

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 27 March 2019	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly
<b>Report title:</b>		Motion on the Theme: Climate Change	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Proper Constitutional Officer	

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The theme for this meeting is Climate Change.

The relevant cabinet member shall submit a motion on the theme. All other political groups on the council are allowed to submit one amendment to the motion. The cabinet member's motion and the amendments do not need to be seconded. The cabinet member will present the motion to the meeting, followed by the lead opposition spokesperson's response and moving of their amendment, if any. Following this, the subject matter of the theme will be open to debate. Amendment(s) from other opposition groups on the council can be moved during this part of the meeting.

## **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT AND AIR QUALITY**

### **Declaring a Climate Change Emergency**

1. Council assembly notes:
  - a. Southwark's Council Plan Commitments to make Southwark carbon neutral by 2050 and halve Southwark Council's emissions by 2022.
  - b. Southwark Council's existing work to tackle climate change, including:
    - i. Cutting the council's carbon emissions by 25%;
    - ii. Divesting pensions funds away from fossil fuels into sustainable alternatives;
    - iii. Introducing idling fines for drivers who leave their engines running while idle;
    - iv. Closing roads around schools to improve air quality;
    - v. Ensuring more people are walking and cycling rather than using greenhouse gas emitting vehicles;
    - vi. Protecting Southwark's biodiversity;
    - vii. Keeping recycling rates high: Southwark's are currently the highest in inner London;
    - viii. Committing to ending single use plastic in the council, halving it in the borough, and introducing water fountains to reduce plastic bottle use.
2. Council assembly further notes:
  - a. Humans have already caused climate change. Global temperatures have already increased by 1°C from pre-industrial levels. Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels in excess of 400 parts per million are already far in excess of the 350 deemed the safe level for humanity.
  - b. That plastic pollution has become a widespread and critical problem throughout our society and steps must be taken to halt and reduce the flow

of plastic waste into our environment. This is a problem that is not going away - all of the plastic ever created still exists today and estimates suggest that 1 in 3 fish now contain some traces of microplastic so our waste is now contaminating our food chain.

- c. The recent 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report which states that we have just 12 years to act on climate change if global temperature rises are to be kept within the recommended 1.5°C.
- c. That the expected consequences of a 2°C instead of a 1.5°C increase in global temperatures would include 99% of warm water corals and their associated ecosystems disappearing, at least one in ten summers in the Arctic having little or no sea ice at all, 420 million more people worldwide being exposed to extreme heatwaves, sea levels at least 10cm higher, more frequent extreme weather events, and potential mass extinctions of animals.
- d. That this Conservative government's failure to take the radical steps required to prevent an increase of over 1.5°C is shameful. Its guidelines to only reduce carbon emissions by 80% by 2050 are woefully short of the change that is needed.
- e. That as a largely low-lying area next to the tidal Thames, Southwark is particularly prone to the impact of sea level rises and flooding.
- f. Rebecca Long-Bailey MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's recent announcement that the Labour Party intends to launch a Green New Deal, which would decarbonise the UK's economy, and create thousands of new jobs in the renewable energy sector in deprived areas and communities. Proposals also include increasing the UK's installed offshore wind capacity sevenfold, bringing all homes in the UK up to the highest efficiency standard, and tripling the UK's solar power capacity.
- g. That the Labour Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has declared a climate emergency.

3. Council assembly believes:

- a. This situation requires urgent action by all levels of government, businesses and individuals.
- b. That, despite the leadership already shown by Southwark Council to reduce carbon, it needs to go further still if we are to play our part in preventing further climate change and to set an example to others.
- c. That, whilst Southwark Council can and should take all possible steps to reduce carbon emissions and improve environmental sustainability, ultimately this problem needs to be tackled on a national and international scale.
- d. That bold climate action can deliver economic and social benefits: new jobs, economic savings, business opportunities and improved health and wellbeing.

4. Council assembly resolves to call on cabinet to:

- a. Declare a Climate Emergency and do all it can to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030.
- b. Develop a strategy, working with local stakeholders, to ensure that the council becomes carbon neutral at a much more rapid pace than currently envisaged. This Carbon Reduction Strategy should aim to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 if feasible. This strategy should be clear in its targets and resources required. It should also be developed in a way that is sufficiently

flexible to make best use of new carbon reduction technologies as they develop.

- c. Call on other London boroughs to also work towards carbon neutrality by 2030.
- d. Lobby government to provide the power and resources to the Mayor of London and local authorities to accelerate the pace of carbon reduction.
- e. Lobby the government to take radical steps to divest away from fossil fuels, invest in new technologies to make innovative approaches such as carbon sequestering possible, and reduce the UK's reliance on greenhouse gases.

**Note:** If the motion is agreed, any proposals will be submitted to the cabinet for consideration.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet members motion	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Andrew Weir 020 7525 7222

## AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer
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