

# Mole Valley Climate Change Strategy

## Background and Context

In October 2018 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published a 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C'. This described the harm that a 2°C average rise in global temperatures is likely to cause compared to a 1.5°C rise. The report calls for ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, local communities and the private sector to limit Global Warming to 1.5°C.

The potential implications of a do nothing approach for communities include increased risk of flooding and extreme heat, disruption to our critical infrastructure, networks and industry, and increased risk to our health and wellbeing.

There has been a significant rise in awareness of the catastrophic consequences of inaction, and increasing pressure on governments at all levels to strengthen their response. The challenge of addressing climate emergency is unprecedented.

The UK Committee on Climate Change recommended that the UK government achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. This was adopted by central government by amending the Climate Change Act of 2008 in June 2019.

The emerging climate related policy of the new government includes:

- Investing in electric vehicle charging stations
- Phasing out the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars
- Investing in energy efficiency
- Setting strict new laws on air quality

Man-made climate change is a global challenge that requires a global response.

## Data 1: UK Greenhouse gas emissions by source sector

- **Transport – 27%**
- **Energy Supply – 24%**
- **Business – 17%**
- **Residential – 15%**

- **Agriculture – 10%**
- **Waste Management – 4%**
- **Industrial Process – 2%**
- **Public – 2%**

As Data 1 shows, the emissions the public sector is directly responsible for makes up 2% of the UK's total emissions. MVDC will therefore work with others to lobby government for early adoption of and funding for ambitious carbon emissions reduction measures.

This Strategy focuses on reducing carbon emissions from the Council's estate and operations to zero by 2030. As well as reducing MVDC's own emissions, this Strategy also aims to help stimulate action by individuals, communities and organisations in Mole Valley to contribute towards national and international efforts.

## **Climate Emergency Declaration**

In June 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency. The motion was passed unanimously by Full Council, specifying a 2030 carbon neutral target. Council noted that the impacts of climate change are already manifested globally and will impact communities across Mole Valley. As a result the Council resolved to:

1. Declare a Climate Emergency.
2. Pledge to make Mole Valley District Council and its contractors carbon neutral by 2030, or earlier if possible, taking into account both production and consumption emissions.
3. Lobby Surrey County Council and the Government to provide resources that will make possible the 2030 target date set by scientists for total carbon neutrality.
4. Work cross-party within Mole Valley District Council, and with local businesses, land owners, community organisations and residents to make a positively beneficial impact on the environment and biodiversity in the District.
5. Place climate change on agendas to be discussed at appropriate committees - to build strategies and action plans with timescales.
6. Report actions undertaken to address this emergency to Council twice a year and inform Council of planned actions for the next period.
7. Use these actions to help create jobs and a stronger community, along with increased wellbeing and a sustainable future.

Action to reduce carbon emissions will also support MVDC's strategic priorities, including to improve community wellbeing, protecting and enhancing the environment, sustainable development, air quality and prosperity for all. Inaction on climate change will undo progress towards any of these objectives.

# Vision and Aims

MVDC is committed to protecting and enhancing the environment and improving the quality of life for all our communities. In this Strategy MVDC commits to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 with initial actions focused on making significant reductions in carbon emissions at the Council Offices and Dorking Halls.

The Strategy also aims to demonstrate local leadership in helping Mole Valley become a carbon neutral district. To this end the Council will fulfil a leading role in working with other Surrey authorities to shape the county wide approach to the Climate Emergency.

The Strategy sets out specific areas of action to meet the following aims:

**Energy efficiency:** ensuring that our own estate is as energy efficient as possible and supporting the community to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, in turn reducing their household energy costs.

**Renewable energy generation:** generating renewable energy for direct use in Council owned buildings.

**Sustainable procurement:** ensuring that carbon reduction and sustainability is evaluated as part of all goods and services procured by the Council, encouraging our suppliers to minimise their environmental impact.

**Transport:** minimising staff car travel by encouraging working from home, where appropriate, and use of video conferencing and encouraging sustainable transport options. Working with Surrey County Council to ensure the infrastructure is in place to increase opportunities for cycling and walking throughout the district.

**Fleet:** replacing our existing diesel and petrol fleet with electric, or other low carbon alternatives, and providing the charging infrastructure at relevant MVDC car parks to make it easier for our staff, residents and visitors to do the same.

**Planning and development:** the local plan and any future supporting documents will support the transition to a low-carbon future in a changing climate by shaping places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and improving resilience. This would include decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy supply systems as well as support for green infrastructure. The overall aims and objectives of this Strategy will, where appropriate, be reflected in land use policy to be set out in the Local Plan and any supplementary planning guidance developed by the Council. In particular the Council will produce supplementary planning guidance to identify suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their provision.

**Land use:** protecting our green spaces, increasing biodiversity and maintaining opportunities for the public to access and enjoy our green spaces. Working with the countryside management partnerships, Surrey Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency and the Surrey Nature Partnership on initiatives to mitigate the impacts of climate change on habitats and species. Maintaining the number of allotments provided within the District.

