

## **Motions**

**The following Motion has been submitted by Councillor Henry Hobhouse:-**

**Extinction Rebellion South Somerset**

**9<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

### **Motion to SSDC to Declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency**

#### **Notes for Council:**

1. Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt around the world. Global temperatures have already increased by 1 degree Celsius from pre-industrial levels. Atmospheric CO2 levels are above 400 parts per million (ppm). This far exceeds the 350 ppm deemed to be a safe level for humanity.
2. In order to reduce the chance of runaway Global Warming and limit the effects of Climate Breakdown, it is imperative that we as a species reduce our CO2eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible. (1)
3. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction by themselves. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, infrastructure, etc. to make low carbon living easier and the new norm.
4. Carbon emissions result from both production and consumption of resources and are made worse by our excessive levels of both.
5. SSDC has already shown foresight and leadership when it comes to addressing the issue of Climate Breakdown, having invested in renewable energy and many other schemes over the years.
6. Unfortunately, current plans and actions are not enough. The world is on track to overshoot the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit before 2050. (2),(3)
7. The International Panel on Climate Change – IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published October 2018, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared to a 1.5°C rise. The UK's Climate Change Committee has recommended zero greenhouse gas emissions **by** 2050 but other groups such as WWF, Greenpeace and Extinction Rebellion have suggested earlier targets. Only with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities can these targets be achieved. (3)
8. Councils around the UK and the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing resources to address this. (4)
9. The International Panel on the Environment and Biodiversity (IPEB) report, released this month, in addition to the IPCC report, states that we are at risk of one million species' of animal becoming extinct within the next few decades. This will have a devastating effect on the symbiotic relationship of all life and the threat to human extinction will increase as a result if action is not taken now to prevent the collapse of the ecosystem.

**Full Council believes that:**

1. All governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts of Climate Breakdown, and local governments that recognise this should not wait for their national governments to change their policies. It is important for the residents of South Somerset and the UK that districts commit to carbon neutrality as quickly as possible;
2. The consequences of global temperature rising above 1.5°C are so severe that preventing this from happening must be humanity's number one priority.
3. Bold climate action can deliver economic benefits in terms of new jobs, economic savings and market opportunities (as well as improved well-being for people worldwide).

**Extinction Rebellion South Somerset calls on SSDC to:**

1. Declare a 'Climate and Ecological Emergency'.
2. Pledge to make the district of South Somerset carbon neutral by 2025, taking into account both production and consumption emissions. (5)
3. Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2025 target possible.
4. Work with other councils and governments to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C.
5. To examine what immediate action can take place upon the passing of this motion, e.g. divesting from fossil fuels; lobbying Government to bring forward the Future Homes Standard or equivalent such as Passivhaus to 2021 not 2025; embark on a tree planting plan to plant 100,000 trees by the end of 2019 and 4,000,000 by 2025 (equivalent to 14 new completely wooded Ham Hill Country Parks).
6. To provide leadership to the residents of the district on individual measures that can be taken now and how the council can assist in delivering those steps.
7. To develop a Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan, starting from July 2019, with a cross party working group and the necessary officer support to assist with investigative work, drafting the plan for the delivery of early projects.
8. To report to Full Council before the end of 2019 with costed proposals for projects for the Council to effectively start addressing the climate emergency, which could include:
  - a) Enabling more cycling, walking and use of shared and public transport.
  - b) Providing electric car charging points in car parks and other suitable locations, including for use by council tenants and council vehicles.
  - c) Adopting high energy efficiency standards and providing for the effective use of recycling services in new buildings through the planning system.
  - d) Demonstrating and developing a programme for retrofitting high standards of energy saving and insulation in existing council buildings, including housing and assets; initially focusing on where the greatest benefits could be gained.
  - e) Promoting waste reduction, reuse and recycling on the go, and supporting community projects.

- f) Sourcing electricity used by the council from renewable energy suppliers and providing support for smart energy infrastructure, including demand management and storage.
- g) Supporting green businesses and social enterprises. Review of planning policies and investment opportunities for local renewable energy and infrastructure and environmental markets, as well as divestment from fossil fuels.
- h) Adaptation for flooding and other impacts of climate change.
- i) Continue to work with partners across the district and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans;
- j) Work with Somerset County Council to establish a Citizens Assembly to include a representative range of citizens from all districts to establish the facts and make recommendations to guide the actions of the county as a whole in addressing the climate and ecological emergency.
- k) Report to Full Council every six months with the actions the Council will take to address this emergency.
- l) To add carbon footprint management protocols to all future council decisions and to address and manage the carbon footprint of programs already within the councils various portfolios.

#### **References:**

1. Fossil CO<sub>2</sub> & GHG emissions of all world countries, 2017: <http://edgar.jrc.ec.europa.eu/overview.php?v=CO2andGHG1970-2016&dst=GHGpc>
2. World Resources Institute: <https://www.wri.org/blog/2018/10/8-things-you-need-know-about-ipcc-15-c-report>
3. The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sr15/>
4. Councils declaring climate and ecological emergencies  
<https://climateemergency.uk/blog/map-of-local-council-declarations>  
 Berkeley: <https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/blog/2018/6/13/berkeley-unanimously-declares-climate-emergency> and  
 Hoboken: <https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/blog/2018/4/25/hoboken-resolves-to-mobilize> and the C40 cities: <https://www.c40.org/other/deadline-2020>
5. Scope 1, 2 and 3 of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol explained: <https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/faqs/services/scope-3-indirect-carbon-emissions>