

## Climate Change Update Report-Georgina Pacey, Local Plans Manager

### Synopsis of report:

This report seeks to respond to the comments made by the Environment and Sustainability Committee at their 12<sup>th</sup> January meeting in providing a full text report which 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.

### Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report for consideration at Corporate Management Committee.

## 1. Context and background of report

1.1 At the Environment and Sustainability Committee meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> January, 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.

1.2 On consideration of the report produced, Officers were asked to reproduce the report for future Environment and Sustainability Committees in a more accessible format (with the next version of the update report being requested to be reported at the 9<sup>th</sup> March Committee). Comments which officers were also asked to address are set out as follows:

- Officers to provide links in future summary reports (where applicable) to relevant Committee papers;
- The Heathrow 2.0 strategy should be referenced in future summary reports;
- Officers consider providing a key to future summary reports to make the report more accessible;
- A communication strategy be incorporated into future summary reports;
- More detail on biodiversity be incorporated into future summary reports.

1.3 Officers have sought to address these comments during the production of this report.

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

2.1 In producing this report, all service areas within the Council have been approached to input. The remainder of section 2 of this report is split by Service Area across the Council, and for each service area the following is reported:

-Relevant activities completed since 2019. 2019 is the date taken as this will tie in with the base date for calculating the Council's carbon emissions in the Runnymede Carbon Baseline report which is currently being produced.

-Current/ongoing activities

-Planned activity: This relates to activities due to be commenced in the 2023/24 financial year only. These projects and defined smaller pieces of work/initiatives seek

to flow from the Council's Corporate Business Plan and its supporting future strategies. Larger projects have been taken from the 2023/24 Service Area Plans being produced across the Council. At the time of producing this report, some of these Service Area Plans have been approved, whilst others are to be agreed by the end of the municipal year, and may therefore be subject to change.

- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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 Council's Climate Change Carbon Baseline Study which will establish the baseline carbon emissions in the Borough as at 2019, and the production of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan which, subject to Member approval, will commence later this year. Through the Action Plan, it is envisaged that a more streamlined monitoring and reporting process will be developed which will not only prioritise actions, but also provide further detail on the expected carbon savings (or other key monitoring criteria) associated with each.
- 2.5 In the meantime, however, officers are committed to working with Members to continue to improve and evolve reporting around climate change to aid transparency around the Council's activities. The primary purpose of this report is to provide an initial overview of all relevant projects/activities with a description of each and other relevant information included where possible.
- 2.6 For the purposes of future reporting, prior to the approval of the Climate Change Action Plan, officers are intending to present progress reports in a simple tabular format by Service Area which can be more easily updated than a full text report. Data gaps will continue to be filled wherever possible.
- 2.7 Members must remember when reviewing this report that a number of the planned future activities/initiatives described will require growth bids/supplementary revenue estimates if they are to be delivered. Where it is agreed that business cases and growth bids cannot be supported, certain activities will not be able to proceed. It is also the case that new initiatives not currently listed in this report may be identified in the future, and which may help the Council respond to the challenges of climate change.

## **Overarching/Chief Executive's Office**

### **Key achievements to date**

- 2.8 Agreement of net zero target for Runnymede Borough Council: In January 2022, the Council committed to tackling climate change and adopted a target to achieve operational 'Net Zero Carbon' emissions from its services and operations by 2030.
- 2.9 Production and adoption of Corporate Business Plan and supporting corporate strategies (2022-2026): Approved by [Full Council on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022](#) and published late October 2022. This includes the Council's overarching Climate Change Strategy.

**Current/ongoing actions**

- 2.10 Development of Procurement Strategy, Sustainable Procurement Policy and Social Value Policy: The Council's Procurement Strategy will address all elements of procurement activity carried out at the Council at both a strategic and operational level to support the delivery of the Corporate Business Plan and Service Area Plans. At a strategic level, this will include consideration of ethical and environmental impacts as part of contractual requirements and seek the achievement of sustainable outcomes that support the climate change agenda. The Sustainable Procurement Strategy will set out how environmental considerations will be built into the procurement processes of the Council. The Social Value Policy will set out how procurement activities in the Borough can achieve wider financial and non-financial outcomes, including improving wellbeing of individuals, communities and the environment by making social value a decision-making criterion when awarding contracts. Due to be reported to Corporate Management Committee in Spring 2023.
- 2.11 Community Cool Hubs: This initiative will provide cool environments to give relief to people during periods of excessive heat as part of our emergency planning function. However given that hot weather events are likely to continue due to the effects of climate change, a longer term solution needs to be developed. Potential locations are currently under discussion with RHUL. This initiative will be subject to a future growth request and therefore will be dependent on the financial position of the Council at that time.
- 2.12 ESSO Pipeline Investment Fund External Funding: Through this fund, £50,000 has been secured for tree maintenance and planting on Chertsey Meads. To be delivered by 2025 by the Environmental Services Team.
- 2.13 Represent the Council in discussions regarding the future of Heathrow Airport and its plans for expansion and carbon emission reductions and the impact of this on the surrounding communities: This engagement will continue through the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG). In addition, Heathrow 2.0 has been published but is a dynamic document which will be subject to future revisions. The Head of External Projects will continue to represent the Borough including by responding to relevant consultations and will update Members through the relevant committees as appropriate.
- 2.14 Net Zero Places: Phase 1 Innovate UK + City Science: RBC, as part of the wider Heathrow community has recently secured stage 1 funding of circa £100,000 to evaluate non-technical barriers (such as financing, governance, regulation, and engagement) to achieving carbon net zero from Innovate UK (part of UK Research and Innovation) in partnership with City Science. The ultimate aim is to help places and businesses accelerate the delivery of the transition to Net Zero. In this first phase of the programme, 31 projects from across the UK, have been awarded a share of £2m through a competitive process, to carry out feasibility studies to understand what approaches to test in their local area. If phase 1 is successful, it will be possible to

apply for phase 2 implementation funding up to £7 million with HSPG partners. The stage 1 monies will be spent between by April-June 2023.

- 2.15 River Thames Scheme (RTS): The River Thames Scheme is the first flood and climate mitigation project which is described as nationally significant, reflecting the scope and ambition of the scheme. RBC is a statutory consultee, along with the other two directly impacted Boroughs (Elmbridge and Spelthorne) and Surrey County Council.
- 2.16 The RTS is being designed to:
- respond to the challenges of flooding
  - provide access to green open spaces and sustainable travel routes
  - encourage inclusive economic growth
  - increase biodiversity
  - provide economic, health and environmental benefits between Egham and Teddington.
- 2.17 Each part of the River Thames Scheme will deliver benefits for communities.
- 2.18 Two new river channels (the longest section will run through Runnymede) will:
- reduce the risk of flooding to homes, businesses, and infrastructure
  - provide a habitat for wildlife and a new feature in the landscape
  - create new areas of public green open space next to the river
- 2.19 New footpaths and cycleways will run along the channel and through the new public spaces. These will connect communities to different parts of the scheme and surrounding areas. New and improved habitat areas for wildlife will connect with existing nature sites and wildlife corridors to support biodiversity.
- 2.20 The latest round of public consultation on the RTS ran between 8<sup>th</sup> November and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022. The current expectation is for the works to start in 2026, with commissioning of the River Channels currently expected to be 2030. More information about the RTS can be found on its website at: [www.riverthamesscheme.org.uk](http://www.riverthamesscheme.org.uk) .
- 2.21 Continued proactive working to identify opportunities for grant funding to support the Council in responding to climate change: The Council's Climate Change Officer is working closely with the Bid Writer and Grants Officer to investigate potential funding and shape appropriate applications to deliver climate change initiatives to meet the aims of the Corporate Plan and supporting corporate strategies.

