Shipley Town Council


1. Background

a) IPCC report and context

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a special report on 8th October 2018 on the subject of ‘Global Warming of 1.5°C’. The report is an international effort to summarise the current scientific consensus on how society might limit global warming to 1.5 degrees, as well as the likely consequences of this and greater levels of warming. The report states that:

- Human activity has already caused 1°C of warming to the earth.
- To limit warming to 1.5°C it will be necessary to halve global carbon emissions by 2030 and to achieve near-zero net emissions by 2050.
- The consequences of 2°C warming are significantly worse than 1.5°C warming across all areas considered in the report.

At present, humanity is falling far short of the action necessary to limit warming to even 2°C. The likely global failure to achieve this target would result in increasingly severe consequences including very large-scale water and food shortages, widespread flooding, heat related morbidity and large-scale destruction of the natural world. These would result in substantial political and economic instability. These changes are already in progress, and will severely affect all of society before the end of the century, but will have a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable and the generations yet to come.

b) Local authority activity

Since the publication of the IPCC report, local authorities in various parts of the country have passed motions declaring a Climate Emergency and committing to making their areas carbon neutral by 2030. Bradford Council passed an energy procurement motion in January 2019, and has already exceeded its initial aims of achieving a 40% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020. In January 2019, Bradford Council declared a Climate Emergency and voted to go further, adopting a number of additional measures to tackle climate change.

c) Recent developments

A great deal has happened in relation to climate breakdown over the last 18 months:

- Increasing action by school climate strikers and by Extinction Rebellion activists;
- 1 May 2019 – The House of Commons voted to declare a climate emergency;

2 May 2019 – A report from the Committee on Climate Change\(^2\) stated that the government must set a legally binding target to cut greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050. Measures to achieve this include abolishing petrol and diesel cars and gas boilers, reducing meat consumption, an increase in renewable/clean electricity generation and planting around 1.5 billion trees.

6 May 2019 – A global assessment report on a study of biodiversity and ecosystem services was released by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). It stated that people living today, as well as wildlife and future generations, are at risk unless urgent action is taken to reverse the loss of plants, insects and other creatures on which humanity depends for food, pollination, clean water and a stable climate.

June 2019 - The UK Government passed legislation to deliver net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050\(^3\).

During 2019 an increasing number of Town Councils declared a Climate Emergency including the neighbouring Councils of Bingley and Ilkley.

Researchers have argued though that the Government’s target of net zero by 2050 is too late and that the UK needs to take swifter action\(^4\).

Over 500 global companies have signed up to a commitment to reducing emissions in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement\(^5\).

2. Proposed resolutions

I propose that Shipley Town Council:

1) Acknowledges the urgent need for global society to reduce carbon emissions and other greenhouse gas emissions, recognises the part which we have to play and commits to taking an active role in achieving this, by:

- Declaring a Climate Emergency
- Pro-actively limiting our CO\(_2\) emissions as an organisation to enable us to be a carbon neutral Council
- Seeks ways to help and encourage our community to reduce direct and indirect CO\(_2\) emissions\(^6\) and to become resilient to changes caused by the changing climate.

\(^2\) An independent, statutory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008.

\(^4\) [https://tyndall.ac.uk/news/uk-sweden%e2%80%99s-carbon-targets-half-what-needed-15c](https://tyndall.ac.uk/news/uk-sweden%e2%80%99s-carbon-targets-half-what-needed-15c)

\(^5\) [https://wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/step-up/](https://wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/step-up/)
➢ Seeks to influence the policies of other local organisations to encourage them to reduce their emissions.
➢ Acknowledges that ‘business as usual’ is not an option in the face of the climate emergency, and that society in its current form is unsustainable. To meet our obligations, we will ensure we consider the impact all our activities and decisions have on the climate.

2) Sets up a ‘Climate Emergency and Environment’ Committee to put in place actions to meet proposal 1) (above). Appendix A lists a number of possible actions the committee could put in place, but this is in no way an exhaustive list.

3) Delegates funds from the budget to the ‘Climate Emergency and Environment’ Committee to enable it to put actions in place. The budget agreed at Full Council on 28/5/20 identifies three items of service costs that would fall into the remit of this Committee: ‘Climate Emergency Declaration: £4,000; ‘Air Quality Improvement’: £4,000; ‘Sustainable Transport Improvements’: £4,000. These funds (total of £12,000) should be delegated to the ‘Climate Emergency and Environment Committee.

