

Climate Change Emergency – Labour Group motion to Herts County Council 26 March 2019

In light of the County's emerging Air Quality Strategy through Highways and Environment (12th Feb 2019), Public Health and Protection and Growth, Infrastructure, Planning and the Economy Cabinet Panels (12th March 2019) and the clear link between air quality and climate change and the benefits of an integrated approach to both the Council notes that:

- a) the recent 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report 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 degrees Celsius;
- b) all governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts on climate breakdown, and local governments that recognise this should not wait for their national governments to change their policies. UK county, district and city councils need to commit to aggressive reduction targets and carbon neutrality as quickly as possible;
- c) counties are well placed to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions, as their responsibility for planning infrastructure, Transport, the Environment and Public health open up a range of sustainable transport, buildings and energy opportunities;
- d) in recent years Hertfordshire county has been directly impacted by the effects of extreme flooding, water quality and quantity.

Hertfordshire County Council will therefore:

1. Join other councils in declaring a Climate Emergency;
2. Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs requesting that they provide the necessary powers and resources to make local action on climate change easier;
3. Request that, in light of the recent IPCC report, officers - develop a Climate Change Policy for the Council with the aim of bringing a report to Cabinet in the autumn of 2019. The policy should include an action plan to achieve a target of zero carbon emissions by 2030 and proposals for regular reporting to Overview & Scrutiny of the progress with the plan;
4. Ask officers to develop a County Climate Change Action Plan to be adopted by Cabinet in the 2019/20 civic year and reviewed regularly thereafter.
5. Ask officers to investigate the most appropriate training for members and officers about how to promote carbon neutral policies for future consideration by Cabinet;
6. Continue to work with partners across the county and wider region to deliver widespread carbon reductions.