#### **Planned activity**

- 2.22 Heathrow Surface Access: RBC to work with other Boroughs and Districts to develop a consensus position and lobby the Government in progressing this scheme to enhance public transport options to Heathrow from Surrey/achieve a modal shift to public transport to reduce harmful air quality impacts/carbon emissions associated with private car use. This is led by the External Projects unit. There are no fixed timescales for this activity at the time of writing.
- 2.23 Project Management template update: The Project Management Office (PMO) will be reviewing and updating the business case and project charter templates to include a mandatory section on climate change benefits. Each proposed new activity or project will therefore need to identify and detail any direct or indirect benefits of the proposal on climate change, carbon reduction or environmental benefits.

2.24 PMO will look to develop project and activity reporting to provide overviews of progress of activity with climate change benefits as part of the overall performance of the Council.

**Central Climate Change Function (Lead Officers: Georgina Pacey and Sarah Hides)**

**Key achievements to date (taken from 2019)**

2.25 Development of the Council’s Climate Change Strategy: (see entry above in Overarching/Chief Executive’s Office section).

2.26 Green Homes Grants and the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Scheme (see Environment and Sustainability Committee agenda from 17th November 2022 for more information): In July 2020 the Chancellor announced a £2 billion Green Homes Grant scheme to upgrade homes across England. Under this, £500 million funding was allocated to local authorities through the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) scheme. The LAD scheme aims to improve the energy efficiency of homes of low-income households (typically those having a combined gross income of less than £30,000) with low energy performance homes (those with energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings of E, F or G, including off-gas grid homes. Some Band D properties can be included).

- In 2021, RBC secured £4.335m LAD1B funding from BEIS. In addition to this Surrey contributed RBC £68,000 and RBC contributed £0.39m to this project making a total amount of £4.4m. The Climate Change team administered the scheme with delivery partners Happy Energy Solutions Ltd. Please see Table 1 below for details.
- Between March and September 2022 RBC along with the other D and Bs were part of the Surrey County Council consortium for LAD2 funding. The delivery partner was Action Surrey. Please see Table 1 for details.

**Table 1: Green Homes Grant Schemes secured and delivered in Runnymede**

<b>Green Homes Grant Type and details</b>	<b>Number of properties with measures installed</b>	<b>Measure mix</b>	<b>Average cost per household</b>	<b>Total value of works</b>
LAD1B – running between 01/22 – 09/22	390 properties in total	143 Park home insulation (external or underfloor)	Owner occupied not to exceed £10,000 per property	£4,335,000 – total grant value
RBC awarded funding from BEIS	192 RBC owned properties	241 Solar PV panels	Rented (private or social) subsidy not to exceed £5000 per property.	£3.98m – value of works completed
Delivery partner is Happy Energy Solutions Ltd		37 Loft insulation	Minimum of 1/3 to be paid by the landlord.	£68K additional grant secured from Surrey County Council in addition to above spend
		6 Cavity Wall Insulation		
		(RBC properties 188 solar, 2		

		cavity wall and 22 loft insulation included n above figures)		£1.4m on RBC owned properties (RBC have contributed £0.39m)  Total funding invested into borough £4.44m
LAD2 – running between 03/22 – 09/22  SCC awarded funding from BEIS  RBC part of D and B, SCC consortium  Delivery partner is Action Surrey	6 Properties	2 Loft insulation  1 Solar Thermal installation  4 solar PV installations	£6,556.17	£36,302

### Current/ongoing actions

- 2.27 Sustainable Warmth -incorporating (LAD3 and HUG1): RBC are part of the SCC consortium along with the other D and Bs for this fund. The delivery partner is Action Surrey. SCC were awarded funding from BEIS and began delivery of the scheme on 3/10/22. HUG1 – relates to off-gas properties.
- 2.28 Home Upgrade Grant for off gas properties (HUG 2): Delivery arrangements as for Sustainable Warmth.
- 2.29 Energy Company Obligation (ECO) 4: Delivery arrangement as part of SCC consortium to be confirmed. NOTE: At present the Surrey Consortium have asked that this offering be temporarily put on hold. The reason is that the target clients for this fund are largely the same as those covered by the other funds. The advice from the consortium delivery partner is to concentrate for the present on the existing funds which are actively being implemented.

**Table 2: Green Homes Grant Schemes secured and being rolled out in Runnymede**

Grant Type and details	Number of properties with measures installed	Measure mix	Average cost per household	Total value of works
Sustainable Warmth - incorporating (LAD3 and HUG1)–	To be determined	Can include:  Cavity Wall insulation	£10,000 available per household	£11.19 million awarded to SCC

<p>running between 01/22 – 03/23</p> <p>SCC awarded funding from BEIS – began delivery 3/10/22</p> <p>RBC part of D and B, SCC consortium</p> <p>Delivery partner is Action Surrey</p> <p>HUG1 – relates to off-gas properties</p>		<p>External wall insulation</p> <p>Park home insulation</p> <p>Loft insulation including top-ups</p> <p>Underfloor insulation</p> <p>Solar PV*</p> <p>Solar hot water system*</p> <p>Air source heat pump*</p> <p>(*Grant conditions require insulation measures to be installed prior to any renewable/low carbon systems)</p>	<p>Up to £25,000 for off-gas properties</p>	
<p>HUG2 (off-gas properties) – running between 2023 and 2025</p> <p>SCC awarded funding from BEIS – began delivery 3/10/22</p> <p>RBC part of D and B, SCC consortium</p> <p>Delivery partner is Action Surrey</p>	<p>To be determined</p>	<p>Eligible measures are any energy efficiency and heating measures compatible with the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) that will help improve the energy performance of homes</p>	<p>HUG2 – various cost caps per measure per property archetype</p>	<p>To be determined</p>
<p>ECO 4</p> <p>Running from 2022-2026</p>	<p>To be determined</p>	<p>Gas Central Heating</p> <p>Non-Condensing Boiler</p>		<p>To be determined</p> <p>Please see comment above for rationale</p>

