

Great Big Green Week (Sarah Hides – Climate Change Officer)

**Synopsis of report:**

**This report gives the Committee information on the Big Green Week and its founder charity The Climate Coalition. Options for the Council's participation are presented for discussion.**

**Recommendations:**

- 1. The Committee to adopt either option 1 or 2; and**
- 2. Officers evaluate the success of the Great Big Green Week and review the level of input required for 2023.**

**1. Context of report**

- 1.1 This report was requested at the Meeting of Full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022 in response to a motion being passed to promote The Great Big Green Week in September 2022.

**2. Report**

The Climate Coalition

- 2.1 The Climate Coalition is the operating name of the Climate Movement – Registered Charity No. 1109973. The Climate Coalition's website claim they are the UK's largest group of people dedicated to action against climate change. When including their sister organisations Stop Climate Chaos Cymru and Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, they are a group of over 140 organisations incorporating 22 million supporters, spanning nature, environment, international development, faith, community and women's groups. These include the National Trust, NUS, WWF, Women's Institute, Islamic Relief and the RSPB.

- 2.2 The main purpose of the organisation is to influence decision makers by bringing people together across society to unify and amplify voices, showing the broad support for climate action across the UK. They aim to highlight all the things supporters want to protect from climate change, and to call on politicians to put aside their differences and commit to doing whatever is necessary to protect them. They work with a range of partners for example celebrities, sports teams and business to create change at all levels. They are led by a small central secretariat team working closely in partnership with the coalition members.

The Great Big Green Week

- 2.3 The first Great Big Green Week took place last year between 18 – 26 September 2021 and has been declared by the Climate Coalition as the largest event for climate and nature ever seen in the UK. Across the country, over 5000 community-led events, split between more than 200 Local Green Weeks (Great Big Green Week

community hubs) celebrated how communities are taking action to tackle climate change and protect green spaces, and encouraged others to get involved too. In Scotland, the Climate Fringe Week, took place hosted by Stop Climate Chaos Scotland.

- 2.4 The types of activities ranged greatly including bat walks, bake offs, festivals, concerts, litter picks, plastic free picnics, football matches, film screenings, bike rides, murals, MPs in Electric Vehicles (EVs), seaweed foraging and school projects. These were mainly hosted by community members such as teachers, bus drivers, sport clubs, artists, builders, local groups, places of worship and others who care about climate change and wished to participate. National organisations, institutions, businesses and media outlets also joined in, getting more people involved up and down the country. The Great Big Green Week is presented as a celebration of local action on climate change with the overarching aim of putting pressure on politicians to raise their ambition and champion action on climate change.
- 2.5 This year the Great Big Green Week will run from 24th September to 2nd October and is hoping to be larger than last year. The Climate Coalition are calling for events within local communities that will celebrate how they are taking action to tackle climate change and protect green spaces and encourage others to get involved too.

#### Options for participation by the Council

##### Option 1

- 2.6 The Council supports and promotes the Great Big Green Week this year by encouraging uptake and participation by residents and local community groups. For example, local sports clubs, environmental groups, schools, local businesses, youth groups, faith groups or any other organisations or individuals who may have an interest in tackling climate change. Closer to the week's start date, the Council can collate a list of local events based on details provided by the groups participating and advertise and promote them to residents. This could be done via posters/banners and sharing information and links to the Great Big Green Week's website via social media, newsletters and on our own website. A comprehensive comms pack is available from The Climate Coalition.

##### Option 2

- 2.7 The Council supports the Great Big Green Week as described in Option 1 above. However, we effectively become the co-ordinator of our own 'Runnymede Great Big Green Week' by registering it on the Great Big Green Week website as an overarching Borough based event. Local groups wishing to participate would then be able to tag Runnymede Great Big Green Week when they sign up their events taking place in the Borough. The events will be automatically pulled together as one big event for Runnymede on the Great Big Green Week website. If local groups sign up separately and do not tag our banner we can search the Great Big Green Week website via post code and contact those groups to see if they want to fall under the Runnymede Borough Great Big Green Week.

##### Option 3

- 2.8 The Council support the Great Big Green Week as in Option 1 or Option 2 above but additionally look to provide support where practical and within our remit if approached by local groups or residents who would like to put on an event. For example, providing licences, allowing road closures and providing spaces for events.

- 2.9 For the avoidance of doubt, Council support will be subject to the usual application processes. All requests will be subject to evaluation and some requests may have to be declined.

### **Recommendation**

- 2.10 Officers recommend the Council either agrees to Option 1 or 2 and actively supports and promotes the Great Big Green Week in September 2022 by encouraging uptake and participation by residents and local community groups and signposting/promoting events. We also register the collection of local events under the banner of 'Runnymede Great Big Green Week' to collate and join up events within the Borough.
- 2.11 While doing so we evaluate the success of the Great Big Green Week and review what our level of input might be for next year.

### **3. Policy framework implications**

- 3.1 Participation in the Great Big Green Week will support three of the integral Strategies of the Corporate Business Plan that will be brought to Members in June 2022. The Climate Change Strategy, the Empowering Communities Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

### **4. Resource implications**

- The resource implications will vary depending on the level of participation in the Great Big Green Week Members decide to take
- Individual actions which evolve from our participation will be the subject of individual evaluation of resources and implications prior to presentation to Members for resolution.
- Where additional financial resources are required to carry out the chosen option, a supplementary estimate will be sought in line with the council's financial procedures.
- Whichever option is chosen may have an impact on other work demands.

### **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 To be assessed on an individual action or project basis.

### **6. Equality implications**

- 6.1 The Great Big Green Week aims to bring together and unite the voices of local communities. This should help to integrate and bring together people of different backgrounds, ethnicity, faiths, health and sexual orientation in the fight against climate change.

### **7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

- 7.1 The purpose of the Great Big Green Week is to bring communities together to raise awareness and influence politicians to create a sustainable future. They hope to

increase momentum within central Government to tackle climate change and protect nature, biodiversity and green spaces.

## 8. **Other implications**

- 8.1 Participation in the Great Big Green Week will support three of the integral Strategies of the Corporate Business Plan that will be brought to Members in June 2022. The Climate Change Strategy, the Empowering Communities Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 8.2 Subject to the option chosen by the Committee there may be further implications which Officers need to consider and report back on.

## 9. **Timetable for Implementation**

- June to mid-July: raising awareness and promotion of the Great Big Green Week by Members and officers to residents and local community groups. For example, sports clubs, youth groups, faith groups, environmental groups, local businesses, schools and any other organisations or individuals who might wish to participate. This should start as soon as possible to enable an evaluation of the level of participation expected from the community. Groups interested in participating should be directed to the Great Big Green Week website (see link at the end of this report) for details of grants, guidance and support available and instructions on how to register their events.
- Registration of a 'Runnymede Great Big Green Week' would also need to be completed as soon as possible if Option 1 or 2 was agreed by Members.
- Promotion and collation of events taking place would / is expected to occur in late August/early September.
- Ongoing coordination and oversight of participation, promotion and support.

## 10. **Conclusions**

- 10.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about the Great Big Green Week and options for the Council's participation, so that Members can provide guidance as to the preferred course of action.

**(To resolve)**

### **Background papers**

Details of the Big Green Website can be found here: [Great Big Green Week](#)