

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE LOCALLY

Executive Summary

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has requested an update on the Council's climate change activities, highlighting in particular work undertaken in furtherance of its climate and ecological emergency declaration.

To set this in context, this report begins with an overview of Woking's climate change activities to date, our local pledges and continuing climate commitments.

The report then goes on to highlight work undertaken in the last year as well as outlining future projects and plans.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That:

- (i) the activities undertaken to date and those planned in furtherance of the Council's climate and ecological emergency declaration, be noted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

Background Papers:

[Woking 2050](#)

[Climate Emergency Action Plan Progress Reports](#)

[Report and presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 22 March 2021.](#)

[Report to the Executive 20 January 2022.](#)

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1.0 Introduction and background

- 1.1 Woking Borough Council has long been committed to protecting the environment. Its first climate change strategy was adopted in 2002, although activities in this area began much earlier in 1990. A timeline of activities is available on the Council's website at www.woking.gov.uk/nature-and-sustainability/climate-change/climate-change-and-sustainability-timeline and is presented in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 There are two key strategy documents that underpin activities in this area. [Woking 2050](#) is the borough's current climate change strategy. This sets out a vision guiding our collective efforts to create a sustainable borough by reducing our impact on the environment. The significance of the year 2050 used in the strategy's title is tied to the national legislation in place at the time of its adoption. The UK's Climate Change Act sought to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 on the 1990 baseline. This was adopted as a local target at the time of the last revision of the Climate Change Strategy (2015). This national target has been superseded by a pledge to reach net zero by 2050, which has also been adopted locally as part of the Council's climate and ecological emergency declaration (2019). A future update of Woking 2050 will reflect this, as well as other actions that have been developed as part of the Climate Emergency Action Plan, which is outlined later.
- 1.3 Complementing Woking 2050 is the [Natural Woking](#) strategy (adopted in 2016), which is the Council's equivalent strategy for biodiversity and green infrastructure strategy. It sets out how we intend to enhance the provision and accessibility of green spaces, conserve existing biodiversity and habitats and create opportunities for species to return to the borough.
- 1.4 Delivery against the Woking 2050 and Natural Woking strategies is monitored through regular reporting to the Climate Change Working Group whose members include representatives from the community, business, environmental organisations, councillors and council officers. This cross political party group was established in 2003. It is a non-public meeting however notes of topics covered are published on the Council's website at www.woking.gov.uk/nature-and-sustainability/climate-change/climate-change-working-group. A wide range of projects have and are being delivered in implementation of the objectives of Woking 2050 and Natural Woking, by the Council, by partner organisations and groups. More information about these is available at www.woking.gov.uk/nature-and-sustainability. This earlier work provides a strong foundation on which the Council is building as it takes additional steps in light of the urgency of the climate challenge.
- 1.5 On 25 July 2019, the Council declared a [climate and ecological emergency](#). This cross-party declaration recognised the continued priority and commitment the borough gives to addressing climate change, both through mitigation and adaptation. The Council pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030 across its own estate and operations, and by 2050 (or sooner) across the wider borough.
- 1.6 Further to the declaration, a [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (CEAP) was approved by the Council on 13 February 2020. The plan highlights and acknowledges this is a continuation of the long-term commitment of the Council to protecting the environment and addressing climate change.
- 1.7 Given the breadth of the pledge to reduce (and eventually eliminate) the Council's own impact and contribution to climate change, the action plan is naturally broad ranging. Crucially, it acknowledges the need to accelerate existing Woking 2050 activities in order to meet the pledge. Every quarter an update on the CEAP and progress against its actions is considered by the Climate Change Working Group and is [published online](#). The CEAP is a living document which continues to be developed as more information is gathered about potential new projects and activities.

2.0 Activities undertaken to date

- 2.1 A number of key activities and projects have been progressed post-declaration. These activities build on a strong foundation of green initiatives that pre-date July 2019 which are recorded on the Council's website here: www.woking.gov.uk/nature-and-sustainability/green-initiatives.
- 2.2 A full record of progress is available through the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) reports that are taken to the Climate Change Working Group each quarter and are published online at www.woking.gov.uk/nature-and-sustainability/climate-change/climate-emergency-action-plan. The table below records a selection of highlights and achievements post-declaration to date, grouped by theme.

