure that the work that we do over the coming five years will lay the foundations to enable us to explore new ways to generate, supply and use energy more effectively. By delivering more energy efficiency and investing in lower carbon energy generation we will not only meet our targets for a low carbon future, but will help businesses and residents to thrive and prosper today.



2 The Challenge Ahead

In early 2023, the first full energy audit of SHBC's operational buildings was completed. This audit analysed the total amount of energy used by each site and calculated the resultant carbon emissions. This analysis shows 237 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) was produced from 1,299 megawatt-hours (mWhs) of gas and 383 tCO₂e from 1,981 mWhs of electricity. As such, total energy use produced 620 tCO₂e over 22/23.

Reaching net-zero emissions by 2030 necessitates a 14.3% annual reduction in emissions from our assets. Purchasing of green electric from October 2023 will allow us to report our electricity emissions as zero (saving 383 tCO₂e), in practice, we will still be using the same electricity from the grid, thus producing carbon. With 50% of our buildings emissions coming from Surrey Heath House and Camberley Theatre, achieving net zero will be determined by our future plans for these sites. Removal from the building stock, or moving to energy efficient premises, will lead to large carbon reductions. Otherwise, extensive retrofits will be needed. As such, careful redevelopment of Surrey Heath House and Camberley town centre is a once in a generation opportunity to sharply cut operational energy emissions.

An action plan has been created which lists the steps needed to realise our net zero aims. However, there are several areas in which more information must be gained before a detailed plan can be put forward, particularly in the key areas of energy data management and the costing of capital works. As such, it is suggested that a yearly review is conducted so that detailed plans and costs for the decarbonisation of council assets can be included as and when this information becomes available. The Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) will oversee the delivery of the Energy Strategy. Any updates to the document will first be presented to the Director of Environment and Community with proposed alterations finalised by the CCWG.

Achieving net zero energy emissions by 2030 will require significant financial and staff resource. Initial quotations have identified projects worth around £2.7M (£1.2M for theatre, £1.5M for other building PV) which would produce £324k per annum in savings and income at current energy prices. The already identified works would reduce the council's direct carbon emissions by approximately 35%. The high costs of identified works mean it is likely residual energy emissions will continue post 2030 and will have to be offset.



3 Our Vision

Surrey Heath Borough Council has declared a climate emergency and has pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030 across its own estate and operations, including contractors. To this end we recognise that the greenest type of energy is the energy you don't use. As such we will ensure:

- That all our staff are aware of their responsibility to minimise energy use.
- That all staff are given training, skills and knowledge, appropriate to their role, to help us deliver this strategy in their own areas of operation.
- That energy is used as efficiently as possible in our own operations, by our contractors and across our operational and investment estates.
- We will identify areas where operational changes, or investment in new vehicles, plant, technology or management systems can deliver energy savings and emission reductions.
- We will work with Surrey County Council and our neighbouring boroughs to support our residents in reducing their energy costs. In particular we will prioritise making the best possible use of any government initiatives and the support offered by other organisations to assist our poorest residents, actively tracking these opportunities as they arise, and developing and implementing clear plans to use them to the best advantage of Surrey Heath.
- We will work with Surrey County Council, neighbouring boroughs and national and regional organisations to support businesses in reducing their energy costs.
- We will identify opportunities to invest in renewable energy generation across the borough, and ensure that the Council, our residents and local businesses benefit from the low-cost, low-carbon energy generated from such schemes.



4 The Council's Use of Energy

REF	FIVE YEAR STRATEGY AIM	2023/24 TARGET/PROJECT	MILESTONES/TARGET	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
E1	Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to minimise energy use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Publicise strategy on intranet ii. Publish strategy on website iii. All staff briefing on energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Publication of strategy after Executive sign-off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Climate Change Officer ii. Climate Change Officer iii. Chief executive
E2	Report Energy Use to Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Accurately identify and track total building energy use and identify major sites of emissions ii. Annual Report to Executive on energy use and costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Process for managing billing and energy data, Dec 2023 ii. Annual report 	Climate Change Officer
E3	Ensure that staff are given the skills and knowledge to help us deliver this strategy in their own areas of operation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop appropriately targeted training programmes for staff ii. Identify opportunities for energy awareness training for planners and surveyors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Energy taught as part of staff climate training module, Dec 2023 ii. Identification of training opportunities, Dec 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Climate Change Officer, HR ii. Climate Change Officer, Planning Policy, HR
E4	Use energy as efficiently as possible in our own operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Reduce energy use through changes to day-to-day operations in council buildings ii. In line with our major energy contract expiring in 2024, ensure that all buildings are on the best value for money tariffs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Discussions with key facilities staff, Dec 2023 ii. Preferred supplier chosen, Oct 2023 	Climate Change Officer



E5	Ensure that energy is used as efficiently as possible by our contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Include energy saving requirements where appropriate in new contracts ii. Discuss energy saving with existing contractors and leisure centre operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Development of new energy use policy for future contracts, Mar 2024 ii. Initial discussions with existing contractors to be held, Dec 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Procurement Officer, Contract Managers, Climate Change Officer ii. Contract Managers, Climate Change Officer
E6	Identify areas operational changes, or investment in new vehicles, plant, technology or management systems to deliver energy savings and emission reductions in our operational estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review of council assets to confirm which buildings will be kept long term and which will be disposed of ii. Creation of costed decarbonisation plans for highest energy consuming buildings and the submission of capital bids for works iii. Ensure any new buildings acquired by the council are assessed for carbon impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Confirmed long term asset list, Mar 2024 ii. Development of prioritised investment programme, Dec 2023 iii. Assessments completed ad hoc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Head of Investment & Development ii. Head of Investment & Development Community, Climate Change Officer iii. Climate Change Office



5 Supporting Residents & Businesses

REF	FIVE YEAR STRATEGY AIM	2023/24 TARGET/PROJECT	MILESTONES/ TARGET	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
E7	Supporting residents in reducing their energy use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review information and information channels aimed at informing residents about energy saving, including information on Solar Together ii. Ensure that support services have access to appropriate information iii. Use SHBC's planning powers to push for new development to be as energy efficient as possible. Helping to reduce energy use and bills in the borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ongoing ii. Ongoing iii. Adoption of Local Plan, 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Climate Change Officer ii) Climate Change Officer iii) Planning Policy and Conservation Officer
E8	Track initiatives and the support offered by other organisations to assist our poorest residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Receive quarterly updates from Action Surrey to ensure that the needs of our poorest residents are being met 	Annual report to CCWG	Community Development Officer, Public Relations Officer, Climate Change Officer





E9	Work with Surrey County Council, neighbouring boroughs and national and regional organisations to support businesses in reducing their energy costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Identify opportunities to enhance the energy efficiency of council owned commercial properties, ensuring they meet the legally required EPC standards and going beyond this where possibleii. Develop and fund a replacement to the LoCase business grant scheme	Annual report to CCWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Head of Investment & Developmentii. Economic Development Manager
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6 Generating Renewable Energy

REF	FIVE YEAR STRATEGY AIM	2023/24 TARGET/PROJECT	MILESTONES/TARGET	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
E10	Identify opportunities for investment in renewable energy generation on council owned property	i. Identify sites, submit capital bid for and install renewable energy generation capacity	i. Costed programme identified, Dec 2023	Climate Change Officer, Head of Investment and Development

