

NOTICES OF MOTION

Report of the County Solicitor

Recommendation: that consideration be given to any recommendations to be made to the County Council in respect of the Notices of Motion set out hereunder having regard to the relevant factual briefing/background papers and any other representations made to the Cabinet.

~~~~~

The Notices of Motion submitted to the County Council by the Councillors shown below have been referred to the Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8(2) - for consideration, reference to another committee or to make a recommendation back to the Council.

A factual 'Briefing Note/Position Statement' prepared by the relevant Head of Service is also included, to facilitate the Cabinet's discussion of each Notice of Motion.

### **(a) Climate Emergency and the Inclusion of Ecological Emergency (Councillor Hodgson)**

*'That DCC amends the Declaration of a Climate Emergency to include an Ecological Emergency'.*

### **Briefing Note / Position Statement from the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment**

In February 2019, Devon County Council (DCC) declared a climate emergency. In doing so, the first expectation was to increase the ambition of the DCC Climate Change Strategy and Corporate Energy Policy; the second was to facilitate stronger Devon-wide action through collaboration at a strategic, community and individual level. It was this decision that, subsequently, led to the establishment of the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group (DCERG) in order to provide a strategic and joined-up approach to the Devon Climate Emergency. On this basis, all decisions relating to the Devon Climate Emergency are now taken collaboratively through DCERG.

This issue of how environmental and ecological issues are addressed through the Devon Climate Emergency was recently reviewed by DCERG. At its meeting 8 October 2019 agreement was reached on the following points:

- a. DCERG is asked to confirm explicitly its intention to address the environmental/ecological implications of climate change as an integral element of the Devon Climate Emergency, with this scope clarified through some amendment to the precise wording of its terms of reference.
- b. In amending the terms of reference to also make reference to the broader ecological crisis (or biodiversity crisis) that forms an inter-linked global threat. In effect, this would recognise the twin-tracks of climate emergency and ecological crisis.
- c. Whilst the primary focus of DCERGs work might remain focussed on climate-related issues, all appropriate opportunities should be taken to address these in a

way which supports both climate change and ecological objectives (e.g. development of a Devon Nature Recovery Network).

- d. The Tactical Group and the Climate Impacts Group should be asked to consider how the planned updating of the community risk register might be followed-up by work to properly document the ecological risks to Devon presented by climate change, plus options to address these, drawing on the expertise available through Natural Devon. This should include consideration of how these options for future action might best be presented through some form of 'Devon Adaptation Plan', to supplement the mitigation focus of the planned 'Carbon Action Plan'.

### **(b) Reconsideration of Dates for Carbon Neutrality (Councillor Hodgson)**

*'In response to the recent Climate & ecological Emergency protests, this Council will reconsider its date for becoming carbon neutral from 2050 to a revised date of 2025'.*

### **Briefing Note / Position Statement from the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment**

This Council has not previously set a date for its operation to be carbon neutral, focussing instead on shorter-term targets for significantly reducing its own carbon footprint. However, at its meeting on the 9th October 2019, Cabinet considered a date by when Devon County Council (DCC) should aim to achieve carbon neutrality, with 2030 agreed as the appropriate target. This recommendation will be presented to Council for ratification on the 5th December 2019.

In February 2019, Devon County Council declared a climate emergency and agreed to facilitate a collaborative approach to Devon becoming carbon neutral by 2050 at the latest. The Authority has, subsequently, led the establishment of the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group (DCERG) that is overseeing the development of an evidence-led Devon Carbon Plan with the involvement of 25 other organisations which, over the next 8 months, will engage further expertise and community participants. A Net-Zero Task Force has been appointed by the DCERG to develop the Plan. The intention is that the Plan will, collaboratively, set a credible and challenging date for Devon to achieve carbon neutrality.

-----

This Report has no specific equality, environmental, legal or public health implications that will not be assessed and appropriate safeguards and/or actions taken or included within the detailed policies or practices or requirements in relation to the matters referred to herein.

JAN SHADBOLT

[Electoral Divisions: All]

### **Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers**

Contact for Enquiries: K Strahan

Tel No: 01392 382264      Room: G31

| <b><u>Background Paper</u></b> | <b><u>Date</u></b> | <b><u>File Reference</u></b> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|

NIL