

Item No. 3.2	Classification: Open	Date: 24 November 2021	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Motion on the Theme: Climate Justice: A Green Future For All	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Proper Constitutional Officer	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The theme for this meeting is climate justice: a green future for all.

The relevant cabinet member shall submit a motion on the theme. All other political groups on the council are allowed to submit one amendment to the motion. The cabinet member's motion and the amendments do not need to be seconded. The cabinet member will present the motion to the meeting, followed by the lead opposition spokesperson's response and moving of their amendment, if any. Following this, the subject matter of the theme will be open to debate. Amendment(s) from other opposition groups on the council can be moved during this part of the meeting.

Motion from Councillor Helen Dennis, Cabinet member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development

Climate Justice: A Green Future For All

1. Council Assembly notes:
 - a) That the climate crisis requires urgent global action to keep warming below 1.5 degrees and to avoid the catastrophic consequences of temperatures rising beyond this, as set out by the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
 - b) That the UK along with other wealthier countries has a particular responsibility to reduce emissions, being responsible for a larger proportion of both current and historic emissions, and notes the government's legally binding target to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 and to be net zero by 2050, along with this borough's ambition to be a carbon neutral borough by 2030.
 - c) That in a warming world, Southwark is particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events and to flooding, as an urban borough which is bordered by the Thames in the north with flat and low-lying land beneath this, with 60% of residents living less than 10 metres above sea level.

- d) That according to a recent global survey three quarters of young people now feel frightened about their future as a result of climate change. In London, 82% of residents are concerned about climate change, with 66% saying they have become increasingly concerned in the last year.
- e) That UK government plans including their Net Zero Strategy, are too little, too late, and fail to provide adequate funding for local authorities to deliver on a just transition, especially in the area of social housing decarbonisation which could help reduce fuel bills for residents.
- f) That the government's record speaks for itself: scrapping the planned zero carbon homes standard, ending the feed-in tariff, continuing to pursue oil and gas exploration, a dodgy trade deal with Australia, and a failed Green Homes Grant. Failing to regulate properly and invest, leaving everything to the whim of the market. And a Prime Minister who doesn't think twice about taking a private jet to Cornwall.
- g) That the recent Spending Review barely mentioned climate change, whilst halving air passenger duty for domestic flights and freezing fuel duty, just days before COP26 began.

2. Council Assembly further notes:

- a) That despite a lack of leadership from government, local communities and local authorities are stepping up to make ambitious commitments to bring about change.
- b) That Southwark declared a climate emergency in 2019, accelerating work that was already underway to reduce emissions, and that the council's operational emissions have already halved since 2018.
- c) That the council has published its Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, with 85 priority actions which will put us on the path towards net zero by 2030.
- d) That we have already made excellent progress on much of this, including:
 - i. Buildings – installing water-source heat pumps on three of our estates to serve over 2100 homes; bringing forward new passivhaus council homes in Rotherhithe; delivering retrofit work to street properties and the Tustin towers; greening our council buildings including by installing heat pumps in libraries; strengthening our planning policies through the New Southwark Plan and establishing a new Green Buildings Fund to retrofit our community buildings.

- ii. Transport – doubling cycle storage to 500 hangars next year, delivering 4 kilometres of cycleways, installing over 260 electric vehicle charging points with more planned this year; 36 school streets and 11 street space schemes to promote active travel; and major upgrades to London Bridge, Denmark Hill, Elephant and Castle and Peckham stations.
 - iii. Natural environment – planted over 8,000 new trees last year alone, supported biodiversity through its ‘no-mow’ policy, creating 200 new food growing plots on estates, opened the new Elephant Park, invested in renewing Burgess Park, Camberwell Green and Dickens’ Fields, started to consult on Bramcote Park, and retained 30 Green Flag parks – the most in inner London. Through the New Southwark Plan, the council is creating 17 new sites of importance for nature conservation, ensuring biodiversity net gain in development, and creating 11 hectares of new protected open space.
 - iv. Circular and Green Economy – pledged to create 5000 green jobs between now and 2030; ended the pension fund’s direct investments in fossil fuels with a target to be 100% fossil fuel free by 2030; and maintained one of the best recycling rates in inner London, up from the 6th worst recycling rate in the country in 2010.
 - v. Renewable and Sustainable Energy – rolled out LED street lighting, switched to 100% renewable electricity in council buildings, supported the expansion of South East London Combined Heat and Power (SELCHP), sought to maximise renewable energy generation through new developments, and have started to install solar photovoltaic systems on council buildings.
- e) We are investing an additional £25 million of capital funding into carbon reduction projects which will include among other things, electrification of our council fleet, further decarbonisation of council buildings including leisure centres when these are brought in house, and the expansion of measures to support the borough’s climate resilience.
 - f) That the council is supporting a citizens’ jury on climate change, which will bring together a group of people who are representative of the borough’s demographics to make recommendations on how the borough can further respond to the climate emergency.
 - g) That the analysis underpinning the Climate Strategy and Action Plan estimates that capital investment of £3.92 billion is required for Southwark alone and that the government must therefore demonstrate its seriousness to this agenda by fully partnering with and resourcing local authorities.

h) That the lack of a long-term funding settlement with TfL is damaging to our efforts to become a carbon neutral borough, putting important projects on hold such as the Bakerloo Line Extension, the Rotherhithe Bridge, bus service enhancements and electrification, and active travel infrastructure.

3. Council Assembly celebrates and thanks:

a) The community organisations and projects who have worked hard to bring down carbon emissions locally and protect Southwark from climate change; we applaud you and are grateful to be hearing from some of these groups today.

4. Council Assembly resolves to call on Cabinet to:

a) Continue working with the community and local businesses to build upon Southwark's climate action plan and ensure collectively we are doing everything we can with the resources we have to achieve net zero by 2030. This work must have a strong focus on decarbonising Southwark's buildings, and moving away from petrol and diesel vehicles.

b) Go further in addressing and resourcing action to address the related ecological emergency, building on the existing Southwark Nature Action Plan, to see further flourishing of nature and biodiversity across the borough.

c) Review Southwark's planning policies in line with our aim to be a carbon neutral borough by 2030, including through the establishment of a local carbon offset price.

d) Work to implement all the recommendations of Southwark's Climate Change Citizens Jury within the council's capacity, and work with all concerned stakeholders to respond to the Jury's recommendations.

e) Protect Southwark residents from the impacts of climate change by bringing forward an Adaptation Plan in 2022 which will consider:

i. An increased population due to climate refugees and displaced citizens.

ii. The urban heat island effect which we are already experiencing in London.

iii. Flooding and other extreme weather.

iv. Public health risks including new diseases.

v. Water scarcity and food shortages for residents.

- f) Strengthen its lobbying efforts, working with the Local Government Association and networks like UK100, to push the government for the more ambitious national action and funding that is urgently needed to address the climate emergency.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet members Motion	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Constitutional Team Constitutional.Team@southwark.gov.uk

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer
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