

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Monday, 13th July, 2026 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Halleh Koohestani (Chair)
Cllr Kevin Betsworth (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Steve Harden (Vice-Chair)

Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr G.B Lyon
Cllr Sally McGuinness
Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Cllr Mike Roberts

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Uttar Gurung, Cllr Nicky Slater and Cllr Sarah Spall

7. APPOINTMENTS 2026-27

The Committee **NOTED** the following appointments:

- (1) Cllr S.J. Masterson as a Standing Deputy of the Committee in place of Cllr M.J. Tennant for the remainder of the 2026/27 Municipal Year,
- (2) Cllrs P.J. Cullum and Steve Masterson as Members of the Council Tax Support Group, and
- (3) Cllrs Steve Harden, Steve Masterson and Nicky Slater as Members of the Housing Oversight Group.

8. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee were provided with an amended version of the minutes, which included the names of the Officers and Portfolio Holder who were present at the meeting of the Committee on 11th June, 2026.

The amended minutes, as circulated at the meeting, were agreed as a correct record.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE

The Committee welcomed Emma Lamb, Community and Partnerships Service Manager, Sophie Rogers, Climate Change Officer and Cllr Sophie Porter, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities and Active Lives who were in attendance to provide an update on the progress of the Climate Change Action Plan.

The Committee received a presentation which covered:

- Council's Carbon Footprint – The Committee were informed how the footprint was calculated, through direct emissions (heating and operational fleet), indirect emissions (purchased electricity) and indirect emissions ((supply chain) staff business travel, paper, waste, water and purchased goods).
- Climate Change Impact Assessments – It was noted that these assessments had been developed to help the Council understand, assess and respond to climate impacts and to ensure that environmental considerations were integrated into decision making. The Assessments would be a mandatory element of Cabinet Reporting from August 2026 and aimed to understand and remove negative impacts, reduce the Carbon Footprint and capture positive outcomes. The Assessments would be carried out in a two-part process, a screening tool and a full assessment if required. A training session would be arranged for Members to ensure greater understanding of the Assessments.
- Climate Action Scorecards – It was advised that Climate Emergency UK were an organisation that assessed all UK councils on the actions taken towards net zero. Volunteers marked councils against national data sets, freedom on information data and volunteer research. It was advised that the Council's score had increased by 10% since 2023 and would not be reassessed until after Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
- Community Engagement – The Committee were apprised of the activities involving the local community. These included:
 - The Rushmoor Climate Community – A forum of residents established to engage with the Council on climate, environment and sustainability issues. The aims of the Group were to engage, consult, network and share, create and raise awareness of issues being faced by the Council and the wider community.
 - Rushmoor Eco Festival – An event which last took place in September 2025 at the West End Centre which aimed to promote sustainable living, raise awareness of environmental issues, promote local green spaces and promote local, sustainable and upcycled products. Eighteen stallholders had been present at the event and a programme of events ran throughout the day.
- Young People Engagement – It was noted that this Group, of representatives from each of the Borough's secondary schools and colleges, met monthly, during term times. The aims of the Group were to engage young people in local initiatives, feedback to the Council on climate action, to act as climate ambassadors in their education establishments and develop knowledge and skills. The Group had undertaken a number of activities, including, Climate Myth Busters, Rushmoor COP and a climate debate with students from Wavell School held at the Council Offices.

- Active Travel – It was noted that the Council had received an Active Travel Grant from Hampshire County Council (HCC) which had enabled balance glide and ride sessions and equipment for Reception and Year 1 students at five schools, and the establishment of an after-school cycling club.

The Committee were advised that the Annual Climate Change Action Plan Report was currently being drafted and would be presented to the Cabinet at its meeting in September, 2026.

