

Report title	Climate Change Update
Report author	Sarah Hides, Principal Climate Change and Sustainability Officer
Department	Planning, Economy and Built Environment
Exempt?	No

Purpose of report:
For information

Synopsis of report:
This report seeks to update the Committee on the various activities which have been undertaken, are ongoing or are planned to help the Council and the Borough of Runnymede meet its net zero targets, by 2030 and 2050 respectively.

1. Context and background of report

- 1.1 The Council's Climate Change Strategy which was adopted in October 2022 contains the strategic objective to, 'Reduce Carbon emissions from Council operations to Net Zero by 2030'. More widely, the Council will be using its reasonable endeavours to help the Borough of Runnymede meet the national target of achieving net zero carbon by 2050.
- 1.2 Councillors have requested regular update reports from officers to detail the activities being carried out across the Council which are likely to impact on the Council's response to climate change and contribute to meeting the above mentioned targets.

2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended

- 2.1 At the Environment and Sustainability Committee meeting of 9th March 2023, and Corporate Management Committee of 23rd March 2023, officers produced a climate change update report which sought to bring the Committee up to date in terms of the various activities being carried out across the Council to help the organisation respond to the challenges of climate change and meet local and national net zero targets. It was agreed at the March 2023 Corporate Management Committee meeting that the Climate Change Team would produce similar reports biannually. The second report was produced for September 2023's Corporate Management Committee and this third report follows on from that September version, and provides updated information to reflect changes which have occurred in the intervening period.
- 2.2 In producing this latest update report, staff from all service areas within the Council have been approached for their input. Information is presented in a simple tabular format. A table has been produced for each service area, with additional tables also produced for the Chief Executive's Office and the Central Climate Change Team (the latter is part of the wider Planning, Economy and Built Environment service area, however, given the length of the table for this service area and the Climate Change team, officers have split it into two). These tables can be viewed at Appendix 1. Each table lists the name of the relevant activity,

gives a brief description of it, lists any relevant committee report(s) and then provides any relevant update which has occurred since September. A number of new activities are also captured. These are clearly annotated in the second column from the left. An additional column has been added on the left-hand side of the table which shows the action IDs from the Corporate Business Plan and Climate Change Action plan that are relevant to each project.

2.3 Each Service Area table has up to three sections as follows:

-Relevant activities completed since the September 2023 report In the interest of keeping the update report as succinct as possible, the focus of this section is on recently completed activities. Therefore, any completed activities that were previously listed in prior update reports and which have had no change of status or update since the last report, have been removed from the table and transferred to a separate list of completed activities, presented at Appendix 2.

-Current/ongoing activities

-Planned activities: This largely relates to activities due to be commenced in the 2024/25 financial year. These projects and defined smaller pieces of work/initiatives which flow from the Council's Corporate Business Plan and its supporting strategies. Many of these planned activities have been taken from the 2024/25 Service Area Plans.

2.4 As well as speaking to staff from each service area, other sources of information which have been reviewed in producing this report are:

- Published information on the Council's website;
- Information obtained from the Council's Project Management Office;
- The Forward Plan produced by Committee Services.

2.5 In reviewing this report, Members are asked to remember that not all of the activities reported have/are being undertaken specifically in response to climate change. For example, the driver for undertaking a number of the projects/activities has been to make efficiencies in the Council's processes (for example, the introduction of Hybrid Mail), or to respond to statutory requirements (for example the production of the Borough Local Plan). Some of these activities do however have additional benefits of helping the Council deliver more environmentally friendly services/policies which will contribute to the Council's response to climate change. For completeness, these activities have been reported. The report also sets out the activities which are being specifically undertaken to help the Council respond to climate change, for example the production of the 2024/25 Climate Change Communications Plan.

2.6 Officers will continue to work to refine the Climate Change updates provided to Members, working to fill gaps in information where they exist. For example, officers are working to extend the range and estimation accuracy of carbon emission impacts for projects where this is possible to calculate.

3. Policy framework implications

3.1 All of the projects/activities which have already been completed by the Council since 2019, or which are underway, would have been assessed for their wider policy implications. Future planned activity through the Service Area Plans across the Authority have been designed to ensure that the objectives of the Council's Corporate Business Plan and supporting corporate strategies can be delivered over their lifetime.

4 Resource implications/Value for Money

- 4.1 All of the projects/activities which have already been completed by the Council since 2019, or which are underway, would have had their resource and financial implications assessed. Activities beyond this current financial year would be set out in future Service Area Plans adopted by the Council.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 All of the projects/activities which have already been completed by the Council since 2019, or which are underway, would have had their legal implications assessed. Future planned activities will need to have their legal implications considered at the relevant stages, as appropriate.

6. Equality implications

- 6.1 All of the projects/activities which have already been completed by the Council since 2019, or which are underway, would have had their equality implications assessed. Future planned activities will need to have their equality implications considered at the relevant stages, as appropriate.

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 7.1 All of the projects/activities which have already been completed by the Council since 2019, or which are underway, would have had their environmental/ sustainability/ biodiversity implications assessed. Future planned activities will need to have their implications in terms of environment, sustainability and biodiversity considered at the relevant stages, as appropriate.

8. Other implications

- 8.1 Future activities listed in the report will be assessed for other implications as appropriate.

9. Timetable for Implementation

- 9.1 The various activities listed in this update report all have their own timetables. Further climate change update reports will seek to provide further information on the timescales for delivery for different projects where possible through discussion with the Council's Project Management Office and Service Heads.

10. Background papers

- 10.1 None-relevant committee reports are hyperlinked as appropriate in the Service Area updates.

11. Appendices

Appendix 1: Climate Change updates by Service Area

Appendix 2: Climate Change Activities completed by September 2023