

## County Council

5 April 2019

### Item 10(a) - Notice of Motion from Mr Jones on Climate Change

#### Amendment by Mr Barling

This Council notes that humans have caused 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 CO<sub>2</sub> levels are above 400 parts per million (ppm). This far exceeds the 350 ppm deemed to be a safe level for humanity **and diverse ecosystems**. In order to reduce the chance of runaway Global Warming and limit the effects of Climate Breakdown, it is imperative that all countries should reduce our carbon equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>eq) emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible. Councils around the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing resources to address this.

***This Council has a strong reputation for responding positively to the challenge of climate change. Sustainability is being embedded into the day-to-day business of the Council, such as procurement, the capital programme and introducing electric vehicles into the fleet. An annual sustainability report is produced. The West Sussex Plan also has a strong focus on sustainability and includes targets for renewable energy, carbon reduction, air quality, sustainable transport, encouraging ultra-low emissions vehicles and waste reduction and recycling.***

This Council believes that 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 West Sussex and the UK that cities commit to carbon neutrality as quickly as possible.

Councils like West Sussex are uniquely placed to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions – for example because of their capacity for local energy generation, such as running our own solar farms and promoting solar energy take up among local organisations and residents, supporting the greater use of electric powered vehicles both in the private and public sector and for personal use, and investing further in public transport.

West Sussex is already suffering from flooding problems, and a significant proportion of its population and a large number of its settlements are based in coastal areas which would potentially be devastated by a rise in sea levels caused by continual global warming. The consequences of global temperature rising above 1.5°C are so severe that preventing this from happening must be a number one priority. ~~and~~ **B**bold climate action can deliver economic benefits in terms of new jobs, economic savings, ~~and~~ market opportunities **and** ~~(as well as improved well-being for people worldwide).~~

This Council therefore calls on the Cabinet to:

- (1) **Note the call of the Campaign against Climate Change to d**Declare a 'Climate Emergency', **show leadership to combat this climate urgency in West Sussex and commit to stepping up the work of the Council to combat climate change and raise awareness of the issues and ways in which residents and businesses can contribute to mitigate climate change;**
- (2) Pledge to attempt to make West Sussex **County Council** carbon neutral by 2030, ~~taking into account both production and consumption emissions;~~
- (3) Call on the Government to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible;
- (4) **Continue to w**Work with **the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and** other councils to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C;
- (5) Continue to work with partners across the county and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies, and plans **and by encouraging behaviour change, including separation of food waste for collection and processing for energy generation;**
- (6) **Support the officers working group which is investigating ways of taking into account climate change impacts in all of the Council's policies and operations** ~~Set up a Task and Finish Group to look into the matter in greater detail; and~~
- ~~(7) Consider whether it would be advisable to take into account climate change impacts, when considering planning applications, or taking part in consultations, commenting on reports, plans and reviews put to the Council; and~~
- (78) **Revise the Council's reporting framework to highlight annually to full Council the actions taken by the Council to mitigate climate change and its wider environmental impact** ~~Report to full Council within six months with the actions the Cabinet and Council will take to address this emergency.~~