Theme	Activity
Our assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate emergency declaration and definition adopted with a baseline year of 2018/19. • A climate emergency action plan (CEAP) was drafted and approved by the Climate Change Working Group at its meeting on 3 December 2019 and by Council on 13 February 2020. • Boiler replacement at Woking Leisure Centre in November 2020. • Greenhouse Gas reporting for 2019/20 showed 11% reduction on baseline levels. The report for 2020/21 recorded a reduction of 45% on the baseline year (although this coincided with a series of national lockdowns caused by the Covid-19 pandemic so should be treated with caution). • A PV installation with a generation capacity of 36,500 kWh was completed at Dukes Court (owned by WBC) in spring 2021 which will assist in improving the building's carbon footprint. Statistics showing the electricity generated and CO2 saved can be viewed here. • WBC's Renewable Energy Plan adopted by the Executive on 17 June 2021. • ThamesWey's Poole Road energy centre was completed in summer 2021 ready to supply energy to the new Hilton Hotel, retail stores and residential towers at Victoria Square further helping the decarbonisation of energy supplies in the Town Centre.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The completion of the Chobham Road pedestrian/cycle bridge in October 2019 helped improve connectivity and access to the Town Centre via the Basingstoke Canal for walkers and cyclists. • Seven electric vehicle chargers were installed at Dukes Court in spring 2021 including a 50kW DC charger for use by the tenants. • Following a recommendation from the Climate Change Working Group, on 17 June 2021 the Executive resolved that non-statutory meetings should continue, where practical, on a remote basis, further reducing unnecessary travel to meetings and associated carbon emissions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBC attends the Surrey Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy Forum the aim of which is to work together to deliver a consistent strategy across the county to provide the necessary EV infrastructure for Surrey residents to help meet common climate targets and facilitate a shift to zero emission transport. • In summer 2021, one of WBC's petrol car club vehicles was replaced with an electric vehicle, a Nissan Leaf, helping to further reduce carbon emissions associated with business travel. • The My Town Shops initiative was introduced in Woking in summer 2021 using an e-bike for deliveries. • WBC's Green Infrastructure team has been successful in its funding application to the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) and has been awarded £166,090 for the installation of 70 electric vehicle charging points in the new Red Shoppers Car Park due to open in spring 2022. • The On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) project in partnership with SCC, is installing 20 on-street charging bays across Woking borough. Commissioning of EV points is expected in spring 2022.
<p>Policy, leadership and behaviour changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To mark the first anniversary of Refill Woking, Refill West Byfleet was launched in September 2019. The network includes local cafes, restaurants, shops and retail outlets, that offer a water bottle refill service free of charge. The scheme encourages the reduction of single use plastic bottles. • In November 2020, Woking Chamber of Commerce set up an Environment Committee. Officers from WBC attend these meetings which are a good opportunity to raise the profile of the climate and ecological emergency declaration and how the business community can assist and also continue to improve their own sustainability practices. • Over £9m (£6.2m in September 2020; £3m in January 2021) awarded by the Government to Action Surrey (part of the ThamesWey group of companies owned by WBC) for the delivery of the Green Jump Surrey project to enhance household energy efficiency improvements across the county. • On 17 June 2021, the Executive resolved that all non-statutory meetings (such as working groups) should continue, where practical, on a remote basis. • Surrey's first sustainable business awards took place on 20 May 2021. The Corporate Responsibility for the Environment and a Sustainable Tomorrow 2021 - CREST21 - awards were run jointly by the Woking News & Mail and the University of Surrey's Centre for Environment and Sustainability. Planet Woking was proud to sponsor the Transforming Food category. The awards showcased the positive work by local businesses to protect the environment and promote

more sustainable working and lifestyle habits. The awards return for a second year on 19 May 2022.