<p>Delivery options currently under evaluation.</p> <p>Funded directly via Energy Companies</p>		<p>Replacement</p> <p>Air-Source Heat Pump</p> <p>Solar PV Replacement</p> <p>Storage Heaters</p> <p>Loft Insulation</p> <p>Room in Roof Insulation</p> <p>Cavity Wall Insulation</p> <p>Internal Wall Insulation</p>		
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2.30 Climate Change Study (part 1): At the [14<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Corporate Management Committee meeting](#), a £60,000 supplementary revenue budget was approved to fund the Climate Change Study. The main purpose of this project is to inform the Council's actions to meet its target to achieve operational net zero carbon emissions from its services and operations by 2030, as well as to enable its actions within its areas of influence, to reduce emissions across the wider Borough by 2050, in line with national targets. The work of the study is split into two main stages:

-Part 1 is being led by the Council's Climate Change Officer and will establish the Council's emissions baseline and improve and streamline the Council's carbon monitoring, measuring and reporting methodologies. The Stage 1 work will also estimate carbon emissions trajectories for various mitigation pathways out to 2030 and 2050. The emissions baseline year has been chosen to be 2019 to be in line with Surrey County Council reporting. Officers are proposing to bring a report to 23<sup>rd</sup> March Corporate Management Committee to agree the approach to setting the Scopes for the purpose of the assessment. It is anticipated that the final Stage 1 report will be brought to the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 Corporate Management Committee for endorsement.

-The Part 2 work will establish the evidence base needed to underpin the development of future planning policies to mitigate and adapt to climate change in the revised local plan. Building on the Council's Climate Change Strategy and using the baseline work on emissions in Stage 1, the Stage 2 work will recommend decarbonisation pathways which will help identify priority areas for action and show where policy gaps remain. Part 2 will be led by the Planning Policy Team and is detailed further at paragraph 2.71.

**Planned activities**

2.31 Great Big Green Week: A report is being taken to the [23rd February Corporate Management Committee](#) to consider how the Council could get involved in this year's Great Big Green Week which will take place between 10th and 18th June 2023. Four options are presented for Members to consider.

- 2.32 Carbon Literacy Training: The Council's Climate Change Officer has recently written to all Councillors to offer the opportunity to attend carbon literacy training. At the end of the training, participants will understand:
- The climate change impacts we're already experiencing
  - What's causing climate change
  - What future impacts we will experience on our current trajectory
  - What's required from a big picture perspective to tackle climate change
  - What we're doing at the global and national level
  - The steps councils need to take for local authorities to play their full part in tackling emissions
  - What emissions are produced by your administrative area and council as an organisation
  - What is being done to tackle these emissions
  - The carbon footprint of UK households and what can be done to reduce it
  - Which nations and income groups are most responsible for climate change
  - The co-benefits of tackling climate change
  - How to engage the public in climate action
- 2.33 This course is accredited by The Carbon Literacy Project [Home - The Carbon Literacy Project](#). Participants will receive roughly eight hours of learning. The Climate Change Officer is currently collating expressions of interest from Councillors and a report will be taken to [23<sup>rd</sup> March Corporate Management Committee](#) to request funding as a growth item to allow this training to be organised following the local elections in May. In the initial roll out of this training, it is also proposed that senior officers in the Council attend the training.
- 2.34 Production of the Runnymede Climate Change Action Plan: Following the completion of part 1 of the Council's Climate Change Study (which will set the carbon baseline for Runnymede and provide the Council with the mechanism to identify areas where we can effectively achieve carbon savings), officers will seek Member approval to commence work on the Runnymede Climate Change Action Plan. The Action Plan will clearly set out the actions that will need to be implemented in order to achieve the relevant net zero targets, in particular the Council's 2030 target for its own operations. It will estimate carbon savings, and provide information where possible on likely costs, timescales and risks associated with the different actions. It is anticipated the work on the Action Plan can, subject to Member approval at 25<sup>th</sup> May Corporate Management Committee, commence in June 2023 to coincide with the 2023 Great Big Green Week. A public consultation will be proposed at the outset of the process so that the views of the Borough's residents (including our young people) and businesses can feed into the development of the Action Plan. Alongside the Action Plan, a high-level Communications Strategy is proposed to be developed by the Council's Communications Team. This will be supported by annual Communications Action Plans to support the initiatives being pursued in each financial year.

### **Community Services (Corporate Head: Darren Williams)**

#### **Current/ongoing actions**

- 2.35 Community transport review: This review is ongoing, and discussions are being held with Surrey County Council regarding the potential to partner on the electrifying of a future Community Transport fleet and service model (no agreement has been made at the time of writing, but this matter is being explored). These discussions are in

early stages and with no guarantees, however, this forms a core part of the service review. The review will also consider new demand responsive service models which if viable in the borough, will provide an opportunity to promote active/alternative travel options to residents, reducing their requirements for personal car use etc. Within service KPI's for 2023/2024, officers will be measuring service delivery against numbers of kilometres driven and diesel fuel drawn, to monitor operational and environmental efficiency in our planning and scheduling. When Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) is made available at the depot, it is intended that all community services vehicles that are able use HVO, do so until they reach the end of their life, at which point, their replacement with greener alternatives will be considered. The inability to accept HVO by some vehicles, will form part of the considerations when refreshing the vehicle replacement programme.

- 2.36 Meals at Home service review: A review of service delivery options has been completed for Meals at Home, within which consideration was given to the fleet to be used, in conjunction with operational processes and risk. The number of required vehicles was also reviewed.
- 2.37 A report was presented to the Community Services Partnership Board (a joint group between RBC and Surrey Heath Borough Council) to discuss and agree a way forward that would be presented to committees at each Council within formal structures.
- 2.38 It is unfortunate that a lack of confidence in, and logistical concerns re other models has resulted in it being viewed that retention of the current delivery model is appropriate. This is because currently, Apetito are not leasing any new electric vehicles due to supply chain issues and compatibility of technology. As a result, vehicles for this model would have to remain diesel. However, contact has been made with Apetito to negotiate break clauses etc. within leases to be able to switch to electric vehicles when available, at which time, officers were informed of the potential to take on 7 electric vehicles from another contract, on a shorter lease. Officers are now exploring this. In principle, a shorter lease should allow for technology and availability to advance so that the service is able to continue with EV or other vehicles.
- 2.39 It is intended that a report on this will be taken to Community Services Committee in March, although if the electric vehicle option is viable, the Council may need to move more quickly to secure what seems to be a one-off offer.

### **Housing Services (Corporate Head: Andy Vincent)**

#### **Key achievements to date (taken from 2019)**

- 2.40 Adoption of the Housing Asset Management Plan (2021-2026): [This document](#) highlights Runnymede Borough Council's aspirations for the management of its housing assets over the next four years.
- 2.41 The plan sets out three commitments on environmental sustainability:
- 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 a high energy efficiency rating (A) 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.