During discussions on the presentation, Members raised a number of queries, these included:

- How the Council's Climate Change Impact Assessments compared to Hart District and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's? – it was advised that the assessments were reasonably similar but had slightly different policies and assessment criteria. Both Councils were already actively using these assessments as part of their Cabinet reporting.
- A suggestion was made to consider a 20mph speed limit across the Borough to help with pollution and road safety concerns – it was noted that the Council were working with schools on road safety issues and to promote Active Travel. Cllr Porter advised that 20mph speed limits had been on the HCC agenda recently and the matter would be looked at separately.
- In response to a query regarding the methodology used for the Climate Change Scorecards, it was reported that Officers were reasonably content with the methods used, but each Council did things differently making it difficult to compare. The results were published by Climate Emergency UK and could be found at www.climateemergency.uk. It was reported that the average score across all councils was 38% (Rushmoor scored 31%), and the scoring helped identify best practice and took no resource from the Council. At this time, the Council's score had not prevented anything that had been proposed in the Action Plan.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Provide an outline of the assessment criteria for the Climate Change Scorecards	Sophie Rogers, Climate Change Officer	August 2026
Provide information on the governance and finances of Climate Emergency UK who undertake the assessments	Sophie Rogers, Climate Change Officer	August 2026

- In response to a query regarding the Climate Impact Assessments, it was noted that the purpose of the assessments was to establish the different levels of impact and no overall recommendation was currently provided.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Share the screening tools used in the Climate Impact Assessment.	Emma Lamb, Community and Partnerships Service Manager	September 2026
Share examples of best practice showing where high, medium and low impacts had been identified	Emma Lamb, Community and Partnerships Service Manager	December 2026
Arrange a training session on the Climate Impact Assessments for all Members	Emma Lamb, Community and Partnerships Service Manager	September 2026

- Progress with the Action Plan – it was advised that the Council only had one Climate Change Officer therefore not all actions had been delivered as set out in the Plan. Some of the actions involved commitment from other services and some work had started to be embedded in business as usual for services where appropriate.
- Community Engagement – in response to a query regarding the effectiveness of engagement and how it was measured, it was reported that there was no formal feedback at present, but this could be sought going forward.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Consider how feedback could be sought from residents/the community and how this could be used to measure impacts	Sophie Rogers, Climate Change Officer	Ongoing

- Young People Engagement – in response to a query regarding the number of schools currently engaged, it was reported that all of the schools/colleges had been invited to attend, and representatives from four schools and a college meet monthly.
- Environmental and Climate focused groups – in response to a query regarding ensuring the longevity of these groups following LGR, it was noted that the Community and Partnerships Team worked with all groups to look at how they could be sustained now and in the future following LGR.

Some Members proposed that a fund be established, for residents to contribute into, for environmental projects for those groups not willing to apply to the Farnborough Airport Community and Environmental Fund. In response, Officers advised that consideration would need to be given to the governance of such a fund, which may be quite complex.

- **Benefits** – the Committee discussed the benefit, impacts and successes of the actions outline in the Plan. It was felt that all actions had a benefit and there was an individual responsibility on everyone to help reduce the impacts of Climate Change. When asked how the Plan would be achieved, it was noted that LGR had an impact on some actions and others were quite ambitious. Timescales for each action would be reviewed as part of the annual reporting to the Cabinet in September. It was also advised that Members would be updated on progress through the Chief Executives News and/or Member Briefings.

Other issues discussed included, solar panelling, mini forests, re-wilding, grass cutting schedules, screening of the National Emergency Briefing film, an update on the Notice of Motion on the Rights of Rivers and Cove Brook Greenway clearance.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Provide an update on the SERCO Contract renewal.	Ruth Whaymand, Service Manager Environmental Contracts	August 2026
Add SERCO Update to the Committee's Work Plan for 2026/27 for consideration.	David Phillips, OSC Lead Officer	July 2026

The Committee discussed the proposal to create a fund for residents to contribute to community projects and **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet consider options for residents to contribute voluntary funds for local community projects, which could contribute to both the Climate Change Action Plan and local initiatives.

The Chair thanked Officers and Cllr Porter for their contribution to the meeting.

10. **WORK PLAN**

The current Work Plan was noted, and it was advised that the proposed items for the September meeting would be the Police and Community Safety annual update.

It was also suggested that SERCO should attend a future meeting to provide an update. This would be investigated by officers and a date scheduled when appropriate, following discussion with the Agenda Preparation Group.

The meeting closed at 8.57 pm.

CLLR HALLEH KOOHESTANI (CHAIR)
