



COUNCIL MEETING – 26 SEPTEMBER 2019

PETITION DEBATE

Motion to debate the petition: 'Declare a climate emergency in Islington and pledge to reach net zero emissions by 2030'

Moved by Cllr Claudia Webbe
Seconded by Cllr Satnam Gill

This Council notes that:

- In October 2014 this Council agreed to introduce measures to encourage members of the public to actively participate in Full Council meetings, including allowing questions without notice to be asked of members of the Executive and the Chairs of Scrutiny committees, making it easier for members of the public to set up petitions by introducing e-petitions, and allowing a debate at an ordinary meeting of full Council if a petition attracts 2,000 signatures or more.
- A petition was received at the Council meeting on 27 June 2019 which had over 2,000 signatures.

This Council resolves to:

- Continue to encourage residents to participate in local democracy by carefully considering the concerns raised in the petition and to undertake the debate in a spirit of openness and transparency.

The text of the petition is set out overleaf.

Petition received at the 27 June 2019 meeting of the Council

Declare a climate emergency in Islington and pledge to reach net zero emissions by 2030

We the undersigned are petitioning Islington Council because:

1. Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt around the world. Global temperatures have already increased by 1 degree Celsius from pre-industrial levels. Atmospheric CO₂ levels are above 400 parts per million (ppm). This far exceeds the 350 ppm deemed to be a safe level for humanity;

2. In order to reduce the chance of runaway Global Warming and limit the effects of Climate Breakdown, it is imperative that we keep global warming below 1.5°C. This means reducing global net carbon emissions to zero by the middle of the century according to the IPCC;

3. The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in October, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared to a 1.5°C rise, and told us that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities;

4. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, infrastructure, etc., to make low carbon living easier and the new norm;

5. Islington Council has already shown foresight and leadership when it comes to addressing the issue of Climate Breakdown by committing to decarbonise its pension fund, implementing a car-free development policy, and funding district heat networks and energy from waste production (among other achievements);

6. Unfortunately, our current plans and actions are not enough. The world is on track to overshoot the Paris Agreement targets. In order to have any chance of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050, the world's wealthier countries and communities have a duty to lead the way and reduce emissions at a faster rate;

7. We welcome action by the London Assembly, Bristol City Council and other city councils around the world declaring and committing resources to tackling the Climate Emergency and becoming carbon neutral by 2030. We acknowledge that Islington does not have the powers and funding to meet this target in isolation, and will need to work with regional and national government to achieve net zero carbon emissions.

8. Reducing carbon emissions and enabling a more sustainable way of life will result in a significant benefit to the health and wellbeing of people living in Islington.

References:

1. Fossil CO2 & GHG emissions of all world countries, 2017:
<http://edgar.jrc.ec.europa.eu/overview.php?v=CO2andGHG1970-2016&dst=GHGpc>
2. World Resources Institute: <https://www.wri.org/blog/2018/10/8-things-you-need-know-about-ipcc-15-c-report>
3. The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, pub 6/10/18:
<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sr15/>
4. Cross-party support for Bristol Climate Emergency measure:
<https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/bristol-declares-climate-emergency-and-pledges-to-become-carbon-neutral-by-2030/>
5. Green Party Bristol. (2018) Greens declare a Climate Emergency and bring Bristol's CO2 emissions target forwards 20 years. Available at:
<https://bristolgreenparty.org.uk/news/greens-declare-a-climate-emergency-and-bring-brisstols-co2-emissions-target-forwards-20-years>

Therefore we petition Islington council to resolve to:

1. Declare a 'Climate Emergency';
2. Pledge to make Islington carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3)
3. Work with other governments (both within London, the UK and internationally) to determine and implement best practice methods to achieve net zero emissions;
4. Call on the Mayor of London and Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible;
5. Continue to work with partners across the borough to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans, ensuring that carbon emissions reductions are embedded in all Council decision making;
6. Report to the Full Council within 6 months with the actions the Council will take to address this emergency, including plans and milestones to tackle emissions reductions within the Council's current control and plans to lobby other institutions to achieve reductions outside Islington's direct control.