



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	HEAD OF CORPORATE POLICY, PERFORMANCE & PARKING
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<b>TO:</b>	EXECUTIVE
<b>DATE:</b>	25 FEBRUARY 2016
<b>EXECUTIVE MEMBER:</b>	COUNCILLOR V.W. BROAD

<b>KEY DECISION REQUIRED:</b>	NO
<b>WARD (S) AFFECTED:</b>	ALL

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>MOTION FROM COUNCIL: CLIMATE LOCAL</b>
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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**That:**

- (i) the Council not commit to the Local Government Association’s Climate Local initiative at this time;**
- (ii) our existing approach to support carbon reduction / energy efficiency within our own estate through mainstream services, and the promotion of energy efficiency schemes to local residents and businesses within a Surreywide partnership, be noted; and**
- (iii) Further consideration be given to this issue under the review of the 5 Year Plan, currently scheduled for 2017.**

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Council has previously delivered significant activities in this area, and continues to support countywide activities, as well as deliver improvements to our own estate and promote opportunities to our local residents and businesses through mainstream activities. Committing to a further initiative would require significant resources and is not consistent with our 5 Year Plan priorities.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

At its meeting on 17 December 2015, the Council resolved to refer a motion to the Executive for consideration. The motion proposed that the Council sign up to the Local Government Association’s Climate Local initiative.

This report sets out the context within which the Motion was proposed, following the recent Paris Climate Accord, and provides background information regarding the Climate Local initiative, including the costs and benefits to the Council.

The report sets out our existing approach to supporting energy efficiency and carbon reduction and recommends that this approach continue, without the need to commit to a

further initiative which would require significant resources.

**The above recommendations are subject to approval by Full Council.**

## STATUTORY POWERS

1. The Council has a wide range of powers and duties which are relevant in relation to climate change, for instance planning policy, sustainable development, building control, transportation, flood management etc.
2. In addition the Council has estate management responsibilities for a number of public buildings in the borough. The Council is not under any particular duty to consider or adopt the approach which is suggested by the motion, which is an entirely discretionary matter for the Council.

## BACKGROUND

3. At the Council meeting of 17 December 2015, the following motion was moved by Cllr Essex, seconded by Cllr Kay:

*“This Council Resolves that:*

*Reigate and Banstead Borough Council takes note of the International Climate Talks which have just finished taking place in Paris and takes this opportunity to reaffirm the importance of its leadership role and actions in this area by committing to sign up to the Local Government Association's Climate Local initiative (for details see <http://www.local.gov.uk/climate-local>).”*

4. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.17, the Motion stood referred to the Executive for consideration and recommendation back to Council.

## CONTEXT

5. In December 2015, 195 countries (including the UK) adopted a legally binding global climate agreement. The agreement sets out 4 key actions to avoid climate change and limit global warming:
  - a. To keep global temperatures ‘well below’ 2°C above pre-industrial times and – if possible - 1.5°C.
  - b. To limit the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by human activity to the same levels that trees, soil and the ocean can absorb naturally, at some point between 2050 and 2100.
  - c. To review each country’s contribution to cutting emissions every five years, ensuring that new targets represent progression on previous ones
  - d. For rich nations to help poorer nations by providing finance to assist them in adapting to climate change and switching to renewable energy.
6. The Paris accord agreement is due to enter into force in 2020.

