

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY STATEMENT 2020 – 2030

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The changing climate and its impacts have been recognised nationally and internationally as the most important environmental challenge faced by the planet. A changing climate is having, and will increasingly have, profound effects on everyone and especially future generations. It has been estimated that in 2020 the average temperature will have increased by 1.1°C since the 1900's and will continue to increase with current and predicted greenhouse gas emissions. Rushmoor recognises that action needs to be taken now to make a positive influence on the future of the Borough and the Council fully intends to plan its activities in order to meet the climate change challenge.
- 1.2 Acknowledging the need to make a clear statement of intent the Council took the unanimous decision in June 2019 to address climate change locally, by developing a plan to enable:
- A green and sustainable Rushmoor
 - A carbon neutral Council by 2030
- 1.3 The aim of this Climate Change Strategy is to co-ordinate and set out a range of objectives into one document to guide the Borough to achieve its targets.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 Climate change is defined as the increase of the average temperature on the earth. The main causes of the rise in worldwide temperature is the increase in the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This terminology is used because the gases keep heat in the atmosphere like a greenhouse, thereby warming the earth.
- 2.2 A statutory target was set out in the UK Climate Change Act 2008 to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 1990 by 2050. The Government has now adopted a UK Committee on Climate Change recommendation to increase this target to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment identifies six priority risk areas of flooding, high temperatures, water supply shortages, natural capital, food production and pest and diseases.

2.3 Rushmoor has regularly calculated its carbon footprint for its operations, the last assessment being carried out in 2017. The figures are below:

Source	2016-2017 in kilogrammes of carbon dioxide
Electricity	1,378,658
Gas	1,484,048
Renewables (50% of generation)	(-14,091)
Transport	1,228,755
CF Total (kg)	4,077,370
CF Total (tonnes)	4077

2.4 Carbon emissions from the Council's activities fell by 21.6% between 2008 and 2017. The Council's previous plans from 2006 to 2018 helped to reduce emissions and the declaration made by the Council to ensure a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 will be delivered mainly by directly reducing emissions and also by taking opportunities for offsetting, such as through the planting of certain types of trees and other vegetation. The intention is to keep the level of offsetting to an absolute minimum.

2.5 The Council will be seeking to work with residents, business and other stakeholders to deliver a more sustainable Borough through the use and adaptation of technologies, plans and strategies to ensure the impact on the environment is kept to a minimum

3. THE VISION AND OVERALL GOALS

3.1 The Climate Change vision for Rushmoor is:

"Rushmoor Borough Council will seek to have a positive impact on future generations by working with businesses, communities and organisations to protect and enhance Rushmoor's environment. Through direct action and by encouraging and supporting others, Rushmoor will address the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change"

3.2 The ten-year vision is underpinned by the following principles which summarise what the Council is seeking to achieve for the Borough:

- Protect and enhance the environment and conserve and encourage biodiversity
- The built environment and infrastructure reflect sustainability whilst enabling prosperity
- Natural resources will be used sustainably and waste will be minimised
- Raise awareness of the challenges and, through engagement, build resilience and involvement within the local community

3.3 The Council understands its duty to protect and care for the local environment and this is a significant priority for the Council. It will minimise the environmental impacts of the Council's activities and will reflect a robust strategic approach in its plans and policies, including the Council Vision to 2030 and Business Plan, Rushmoor Local Plan 2019 - 2032 and the link with the Hampshire Policy Framework.

4. PRIORITY AREAS FOR ACTION

4.1 Rushmoor's Climate Change Strategy establishes the strategic framework within which action plans will be aligned over a ten year period. The Strategy reflects the important role the Council plays in tackling climate change as a leader, facilitator, enabler and deliverer of services to the Rushmoor community and beyond.

4.2 The ten year planning horizon will enable the Council to develop and deliver a comprehensive programme of action which will be prioritised to reflect impact, resources and deliverables. It is proposed that the Strategy would be reviewed at the midway point in 2025/26 to reflect the situation at that time and the outcomes achieved.

4.3 The strategy and complementary action plan will be co-ordinated and managed by the Council. Implementation will be achieved through a collaborative approach with a range of stakeholders and the local community.

4.4 The structure of the strategy is based around these main themes the details of which follow:

- A. Awareness raising and engaging the local community**
- B. Reducing Climate Change Impacts (Mitigation)**
- C. Building Resilience (Adaptation)**

4.5 In addition there is an additional theme '**(D) Other Sustainability Initiatives**' which focus on other projects which support the principles set out in this Strategy.

(A) Awareness raising and engaging the local community

The Council intends to ensure that the Borough provides significant support to local work to reduce the impacts of climate change. The collective contributions of stakeholders and the local community will be key to the Borough meeting its targets. The Council will seek to improve understanding and awareness of the issues and how the community can have an impact through their own behaviour and action.

