



EMAS HELP-DESK CASE STUDY



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Department of the
Environment





Introduction

Surrey County Council, which has been in existence since 1889, provides essential services to over one million people, 365 days a year. In providing these services, the County Council has an extensive impact on the environment. These effects arise as a direct result of providing services (direct effects), for example by staff using resources and creating waste; and from the County Council influencing the environmental actions of others (service effects), by educating, motivating and raising awareness.

Commitment to Environmental Issues

The County Council first committed itself to environmental issues during 1991, as a result of the Friends of the Earth's environmental checklist, when it adopted its first Environmental Policy, and established a mechanism where by green actions could be implemented. The Environmental Policy Working Group (EPWG), which is a cross party working group of County Councillors reporting directly to Policy Committee, was established. They were set up to advise Policy Committee, and all other Committees as appropriate, on environmental matters and to develop and review environmental policies, monitor their implementation and establish targets for action. The Environmental Audit Working Group (EAWG), which was also set up during 1991, is a cross departmental group of officers comprising of a Green Team Chairman and specialist officers, e.g. the Recycling Officer, who report directly to EPWG. Green Teams were set up to include in each department a representative of senior management, section representatives and green activists, and typically contain 7-10 members. A training programme was established involving all EAWG, EPWG and Green Team members. Co-ordination of the work was undertaken by existing staff within the County Planning Department.

Environmental Programme Unit

During 1993, Surrey County Council created an Environmental Programme Unit, comprising one part time officer and one full time officer, to co-ordinate and encourage action throughout the authority and to implement the Environmental Policy. Prime tasks each year include organising the production of the annual Environmental Programme and progressing corporate actions. The Unit also works with groups throughout the County in the development of Local Agenda 21 initiatives. As is shown in Appendix 1, the Environmental Programme Unit work to EAWG and EPWG. The Unit has a small budget to pump prime environmental initiatives.

EMAS Within the County Council

At the beginning of 1994 Surrey County Council commissioned CAG Consultants to undertake a review of environmental action implemented in relation to the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (CAG had been involved in the original training programme). CAG concluded that a lot of worthwhile action had been achieved to date but it was largely opportunistic and needed more structure. They pointed out several areas which needed to be addressed, which included reviewing the corporate Environmental Policy, integrating environmental issues into the service planning, developing targeted environmental action programmes and developing a green purchasing policy. The benefits of the EMAS type of approach were stressed to both Chief Officers and members of EPWG.

At workshops run by CAG during summer 1994, Green Teams, EAWG and EPWG reviewed the original Environmental Policy (Appendix 2). This was subsequently adopted by the County Council in April 1995. This new Policy is now contained within the County Council's Strategic Policy Plan, a Plan which all Committee Service Plans must abide. Within departments, the work of separate sections is set down within specific business plans and for individuals within job profiles. The management system Surrey currently have in place is set out in Appendix 1.

This case study concentrates mainly on how Surrey County Council undertook a review of its environmental effects, and how these have begun to be addressed through targeted departmental environmental action programmes.

Review of Surrey County Council's Environmental Effects

CAG Consultants were employed to help undertake all stages of the review process. EAWG carried out an initial scoping review of the County Council's main activities. This was done in order to establish its most significant environmental effects. In light of this review the group put forward changes to the original Environmental Policy. The next stage of the process was for each department to carry out an in depth review of their environmental impacts, both direct and service effects, with colleagues from the Green Team, other key members of staff and the consultant. It was at this stage that departments were consulted on the new Environmental Policy. The aim of these workshops was to generate targeted environmental action programmes which were related to the overall Environmental Policy and directed at significant environmental issues. The group then had to meet again without the consultant to devise their programmes.

Barriers Encountered

No major barriers were encountered during the review process, on the whole it renewed enthusiasm. However, initially some Chief Officers were not wholly committed, but as a result of the workshop run for Chief Officers by the Consultants and the Chief Executive's commitment to Environmental Policy, they all recognised that the Environmental Programme was a corporate priority. As a result of their commitment, specific reference was made to the Environmental Policy within the County Council's Strategic Policy Plan.

