

Statement to Council regarding the Carbon Tax Motion – 17th November 2021

I'm here to ask you please to support the carbon tax motion that is before Council today.

In Glasgow representatives from 197 countries made commitments to take action to keep global warming to no more than 1.5°C. However, independent scientific analysis reports that those commitments will see global temperatures increase by around 2.4° C by the end of the century.*

The global south is expected to be most affected by climate change but COP26 was dominated by voices from the developed nations. Fossil fuel companies sent more than 500 delegates to the summit, whilst many indigenous people from nations most affected by climate change were not able to access the meetings in Glasgow.

The commitments made in Glasgow are pledges that are not legally binding. It is clear that targets are not enough and tough financial measures are needed to transform the economy.

Economists widely agree that introducing a carbon price is the single most effective way for countries to reduce their emissions. We need a global carbon tax to increase the relative price of everything that releases carbon. All proceeds from the tax should be returned to citizens in a way that improves lives for everyone. A **citizens dividend** in fact, because climate justice can't be separated from social justice. It shouldn't be the poor that pay for this. A carbon tax will force companies and suppliers to find ways to reduce their carbon output but in the meantime the tax could be used to provide a much needed improvement to public transport and energy efficient homes.

COP 26 has ended. Alok Sharma worked hard to accommodate the competing voices and interests in the final report but it is widely recognised that the resulting agreement falls far short of what is needed. The COP will reconvene next year in Egypt, so this is an ongoing process and efforts must be ramped up in the meantime.

The fossil fuel industries have the ear of the politicians, they are rich and powerful and our government needs all of us to put pressure on them to act decisively. I am concerned for the future of my children and grandchildren and I urge you to support this motion.

Barbara Gordon

* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-59220687>