### Current/ongoing actions

- 2.42 Energy performance of stock: A new Asset Management Software System went live on 11 July 2022 to enhance the quality of information Housing Services are able to provide in relation to the condition of their assets. An Energy Assessor Module was implemented in August 2022 to model scenarios around the energy performance of their assets.
- 2.43 Housing Services will continue to undertake an annual rolling programme of 10% stock condition appraisal of their stock. This is to validate existing data and to ensure any alterations to properties are captured. 15% were completed in 2021/22.
- 2.44 Runnymede Borough Council have 757 properties with an energy efficiency rating below a C. All of these properties are general needs accommodation. 426 of these properties will achieve a C rating by the installation of new doors, windows, boilers etc. via RBC's 'Decent Homes' programme. The remainder 331 will require additional work on top of what is planned under the Council's capital programme to achieve a C rating.
- 2.45 At the beginning of 2022 it was estimated that £8.78m of investment will be required in the Council's housing stock to deliver the target of 'ensuring all RBC owned social housing units have an energy efficiency rating of C or above by 2030'
- 2.46 Funding to enable this investment is coming from the following sources:
1. Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery 1. Supported by 30% match funding from Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service – total of grant and RBC contribution £1.8m in 2022;
  2. Improvement work to achieve the Runnymede Investment Standard- £3.7m by 2026 A request for wave 2.1 Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding (SHDF) of £3.29m (bid submitted in September 2022 – outcome expected in March 2023([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for Housing Committee, 21/09/2022 19:30](#) ([runnymede.gov.uk](http://runnymede.gov.uk)) (see item 10).
- 2.47 A successful Wave 2.1 bid will mean that total investment towards the Housing Service's key carbon reduction target will be:

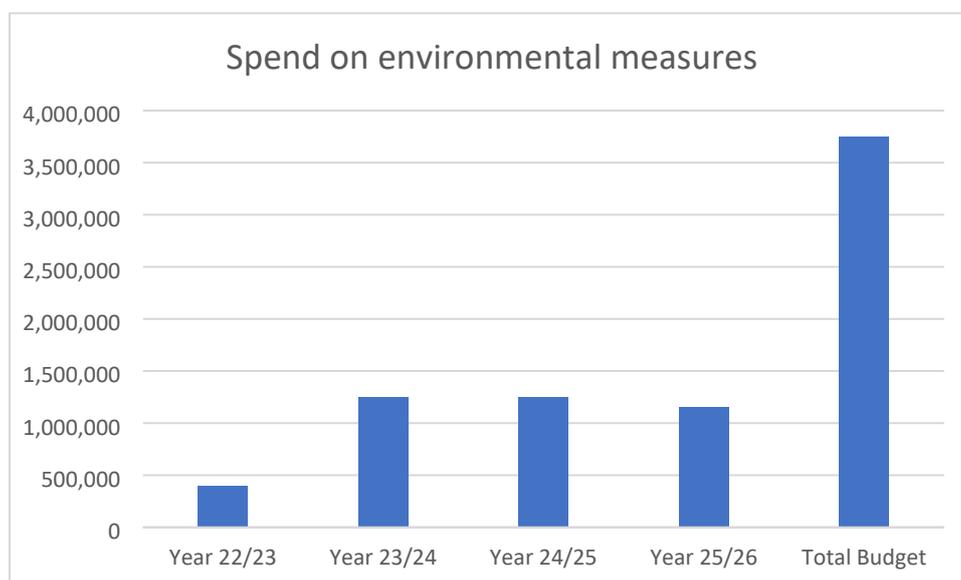
	<b>Grant</b> £	<b>HRA Reserves</b> £	<b>Total</b> £
Green Homes Grant	1,390,000	400,000	1,790,000
Improvement Work	-	3,700,000	3,700,000
Wave 2.1	3,290,149	-	3,290,149
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,680,149</b>	<b>4,100,000</b>	<b>8,780,149</b>

- 2.48 The funding from the SHDF is intended to fund the following work:

<b>Additional Works</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Comment</b>
External Wall Insulation	2,650,000	
Planning Application Fees	1,180	Planning applications all traditional dwellings non-painted

Ground Source Heat Pumps X2	638,969	RBC have budgeted £200,000 for this work - £638,969 is the non-budgeted amount
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,290,149</b>	

2.49 The £3.7m of work identified to improve the energy performance of the Council's housing stock using resources from within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan is phased over 4 years from 2022 – 2026 at the following rate:



### Planned activity

2.50 If the Council is successful with its bid to SHDF:

- The work funded by the SHDF will need to be completed by September 2025 (this is the current requirement set by the Government but could be subject to change if there is any slippage in the Government timescales awarding this fund).
- A procurement exercise will need to be completed in order to source a contractor (usually referenced as a 'Delivery Partner'). A fabric first approach (of insulation and heat loss prevention measures) must be followed where works are required.
- Installation of improvement work done under the SHDF will utilise the Council's existing Tenant Improvement Procedure which ensures engagement with tenants throughout the installation of any improvements to their home. This procedure reflects the requirements of the PAS 2035 (the PAS 2035 process ensures quality installations and effective customer engagement throughout energy efficiency retrofit work) and has been accredited under ISO 9001.

2.51 The work to improve the energy performance of Runnymede Borough Council's housing stock forms a central strand of the work of the Housing Service to cut its environmental impact. A successful bid to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund wave 2.1 will enable the Housing Service to ensure that all its homes have a C energy performance rating by March 2026 (there are likely to be some refusals of the work by tenants). Additional plans for enhancing energy performance can then be compiled to enable further energy performance improvements prior to 2030.

- 2.52 By delivering a C energy efficiency rating for all Council owned homes we will reduce the carbon emissions from Council homes by 1078 tonnes per year.
- 2.53 Additionally, installation of ground source heat pumps at two Independent Retirement Living schemes, to replace boilers that have reached end of life is currently being evaluated. A business case report is due to go to the [Housing Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023](#). It should be noted that this is not part of the SHDF bid – as work under the SHDF can only be undertaken to properties below a C rating. All of the Council's Independent Retirement Living properties are C rated.

### **Customer, Digital and Collection Services (Corporate Head: Linda Norman)**

#### **Achievements to date (taken from 2019)**

- 2.54 Modern Gov paperless committee paper document administration: A joint Digital Services/Democratic Services project which has procured and installed Modern.Gov; a paperless meeting app that supports good governance and transparency, and delivers streamlined co-ordination of meetings and documents. This new system came into force in January 2022 and it is hoped that it will help significantly reduce the amount of paper produced to support the Council's committee processes.
- 2.55 Website upgrade and introduction of the OneAccount: The Council upgraded its website in August 2021. This included the introduction of the Council's One Account which, as part of its operation, contains an e billing facility. Through the OneAccount, customers can currently access the following online services: Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, Business Rates, Recycling & Waste. Amongst other things, the OneAccount offers customers options to sign up to pay by Direct Debit and switch to paperless billing and notifications. The OneAccount not only helps reduce the number of paper bills issued by the Council (the Council currently has 38,680 live council tax accounts of which 1,801 customers have registered for e-billing) but also has the potential to reduce the number of trips that customers need to make to the Council offices. The website upgrade has also included the following:

-Landlord portal: This portal allows landlords (both social and private) who receive payments of housing benefit to: check payments, review individual cases, and report a change in a tenant's circumstance. 50 landlords who between them manage 570 properties receiving Housing Benefit have signed up.