Benefits of Undertaking a Review

The review process renewed commitment to the environment throughout the County Council. Within departments, going through their work in detail made officers realise what wide impacts they had. The process also ensured that departmental environmental action programmes initially concentrated on the most significant and achievable impacts.

Resource Implications

In carrying out the review process, £13,500 was spent on consultancy time. The process also involved officer time, both from the departmental Green Teams and the Environmental Programme Unit. This was typically six hours for each Green Team

Member and a member from the Environmental Programme Unit attending each workshop (23 workshops).

Reporting of Review Findings

The results of the scoping review of the County Council as a whole is reported on within the general introduction (Section One) to Surrey County Council's Environmental Programme . The results of the individual departmental reviews are set out later on in the document (Section Five), in the introduction into each department's action programme. The issues raised within the departmental reviews are tackled within the action programmes. Examples of the results of these reviews are set out in Appendix 3.

Environmental Action Programmes

During the workshops held for each department by the consultants during the review stage, the method of developing targeted departmental action programmes was explained. After the workshops, Green Teams were asked to meet again and produce a targeted action programme based on significant effects raised during the review process. Any further help that was needed by the departments in producing their programmes was provided by the Environmental Programme Unit. In addition to each department producing a programme, one was also produced by the corporate Environmental Programme Unit. Achievement of this action programme is the responsibility of the Environmental Programme Unit reporting to EAWG and EPWG. Before being implemented, each programme was approved by the appropriate Chief Officer and endorsed by members.

An example of a corporate objective is set out below:

OBJECTIVE 1	Environmental Policy Statement
To take forward Local Agenda 21 within the County	G, H
Action	Target
To service the Surrey Local Agenda 21 Working Group	To hold a meeting every three months in order to disseminate best practice and encourage activity at the district level
Help organise and fund a Local Agenda 21 conference for District and County Councillors and other key members of the community	To be held in July 1995
Produce a Local Agenda 21 briefing pack	Complete first draft by February 1995
Network between Local Agenda 21 groups in Surrey	Attend each Steering Group meeting



Problems Encountered

When departments were compiling their action programmes, some officers had difficulty with the difference between objectives and actions and how specific each should be. Officers also found it hard to judge how many actions should be contained within the first year's action programme, and how much of this could be achieved. In the end, officers did what they felt was about right, in reality it turned out that many departments had put too much in for one year. This resulted in some departments feeling slightly disheartened as they had not achieved all they had set out to. Actions not completed had to be carried forward to the next year's programme when Green Teams had more of an idea of what could be achieved in a year.

Some officers had to be bullied into putting a target next to each of their actions, but it was very important to have these if actions were to be achieved and monitored.

In Social Services it had become clear that the Green Team system did not work due to the huge devolved structure of the organisation. To get environmental content built into the Social Services Community Care Plan it was decided that the Social Services' targeted action programme should be developed in a phased manner within specific business areas. Initially a day centre within the disability business and a residential home for the elderly within the elderly business were visited, as they are two types of organisation which are present within all three provider businesses. During the visits, environmental impacts from these types of establishments were assessed and as a result a checklist was produced which could be applied to similar establishments. For further details on this initiative contact the Environmental Programme Unit (address at end).

Relationship to Sustainability Indicators

Sustainability indicators within Surrey are being developed by the Surrey Local Agenda 21 Working Group. It is anticipated that an initial set of indicators will be launched during Environment Week 1996. These indicators, whilst to receive wide publicity, are also expected to help Surrey Officers understand issues related to sustainability, and therefore help to ensure that the yearly action programmes reflect problems identified within the County.

Resource Implications

The main resource used in developing the Environmental Programme was officer time. This was typically two half day meetings of each departmental Green Team. In addition to this was the time of officers from the Environmental Programme Unit who developed the corporate action programme as well as ensuring that the departmental programmes were in the correct format. The Environmental Programme Unit also wrote up each of the programmes for inclusion in Surrey County Council's Environmental Programme. The time involved in this was typically 50% of one officer's time for six weeks, and 25% for a further four weeks.

