

Requisitioned Items

Cabinet Member: All

Division and Local Member: All

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1. Climate Change Emergency

- 1.1 The following requisitioned item will be proposed by Cllr Tessa Munt and seconded by Cllr David Hall:

Full Council notes:

1. Human activity has already caused irreversible climate change, the impact of which is felt around the world. Global temperatures have increased by over 1 degree Celsius from pre-industrial levels. Atmospheric CO₂ levels are over 406 parts per million (ppm), far exceeding the 350 ppm deemed a 'safe' level for humanity⁶. The world is on track to overshoot the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit before 2030;^{2, 3}
2. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C published in November 2018 describes the harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause, and tells us that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities³;
3. In order to reduce the chance of runaway Global Warming and limit the effects of Climate Breakdown, it is imperative that each of us reduces our CO₂eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes without delay;^{1, 6}
4. Individuals can accept responsibility for living in a more sustainable way but cannot be expected to make these changes on their own. Carbon emissions result from both production and consumption, so Governments - national, regional and local - must change legislation, standards and their approach to meet the need to reduce our CO₂eq emissions and make low carbon living easier to achieve and the new 'norm';
5. Local Authorities and Councils across the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing to address this emergency – in the South West, Bristol has already taken this step;⁴
6. Somerset, with its long coastline and large low lying areas across the Levels and Moors, is particularly vulnerable to effects of Climate Change.

Full Council believes that:

1. All governments have a duty to limit the negative impacts of Climate Breakdown, and local government recognises it cannot and should not wait for national government to act.
2. It is important for the residents of Somerset that its Councils commit to reducing CO₂eq emissions and work towards carbon neutrality as quickly as possible;
3. Bold climate action can deliver economic benefits by way of new jobs, economic savings, market opportunities and improved well-being.

Full Council resolves to:

- (a) affirm the Council's recognition of the scale and urgency of the global challenge from climate change, as documented by the latest Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and declares a climate emergency; and
- (b) mandate the Policy and Place Scrutiny Committee to review and recommend what further corporate approaches can be taken through a SCC Climate Change Strategy and to facilitate stronger Somerset-wide action through collaboration at a strategic, community and individual level; and
- (c) pledge to work with partners, including the Heart of the South West LEP, individuals and community action groups across the county to identify ways to make Somerset carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3)⁵; and
- (d) write to the Secretaries of State for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy, Transport, Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Housing, Communities & Local Government calling for the creation, provision or devolution of powers and resources to make achievement of the 2030 target possible here in Somerset; and
- (e) report to Full Council before the end of 2019 with the actions the Council has and will take to address this emergency; and
- (f) allocate £25,000 from the Council's 2018/19 contingency budget and authorise the Lead Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure to utilise this funding to resource the work necessary to support Scrutiny Committee for Policies and Place and to assess any specific recommendations and financial implications. Any unspent allocation will be carried forward into 2019/20 to continue the work.

References:

1. Fossil CO₂ & 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. Including US cities 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>

6. Assessing "Dangerous Climate Change": Required reduction of Carbon Emissions to protect young people, future generations and nature:

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0081648>

2. Precautionary salting network

2.1 The following requisitioned item will be proposed by Cllr Mike Rigby and seconded by Cllr John Hunt:

Somerset County Council resolves to request that the Cabinet:

1. Acknowledge that the damage caused to the Somerset economy during recent snow events has been exacerbated by last year's reduction in the extent of the precautionary salting network;
2. Acknowledge that the reduction in the extent of the precautionary salting network has been counter-productive, costing the wider public purse more than it saved Somerset County Council;
3. Acknowledge that unnecessary stress has been placed on the emergency services, having to attend RTCs that are unlikely to have occurred had the precautionary salting network not been reduced last year;
4. Reinstate the part of the precautionary salting network that was lost in last year's reduction programme.