3) Acknowledges that Climate Breakdown and other environmental problems are closely linked (e.g. increased car usage increases both carbon emissions and local air pollution; reducing waste reduces consumption and associated carbon emissions) and that the Council will be most effective in tackling the climate crisis if it takes a range of climate and environmental actions.

4) Signs up to the Covenant of Mayors (https://www.covenantofmayors.eu/en/) to track progress and link with towns around the world who are cutting emissions.

5) Contacts Bradford Council to ask them to deliver an action plan by the end of the year for net zero and to be kept up to date on progress on the reduction of their carbon emissions and request that Shipley Town Council is informed and involved in any Climate Action initiatives that affect the Town Council’s area and neighbouring area.

With thanks to Cllr Edwina Simpson from Bingley Town Council for her advice and assistance on drafting this Motion.

6 Scope 1 and 2 emissions are direct emissions sources (e.g. fuel used in company vehicles and purchased electricity). Scope 3 emissions cover all indirect emissions due to the activities of an organization. www.carbontrust.com/resources/faqs/services/scope-3-indirect-carbon-emissions/
Appendix A – Suggestions of the kinds of actions Shipley Town Council could take:

- Encourage and support the development of a Shipley Climate Action Group
- Start a ‘Climate Conversation’, or similar to engage with the community about climate change and other environmental issues
- Liaise with other Town Councils who have declared a Climate Emergency to learn from them and work together where possible
- Make policies that promote Active Travel (walking and cycling) and encourage and lobby for more of the same.
- Encourage and lobby for more sustainable transport - better bus transportation and linked train services
- Make policies that benefit visitors who arrive by train or bus
- Encourage the use of electric cars as opposed to petrol and diesel cars. Promote the installation of electric charging points
- Develop and promote lift-sharing schemes and promoting existing car clubs
- Co-operate with organisations seeking to develop low-carbon and community-led affordable housing in Shipley
- Start grant schemes and find funding to enable people in the community to retro-fit their homes with better insulation or to introduce other low-carbon projects.
- Ensure the Council’s own grant-giving policy promotes activity that promotes a low-carbon lifestyle.
- Use a renewable energy supplier for buildings that are in the Council’s control or work with the owner to encourage them to do so
- Install renewable energy generation at Council owned property
- Encourage people living and working in Shipley to reduce energy use in homes, businesses and elsewhere and/or switch to renewable energy sources
- Bring together groups of people for bulk purchases of equipment that will generate renewable energy e.g. solar panels, heat pumps
- Actively support small and large planning applications for renewable energy in Shipley
- Cut less grass – re-wild areas and plant wildflowers, and encourage and support others to do the same
- Plant large numbers of trees in public spaces and encourage others to do so. Apply for Grants for tree planting. Work with pre-existing tree planting organisations e.g. Baildon Tree Planting Partnership
- Make play areas more natural so they need less maintenance
• Encourage a reduction in consumption of animal products (methane produced by livestock is an important greenhouse gas; meat production requires unsustainable amounts of land and water)

• Encourage the buying of local and seasonal food, for example by supporting local markets in Shipley and Saltaire

• Minimise waste, for example by supporting and developing projects such as Plastic Free Shipley, Kirkgate Centre Repair Café, and developing a ‘Library of Things’

• Set up community recycling facilities for hard to recycle items, for example through Terracycle

• Set up a community composting scheme, possibly through working with Council owned allotments

• Invest our money in sustainable banks and investments

• Produce an impartial guide to actions people can take to reduce their carbon footprint

• Object to all planning applications in the parish area that would lock us in to a high carbon pathway.

• If Shipley Town Council develops a neighbourhood plan, ensure any development is planned with the need to reduce carbon emissions, e.g. prioritise measures such as designating land use for renewable energy providers – wind turbines, solar arrays etc – and for tree planting; requiring a high level of energy efficiency in all new-build property (to Passivhaus standard); ensuring all new property includes electric car charging points/renewable energy provision; ensuring suitable provision is made for walking and cycling

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