Cost of Implementing the Environmental Programme

It is recognised that all actions contained within the Environmental Programme have a financial cost, not least in that they will all require officer time to be implemented. The



programme has been tailored to be able to be implemented within existing resources. Some actions such as reducing consumption may generate savings which may be reallocated to other environmental initiatives.

Auditing of Environmental Programme

The first year's programme (1995) has recently been audited. Each Green Team had to report on the progress made on each action, this was then reported to members of EPWG, and will form an annex to the 1996 Environmental Programme. Many action programmes were too ambitious in their first year - actions not completed will be carried forward to the next.

One major problem encountered was the timing of the Environmental Programme. The first document (1995) was based on the calendar year. As implementing the Environmental Policy is an aim within the County Council's Strategic Policy Plan, the Environmental Programme Unit are encouraging/ensuring the integration of action programmes into service plans and business plans. It was therefore agreed that the programme should be moved to the same timetable, namely financial years (April - March). This also meant that the budgets could be set before the programmes were finalised, so officers could tailor actions to be taken within the financial restraints.

Layout of Surrey County Council's Environmental Programme - 1995

The above document is set out in five main sections: Section One: A general introduction, Section Two: the updated Environmental Policy in full, Section Three: examples of how the Environmental Policy has been implemented in past years (to show that action is not all new), Section Four: the environmental management system Surrey has in place and Section Five: the 1995 action programmes. In future years, sections three and five will be updated and the document will have an additional section on the monitoring of action programmes set the year before.

A summary of the Environmental Programme has also been produced for wide circulation in Surrey. This is a 12 page booklet which highlights the Environmental Policy along with certain actions which have been carried out, along with those which are planned for the coming year.

Registration/Validation

Surrey County Council used the EMAS framework to develop the Environmental Management System which is currently in place. However, the County Council did not strictly adhere to all requirements, and it is unsure at the present time whether the Council is eligible for registration, should a decision be made to follow this route. At the present time, the environmental management system currently in place works well within established County Council procedures and secures continuous improvements in environmental performance.

Further Information

For copies of Surrey County Council's Environmental Programme, or further information on any aspect, please contact:

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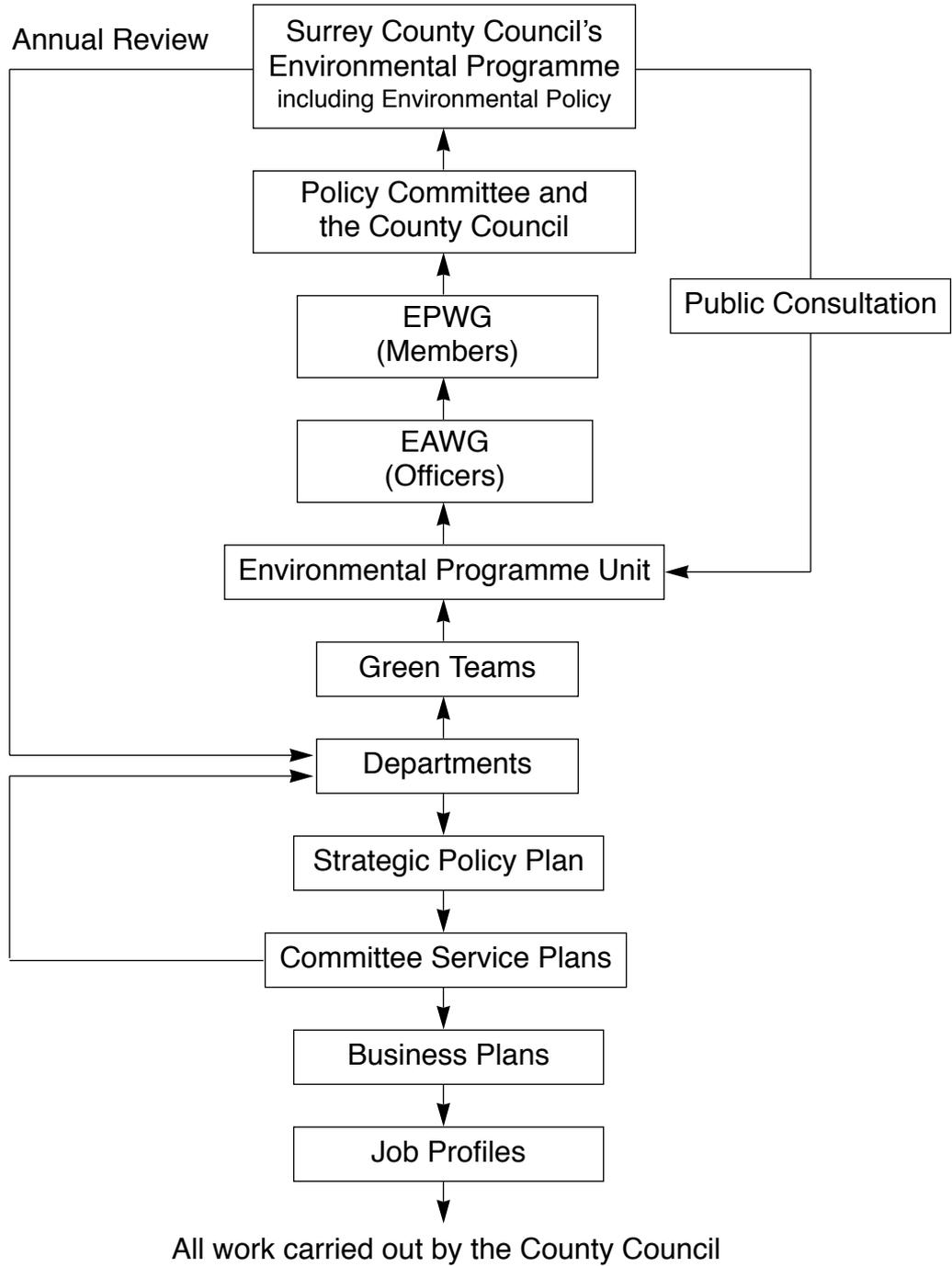
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Appendix 1 - Surrey County Council's Environmental Management System



Appendix 2 Surrey County Council's Environmental Policy

The County Council will seek to ensure that everyone has access to a high quality of life by protecting and enhancing the environment and by supporting the concept of a sustainable Surrey. The County Council will ensure that environmental priorities are fully integrated into the decisions of all its services and will:

- A. Eliminate the unnecessary use of energy.
- B. Reduce the need for movement of both people and goods and encourage walking, cycling, rail and bus travel.
- C. Reduce air, land and water pollution accepting the principle that the polluter should pay
- D. Avoid waste and encourage the conservation, re-use and appropriate recycling of resources.
- E. Preserve restore and enhance the county's built and natural environment, keeping it safe, diverse and pleasant.
- F. Avoid critical and irreversible environmental damage by anticipating environmental problems rather than responding afterwards.
- G. Promote understanding and participation in environmental issues through education, information provision and consultation.
- H. Work with others at a local, national European and international level to encourage good environmental practices.

Appendix 3 - Examples of the results of departmental reviews

Corporate Environmental Action

The Environmental Programme Unit comprises two officers. As well as coordinating, encouraging and undertaking corporate action to implement the Environmental Policy, the Unit also aims to support and develop Local Agenda 21 throughout the County. It maintains a database of over 1000 books and articles on the environment and responds to general and specific requests for environmental information. Achievement of the 1995 Corporate Environmental Action is the responsibility of the Environmental Programme Unit reporting to EAWG.

The Environmental Programme officers work very closely with the Energy and Environmental Management Unit who are based in the Resources Department. This Unit invests in energy efficiency and water conservation measures throughout the authority.

The Environmental Programme Unit also works closely with the County Council's corporate Business Support Officer to encourage environmental awareness within Surrey's business community.

Chief Executive's Office

The County Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that Surrey County Council operates effectively as one organisation within which Councillors and Officers can achieve corporate and service goals. The department is made up of two main areas. The first comprises three direct Public Services - Emergency Planning, the Gypsy Team, and Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages. The second comprises Support Services contributing to Corporate Management. These include Policy and Review, Management Development, Public Relations, Members/Information Services, Committee Services, Corporate Information Systems Consultancy, the European Office, plus Legal Information and Business Support which respectively provide legal information and administration, financial, personnel, accommodation and IT support to the Chief Executive's Office and Legal Services.