- The Surrey [Solar Together](#) group-buying solar PV project which ran during summer 2021 saw 142 Woking households commit to the scheme. Of these, there have been 41 approved installations so far resulting in a total of 188 kW installed capacity, 523 panels installed, and 31,420 kg saved CO2 emissions. Woking households participating in the scheme have invested just over £237,000.
- 24 September 2021 marked one year of [Planet Woking](#) and its communications on climate change. Activities to date include the creation of a standalone website; social media communications; three online talks; and a regular e-newsletter incorporating local climate change, sustainability and biodiversity news.
- On 5 November 2021, Woking topped a list of green local authorities in Surrey in an [article](#) featured in the Surrey Advertiser. Seven environmental indicators were used to rank local authorities across the country on their green commitments. Woking was the highest ranked in Surrey and 89th on the national list. Energy efficiency of homes, waste recycling rates and renewable energy generation featured amongst the indicators.
- [Climate Emergency UK](#) (CE UK) has compiled a set of [score cards](#) based on local authority climate and ecological action across the country. Assessment was made against over 100 criteria covering themes such as plans for decarbonisation; collaborative working and action to conserve wildlife and biodiversity. CE UK suggests the score cards can be used as a benchmark of council activity to help identify areas of strength and improvement. Published on 27 January 2022, [Woking Borough Council was awarded a score of 70%](#), placing it tenth in the country's list of district councils
- The climate change e-learning module which was created by Learning Pool in partnership with SCC is being trialled by WBC Neighbourhood Services staff prior to wider staff/Councillor roll out in early 2022.
- During autumn 2021, Woking Borough Council carried out a series of community engagement activities to inform our emerging Corporate Strategy 2022 – 2027. Climate change and sustainability were strong and consistent themes raised at the engagement roadshows alongside recognition of the Council's work to date in this area. The new Strategy will be shaped by residents' views and continue to reflect the Council's commitment to tackling climate change locally.
- On 20 January 2022, the Executive received a report on the Council's climate change and conservation activities. It resolved to approve a number of priority activities for the forthcoming year including the allocation of funding for an independent carbon footprint assessment and a series of low/no cost options that will be progressed to further embed the corporate commitment to climate action. Formal support of [Surrey County Council's Climate Change Delivery Plan](#) was also noted.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the success of the Green Jump Surrey project (see above), Action Surrey will be delivering further fully funded energy efficiency measures under the government's Sustainable Warmth scheme for eligible households across the county. The scheme launched in February 2022 with measures to be completed by June 2022.
Sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A scoping exercise of the Council's current planning policies, how they align with its climate emergency declaration, what they cover and what gaps exist, was completed by officers in Planning Policy and presented to both the Local Development Framework Working Group and the Climate Change Working Group in September 2021. The findings will inform the review of the Council's Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which is due to be completed late 2022.
Adaptation, ecology and habitats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Great Crested Newt Pilot Project with Natural England began in 2016 and saw the development and trial of a new way of supporting GCN, a European protected species whose numbers have declined in recent decades. Habitat improvements have been undertaken at Westfield Common, in addition to the complementary conservation work of local volunteers, guided by Surrey Wildlife Trust. The project team wrote a paper discussing the lessons learnt so far, published in a national ecology journal in September 2021. A swift, bat and town twinning sign was installed in Woking Town Centre in August 2019. The raingarden pilot project continues in partnership with Surrey County Council and Highways. So far, raingardens have been installed at Blackdown Close and Alpha Road as well as locations within the Town Centre helping to alleviate surface water flooding in these areas as well as enhancing biodiversity through pollinator friendly planting. Living green walls have been installed at High Street (April 2019), Dukes Court (summer 2020) and at the new Red Shoppers Car Park (late 2021) enhancing urban biodiversity and improving air quality. Tree veteranisation at Woking Park in February 2020 to maintain the diversity of a small woodland by creating the habitat needed to sustain a number of important insects, fungi and wildlife. First phase of the Sutton Green Flood Alleviation scheme completed in December 2020. Conservation and management of the borough's heathlands continues through work with the Surrey Heathland Partnership. Ongoing support to Woking Peregrine Project. On 27 October 2021 Serco, Woking Borough Council's environmental maintenance contractors, installed a feature bug hotel in Woking Park with the help of Woking District Cub Scouts.