**Waste:** reducing the amount of waste we produce and supporting the community to reduce, reuse and recycle.

**Adaptation:** identifying how changes in the climate will impact on the Council and its services and taking action to minimise the adverse impacts.

**Leadership:** leading by example, setting climate friendly policies and engaging with our residents and businesses to drive positive change across the District.

**Lobbying government:** working with others to lobby government for changes in policy and infrastructure and for funding opportunities to help achieve ambitious carbon reduction measures. Lobbying Surrey County Council to cease fossil fuel extraction and invest its funds in a way which supports environmental sustainability.

In view of these aims, MVDC has developed its Climate Change Strategy with the following strategic priorities:

- **Reducing emissions from MVDC's estate and operations**
- **Reducing energy consumption and emissions by promoting energy efficiency measures, sustainable construction, renewable energy sources and behaviour change**
- **Reducing consumption of resources, increasing recycling and reducing waste**
- **Supporting council services, residents and businesses to adapt to the impacts of climate change**

The accompanying action plan also sets out how the actions align to strategic priorities set out in the Surrey Climate Change Strategy to help identify potential areas for joint working.

## **MVDC's Carbon Footprint**

To understand the main sources of the Council's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, a carbon footprint was compiled for the year 2018/19 using International Greenhouse Gas Protocols Corporate Accounting and [Reporting Standard methodology](#). The carbon footprint for 2018/19 is calculated as 4,162 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent.

The Council's carbon footprint is based on the energy use and fuel use from the Council's estate and operations. It includes the emissions of the Council's major contractors for waste, leisure and grounds maintenance and staff business mileage.

In a 'do nothing' scenario, MVDC's emissions are expected to reduce by 774 tCO<sub>2</sub>e p.a. as a result of using greener electricity from the national grid. Beyond this, a further 3,389 tCO<sub>2</sub>e p.a. reduction must be achieved to meet the 2030 carbon neutral target.

The largest emissions source is from buildings leased by the Council to third party operators, which accounts for 42% of emissions. These are Leatherhead Leisure Centre, Dorking Leisure Centre and Meadowbank sports ground.

Emissions from procured goods and services such as waste collections and grounds maintenance are the second largest emissions source, comprising over 32% of emissions. However, it should be noted that, with the exception of waste collections, the emissions for contracted services were calculated using industry specific emissions models.

Further work is required to produce more accurate emissions data for contracts with high emissions.

Emissions from the Council's own buildings account for approximately 20% of the carbon footprint. This is predominantly from gas and electricity, but also includes emissions from council owned vehicles and business mileage undertaken in staff's own vehicles.

## **Data 2: Carbon Footprint**

- **Leased Buildings – 42.5%**
- **PG&S – 32.8%**
- **Electricity – 10.9%**
- **Gas – 9.3%**
- **Fleet – 2.8%**
- **Water – 0.7%**
- **Business Travel – 0.6%**
- **Waste – 0.3%**

## **Carbon Neural Plan Evidence Base Modelling Approach**

The carbon footprint analysis used the best available data to identify the main sources of emissions that play a key role in the Council's operations and which, as a result, the Council has direct control or a high level of control over.

### **Scope 1**

- **Gas consumption within MVDC owned buildings.**
- **Fuel consumption from Council owned/controlled vehicles**

## Scope 2

- Emissions from the generation of purchased electricity

## Scope 3

- Emissions from business travel from non-Council owned vehicles
- Emissions from third party disposal and treatment of waste in council operations
- Emissions from the supply and treatment of water consumed by the Council's operations
- Emissions from procured goods and services
- Emissions from energy consumed in buildings leased to a third party operator

The scope does not include emissions that the council has no control over or are not directly related to the Council's operations, including emissions from employee commuting and investments, although MVDC will still seek to reduce the carbon emissions from these areas.

However, it should be noted that some data for procured goods and services was not readily available and proxy data was used instead. Since the production of the carbon footprint analysis, work is being focused on improving the quality of the data for future reporting.

MVDC will work with existing contractors to implement measures to reduce their carbon footprint over the remaining term of their contracts. When tendering for future contracts, carbon reduction measures will be assessed as part of the tender evaluation process.

# Monitoring and Performance Management

MVDC will monitor and publish reports on its progress annually. The action plan sets out the projects and strategies required to achieve carbon neutrality. The approach to identifying the required actions is evidence based.

The action plan will need to evolve as projects complete, new data becomes available and new challenges and opportunities arise.

## References

1. UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60198cd5d3bf7f70bc2e1ee7/2019\\_Financial\\_greenhouse\\_gas\\_emissions\\_statistical\\_release.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60198cd5d3bf7f70bc2e1ee7/2019_Financial_greenhouse_gas_emissions_statistical_release.pdf)
2. International Greenhouse Gas Protocols Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard methodology: <https://ghgprotocol.org/corporate-standard>