



Council – 27 June 2019

Notice of Motion from Councillors P K Jones, M Sherwood, R C Stewart, C A Holley, L R Jones, P N May, C E Lloyd, M C Child, R Francis-Davies, D H Hopkins, E J King, A S Lewis, S Pritchard, A Pugh, J A Raynor, A H Stevens and M Thomas,

Notice of Motion on Climate Emergency

This Council notes the recent conclusion of an interim report from scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that every effort must be made to prevent the continuing average global temperature rise exceeding 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. However, such an increase could, with present government policies, be reached as early as 2030, with further increases in the decades thereafter. Such a scale of temperature rise threatens both human civilisation and all other life forms on the planet, with drastic disruption of agriculture, and the loss of terrestrial and marine wildlife habitats. We recognise that throughout the world, already, species of plants and animals are becoming extinct in record numbers; coral reefs, which are fundamental to marine life are dying; small island nations and coastal cities are threatened by sea level rise from the melting of polar ice sheets; the human death toll from adverse weather events – such as excess cold, excess heat, hurricane, flood – is increasing.

We note the activism of young people throughout the world, expressing their feeling of disempowerment in this situation and asking the decision-makers of today to take urgent action to protect their futures.

We acknowledge that globally, the actions required to address climate change effectively rest with national governments and require international collaboration, but there is still important work that local councils can do.

We recognise the recent history of this council in aiming to do its utmost to reduce carbon emissions, enhance biodiversity, and secure a prosperous, low-carbon economy for our region. We are proud of the actions taken by Swansea Council to date which include:

- The City & County of Swansea Pension Fund is one of the first Pension Fund's in the UK to adopt an Environmental, Social & Governance policy which commits the pension fund to reduce its already low exposure to carbon based fossil fuel investments by up to 50% over the next 4 years. In doing so, it accepts that investing in new green energy, infrastructure and socially responsible investments offers the best sustainable financial return for members of the pension fund over the long term. Progress is reported on an annual basis.
- Changing 21,053 street lights to LED, reducing CO2 year on year by 2,198,608.49kg.

- Delivering an annual Clean Air Roadshow to stimulate public uptake in electric vehicles and promote improving air quality.
- Delivering insulation and energy efficiency measures to benefit tenants of our council housing.
- Promoting Welsh & UK Government campaigns and programmes to increase energy efficiency amongst private tenants and home owners, reducing fuel poverty and reducing emissions.
- Campaigning for the electrification of the railway line from Swansea to London.
- Progressing work towards a world-leading Tidal Lagoon, supporting community-owned renewable energy schemes, like SCEES, to deliver clean energy and benefit local schools and community buildings.
- Working with others nationally to urge Welsh Government to develop electric car charging infrastructure.
- Being leaders of good practice in Wales through having Sustainable Development policies and approaches pre-dating the Well-Being of Future Generations Act.
- Recently incorporating care for the natural environment into our corporate plan as a new priority, recognizing the hugely important contribution made by the extensive work of our Nature Conservation Team.
- Building the first council housing in a generation here in Swansea to Passivhaus standard, and begun building new council housing to a super-energy-efficient “Swansea Standard” that will enable all components to be procured locally and reducing emissions using solar battery storage and air source heat pumps.
- Using innovation in construction for flagship projects such as Pentrehafod School, showcasing waste minimization and sustainability.
- Winning investment for innovative green technology, such as “Homes as Power Stations”, as part of the City Region Deal.
- Continuing to seek opportunities to add to our corporate fleet of Electric Vehicles, which is already the largest in Wales.
- Continuing to deliver on our Carbon Reduction strategy: 42% reduction in emissions since our baseline year.
- Securing funding for a vast increase in Active Travel (walking and cycling) routes throughout the county and supported Swansea University’s community cycle scheme.
- Becoming an Anti-Fracking Local Authority in 2016, having passed a motion to “oppose any unconventional gas development (fracking)” which also committed us to working towards being a fossil fuel free local authority by 2025.
- Implementing agile working so that our workforce may reduce unnecessary travel.
- Developing local procurement practices to reduce our carbon footprint.
- In Education, we are early joiners of the international EcoSchools programmes which encourages schools to promote recycling and reduce energy and water consumption.
- Encourage our Foundation Phase learning pupils to learn outdoors ensuring a respect for nature, biodiversity and eco-systems.
- At KS4, developing partnerships with our Universities to establish STEM workshops including the impact of climate change.

We recognise the importance of working closely with researchers in order to have the latest knowledge and the clearest understanding about what we can do to respond to the urgent need to address climate change.

This Council therefore declares climate emergency, and calls upon the government of the United Kingdom to do the same. We commit to:

1. Call upon the UK and Welsh governments to provide us with the necessary powers and resources to ensure Swansea becomes carbon neutral by 2030.
2. Publicise climate emergency and promote a greater awareness of the truth of climate change amongst the local population.
3. Work with relevant experts in research and development to:
 - a. Review our current strategies and action plans for addressing climate change.
 - b. Identify any further policy changes or actions which we could undertake, within the scope of our powers and resources, to meet the challenge of climate emergency.
 - c. Seek the help of local partners such as Swansea University and other research bodies to, within one year, produce a report to share with the community, explaining work already underway and achievements already made, as well as targets for the future.
4. Update on further work undertaken by the Council in this area on an annual basis through the Council Annual Review of Performance Report section on corporate objective - *Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity.*