3.0 Partnership working and collaboration

- 3.1 Many activities and projects continue to be made possible through working together with key stakeholders, commercial partners and volunteer organisations to meet our common environmental goals. These activities are key to achieving carbon neutrality both across the council estate and borough-wide.
- 3.2 Our continuing collaboration with ThamesWey and Action Surrey is highlighted in projects listed in section 2 and the CEAP updates. Such projects are central to decarbonising corporate energy supplies (e.g. Poole Road Energy Centre) and engaging residents in the take up of energy efficiency measures (e.g. Green Jump Surrey) and the reduction of the borough's domestic carbon footprint. Action Surrey provides an impartial energy advice service through which Surrey residents can access a network of trusted, local and experienced installers for various energy saving measures, such as loft insulation, cavity and solid wall insulation, energy efficient boilers, LED lighting, solar panels and more. As well as improving household energy efficiency, their services assist in tackling local fuel poverty.
- 3.3 Another significant partner in progressing community focused climate and ecological activities is [Woking Environment Action \(WE Act\)](#). WE Act works to tackle global environmental concerns on a local scale, encouraging sustainable living and working in the Woking area, helping residents, businesses and organisations to make a positive difference to our local environment. The group's work also contributes towards delivery of the Woking 2050 and Natural Woking strategies. Woking Borough Council supports their projects and they are represented on its Climate Change Working Group to help progress our action plans and key objectives. In September 2021, WE Act ran a successful week of events marking Great Big Green Week, including its first Woking Climate Forum with panellists including Jonathan Lord MP. A second Climate Forum took place on 24 February 2022.
- 3.4 Organisations such as the Surrey Heathland Partnership and Surrey Wildlife Trust are also essential to the valuable management work being undertaken, in partnership with the Council, to protect our local habitats and species in furtherance of our ecological commitments.
- 3.5 Since March 2020, officers from all districts and boroughs in Surrey, plus the County Council, have convened monthly through virtual meetings of the Surrey Climate Change Officers' Group to progress joint working across the agenda and share good practice. All local authorities within this group have formally acknowledged the climate situation and need for urgent action.
- 3.6 Furthermore, Surrey County Council's [Greener Futures Climate Change Delivery Plan \(CCDP\)](#) was approved at a meeting of its Cabinet on 26 October 2021. The Plan sets out its ambitions to reduce emissions and tackle the effects of climate change in line with its net-zero carbon targets. There are clear links between Woking Borough Council's own climate commitments and those of the county plan and we will be continuing to work together with our local authority partners to achieve area-wide climate and ecological action. Woking Borough Council's Executive formally supported the CCDP at its meeting on 20 January 2022.
- 3.7 Further examples of Woking Borough Council working collaboratively with authorities across Surrey on sustainability issues are listed in section 2 and the CEAP.

4.0 Planet Woking

- 4.1 Work continues on the Planet Woking programme – the Council's successful climate change communications campaign. Its purpose is three-fold:
 - To share what the Council has been doing to date to address climate change and sustainability locally;
 - To raise awareness about what the Council is doing to meet its carbon neutral targets; and

- To inspire local people to get involved and continue to make changes to live a greener, more sustainable life and gather their feedback for new project ideas.

4.2 Examples of Planet Woking activities since its launch on 24 September 2020:

- Standalone website launched at www.planetwoking.co.uk
- Communications through the dedicated Facebook and Instagram accounts.
- Hosted three well-received online events as part of a programme of themed talks aimed at residents, schools and businesses. Topics covered in these talks were sustainability at home; the great outdoors; and adapting to climate change. Audiences enjoyed a series of presentations given by expert guest speakers. Each online talk was followed by an open discussion during which viewers had the opportunity to share their own experiences of living greener and to ask panellists and Council representatives questions. These discussion sessions have proved to be a great forum through which to gather ideas to later share through Planet Woking. Recordings of the webinars are available via the Planet Woking website [event page](#).
- A growing set of community focused case studies inspired by local individuals and groups published to the [Get Involved](#) section of the Planet Woking website.
- In October 2020, the Natural Woking newsletter was relaunched as a Planet Woking e-newsletter which carries all the latest local climate change, sustainability and biodiversity project updates. This now has a circulation of over 600 readers. New subscribers can sign up to the newsletter at www.planetwoking.co.uk/get-involved/newsletters/
- The Council's website features a direct link to the Planet Woking website from the [climate change pages](#).
- Full page features in each edition of the Woking Magazine. The Magazine is circulated to all households in the Borough and available online [here](#).

5.0 Future Plans

5.1 The CEAP provides a framework for identifying continuing and future actions. As discussed in section 2, many themes and actions are rolled forward to reflect their ongoing nature.

5.2 Additionally, at its meeting on 20 January 2022, the Executive resolved to approve a number of priority activities identified for the forthcoming year to further embed the corporate commitment to climate action.

5.3 Key activities for 2022/23 include:

Activity	Outputs
Corporate Strategy 2022 - 2027	Feedback from community engagement undertaken in autumn 2021 showed that local climate action continues to be a key priority. This will be reflected in the themes of the new Strategy.
Climate Change Strategy review	An update to the Council's Climate Change Strategy is noted as an action within the CEAP. Green Infrastructure plans to update the Strategy this year.

Electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure	Activity is underway in Woking borough that will see enhanced local charging provision over the short and medium term, including 70 new EV bays becoming available within the new Red Car Park and 20 on-street bays being commissioned as part of SCC's on-street pilot project in spring 2022. Officers from across the county continue to meet through the Surrey EV Forum. The aim of this forum is to work together to deliver a consistent strategy across the county to provide the necessary EV infrastructure for Surrey residents.
External assessment of our carbon footprint	<p>The Council's annual greenhouse gas (GHG) report covers key corporate buildings but this only represents a proportion of the total estate and operations. It is a good indicator but does not provide a comprehensive carbon footprint for the entire Council estate.</p> <p>An external assessment of the Council's carbon footprint was approved by the Executive at its meeting on 20 January 2022. It will improve the Council's knowledge of its carbon footprint helping to further identify key areas of focus, particularly in reaching our net zero target by 2030.</p>
Sustainable development	New development will be guided by the latest good practice with a revised Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document due to be published late 2022. This follows a scoping exercise of the Council's current planning policies, how they align with its climate emergency declaration, what they cover and what gaps exist, which was completed by officers in Planning Policy in September 2021.
Household energy efficiency	<p>Households across the borough will continue to benefit from government grant funding for energy efficiency improvements through Action Surrey.</p> <p>£9.2m in government funding for the installation of measures to upgrade the energy efficiency of low income, fuel poor households across the county was awarded to the Green Jump Surrey project which was managed and delivered by Action Surrey on behalf of a consortium of Surrey local authorities. Over 400 households benefitted from more than 500 energy efficiency measures helping to reduce energy bills and save carbon.</p> <p>Following the success of this project, Action Surrey will be delivering further fully funded energy efficiency measures under the government's Sustainable Warmth scheme for eligible households across the county. The scheme launched in February 2022 with measures to be completed by June 2022.</p>
Continued engagement through the Planet Woking programme	<p>Ongoing communications and engagement to further raise the profile of what the Council and its partners are doing locally to address the climate and ecological declaration. This follows approval from the Executive in June 2021 for a further two years' funding up to July 2023. Activities to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a further themed webinar; • regular social media posts;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued expansion of case studies and resources on the Planet Woking website; • promotion of local climate and biodiversity events and activities.
Climate change e-learning	In order to assist staff and Councillors to understand their role in achieving the Council's climate targets, Neighbourhood Services staff are trialling an online climate e-learning module. It is hoped this will be made available as part of the Council's wider corporate training programme early in 2022 pending feedback from the pilot.
Engaging with the business community	<p>Officers from the Green Infrastructure team attend the Woking Chamber of Commerce's Environment Committee. This is a good opportunity to raise the profile of the climate and ecological emergency declaration and how the business community can assist and also continue to improve their own sustainability practices.</p> <p>Officers in Business Liaison plan to add environmental signposting pages to the Woking Works website which will offer sustainability advice and information to local businesses.</p>
Wild about Woking event	This joint event by Surrey Wildlife Trust and Woking Borough Council will promote nature and greenspaces in the local area. The programme will host a variety of engaging activities such as a nature trail, guided walks and wildlife themed crafts. Wild about Woking will launch Surrey Wildlife Trust's 30 Days Wild campaign and will raise awareness of how the public can help care for the environment through local biodiversity and greenspace projects. This free event takes place between 10am – 4pm on Saturday 21 and 11am – 4pm on Sunday 22 May 2022 in Woking Town Centre - no booking required. More information will be published at https://planetwoking.co.uk .
Renewable Energy	<p>In furtherance of the Renewable Energy Plan approved by the Executive in June 2021, opportunities for increasing the amount of energy derived from local renewable energy projects will continue to be explored, both across the Council estate and in the wider borough.</p> <p>An example of this is Community Energy South (CES) which provides support and training for the development of community-led renewable energy groups and projects. CES supports groups to own or manage their own renewable energy installations in local communities, reduce energy consumption and help reduce fuel poverty. The project is being led locally by Surrey County Council with support from districts and boroughs.</p>
Collaborative working across Surrey	Woking Borough Council's Executive formally noted support of Surrey's Climate Change Delivery Plan at its meeting on 20 January 2022. This support recognises the clear links between our environmental objectives and continuing delivery against our area-wide climate and ecological action plans.