-Citizens Access Benefits: Has approximately 132 users. Allows users to view notification letters online. 155 Online Benefit claims have been received which not only reduces paper but integrates with the Benefits system to reduce the number of days it takes to process a Benefits application and get a payment to a claimant.

#### **Current projects and actions**

- 2.56 Hybrid mail-Not only has this initiative facilitated agile working, it has also allowed the Council to streamline the letters that it sends to its customers, for example, Council Tax, Revenues and Benefits notices are now matched for people who do not have access to e-billing; reducing the number of hard copy letters which need to be sent out which reduces paper usage. Further efficiencies are to be explored to further reduce the need to print and post multiple notifications for residents.
- 2.57 Review all car parks to establish potential to install EV charging point facilities: Current review in progress. Officers are working to facilitate public charging points across the borough on Council owned land, subject to demand and available funding. Officers are working closely with Energy Saving Trust as part of this project. The initial focus is on Council owned car parks but there is future potential to look at

other locations in the longer term. The timescales for this work will be set out in the Council's Electric Vehicle Strategy which is currently being developed and which is discussed in more detail under the Planning Policy and Economic Development section of this report.

- 2.58 Hardware refresh for Council staff: Amongst other things, as part of the wider IT hardware refresh roll out at the end of 2022, staff across the organisation are moving from two screens to single screens. One of the benefits from this is to cut monitor energy consumption by 50% for those desks which have/have previously had two monitors. In addition, in 2022, a new contract was put in place for the disposal of IT hardware and peripherals across the Council. Stone Group who are ISO:14001 accredited were appointed. Their collection service includes the data erasure, disposal, and refurbishment of IT hardware, cabling and peripherals. Stone Ltd have been accredited by Valpak for its Zero landfill policy. The asset disposal solution will ensure that no hardware is sent to landfill. Stone Ltd are part of the Microsoft initiative [www.getonline@home.org](http://www.getonline@home.org). A percentage of IT equipment will be offered to the largest independent grant giving charity in the UK providing valuable help to low-income families caring for severely disabled or seriously ill children aged 17 and under. The Council will be rewarded for recycling its IT assets responsibility with Stone Ltd by planting trees in The Nation Forest as part of Stone's ongoing commitment to a sustainable future. In addition, unlike the Council's previous arrangement where the Council was having to pay a contractor to dispose of its redundant IT equipment, this initiative with the Stone Group now generates a modest income stream for the Council, generating approximately £1800 to date. This initiative was described in a Part 2 report taken to [Corporate Management Committee in 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022](#).

#### **Planned activity**

- 2.59 Pay and display parking machine upgrade: A business case has been approved to upgrade the Pay and Display machines in the Council's car parks. This upgrade will be linked with ANPR technology and aims to provide a contactless system and allow paperless permits. A contactless system will mean that operatives will no longer be required to collect money from the machines, which will result in a cost saving to the Council and also reduce carbon emissions from vehicle trips. As part of the upgrade to the machines in the car park, the use of renewable technologies will be explored to power the machines, for example, the use of solar technology.
- 2.60 One Account enhancements: Further enhancements to the Council's OneAccount to include an online Parking portal to digitalise the parking service and increase the Council's online offer is planned, and this is set out in the 2023/24 Service Area Plan for this department. The OneAccount is also to shortly be enhanced to make various services available to Council tenants including the ability to access their rent accounts and the repairs service.
- 2.61 Waste and Recycling Software Improvements: Also included in the 2023/24 Service Area Plan for Customer, Digital and Collection Services is an initiative to carry out improvements to the Council's waste and recycling software. This will improve efficiency of waste collections and allow real time access for customers to report missed bins. From a climate change perspective, this will also enable optimisation of waste collection rounds.

#### **HR and Organisational Development (Corporate Head: Fiona Skene)**

##### **Key achievements to date (taken from 2019)**

- 2.62 Agile working policy rollout: This Grade B corporate project which commenced in September 2021. A new formal policy came into effect in February 2023 on agile working for the organisation. This roll out, which allows staff to work from home for part of the week, is likely to contribute to reducing carbon emissions from reduced travel to work, reduce traffic congestion and contribute to improvements in air quality.

**Current/ongoing actions**

- 2.63 Electric car incentives be looked at for staff: A new policy is being investigated to see, given the Council's financial constraints, how to reimburse employees with vehicles run on electricity rather than petrol or diesel.

**Planned activity**

- 2.64 Active Travel Strategy: The 2023/24 Service Area Plan for the Human Resources and Organisational Development Service Area proposes to review existing, and investigate and develop new policies to encourage colleagues to adopt Active Travel to commute to work through:  
-Green Travel Policy for employees;  
-Season Ticket Loan Scheme for commute to work. This action is due to be completed in March 2024.
- 2.65 To develop this strategy, it is proposed to develop a Green HR officer working party which will contain representatives from a number of service areas across the Council.

**Planning Policy and Economic Development (Corporate Head: Rachel Raynaud)**

**Key achievements to date (taken from 2019)**

- 2.66 Adoption of Runnymede 2030 Local Plan (Adoption July 2020): One of the Council's most significant policy documents in relation to the environment and climate is the adopted Runnymede 2020 Local Plan. This Local Plan which was adopted in July 2020 includes number of policies which contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. As part of its spatial vision the Plan states that by 2030:

*Runnymede will be resilient to and mitigate climate change impacts especially by reducing and minimising the risks from flooding, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving water quality and efficiency*

- 2.67 Objective 6 in the Plan reiterates this vision and includes commitment to the use of renewable and low carbon energy. Additional objectives also contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, for example, by seeking to improve accessibility to range of active travel choices (thus reducing the need to travel by car) and to enhance the Borough' landscapes, green spaces and biodiversity.

- 2.68 Three policies which play fundamental role in supporting climate change action include:

Policy SD7: Sustainable Design: This embeds sustainable design principles to ensure development proposals mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts;

Policy SD8: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy: This sets out the Council's in-principle support for proposals for stand-alone and community led renewable, low carbon and decentralised sources of energy.

Policy EE13: Managing Flood Risk: This policy steers vulnerable development away from areas affecting by flooding, and where there is no alternative to development being located in an area at risk of flooding, the policy sets out specific requirements to minimise the risk. It also requires development in flood risk area to be supported

by Flood Risk Assessment which sets out how the development will manage flood risk over its lifetime, considering the impacts of climate change. The policy also confirms the Council's support for proposals for strategic flood relief measures, including the emerging flood relief measures and channel through Runnymede as part of the wider River Thames Scheme.