### **Local Government Association: Climate Local**

7. Climate Local is a Local Government Association initiative, supported by the Environment Agency. Its aim is to support Councils to reduce carbon emissions, and to increase resilience to a changing climate. Around 100 local authorities have currently signed up to Climate Local. The formal commitment is attached at **Annex 1** to this report.
8. A list of signatories is available online at <http://www.local.gov.uk/climate-local-signatories>. Woking is the only Surrey authority currently signed up, although Surrey County Council committed to sign up to the initiative at their meeting on 8 December 2015.
9. In signing the Climate Local Commitment (appended at **Annex 1**), the Council would be committing to:
  - a) Set out the actions it intends to undertake locally to reduce carbon emissions and respond to changes in the climate within its own operations, its services and with its local community.
  - b) Set out its level of ambition and how it is going to monitor and demonstrate its achievements.
  - c) Share with other councils and with national partners:
    - o The actions it is undertaking and its ambitions
    - o Its progress
    - o The learning from its experiences and achievements.
10. In practice, this means that within six months of signing the Commitment, the Council would be expected to agree an action plan of measures it intends to take in relation to a range of climate change objectives, and the means by which these actions would be delivered. The Council would be held to account over the content and targets within any Action Plan.

### **Benefits**

11. Climate Local identifies the following benefits for local authorities:
  - Provision of a council-owned and led platform for authorities to demonstrate leadership locally and nationally.
  - Support for local authorities to share good practice, support joint working and the sharing of experience and ideas.
  - Provision of practical tools and advice to councils on climate change issues.
  - Raising the profile of climate change mitigation and adaptation nationally.
12. These benefits are raised as a result of the recent media coverage of the Paris talks, which has increased the profile and public awareness of climate change issues.
13. Projects that reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency often provide financial savings, over time, to the Council, or to local households and businesses, in addition to the environmental benefits.

## Costs

14. In signing up to Climate Local, the Council would be expected to demonstrate further activities to reduce carbon emissions and respond to climate change. As set out above, this would require an action plan to be developed, setting out the measures it intends to take in relation to a range of climate change objectives, and the means by which these actions would be delivered. The Council would then be required to report on progress towards delivering these agreed actions.
15. This would require considerable resources. As stated previously, Woking Borough Council is the only council in Surrey that has signed up to Climate Local and developed an action plan. Woking is not directly comparable, as Reigate & Banstead is larger in terms of Council size and population, however it is indicative of the potential costs. The Woking 2015/16 Service & Performance Plan sets out the following resources:

	<b>Latest estimate 2014/15</b>	<b>Original estimate 2015/16</b>
<b>Environment &amp; sustainability</b>		
Employees	£142,137	£138,302
Other costs	£24,030	£24,030
<b>Climate Change / Strategy</b>		
Employees	£114,847	£109,974
Other costs	£30,000	£30,000
<i>Gross Expenditure</i>	£311,014	£302,306
<i>Income</i>	(£10,000)	(£10,000)
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	£301,014	£292,306

Source: [www.woking.gov.uk](http://www.woking.gov.uk)

## EXISTING ACTIVITIES

16. The Council has previously committed to undertake activities to reduce carbon emissions and tackle climate change.
17. In 2009 the Council adopted the Sustainable Energy Strategy. This was incorporated into the 2011-15 Corporate Plan, in which the Council set out an operational priority to implement a Sustainable Energy Strategy and Low Carbon Management Plan, with a target of reducing CO2 emissions by 30%. These strategies were very successful and were both largely delivered against, including:
  - Energy efficiency measures within our own estate (leisure centres, town hall, car parks, theatre)
  - Promoting energy efficiency schemes to local residents and businesses
  - Improving the efficiency of our fleet operations

