

# Bath and North East Somerset Council

## Full Council meeting 21 July 2022

### Liberal Democrat Motion in Support of the Climate and Ecology Bill

#### To be proposed by Councillor Sarah Warren

Council:

1. Notes that, along with many other local authorities, Bath and North East Somerset Council is already taking action to achieve net zero carbon emissions and protect and revitalise local wildlife and natural habitats.
2. Recalls that Bath and North East Somerset Council declared a Climate Emergency in March 2019 and declared an Ecological Emergency in July 2020, and also that the UK Parliament declared an Environment and Climate Emergency in May 2019.
3. Notes that the [Climate and Ecology Bill](#) was introduced into the UK Parliament on 21 June 2021 which would, if it becomes law, require the development of a strategy to ensure that the UK's environmental response is in line with the latest science. The strategy would ensure that:
  - the ecological crisis is tackled shoulder to shoulder with the climate crisis via a joined-up approach;
  - the Paris Agreement aim is enshrined into law to ensure that the UK does its full and fair share to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C;
  - we halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 to ensure that the UK's ecosystems are protected and restored;
  - the UK takes responsibility for its greenhouse gas footprint, including international aviation and shipping—and by accounting for consumption emissions related to the goods and services that are imported and consumed in the UK;
  - the UK takes responsibility for its ecological footprint in order to better protect the health and resilience of ecosystems—including along domestic and global supply chains; and
  - an independent, temporary Climate and Nature Assembly is set-up—representative of the UK population—to engage with the UK Parliament and UK Government to help develop the strategy.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. Support the Climate and Ecology Bill.
  2. Write to the MPs for Bath and for North East Somerset letting them know that the motion has been passed, and urging them to support the Bill, or thanking them for already doing so; and
  3. Write to [Zero Hour](#), the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the Bill, to express Bath and North East Somerset Council's support.
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- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
  - *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

### Notes from the Zero Hour campaign:

Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt in the UK and around the world. The global temperature has already increased by 1.2°C above pre-industrial levels, and the natural world has reached crisis point, with [28% of plants and animals](#) threatened with extinction.

#### Climate change

Unless we drastically change course, the world is set to exceed the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit. Pledges, such as the Paris Agreement and Glasgow Pact—and updated emissions targets—are not legally-binding. This gap between pledges and policy leaves the world on course for catastrophic warming of [near 3°C](#).

Following the “now or never” Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [report](#) in April 2022, the UN Secretary General António Guterres stated that “we are on a fast track to climate disaster. This is not fiction or exaggeration. It is what science tells us will result from our current energy policies”.

In addition, the UK Government's [Net Zero Strategy](#) (October 2021) stated that “if we fail to limit global warming to 1.5°C, we risk reaching climatic tipping points, we could lose control of our climate for good”. The 1.5°C goal is ‘on life support’ and only ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector and local communities will help us realise it.

#### Biodiversity loss

The UK is [one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world](#). More than one in seven of our plants and animals face extinction, and more than 40% are in decline. We therefore welcome the [Leaders' Pledge for Nature](#), signed by the UK Government, which states that—if we fail to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030—we increase the risk of further pandemics, rising global temperatures and loss of species. In order to achieve this, the UK needs a legally-enforceable nature target so that, by 2030, nature is visibly and measurably on the path of recovery—in line with the [Global Goal for Nature](#).

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