- 2.69 The Local Plan also contains a suite of policies on the natural environment which amongst other things, seek net gains in biodiversity from new development through creation/expansion, restoration, enhancement and management of habitats and features to improve the status of priority habitats and species.
- 2.70 A series of [Supplementary Planning Documents](#) (SPDs) provide further guidance to supplement the policies of the 2030 Local Plan, including: Design SPD, describing how to achieve sustainable design standards; Green and Blue Infrastructure SPD setting out measures which will help build resilience to climate change; and Parking Guidance SPD setting out appropriate levels of car, cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points for different types of development. It also encourages less car parking in town centre locations, where alternative modes of transport are more readily available.

### **Current/ongoing actions**

- 2.71 Climate Change Study part 2 (Local Plan evidence on climate change): As set out earlier in this report, the Council's new Climate Change Strategy 2022-2030 includes a commitment to achieve operational 'net zero carbon' emissions from its own services and operations by 2030, and for the wider Borough to reach net zero emissions by 2050 in line with national targets and legislation. A series of actions will be developed to help deliver the targets in the Strategy, which will include revising the 2030 Local Plan to strengthen its climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. Evidence is required to improve the Council's understanding about the degree to which existing 2030 Local Plan policy requirements are contributing towards the Council's climate change objectives, and how new or revised policies can be introduced to a revised Local Plan to drive forward these objectives further. Consultants have been commissioned to produce a Climate Change Study in two parts. Having identified the extent of the gap to achieving 2030 and 2050 net zero targets in the first part of the Study, the second part will consider various ways that the revised Local Plan can be strengthened to reduce this gap. Stronger climate change planning policies will impact on development viability and delivery, and will need to be robustly defended at a future Examination in Public – the Climate Change Study will therefore form a critical evidence base to help justify the inclusion of these policies in a future Local Plan. Draft outputs from the part 2 work are expected in Spring 2023.
- 2.72 Sustainability Award introduced as part of Runnymede Business Awards 2023: 2023 is the inaugural year for the Runnymede Business Awards. A Sustainability Award has been included which seeks to showcase the efforts of Runnymede businesses that have shown significant initiative in moving towards a greener and more sustainable future. The awards ceremony is being held in May.
- 2.73 Promoting LoCASE through Business Runnymede: The Low Carbon Across the South and East (LoCASE) programme is supported by the European Regional Development Fund to provide a free business support programme to SMEs in the South and East. The aim is to help businesses to become more competitive and profitable while protecting the environment and encouraging low carbon solutions. To do this, LoCASE provides grants for businesses of up to £10,000 (although match funding is required) as well as training workshops and fully funded events. Targeted

business support is on offer for companies who offer “green” or low carbon goods and services. LoCASE came to a Runnymede Business Partnership event in September 2022 to talk to local businesses about the initiative and to discuss energy saving benefits associated with the fund and how it could reduce a business’s costs. There have been 69 enquiries from businesses in Runnymede to date (data from January 2023). The fund closes in June 2023.

- 2.74 Local Plan Review: The Local Plan Review offers a significant opportunity to revisit the policies in the 2030 Local Plan to see if their contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation can be strengthened and determine whether any new policies should be introduced. There is scope for policies to play a greater role in, for example, improving the sustainable design and construction of new development; promoting the provision of active travel, low carbon and renewable energy infrastructure; and protecting and enhancing green and blue infrastructure to adjust to the adverse impacts of climate change. The Local Plan also has a significant role to play in setting the spatial distribution of new development in the Borough to ensure sustainable patterns of development. A revised timetable for Local Plan preparation will be taken to Planning Committee followed by Full Council this Spring once the final Government reforms to the NPPF are published (national reforms are subject to public consultation at the time of writing this report). Whilst the first round of public consultation on the Local Plan Review has been paused pending a decision being made at a national level on a number of key planning reforms, officers have continued to develop key parts of the evidence base that will underpin the revised policies – including the Climate Change Study.
- 2.75 Electric Vehicle Strategy: The main purpose of the EV Strategy is to develop a borough wide approach in the period up to 2030 to encourage the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles (EVs) as part of a sustainable transport system. The Strategy also encourages the use of e-bikes. To deliver the EV Strategy, an action plan is being formulated based on 9 action points. The actions, set out under each of the 9 overall headings, will be broken down into two time periods – short term (2023-2026) and longer term (2026-2030). The action plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure adaptability to changes in technology, trends in mobility and financial considerations are kept up-to-date. It is intended that a draft of the Strategy be taken to Corporate Management Committee in July 2023. Production of a strategy for Ultra Low Emission Vehicles is also currently under consideration.
- 2.76 Corporate Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy: The purpose of the GBI Strategy is to set the framework for the Council’s approach to GBI; identifying the assets and features we have, whether there are any deficits or weaknesses and where/how these could be strengthened with opportunities/projects for improving/enhancing GBI and partners required to aid delivery. This will give an overarching but comprehensive strategy on where resources such as developer contributions, CIL and other funding should be focussed and prioritised. The GBI Strategy will set out background information on why GBI is important and its purpose, include an audit of GBI in Runnymede set out a vision and objectives of what the Strategy is trying to achieve and will be centred around a number of themes to be agreed upon. Within each theme will be a consideration of GBI in the Borough, identification of deficits and/or where GBI and GBI connectivity could be strengthened. Initial stages of preparation have involved an audit of GBI assets and features in the Borough and this work is currently on-going. A ‘For Information report’ on the GBI Strategy is being reported to [Community Services Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023](#).

- 2.77 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP): This project is led by Surrey County Council with RBC part funding the consultants. Project started in March 2021 and phase 1 is now complete. The Council is currently awaiting a commencement date for Phase 2 of the LCWIP study, which is being undertaken by SCC in partnership with RBC, and is expected to take approximately 9 months to complete. The detailed designs and costings provided by phase 2 of the plan will enable appropriate funding bids to be submitted to fund delivery of elements of this ten-year plan. Funding for delivery of the plan will also be sought from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and planning obligations where appropriate.
- 2.78 E Bikes pilot: As part of the wider Electric Vehicle Strategy that is being developed, a specific action is being investigated in relation to E Bikes. Initial research has been carried out on different types of e-bike schemes and the success or otherwise of other projects. Discussions have taken place with SCC officers and RHUL, and a further discussion with RHUL is planned. It is likely that to take this project forward a feasibility study will be required to assess demand and look in detail at costings (similar to that undertaken in Guildford). This is likely to cost in the region of £20,000 and would need to be secured via a growth bid to a future committee.

