

Meeting Name:	Council Assembly
Date:	20 November 2024
Report title:	Motion on the Theme: The climate emergency in Southwark: a fair transition to net zero
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	Not applicable
From:	Proper Constitutional Officer

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The theme for this meeting is “The climate emergency in Southwark: a fair transition to net zero.”

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 Cllr John Batteson, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs and Business

The climate emergency in Southwark: a fair transition to net zero

1. Council Assembly Notes:
 - a. That the climate emergency requires continued action to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees and that the UK, along with other wealthier nations, holds greater responsibility for reducing emissions given larger current and historic contributions.
 - b. The UK’s legally binding target to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels, and to be Net Zero by 2050.
 - c. Southwark Council’s declaration of a climate emergency in 2019 and our ambitious target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

- d. That as an urban borough bordering the Thames, Southwark is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change such as flooding, and that hotter summers in an urban environment will greatly impact our vulnerable residents.
- e. The need for the transition to net zero to be fair to all residents and businesses and the importance of a collective effort from central government, local government, community groups, voluntary organisations and the private sector to work together to meet this goal.

2. Council Assembly welcomes:

- a. The new government's commitment to tackling the climate emergency.
- b. The establishment of Great British Energy and a change in policy allowing new onshore windfarms to clean our energy supply along with further commitments in the government's mission to make Britain a clean energy superpower, including a new warm homes plan.
- c. The new government's commitment to work with businesses and investors to ensure we have a fair and just transition to net zero.

3. Council Assembly further notes:

- a. That despite a lack of leadership and funding from the previous government, Southwark Council and the local community have brought forward action to tackle the climate emergency.
- b. The council has seen year on year emission reductions since launching our Climate Action Plan in 2021.
- c. That £25m in the Climate Capital Fund has now been fully assigned to specific projects or project areas which will be delivered over the next 12 months.
- d. That buildings account for 79% of emissions in the borough and the council has made great progress in reducing these emissions by:
 - i. Remaining on track to halve emissions in council-operated buildings by 2026.
 - ii. Moving over 2,000 council homes onto clean, water-source heat pumps on the Consort, Newington, and Wyndham estates.
 - iii. Launching the Schools Climate Action Guide to help schools reach net zero.

- iv. Adopting ambitious planning policies which go further than the London Plan and require new developments in Southwark to achieve higher green standards and more operational carbon reductions.
 - v. Encouraging private sector competition in the north of the borough for building low-carbon office space.
 - vi. Introducing a green buildings fund, using developer contributions to subsidise the decarbonization of buildings in the borough.
- e. That transport contributes significant carbon and other toxic emissions which Southwark has made progress on by:
- i. Reducing the need to own a car through the streets through the Streets for People campaign, which also includes cleaning air by reducing traffic around schools and in Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.
 - ii. Encouraging uptake of active travel, particularly in cycling with £2.5m committed to install 3,000 new cycle hangars, and the opening of new cycle routes.
 - iii. Making it easier for people to walk and wheel in Southwark, with a target of 87% of journeys being made by walking, cycling or wheeling by 2030.
 - iv. Campaigning for an extension of the Bakerloo Line and improving all forms of public transport.
 - v. Where driving remains a necessity, encouraging the uptake of EV cars by rolling out over a 1,000 new EV charging points by 2026.
- f. That the natural environment needs to be preserved and expanded in order to combat the climate emergency, which Southwark is achieving by:
- i. Making Southwark the first inner London borough to have over 100,000 trees on council land, providing greater shade for residents and cooling the borough during hot weather, with 13,000 trees planted since 2022.
 - ii. Having some of the best parks in London, with 30 parks maintaining their green flag status.
 - iii. Rolling out the Biodiversity Fund, which will provide £500,000-worth of grants to projects which will increase biodiversity and resilience to climate change.

- iv. Establishing a new park in Canada Water as part of the area's development, designed in consultation with residents and creating new green space in the north of the borough.
 - g. That for the climate emergency to be tackled, the economy must be cleaner and greener, and that the council is leading the way in this area by:
 - i. Launching the Southwark Green Finance Initiative, with £1m raised for green projects in the borough in round one, and the second round currently open.
 - ii. Creating 1,817 green jobs since 2022 and on track to surpass our target of 2,000 by 2026.
 - iii. Establishing a Green Skills Hub at London South Bank University, so local residents can enter rewarding careers in the green sector.
 - iv. Focusing the Southwark Construction Skills Centre on developing skills for retrofitting homes and buildings, ensuring the workforce has the capacity to decarbonise the borough.
 - v. Increasing recycling rates across the borough and rolling out food waste recycling on estates.
 - vi. Cutting the council's own emissions, including reducing the carbon footprint of the pension fund by 83%.
 - h. The renewable and sustainable energy are essential for the borough's future, which is being addressed by:
 - i. The Southwark Community Energy Fund, providing £400,000 to 22 projects schools and faith groups to make green improvements to their buildings and make them more efficient.
 - ii. Exploring renewable energy options within the LASER Energy contract including a potential Green Power Purchase Agreement with other councils.
 - iii. Improving infrastructure across the borough to more efficient systems, such as upgrading all of our streetlights to LEDs by 2026.
4. Council Assembly recognises, celebrates and thanks:
- a. The commitment of the community, residents and organisations to reducing emissions in Southwark, including the Community Stakeholder Panel, Citizens' Jury on Climate Change, Southwark Climate Action Schools, Southwark Climate Collective, the Southwark Biodiversity Partnership and others who have played their

part in tackling the climate emergency.

- b. Participants in Southwark's annual Climate Day, with residents and organisations showcasing their fantastic work to combat the climate emergency in Southwark and over 350 people who live, work and spend time in the borough coming together to learn how they can play their part.

5. Council Assembly therefore resolves to call upon Cabinet to:

- a. Continue its nationally leading campaign on *Securing the Future of Council Housing*, working with the new Labour government and Southwark's coalition of over 100 councils to establish a new 'Green and Decent Homes Programme' for councils and housing associations to decarbonise our country's social homes.
- b. Help establish 'Retrofit London' – a hub of retrofit expertise to help decarbonise the city.
- c. Update the hugely successful climate strategy and climate action plan, utilising the opportunity of working with a new government to ensure the council has a big an impact as possible in helping the country reach net zero.
- d. Bring forward its early climate review of the Southwark Plan in 2025 to ensure that policies on energy and sustainability represent current best practice.
- e. Continue its work on Streets for People, bringing forward an ambitious new action plan.
- f. Bring forward a new plan for enhancing and expanding green spaces across the borough.
- g. Ensure that the climate emergency plays a central role in Southwark 2030, applying to each goal and seeking opportunities to make even greater progress toward net zero.
- h. Continue to campaign for the upgrade and extension of the Bakerloo line, which would take 20,800 cars off our roads every day.
- i. Continue and strengthen the council's partnerships with neighbouring boroughs, Greater London Authority, the Local Government Association and the new government in order to ensure Southwark has the resources it needs to be a net zero borough.
- j. Work with and support residents, organisations and businesses toward a collective goal of a fair transition to net zero.

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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