

Agenda item, CCMWP Meeting 23rd March 2021: Climate change Statement of Intent

The Climate Change Members Working Party adopted its Terms of Reference 5 months ago, in October 2020, with an aspiration to adopt a Climate Change Strategy by Dec 2020. Acknowledging the difficulty of doing this due to the pandemic and the ramifications for appointing a Climate Change Officer, I propose that we ask the Council to adopt the following statement of intent, to indicate the direction that Runnymede Borough Council proposes to take:

Statement of Intent:

Climate change is one of the defining issues of our era, but together we can all help to tackle it in our Borough. Change can happen if everyone who can make a difference does so. Runnymede is one of many players in the area that are acting now to make that difference. We've already taken significant steps across the buildings we own and through the policies we implement on behalf of residents.

In October 2019, Runnymede Borough Council formally resolved to tackle the climate emergency, and the Climate Change members' working party has now been formed to look at this area. In doing this, the borough is paying close attention to the Surrey County Council Climate Change Strategy (2020) which sets out the joint ambition of the Surrey local authorities to address carbon emissions.

As a first stage in this process, we have decided to adopt the ambitions and targets in the SCC Climate Change Strategy, modified to be appropriate for Runnymede Borough, as indicated below.

Ambitions and Targets	
Organisation Emissions Become a "net zero carbon" Borough Council that leads by example in promoting sustainable practices across our operations, estate, and vehicles.	Net zero carbon For RBC's organisational emissions by 2030 or sooner.
Transport Deliver and promote an integrated, accessible, affordable and reliable public and active (walking or cycling) transport system across the Borough, thereby reducing journeys and improving local air quality for improved health and wellbeing of our residents.	60% Emissions reduction in the Transport sector by 2035 against BAU as a minimum.
Energy Generation To support the national decarbonisation ambition by leading renewable energy generation expansion and bringing low carbon heating into Runnymede homes through smart, decentralised systems.	15% Of energy from solar PV by 2032.
Housing and Planning To create low carbon, healthy homes for our residents that reduce emissions, have lower running costs and improve the wellbeing of our community.	66% Emissions reduction in the domestic housing sector by 2035 against BAU as a minimum.
Buildings and Infrastructure To drive forward the transition to a zero carbon built environment, through the pursuit of lower operational energy use, increased supply of renewable energy to Runnymede's buildings and reduced embodied carbon – the GHG emissions associated with non-operational phases e.g. construction.	61% Emissions reduction across commercial and public buildings sector by 2035 against BAU as a minimum.
Waste, Resources and Circular Economy Rethink our current approach to waste, to create a system centred on circular economy principles that seeks to prioritise the reduction of waste creation, encouraging innovative approaches to waste reutilisation and recycling - throwing away will become a last resort.	70% Of all Runnymede Borough collected waste to be reused, composted or recycled by 2030.
Land Use and Food Systems Develop a land use framework for Runnymede Borough focused on increasing accessible green spaces, woodland cover in appropriate locations in line with national targets and sustainable farming practices.	1.2 million ??? Trees planted by 2030.
Industry and Green Economy Pursue the transition to clean growth, through the decarbonisation of all major sectors and investment in the development of clean technologies and industries that create jobs and improve the quality of life for our residents.	56% Emissions reduction across industry by 2035 against BAU as a minimum.

OFFICERS RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSED 'CLIMATE CHANGE STATEMENT OF INTENT' COMPILED BY CIIR MULLENS AND PREVIOUSLY INTENDED FOR DISCUSSION BY THE CLIMATE CHANGE MWP MEETING

This item was previously intended for discussion by the CCMWP.

Due to force of circumstance the CCMWP meeting was cancelled.

This document has been prepared as an Officers response in the short term to facilitate further discussion. For brevity the highlights are itemised below:

1) RBC's Climate Change Strategy

RBC's Climate Change Strategy is work in progress. A draft will be brought to Council for consideration in October 2021

2) At the July 2020 meeting of the Environment & Sustainability Committee Officers communicated that the intention is to use selected Principles and Targets set out in the Surrey County Council Climate Change Strategy.

The Surrey County Council Climate Change Strategy is an 'umbrella' plan encompassing all of the Surrey Authorities. Not all of the content is directly capable of delivery by individual Local Authorities.

The follow-on delivery plan which follows the County Strategy is under development.