18. The new 5 Year Plan 2015-20 does not include priorities within this area. The officer posts with responsibility for implementing these strategies have since been deleted, meaning the Council has no dedicated resources to support these activities. Instead, our approach has been to consider opportunities for environmental improvement and CO2 reductions within mainstream activities, as set out below.
19. The Council continues to be a member of the Surrey Energy and Sustainability Partnership. The partnership has a number of objectives to improve energy efficiency and promote energy efficiency to local households and businesses. Projects have included:
  - Supporting Action Surrey to provide a joined-up referral and support system for all residents, in particular for affordable warmth for vulnerable people. Reigate & Banstead has seen some of the highest take up levels across Surrey.
  - Helping residents living in solid wall homes which cannot have cavity wall insulation, to access funding and local installers for solid wall insulation
  - Working with Coast to Capital LEP, Enterprise M3 LEP and the Forestry Commission to develop the local timber supply chain through wood hubs
20. The recently adopted 5 Year Plan 2015-20 does not make specific reference to climate change objectives or priorities. However, there is a link between climate change mitigation and adaptation measures and the longer term sustainability of delivering corporate priorities. For example:
  - Future proofing Council assets (buildings, parks etc.) to increase their resilience to the effects of climate change
  - Longer term financial savings through reductions in energy/fuel bills etc.
  - Measures to protect residents from the impacts of a changing climate (e.g. flooding, extreme heat in summer or cold in winter), and to maintain the high quality of life that residents currently benefit from
  - Wider lifestyle benefits for residents from behavioural change.

## OPTIONS

21. Under the Constitution, the motion has been referred to the Executive for consideration and recommendation to Council. The Executive have the following recommendations:
  - a. Sign up to Climate Local, and commence work to develop a Climate Local Action Plan (***not recommended***)

This provides the opportunity for the Council to demonstrate its commitment to playing its part in limiting the extent of climate change, and implementing measures to minimise the impact of a changing climate on residents. However, it would require significant resources to develop, implement and monitor and action plan.

If the Executive is minded to recommended this, resources would need to be identified and a further report provided.

- b. Reaffirm the commitment of the Council to play its part in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, but do not sign up to Climate Local (**recommended**)

This is the recommended option, recognising the existing activities that the Council is already supporting (and summarised within this report).

- c. Take no action in relation to this issue (**not recommended**)

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

22. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

23. The financial implications are set out within the report and options. If the Council committed to sign up to the Local Government Association's Climate Local initiative, revenue and capital growth would be required to prepare and deliver an action plan.
24. Preparation, implementation and monitoring of a Climate Change Action Plan would require specialist skills which do not currently exist in the Council, and would have associated cost implications. It may also necessitate some diversion of existing resources from teams across the Council away from currently identified core activities.

## **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

25. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

26. There are no risk management considerations arising from this report.

## **CONSULTATION**

27. As proposer for the original motion, Cllr Essex was provided with a draft copy of this report.
28. Consultation has been undertaken with the Executive and Management Team. Consultation with Councillors, stakeholders, residents and businesses was also undertaken to inform the 5 Year Plan priorities.

## **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

29. The Council has adopted a 5 Year Plan for the period 2015-20. This sets out our key priorities and objectives, which then inform service and financial planning.
30. The Plan does not make specific reference to climate change objectives or priorities.

**Background Papers:** None – all referenced documents are published

# Climate Local [insert council(s) name]:

## Our commitment to taking action in a changing climate

We recognise that our council has an important role to help our residents and businesses to capture the opportunities and benefits of action on climate change. These include saving money on energy bills, generating income from renewable energy, attracting new jobs and investment in 'green' industries, supporting new sources of energy, managing local flood-risk and water scarcity and protecting our natural environment.

## We will progressively address the risks and pursue the opportunities presented by a changing climate, inline with local priorities, through our role as:

- Community leader – helping local people and businesses to be smarter about their energy use and to prepare for climate impacts;
- Service provider – delivering services that are resource efficient, less carbon intensive, resilient and that protect those who are most vulnerable to climate impacts;
- Estate manager – ensuring that our own buildings and operations are resource efficient, use clean energy, and are well prepared for the impacts of a changing climate.

In signing this commitment, **we will:**

- **Set locally-owned and determined commitments** and actions to reduce carbon emissions and to manage climate impacts. These will be specific, measurable and challenging;
- **Publish our commitments, actions and progress**, enabling local communities to hold us to account;
- **Share the learning from our experiences and achievements** with other councils; and
- **Regularly refresh our commitments and actions** to ensure they are current and continue to reflect local priorities.

[Date]

[Name of council or group of councils]

[Signature of Leader or Mayor of Council]