	WBC is represented at the Surrey Climate Change Officers' Group that meets monthly to progress joint working across the agenda and share good practice. There are also a number of linked officer working groups that have been set up in furtherance of SCC's Climate Change Delivery Plan and district/borough climate action plans.
Participation in research projects led by Surrey University's Centre for Environment and Sustainability	Students at the University's Centre for Environment and Sustainability are undertaking research on the affordability of low carbon solutions in tackling fuel poverty. The "Heat4All" decarbonisation research project will use Woking as a case study and apply its findings to the borough's demographics.
Raingardens	Raingardens are landscaped areas, designed to help slow down surface water run off, reducing the rate at that it enters the surface water drainage system. In turn, this helps to reduce the risk of flooding. The partnership project with Surrey County Council will see more locations around the borough benefit from raingarden installations with funding secured for a further three years.
Conservation	Continuing work with partners to protect our local habitats and wildlife with local heathland conservation work and initiatives such as the Great Crested Newt project; rain gardens and the installation of living green walls to boost urban biodiversity.
Supporting biodiversity through day to day service and project delivery	<p>The Council and its partners - including ThamesWey and Serco – continue to expand practices that support biodiversity. For example, new development schemes featuring swift bricks (supporting the Swifts in Woking project), green walls and green roofs, SuDs ponds/raingardens, and suitable tree and landscaping planting selections. These practices are also being incorporated into Council owned housing.</p> <p>Also continuing support for the successful conservation of peregrine falcons in Woking Town Centre (the Woking Peregrine Project).</p>
Wildflowers	Continuing work to expand the area of publicly owned/managed land used to grow wildflowers and/or allow grass to grow taller, whilst ensuring we maintain an attractive, cared for appearance throughout the Woking area.

6.0 Corporate Strategy

6.1 The activities outlined in this update report progress the commitments the Council has made in respect of its climate and ecological declaration and zero carbon pledge. Climate change is corporate priority and links to a number of corporate objectives, most notably effective use of resources, improving the borough's biodiversity and green infrastructure, engaging our communities, and supporting sustainable development and a strong economy.

7.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this update report, however delivery of the CEAP will require an ongoing financial commitment by the Council and access to external funding.
- 7.2 Consideration will be given to opportunities for innovative finance mechanisms for local climate delivery. The affordability and mechanics of any such solutions will need to be carefully tested.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 7.3 There are no human resources implications associated with this update report, however future provision for climate change training is being progressed as referenced in section 5.
- 7.4 Whilst there are no direct equalities implications associated with this report, it is noted that the impacts of a changing climate can be felt more acutely by those that are vulnerable within our community. Examples of this include flood risk and tackling fuel poverty.

Legal

- 7.5 There are no legal implications with this report.

8.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 8.1 The Council roadshows which took place during November and early December 2021 gave residents the opportunity help shape the future priorities of the borough, as part of a comprehensive programme of engagement and consultation to assist with the development of the Council's new five year corporate strategy (2022 – 2027). Feedback showed that local climate action continues to be a key priority for our local communities. This will be reflected in the themes of the new Strategy.
- 8.2 Much has been done in climate change communications through [Planet Woking](#) since its launch in September 2020 and this continues to be a platform through which to build on this to help raise awareness and strengthen community understanding and engagement with the borough's climate emergency declaration. A Planet Woking hub has also been added to the [Woking Community Forum](#) to further raise awareness of environmental projects and consultations.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The Council has long been committed to protecting the environment. This update report reaffirms the pledges made by the Council in July 2019 through its climate and ecological emergency declaration and its continuing local action.
- 9.2 The declaration requires carbon neutrality across the Council's estate and operations by 2030. The CEAP provides a framework for identifying, progressing and monitoring actions in furtherance of this commitment. Much work has been undertaken to date and examples have been highlighted in this report.
- 9.3 However, momentum against the CEAP will need to be maintained and further progressed in order to reach zero carbon within eight years.
- 9.4 The activities planned for 2022/23 will continue to deliver against these commitments. In particular, the proposed independent carbon footprint assessment, will enable improved knowledge and prioritised action and investment. It will also assist with additional benefits such as emissions trajectories; interim reduction targets and insight into where best to invest to yield carbon reduction and value for money. A cost/benefit analysis of interventions over time will help inform best value both economically and environmentally and provide a data led focus in the Council's environmental decision making.