Direct effects of the department include the use of stationery, travel, energy use within offices, furniture and equipment. Service effects occur especially within Emergency Planning, the Policy and Review Team and Public Relations.

Legal Services Division

The Legal Services Division is one of the County Council's support departments based at County Hall. Their main areas of work include legal advice, legal action, European law, research and training.

Due to the nature of the service their environmental effects are mainly direct, including paper use, energy use and travel. Their main service effect is being aware of green legislation and using it wherever possible.

Legal Services has a close working relationship with the Chief Executive's Office and shares many of its support services. As both of these departments' main environmental effects are direct, they have come up with a joint action plan for looking at these.

County Planning Department

The aim of the Planning Service is to control and influence the management, use and development of land in order to secure the improvement of the social, physical and economic environment for Surrey for the benefit of the people living, working or seeking recreation in the County. The department also maintains land owned by the County Council in the countryside and assists others to do likewise in order to protect, maintain and enhance landscapes and wildlife and promote access to, and enjoyment of, the countryside in Surrey.

The main service effects identified by the department include plan preparation, e.g. Structure Plan and Minerals and Waste Local Plans, consultation responses to other plans, consideration of planning applications, preparation of non-statutory plans and strategies, e.g. Countryside Strategy, Heritage Strategy and Economic Strategy, input into other departments plans and enforcement and monitoring.

The main areas of work carried out by the Countryside Management Division of the Planning department include landscape enhancement, habitat management, visitor services, environmental education, enabling community action, and forestry.

Each of the above areas of work has a range of environmental impacts including energy and resource use, waste disposal and chemical use.

Education Department

Surrey's Education Service aims to provide, in partnership with parents, schools and the local community, the opportunity for individuals to acquire knowledge, skills, understanding, and awareness of spiritual and moral values and the capacity for learning, work and enjoyment.

As well as teaching, the field of work covers training, advice, consultants, ground maintenance contracts, new buildings, building reuse, school transport, adult education and information to the general public.

The department has a range of direct and service effects. Direct effects include energy/water use, car use, waste and purchasing. Service effects include transport, rural schools, school meals, budgets, training of teachers and governors, information advice and maintenance contracts.

Highways and Transportation Department

The mission of the Highways and Transportation Department is:

"To improve the quality of life of the people of Surrey by promoting and implementing transportation policies and programmes and securing the maintenance and improvement of the highway and passenger transport networks in Surrey that are valued by the public locally and in doing so spend public money wisely."

In addition:

"To dispose of household and civic amenity waste arising in Surrey in a cost effective way whilst meeting the licensing and planning constraints imposed by the County Council."

The department produced a Transport Plan for Surrey in 1991 which is currently being reviewed. This Plan set a short, medium and long term action plan for all

transport modes within the County. The document recognised that the growing demands for travel are financially impossible to meet and environmentally undesirable to sustain.

The Service Plan for 1995/96-1997/98 includes a number of Policy Areas which reflect the general areas of work within the Highways and Transportation Department. Each contains a number of objectives with specified service standards and expected outcomes.

Libraries and Leisure Service

Surrey's Library Service aims to provide a comprehensive and efficient service which provides books and information to improve the quality of life for everyone in Surrey and supports their educational, economic and leisure activities. It plays a key role in educating and informing the public on the full range of environmental topics. Surrey's Leisure and Tourism Unit aims to provide facilities and opportunities for leisure activities to enhance people's quality of life whilst respecting the environmental and transportation pressures within the County. The unit is responsible for the promotion of arts, sports and tourism in Surrey as well as providing support to the Surrey Museums Consultative Committee and the Surrey Hills Visitor Project. The Surrey History Service plays a key role in preserving and promoting the documented heritage of the County. Whilst carrying out these duties, the Service has many areas where it has direct and service effects. Direct effects arise from the management of many premises, mobile libraries and a large amount of transport usage.

