

Executive Report

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director of Community Services

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## **Climate Change and Energy Management – Supplementary Estimate**

### **Executive Summary**

On 23 July 2019, the Council adopted a motion to declare a Climate Emergency, along with urgent actions, including to reach a target goal of net zero emissions by 2030, working with partners towards a carbon-free borough and establishing a local Climate Change Partnership.

The Council also committed to work towards a plastic free borough by reducing all single-use plastics to minimal medical or other essential uses. As well as continued support of the Surrey Environment Partnership's Single-use Plastics Strategy, the Council's Place-making and Innovation EAB will investigate and work on ways we can support and encourage wider plastic free initiatives.

This report seeks approval for a supplementary estimate to cover the costs of the staff resource and a contribution to the Salix reserve fund to deliver the Council's corporate climate change objectives and energy management of its property assets. To support this work during 2019-20, funding for the current staff resources is required in addition to the existing budget allocation.

### **Recommendation to Executive**

- (1) That a supplementary estimate of £25,000 (including on-costs) be approved in addition to the existing budget to cover the staff resource.
- (2) That a contribution of £217,000 be made from the Council's invest to save reserve into the Salix reserve in 2019-20 to be matched funded by Salix.

### **Reasons for Recommendation:**

To provide the essential staff resources and funding to deliver and support the Council's Corporate Climate Change strategy and targets.

**Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication?**

No

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain additional funding to provide the staff resources to expedite the strategic initiative and policy development work involved in meeting the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Energy Management targets, and to gain approval to top up the Salix reserve to fund future energy savings initiatives.
- 1.2 The 2019-20 Climate Change salary budget of £20,000 requires an estimated £25,000 (including on-costs) of additional funding to afford delivery of the Council's Climate Change objectives within the current year.

**2. Strategic Priorities**

- 2.1 On 23 July 2019, the Council adopted two motions to help tackle Climate Change which included a declaration of a Climate Emergency together with urgent actions, including a target goal of net zero emissions by 2030 and a commitment to working with partners towards a carbon-free borough and establishing a local Climate Change Partnership.
- 2.2 The continued provision of the Climate Change and energy management resource will support and meet the Council's Strategic theme "Protecting Our Environment."
- 2.3 In order to deliver these targets and continue to provide successful energy management through innovation, acquisition of government project funding and reduction of energy usage costs, the Council requires an experienced staff resource. The Salix reserve fund also requires further funding to allow for future energy saving projects.
- 2.4 In addition to the current budget, a further £25,000 (including on-costs) is necessary to ensure the Council can work towards fulfilling its objectives.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Guildford Borough Council has implemented numerous successful energy saving and carbon reduction projects over the last few years and aims to continue to improve its performance to meet the Council's 2019 strategy and targets. Examples of current and previous areas of work include:
- Management, promotion and utilisation of the Salix Invest to Save Fund
  - Energy consumption / CO2 emissions analysis against targets and reporting via the CRC (Carbon Reduction Commitment)
  - Generating income from the submission of Renewable Energy Feed-in tariffs (FITS) and Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) claims to meet targets

- Provision of advice and assistance regarding energy project identification, feasibility, business case development and securing funding
- Promotion of carbon reduction and provision of strategic advice regarding how the Council should address the Climate Emergency and its implications
- Involvement in the promotion of Passivhaus standards for new build and development of energy master-planning concepts to implement sustainable energy across the borough
- Instigation of and development support to the Easit Guildford green travel network

3.2 Without the current staff resource, the Council would be unable to continue to identify and deliver the following:

- The Salix Invest to Save fund attracting £434,000 of additional external match funding (£217,000 each), with over £120,000 of contributions currently invested into the fund
- Energy saving projects bringing a combined lifetime cost saving of over £750,000
- Climate Emergency response with the ability to put together appropriate funding
- The establishment of the Easit Green Travel Network for Guildford, which now has 15 member multi-sector organisations representing approximately 10,500 staff
- RHI and FITS claims to the value of at least £40,000
- Prevention of an overspend on CRC allowances by over £20,000
- Opportunity to receive funding from BEIS (Business Energy Industry Strategy) for approx. £40,000 and access ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) to provide funding for renewable energy projects

3.3 To allow us to support and develop this essential work an additional budget allocation is required of £25,000 to fund the staff resource during 2019-20, along with an additional contribution to the Salix reserve of £217,000 to match fund the contribution from Salix. To ensure the delivery of the Council's Climate Change objectives the additional funding is recommended for approval.

#### **4. Key Risks**

4.1 A reduction in staff resource and Salix contribution will mean that the Council risks failure to deliver its Climate Change objectives and could lose the benefits from continued energy saving initiatives.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 The financial implications are included within this report

#### **6. Legal Implications**

6.1 No legal implications apply.

## **7. Human Resource Implications**

7.1 No HR implications apply

## **8. Equality and Diversity Implications**

8.1 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

## **9. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

9.1 On 23 July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency. To support this during 2019-20 funding for the current staff resources is required in addition to the existing budget allocation. The impact of a resource reduction would affect but not exclusively -

- carbon emissions
- energy use
- collaboration with statutory partners, agencies and/or businesses to tackling climate change

## **10. Summary of Options**

### **10.1 Option 1 – do nothing**

If the current funding remains at £20,000 the existing staff resource is not sustainable, and the Council will be unable to deliver its current Climate Change and Energy Management targets. We may not be able to accept the match funding from Salix which would impact the ability to invest in energy saving measures.

### **10.2 Option 2 – provide supplementary funding and agree Salix match funding**

An additional amount of £25,000 to supplement the current salary budget will ensure that the current resource is retained to deliver the Council's Climate Change and Energy mandates. The additional match funding into the Salix fund will allow the Council to maximise energy saving opportunities.

## **11. Conclusion**

11.1 To resource and allow the delivery and development of the Council's Climate Change objectives and continue with energy saving initiatives a supplementary fund of £25,000 for staff resources, and an additional sum into the Salix fund are essential.

## **12. Background Papers**

None

## **13. Appendices**

None