#### **Planned activity**

- 2.79 To assist with the development of the Climate Change Action Plan (see more information about this project under the Central Climate Change function).
- 2.80 Shortlisting of active and sustainable transport projects for prioritisation: Officers will be working to consider in greater detail where schemes should be prioritised (beyond the LCWIP proposals) for sustainable and active travel interventions in the Borough. Priorities will need to be discussed with Members, and further discussions held with Surrey County Council in their capacity as the Highway Authority to try and drive improvements forward.

#### **Development Management and Building Control (Corporate Head: Ashley Smith)**

##### **Achievements to date (taken from 2019):**

- 2.81 Building Control becoming a 'paperless service area': The Building Control Service went paperless in 2020. For background information, the Development Management function went paperless around 2013.

##### **Current/ongoing actions**

- 2.82 The Development Management Team is responsible for assessing planning applications against the Council's adopted policies in the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan. This includes the application of policies which are concerned with securing environmental improvements through new development and other features which are required to respond to climate change.
- 2.83 The Building Control team of surveyors and engineers make sure that all building work in the Runnymede borough meets the national regulations. Building Control are responsible for ensuring that development complies with the latest Building Regulations. In this regard, from a climate change perspective, it is relevant that interim Building Regulations took effect from June 2022 requiring a 31% reduction in carbon emissions for new homes and a 27% reduction for non-residential buildings compared to the 2013 standard (the current baseline). There have also been uplifts to ventilation standards, as well as the introduction of new measures to mitigate the risk of overheating in new homes. The Government has demonstrated that these standards are now viable for new development at a national scale.

- 2.84 A stepped tightening of the Building Regulations has been designed to help the market prepare for *full* Future Homes and Buildings Standards implementation in 2025 (such as developing necessary skills and supply chains). The full Future Homes Standard is intended to deliver homes that are 'zero-carbon ready', with 75-80% less carbon emissions than those built to current (2013 Building Regulations) standards. This is likely to mean:
- no new homes will have fossil fuel heating (moving away from gas boilers towards heat pumps and heat networks);
  - homes will be 'future-proofed', with low-carbon heating and high levels of energy efficiency;
  - there will be no need to retrofit these homes to enable them to become zero carbon by 2050 as the grid decarbonises (i.e. as the grid is powered by renewables rather than the burning of fossil fuels);
  - in an effort to address existing buildings, existing homes and certain home improvements will be subject to new Building Regulations standards, for example where homeowners build an extension.

### **Environmental Services (Corporate Head: Helen Clark)**

#### **Achievements to date (taken from 2019)**

- 2.85 Recycling initiatives: Contamination project (Autumn 2022) –The Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP) worked with RBC to analyse the borough's contamination rates in individual bins. This looked at contamination rates in specific geographical areas of the borough.

#### **Current/ongoing actions**

- 2.86 Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF): The Council's Parks and Arboriculture Manager is working with Surrey County Council regarding the next bid for the Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF). The LATF is open all year and invites bids from £50,000 to £300,000, through competitive bidding. Capital funding is offered to successful applicants. Applications received after 30 June 2023 will be considered for projects which plan to begin planting during the planting season in the 2024-2025 financial year.
- 2.87 The LATF is the key Government offer for local authorities (LAs) to restore tree cover in non-woodland areas which may have been impacted by issues such as disease, habitat degradation or ageing tree stock. The fund is focused on planting and natural colonisation of trees in areas outside of woodlands, including parklands, riparian zones, urban areas, beside roads and footpaths as well as trees in hedgerows and field boundaries (not hedgerows themselves). LATF-funded trees can be small or large, and in urban or rural settings.
- 2.88 The Fund aims to improve landscape connectivity outside woodland, increase natural colonisation where appropriate and provide benefits to ecosystems and society, such as carbon absorption, flood protection and support for biodiversity. The fund is part of the Government's Nature for Climate Fund and will directly contribute to achieving our ambitious tree planting targets to restore habitats in England.
- 2.89 The Council has historically worked with Surrey County Council to access this fund. The RBC application via SCC in 2019-2020 secured £700, £3050 was secured in 2020-2021 and £85,000 in 2021-2022.

- 2.90 Depot refurbishment: This Grade A corporate project commenced in September 2022. Members are advised to review the quarterly project updates that are reported to Corporate Management Committee to keep abreast of the latest updates on this project. Relevant to the Council's response to climate change, the specification for the Depot Refurbishment contains the following key elements:
- EV Vehicle charging points: The viability of installing EV charging points will be reviewed and a minimum of two spaces allowed for within the scheme subject to feasibility (i.e. that there is adequate power on the grid to achieve this).
  - Mechanical Plant: A condition survey of the existing mechanical plant and equipment throughout the site is to be undertaken. Where plant and equipment is at its end of life, there will be an allowance for a specification to upgrade to meet current regulations and improve efficiency throughout the site. This is to include heating and ventilation of all occupied areas and consideration will be given to renewable/low carbon technologies to help the Council meet its 2030 Net Zero Carbon target for its operations.
  - Fuel Tank Replacement: The provision of a dual tank with HVO and diesel is to be considered as a replacement for the existing diesel tank.
- 2.91 The depot refurbishment works are in the approved Capital Programme (£300k in total).
- 2.92 Sustainable Planting Policy (see report taken to [Environment and Sustainability Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022](#) for more information): The Green Spaces Team is introducing a new planting policy which incorporates planting principles that will help guide the Council in meeting challenges posed by our changing weather systems, offer support to native species, and encourage biodiversity. Community engagement and participation from residents' groups and local businesses will be encouraged and supported within the approved principles.
- 2.93 The policy incorporates the following principles which align with the Council's Climate Change Strategy:
- Planting to be planned to encourage biodiversity and support for native wildlife by providing shelter and a food source.
  - Maximise use of native species with near native species being used to lengthen the flowering season • Where appropriate move from formal annual bedding to planting perennials.
  - Perennial species will be selected to offer a long season of floral display maximising food availability for wildlife.
  - Minimise use of plastic and recycle where plastic cannot be avoided
  - Minimise use of peat in compost and mulch.
  - Review and trial alternative weed control to replace traditional herbicides where practicable
  - Removal of invasive species with the minimisation of traditional chemical control and use of alternative weed control where practicable.
  - Increase drought-resistant planting.
  - Where appropriate revert large or remote areas of diminished formal bedding back to grass.
  - Consider naturalised areas of planting where appropriate
  - Consider wildflower meadows where appropriate
  - Where possible plant hedging to protect play areas and parks from road pollution.
  - Encourage and support local community engagement including residents' groups and local businesses who wish to participate within their local

communities. All community planting will by agreement follow the approved sustainable planting policy guidelines.