The Council's activities within this theme will focus on the following priority areas:

- Develop and deliver a programme of environmental education and promotion of behaviour change (Action Plan category A1)
- Work with stakeholders in the Borough and County to establish a framework for and to co-ordinate action (Action Plan category A2)
- Mobilise the local community to support work to address climate change targets (Action Plan category A3)
- Encourage a low carbon economy in the Borough and households to take action to become more sustainable (Action Plan category A4)
- Climate change will be a corporate commitment for the Council which will adapt and update its policies and allocate resources to support it meet the challenges and opportunities (Action Plan category A5)

(B) Reducing Climate Change Impacts (Mitigation)

The Council has a range of policies to protect and enhance the environment and proposes to reduce the impact of the Borough's activities on the environment. It will seek, in conjunction with partners and the community, to make Rushmoor a better place to live, visit or work by reducing the impact of climate change.

The Council's activities within this theme will focus on the following priority areas:

- Recognise the climate change implications in the planning and delivery of major new developments in which the Council is a partner (Action Plan category B1)
- Using the planning system to reduce the carbon impact of development in the Borough (Action Plan category B2)
- Seek to minimise the generation and disposal of waste by sustainable means and to increase recycling and re-use of materials (Action Plan category B3)
- Support and encourage energy reduction and efficiency and use of clean energy (Action Plan category B4)
- Support and encourage a low carbon economy in the Borough (Action Plan category B5)
- Support and facilitate the introduction of sustainable travel infrastructure and encourage reduced car use (Action Plan category B6)
- Measures to improve air quality and reduce pollution in the Borough (Action Plan category B7)
- Develop and introduce initiatives to enhance sustainable living and well being with the support of the local community and stakeholders (Action Plan category B8)
- Plan and deliver services to provide a more naturalised and protected environment with improved biodiversity (Action Plan category B9)

(C) Building Resilience (Adaptation)

With climate change predictions for the south of England indicating more severe weather conditions, including heatwaves and storms, the Council will seek to minimise the risk to the local community. The aim is for the Borough to remain prosperous and moving forward without detriment to the environment and by reducing the effects of climate change.

The Council's activities within this theme will focus on the following priority areas:

- Work with communities and businesses to plan and prepare for future climate change impacts and how to address them (eg flooding, heatwave, drought) (Action Plan category C1)
- Seek to ensure that measures to conserve the environment and biodiversity reflect the potential impacts of climate change (Action Plan category C2)
- Support the production and purchase of food grown locally and sustainability (Action Plan category C3)
- Work to ensure business continuity planning and risk management ensure resilience impacts (Action Plan category C4)

5. ACTION PLANNING

5.1 The Climate Change Strategy sets out the context and strategic priorities to enable the Council to achieve its high-level targets. Appended to the Strategy is an Action Plan setting out how it will be delivered. The Action Plan has the following underlying principles:

- A ten-year time horizon with a major mid-point review
- A rolling plan with one year, 2-3 years and 3 years' plus activities to be reviewed on an annual basis
- Each strategic priority will be underpinned by a series of actions with specific targets
- The Action Plan complements the activities set out within other strategies and policies adopted by the Council to ensure a consistent and approach
- Actions focus on:
 - Reducing, eliminating or offsetting carbon emissions
 - Support and involvement of other stakeholders, including voluntary sector groups, businesses and individuals/community organisations
 - Enabling longer term resilience to climate change
- A system of data collection and regular calculation of the carbon footprint will be undertaken to ensure that the Borough and Council is on track

5.2 An important element of ensuring that delivery of the Action Plan is effective and making a difference is regular monitoring and evaluation of performance. This will be undertaken by regular updated with the responsible Cabinet Member, the Climate Change Working Group and the Council's scrutiny process.

6. RESOURCING AND GOVERNANCE

6.1 It is likely that the Council's greatest focus in the early years of the Strategy will be on the key principles of "Awareness Raising and Engagement" and "Reducing Climate Change Impacts". The earlier that a reduction in carbon emissions is made the better it will be for the environment and community wellbeing. Whilst there is a cost with this, adaptation for the longer term is likely to be more costly than taking action to mitigate climate change outcomes in the shorter term. The Council recognises the need to allocate resources for the early stages of the Action Plan, which will also focus on building strong support and participation from the local community. Business cases will be developed where appropriate for specific actions to assist in the allocation and drawing down of resources.

6.2 The Climate Change Strategy will be overseen and driven forward by the Climate Change Working Group. It's main roles and responsibilities will be:

- Delivery of the action plan to ensure targets are met and progress is secured
- Review of local and national issues which will affect delivery of the plan
- Revising the Action Plan on an annual basis

6.3 The Council will establish an officer group to drive forward the changes within the Council and will report to the Corporate Leadership Team and portfolio holders. Some actions will fall within the responsibilities of specific portfolio holders who will work with officers to plan and deliver the actions.