- 9.5 Ongoing collaborative working plus the identification of external and innovative funding mechanisms at a time of increasing financial pressures will also continue to be crucial to this agenda.

REPORT ENDS

Climate Change and Sustainability Timeline

The list below highlights some key activities undertaken across WBC's estate since 1990/1991.

1990/1991	The Council embarks on programme of energy efficiency works across its own estate
1994	Woking Environment Action (formerly called Woking Local Action 21) established
1997/1998	Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and first phase of solar panels installed at Brockhill
February 1999	Thameswey Ltd established
July 1999	Thameswey Energy Ltd established
2001	Second phase of solar panels installed at Brockhill
2001	Awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise
March 2001	Woking CHP Energy Station officially opened
December 2002	Climate Change Strategy adopted
2003	Climate Neutral Development Guidance adopted
March 2003	Cross political party Climate Change Working Group established
June 2003	Woking Park Fuel Cell / CHP officially opened
June 2005	Updated Climate Change Strategy adopted
June 2005	First demonstration hybrolight commissioned

Tackling Climate Change Locally

March 2005	Awarded the Beacon Council Status for Sustainable Energy
December 2005	Awarded Low Carbon Leaders' Award
2006	First electric vehicle (EV) charging points installed in town centre car parks
March 2006	Energy Saving Trust fleet health check
Autumn 2006	Enterprise Rent A Car Ltd car club introduced for Council business mileage
March 2007	Awarded Beacon Status for Promoting Sustainable Communities through the Planning Process
2008	Revised Climate Change Strategy adopted
2008/2009	Beacon Council Status for Tackling Climate Change
2008/2009	The Council enters partnership with Enterprise Rent A Car Ltd to deliver a car club for business mileage reducing emissions and saving money on mileage claims
2008 to 2011	Cycle Working programme delivered
2009	Action Surrey created as part of the Thameswey Group to give impartial energy advice to households, schools and businesses helping them save money and reduce CO2 emissions
March 2012	Environmental audit conducted by Cap Gemini
2012/2013	Expansion of electric vehicle charging points in town Centre car parks (ongoing)
December 2013	Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) adopted by Council.
March to August 2015	Electric vehicle pilot as part of the Council's car club arrangements

September 2015	Woking 2050 , revised Climate Change Strategy adopted
January/February 2018	Air quality monitoring tubes installed on Victoria Way at the junction with Lockfield Drive (at the former Toys R Us building, and at Victoria Arch junction)
Spring 2018	Plastic water bottles removed from Council Chamber meetings, china cups and glasses replaced plastic and paper cups in all meeting rooms. Segregated waste bins, including food waste, introduced into staff kitchens in Civic Offices.
October 2018	Diesel vehicles banned from the Council's lease car fleet
2018/2019	New Vision Homes (NVH) invested £5.7m into the existing housing stock as part of the asset management programme. £500,000 of which was focused on improving the energy efficiency of blocks through external wall, cavity wall and loft insulation programmes.
February 2019	Electric vehicle position statement adopted and published on website
April 2019	ThamesWey's new energy centre on Poole Road received planning permission
July 2019	Single Use Plastics Policy adopted
July 2019	Climate emergency declared
September 2019	Minutes of the Climate Change Working Group added to the Council's website to enhance awareness of its activities in this area.
November 2019	Five trees planted at Byfleet Primary School to mark National Tree Week. The planting was part of Surrey County Council's initiative to plant 1.2 million trees in the county by 2030.
December 2019	Minutes of the Climate Change Working Group added to the Council's website to enhance awareness of its activities in this area.
February 2020	Carbon neutral definitions and baselines determined and adopted by Woking Borough Council along with the identification of priority carbon reduction activities for 2020 to 2021.
February 2020	Woking Borough confirmed as part of a Surrey County Council pilot to install on-street charging points. SCC was awarded £470,000 to install 80 fast on-street charging points for electric vehicles across Woking,

Tackling Climate Change Locally

Spelthorne, Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils during 2020 to 2021.

March 2020	Seven trees planted on Surrey County Council highway land adjacent to Horsell Lodge to mark Surrey Tree Week.
March 2020	Minutes of the Climate Change Working Group added to the Council's website to enhance awareness its activities in this area.
March 2020 onwards	Activities post March 2020 are captured within CEAP updates which are available on the Council's website at www.woking.gov.uk/nature-and-sustainability/climate-change/climate-emergency-action-plan .
