

Motions Submitted to Council

In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 15) of the Council's Constitution

Motion 1

Submitted by Councillor Gerrish

Thurrock Council therefore resolves to:

- 1.1 Declare a 'Climate Emergency' that requires urgent action;
- 1.2 Request that the Council's activities become net-zero carbon by 2030;
- 1.3 Request that the Council embed this work in all areas and take responsibility for reducing, as rapidly as possible, the carbon emissions resulting from the Council's activities;
- 1.4 Request that the relevant Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Climate Change convenes a Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change and a Climate Change Partnership group, involving Councillors, residents, young citizens, climate science and solutions experts, businesses and other relevant parties. Over the following 12 months, the Group should consider strategies and actions being developed by the Council and other partner organisations and develop a strategy in line with a target of net zero emissions by 2030. It should also recommend ways to maximise local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as employment, health, agriculture, transport and the economy;
- 1.5 Request that all reports in preparation for the 2020/21 budget cycle and investment strategy will take into account the actions the council will take to address this emergency;
- 1.6 Request that the Leader write to the UK Government asking them to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and ask local MPs to do likewise.

Monitoring Officer Comments:

The Secretary of State is under a duty to ensure that the net UK carbon account for 2050 is at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline and to set legally-binding carbon budgets and limits to achieve that target (Climate Change Act 2008). This Act also established the Committee on Climate Change, to ensure that emissions targets are evidence-based and independently assessed. The Secretary of State has powers under that Act to issue guidance and give directions to 'reporting authorities', including this Council, in relation to those authorities climate change impacts, proposals and policies and their progress in implementing them. Reporting authorities would have to comply with any such directions. Central Government has published the Clean Growth Strategy (2017) under that Act and national non-statutory policy related to climate change, including the 25 Year Environment Plan

(2018) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), which the Council would need to have regard to as relevant in making decisions. The Council has a wide range of statutory duties and powers, including its general power of competence under s.1 Localism Act 2011, the exercise of which might be relevant to climate change impacts, mitigation and adaptation. Any specific legal implications relating to this motion cannot be determined at this stage. Should the motion be agreed further advice on any specific legal implications would be given at that time.

Section 151 Officer Comments:

Financial implication relating to this motion cannot be determined at this stage. Should the motion be agreed, an action plan will have to be completed and fully costed for future consideration.

Is the above motion within the remit of Council to approve?

Yes