- 2.94 The Council will regularly review its planting policy. The new sustainable planting will be made up of purely native or a mix of native and non-native beneficial species, depending on the site's location. These species are more drought-tolerant and require no or very little watering during establishment.
- 2.95 Grounds maintenance: As part of this wider project, lithium-ion powered equipment has been procured to support the new in house grounds maintenance team.
- 2.96 Recycling initiatives: The following initiatives are being rolled out at the time of writing this report:
- Dedicated communal collection project (ongoing) –creating a round specifically that collects bulk bins from flats in order to get a more consistent overview to see why flats struggle to dispose of their waste;
  - Flats above shops (ongoing) – where possible exchanging the bulk bins to individual lockable bins so that it can prevent fly-tipping and the public from using their bin, and overall reducing the amount of overflowing bins across the borough;
  - Food waste project (ongoing) – Improving our own housing stock by introducing more food waste bins, and delivering toolbox talks;
  - Recycling improvements project (ongoing) – Working with JW (Joint waste) to improve the boroughs recycling through leaflets, recycling bin modifications;
  - Pilot introduction of recycling bins within parks and on the High Street. The project to start at the Runnymede Pleasure Grounds.
- 2.97 Monitoring Air Quality: Dynamic monitoring of air quality is being undertaken to determine if any areas meet the criteria to establish an Air Quality Management Area. The Council works with SCC where existing road infrastructure is contributing to poorer air quality.

#### **Planned activity**

- 2.98 Development of a Sustainable Fleet Strategy: This will include a move to HVO fuel. The switch is dependent upon a new fuel tank and fuel management system being purchased for the depot. The cost of the switch to HVO fuel (£100k revenue growth for additional cost of HVO fuel) was approved as part of the budget in February.
- 2.99 SEP 2025: A recommendation is being brought to E and S Committee in March 2023 to adopt the Surrey Environmental Partnership approach to waste prevention and recycling in Surrey for the next three years known as SEP 2025; and approve Runnymede Borough Council's Service Delivery Plan relating to SEP 25.

#### **Assets and Regeneration (Corporate Head: Alex Williams)**

##### **Achievements to date (taken from 2019)**

- 2.100 Installation of photovoltaic panels on Council owned assets: Panels have been installed on the roofs at the Hythe Centre, the Woodham and New Haw Day Centre, Egham Orbit leisure centre and Unit 1 Chertsey Business Park to produce electricity.
- 2.101 Moving to greener energy suppliers: The Council has rationalised part of its electricity contract to Ecotricity who is renewable energy provider.

- 2.102 Development of Council assets: The completed Council owned Magna Square development which has achieved EPC A rating also includes a number of measures within its structure to support the environment and climate including solar controlled glazing, low energy internal lighting, waste water heat recovery system, highly efficient thermal insulation, high thermal mass soffit boards, low water use fixtures. One of the buildings has a living roof and a low water irrigation strategy has been developed to minimise water usage.
- 2.103 The Council owned Chertsey Business Park development aims to ensure a minimum six per cent decrease in CO2 emissions over 2013 Buildings Regulations. All units have been assessed as achieving the highest possible EPC Grade A rating, and other initiatives include:
- low air permeability design
  - electric vehicle charging points
  - transparent warehouse roof panels which increase natural lighting, the cutting the amount of electrically powered light needed
  - high performance insulated cladding and roof materials
  - secure cycle parking to encourage workers to ride to work rather than drive
- 2.104 The Council has installed a combined heat and power unit as part of the Egham Obit Leisure Centre.

#### **Current actions**

- 2.105 The Assets and Regeneration Service Area continue to work to ensure that its new Build Developments achieve EPC A rating to achieve Carbon emission reduction.
- 2.106 The Assets and Regeneration Service Area continues to work to transition the Council's power supply to Renewable Energy Contracts when existing contracts come to an end, where possible.

#### **Planned activity**

- 2.107 The Service Area Plan for the Assets and Regeneration Service Area for the 2023/24 financial year contains the following initiatives which are relevant to the Council's response to climate change:
- Strategic Review and condition surveys of all council-owned car parks to ensure required upgrades are considered/delivered as part of any upgrades for ANPR or ECV charging installation e.g. switch to LED lighting, upgrade electrics, renew car-park surfacing etc.
  - Mechanical and electrical condition surveys of all operational and where appropriate investments assets that can have a Community Heat Network (CHN). This is proposed to be undertaken as part of a rolling 5 year programme which started in October 2022.
  - Replacement of Roof at Civic Centre, Building Management System (BMS), heating ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC), Windows mechanism, Lifts. As part of this, it will be explored whether there are any opportunities for installation of renewable or low carbon technologies, subject to cost and pay back. This project is down to take place between August 2023 and March 2024
  - Climate change initiatives across portfolio to help achieve carbon net zero targets. Following the completion of part 1 of the Council's Climate Change Study which will establish the baseline carbon emissions for the Borough and look at scenarios for future decarbonisation, further discussions will need to be held with the Council's Climate Change Officer and Members to decide which climate change initiatives across the portfolio should be prioritised and consideration of cost and pay back will need to be investigated.

- 2.108 It is also proposed to carry out EPC rating surveys for all commercial assets and upgrade over a rolling programme to achieve a minimum EPC C rating to achieve carbon emission reduction (both investment and operational estate).

### **Financial Services (Corporate Head: Paul French)**

#### **Achievements to date (taken from 2019)**

- 2.109 Hybrid mail: The use of hybrid mail for sundry debtors has been in use since 2021. This has replaced the printing of invoices in the majority of cases, reducing paper use.
- 2.110 Changing existing practices: In addition to the use of hybrid mail, following a big push by the team, over 70% of invoices to our customers are now being sent by email as well as a majority of recovery runs. The team are also making better use of technology and have reduced paper outputs significantly by digitising many former manual paper based processes where to do so does not contravene audit requirements.

#### **Current actions**

- 2.111 Joint HR/Payroll system initiative: This Grade A corporate project commenced in November 2021 and is due to be completed in April 2024. Members are advised to review the quarterly project updates that are reported to Corporate Management Committee to keep abreast of the latest updates on this project. This new system will assist in making work flow efficiencies. An additional benefit is anticipated to be the reduction in the need for paper documentation.

#### **Planned activity**

- 2.112 New financial management system (FMS): Given the need to focus resources on the joint HR/Payroll system, there are no additional projects in the next financial year. However, subject to committee approval, the tendering for the implementation of a new financial management system is proposed to begin in late 2023 which is anticipated to transform workflow practices and significantly reduce the need for paper documentation across the Council. Delivery of this initiative is anticipated to take 2 years.

### **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/financial implications**

- 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. Future planned activity through the Service Area Plans across the Authority have been designed to show where additional resource is required to support particular initiatives, or where a growth item will need to be agreed.

### **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 (where applicable)**
- 8.1 Future activities listed in the report will be assessed for other implications as appropriate.
9. **Timetable for Implementation**
- 9.1 The various projects 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. **Conclusions**
- 10.1 This report has been produced to address the comments made by the Environment and Sustainability Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023. A full text report has been provided as requested. The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report. Officers will continue to refine its processes for reporting around the Council's activities which have the potential to help in our response to climate change.

**(For information)**

**Background papers**

None stated