

Motion to declare a Climate Emergency and commit to action to achieve carbon neutrality

Full Council notes:

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 on their own. 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;
5. Scarborough Borough Council has already shown foresight when it comes to addressing the issue of Climate Breakdown, having signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, written an Environment Sustainability Policy and Action Plan, and having employed a Sustainability Officer and an Energy Manager for several years, leading to substantial improvements in energy use in our buildings.
6. Unfortunately, our 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 IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in the autumn of 2018, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared to a 1.5°C rise, and told 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;
8. City Councils around the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing resources to address this emergency.⁴

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 the Borough of Scarborough and the UK that local authorities 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; and,
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).

Full Council resolves to:

1. Declare a 'Climate Emergency';
2. Pledge to do everything within the Council's power to make the Borough of Scarborough carbon neutral by 2030.
3. Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible;
4. Work with other governments (both within the UK and internationally) 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 borough and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans;
6. Submit a bid as part of the Council's budget setting process for an additional £80,000 to fund a 'Sustainability' Officer Post for a two year period to champion the scoping and delivery of the Borough Council's Carbon Neutral 2030 commitment.

It is proposed that the additional cost is funded from the overachieved budget savings in 2019/20 currently held in the budget proposals as a contingency.

Additionally this Council calls on the Leader of the Council to write to North Yorkshire County Council urging them to recognise the climate emergency and take a lead, both in their own operations and in working with the Districts, to move as rapidly as possible to carbon neutrality.

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>

Proposer: Cllr Dilys Cluer
Secunder: Cllr Mark Vesey