



Report For:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 3 February 2020
Part:	Part 1 - Open

SUMMARY

Title of Report:	RESPONSE TO THE MOTION SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL IN OCTOBER 2019 - CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION
Cabinet Member: Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Councillor Mrs Julia Adey Carl Griffin 01494 421742 carl.griffin@wycombe.gov.uk
Wards affected:	All
Reason for the Decision:	To support national and international efforts to minimise the effects of climate change.
Proposed Recommendation:	That: Council resolves to: (i) Recognise that climate change, and the associated challenges it brings, constitutes a global emergency. (ii) Understand that, although it contributes 1% of global carbon emissions, the UK must irrespectively lead by example in promoting change both within the UK and globally. (iii) Note that Wycombe District Council has already made significant progress to date in preserving the environment, as evidenced by its strong recycling performance and the adoption of an air quality action plan. It has recently developed supplementary planning documents requiring 25% tree canopy cover to be included within developments, is at the public consultation stage for an air quality supplementary planning document and has recently launched an anti-engine idling campaign, signing its air quality management areas, so informing drivers of this. (iv) Wycombe District Council declares a climate emergency by supporting the UK government target to be net-zero by 2050,

	<p>as contained in the 2008 Climate Change Act (as amended).</p> <p>(v) Agree that addressing climate change should be considered as one of the priorities of the new Buckinghamshire Council and recommend that it seeks opportunities to achieve a net-zero level as soon as reasonably possible before the 2050 UK government target.</p>
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	<p>Risk: No perceived risk</p> <p>Equalities: No equalities issues – The declaration will cover all areas of the district and everyone is affected by climate change.</p> <p>Health & Safety: Not applicable.</p>
Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Monitoring Officer: Whilst there is no legal requirement for climate emergency to be declared, it is considered prudent to set as a priority in view of the steps taken by other countries following the UN Climate Change Conference, Poland, December 2018 to take measures to limit climate warming. The report also accounts for the motion to full Council.</p> <p>S.151 Officer: There are no direct financial implications of this decision. Any additional financial requirements of any actions that are developed will need to be built into the medium term financial planning framework and budget setting process.</p>
Consultees:	None
Options:	<p>i) <i>Declare a climate emergency as recommended i.e. supporting the UK government target of net zero by 2050</i></p> <p>Evaluation: Declaring a climate emergency as recommended will align us with Buckinghamshire County Council's declaration that was made in September 2019. However, it will put our ambition at a lower level than the other district councils in Buckinghamshire who have all suggested a target of 2030.</p> <p>ii) <i>Declare a climate emergency with a determination to support a 2030 target to be net zero carbon.</i></p> <p>Evaluation: Declaring a climate emergency with a determination to support a 2030 target to be net zero carbon will align us with both Aylesbury Vale District Council's and Chiltern</p>

	<p>District Council's declarations that were made in 2019. However it will put our ambition at a higher level than Buckinghamshire County Council and the UK government who have both set a target of 2050.</p> <p>iii) <i>Whilst Wycombe District Council fully supports the move towards being carbon neutral at the earliest date, it would seem sensible in light of the formation of the new Buckinghamshire Council in April 2020 for the new Council to agree a climate change declaration at its earliest opportunity. It recognises that this is only possible once detailed baselining work on the newly formed council's emissions have been carried out.</i></p> <p>Evaluation: This option will leave Wycombe DC as the only local authority in the Thames Valley region that hasn't declared a climate emergency. It's main point of encouraging the new Buckinghamshire Council to agree a climate change declaration at its earliest opportunity is already sufficiently covered in the recommended declaration (option i).</p>
Next Steps:	Wycombe District Council must continue to encourage, at all stages of its development, that environmental considerations form a large part of the decision making process of the soon to be Buckinghamshire Council.
Background Papers:	None.
Abbreviations:	None

Detailed Report

1. The report has been drafted in response to the Motion submitted to Full Council in October 2019. The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor R Raja and seconded by Councillor K Ahmed.
2. In accordance with Standing Order 12.7, Cabinet "shall report back by way of recommendation to Full Council and the report shall advise the Council as to whether or not the motion should be adopted or give such other advice as is appropriate".

Motion Text (as proposed by Cllr R Raja and seconded by Cllr K Ahmed)

3. World leaders are at last taking an interest in the potential devastation caused by global warming and climate change. Climate Science experts from around the world tell us that unless we switch away from fossil fuels within the next 12 years, we will be unable to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. We face a Climate Emergency. Reducing energy use and switching to clean energy will increase our energy security, improve our air quality, minimise fuel poverty, boost our local economy and provide jobs and training.
4. Wycombe District Council is prepared to play its small part in this big debate by declaring a climate emergency and committing to being carbon neutral by the year 2030. This move

will raise the profile of this vital issue with our residents and enable us to secure additional external support and funding. Wycombe District Council also agrees to sign up to the covenant of Mayors, to track our progress and itself with Towns around the world who are engaged in cutting emissions.

5. Wycombe District Council would no longer exist after April 2020 and therefore the motion has been submitted to Cabinet under Standing Order 12.6 where more detailed thought could be effected and suitable recommendations made for the new Unitary Authority could be developed.