Resources Department

The Resources Department was formed on 1/4/94 from the former Treasurers, Personnel and Property Services Departments. The Personnel Division has responsibility for employment law, employment policies and conditions, staff quality, Health and Safety and staff training. The Finance Division houses audit services, financial planning, preparation of revenue and capital budgets, superannuation, car leasing and salaries. The Property Division buys, sells, builds, demolishes, maintains, manages and leases buildings, land and small holdings. These include council offices, schools, staff houses, land, libraries, etc.

Direct effects include energy consumption from buildings, purchasing in general (including building materials, lease cars, paper, equipment, etc), waste and travel. Service effects include personnel recruitment incentives, e.g. car leasing and relocation packages, health and safety - advice and monitoring, training, e.g. environmental issues, advice to departments, etc., investment of superannuation, home working, capital/revenue links, location of buildings, design specifications, maintenance, leases and disposal of waste.

Social Services Department

Social Services aim to improve the quality of life for dependant and socially vulnerable people by ensuring the best caring service which are appropriate to the individual needs. Social Services work can be split up into 3 main areas:

* Looking after vulnerable people

* Helping others look after vulnerable people

* Preventative care - helping people look after themselves

Each of these areas of work has a huge range of potential environmental impacts including energy use, transport pollution and waste.

Within Social Services there are three provider services which provide care to about 18,000 people within Surrey each year. The areas covered by these services include Disability and Mental Health, Children and Families and the Elderly. Each of these services provide different levels of care ranging from home visits to day centres to residential care. There are 24 geographically based Purchasing Teams in Surrey which assess the level of social care required by clients and purchase the appropriate care from either the provider services or from the private or voluntary sector. These teams are further supported by a team at Social Services Head Office.

In assessing the environmental impact of Social Services provider services, it was recognised that many of the impacts would be the same across the County due to the large number of establishments carrying out the same duty, e.g. homes for the elderly, day centres and such like.

During the summer of 1994 audits of a residential home for elderly people and a day centre for adults with learning disabilities were undertaken, with a view to providing an environmental checklist for premises managers. In order to ensure that no aspect of the department was missed, visits were also made to a children and families centre and to one of the 24 purchasing teams.

The result of these visits was an environmental checklist for premises managers which aims to take the time and effort out of environmental choice. This has now been drafted and covers energy, transport, water, solid waste and purchasing in the form of a checklist for day to day management and for the occasional big decision! It also provides sources of further information and advice both from within the County Council and outside.

It is also hoped to make the checklist more widely applicable so it could be used within all sorts of County Council premises including schools and libraries.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service

The Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is committed to providing an effective fire and rescue service as prescribed by the Fire Services Act 1947.

The Service comprises two main areas. The first is an effective emergency service for the people living, working or travelling through the county of Surrey. The second key objective is to ensure that the inhabitants of Surrey enjoy a safe environment by ensuring that places of work, public entertainment and hotels, etc. meet the standards of safety in the event of fire according to the legislation currently in force.

The Surrey Fire and Rescue Service has undertaken a number of local and national initiatives designed to reduce their impact on the environment.

Trading Standards Service

The main aim of the Trading Standards Service is to provide a fair and safe trading environment to protect the public and business community. The service has a huge enforcement role which relates to 70 Acts of Parliament, 800 sets of regulations and

numerous EU Directives. The Trading Standards Service is responsible for the safety of all consumer products, for monitoring the quality of goods, for checking credit advertising, for ensuring fair trading and prosecuting where necessary, for providing advice to Surrey businesses on complying with a wide range of European and National Trading Standards legislation and for providing free consumer advice to 14,000 complainants each year. On the environmental side, the Service is responsible for the safety of food, for the safe storage of petroleum, explosives and other hazardous products, for the safe and humane transport of animals, for measures to prevent the spread of animal diseases and to prevent overweight goods vehicles using Surrey's roads.

Whilst carrying out their duties, the service has many potential environmental effects, both direct and service. Service effects can arise in any of the above mentioned areas. Direct environmental effects arise from their premises, transport usage and resource usage, e.g. consumables.