3) As one of the Surrey Local Authorities, RBC's actions will contribute to the Surrey County Council's Targets in varying proportion dependent on a number of factors. These include:

At National and Regional Level

- National Government Leadership in the form of policy and regulation
- Funding: primarily made available by Local Government to Higher Local Authorities for co-ordination at the regional level
- At the District and Borough Level:

At District and Borough Level

- Policy changes in almost every aspect of the Council's operation and services
- Funding: both directly from Central Government and via the County Council
- Procurement: at Local and County Level

Turning to the specific items included in the proposed Climate Change Statement of Intent:

4) Organisation Emissions

This item primarily addresses Scope 1 / 2 Emissions as defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol). We have previously reported a reduction on our Carbon Emissions of 62% on our 2009 to 2019 levels.

We will continue to promote sustainable practices across our operations, estate and vehicles

5) Transport

Surrey County Council is the Road and Transport Authority for the region.

This element is not within RBC's direct control.

RBC is active in promoting contributory initiatives to this objective. These include, but are not limited to:

- Local Cycling and Walking Networks (LCWP): RBC are actively working with Surrey County Council on an LCWP scheme
- River Thames Scheme: as a partner authority, RBC are actively working with other Local Authority Partners, the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council to ensure that in addition to flood alleviation the scheme will also deliver the potential for other benefits in the Borough including Active Transportation
- Heathrow Airport: as a Member of the Heathrow Community, RBC are actively engaged with the Airports recovery and future including the potential for a Southern Access scheme. If successful this will have significant implications for public transport in and through the Borough with ensuing benefits regarding the Modal Shift, Carbon Emissions, Air Quality and Congestion

6) Energy Generation

RBC's Carbon Emissions have been addressed under the item: Organisations Emissions

The Council actively pursues initiatives to support the national decarbonisation ambition. Photovoltaic power generation is already incorporated into the Council's estate to the extent achievable and forms a part of the Magna Square Development which is currently under construction.

The Council will explore further opportunities for renewable energy generation options which will not be limited to photovoltaic generation. The extent to which this can be achieved is a work in progress and will be addressed in the Council's future Delivery Plan.

RBC is an active participant in the Surrey County Council initiative for the cost effective procurement of renewable energy opportunities and will evaluate opportunities with other providers.

7) Housing and Planning

The Housing Asset Management Plan sets out three commitments, reported to the Climate Change Member Working Party: -

- Energy Performance (minimum energy performance of our stock at a C energy efficiency rating by 2030)
- Commencement of work to deliver 125 additional units by 2026, these homes will be built to an A rating and include alternative heating sources to gas where appropriate.
- Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service will invest in its 'refuse areas' at flat blocks to promote recycling. This supports the corporate objective of Enhancing our Environment by reducing the

amount of waste going to landfill and will limit costs to the HRA of excess general waste.

Delivery will be dependent on national government regulation and funding

8) Buildings and Infrastructure

The Lower Operational Energy usage and increased supply of renewable energy to RBC's buildings is already encountered within the Scope 1 / 2 Emissions targets previously referenced.

RBC's capacity to influence lower operational energy usage within its commercial estate is limited. However, the Borough will use all endeavours to positively influence this as a function of its community leadership role

The reduction of embodied carbon in construction is an identified issue which will form part of the strategy. Currently it is recognised that this will require a review of existing policy and regulation at National, County and Borough levels

9) Waste, Resources and Circular Economy

The Waste Disposal Authority for the area is Surrey County Council.

RBC is a Member of the Surrey Environmental Partnership (SEP).

These matters are currently under consultation by Defra, the outcome of which will form part of the Environmental Bill when it comes before Parliament.

10) Land Use and Food Systems

RBC is responding to increasing accessible green spaces, and woodland cover under its Local Plan.

In addition, in line with national strategy, RBC are responding to Surrey County Council's Treescapes Funding Bid.

11) Industry and Green Economy

The objectives identified under this item are effectively included under the Scope 3 emissions of the GHG Protocol – in summary those emissions which are beyond the direct control of the organisation.

Delivery of these objectives is currently under discussion at national, county and local governmental levels.

OFFICERS COMMENTS:

12) The objectives identified in the proposed Climate Change Statement of Intent are beyond question;

- 13) The objective delivery mechanisms are in development at national, county, and local level;
- 14) There is a requirement for National Government to provide leadership with regard to regulation and funding in order to bring about the changes required;
- 15) Items 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are not in the direct control of RBC. Here RBC's actions are constrained to a contributory and influencing role with which it is actively engaged; and
- 16) In the considered opinion of Officers, it is premature for the Council to commit to quantitative Climate Change Targets when the method of quantification, delivery and capacity to deliver is under development at national, county and local levels.