

## **Matt Cooper statement**

### **Accelerating the transition to a clean energy future**

I'd like to start by acknowledging that this council has made significant progress on tackling the climate emergency, and I commend your achievements. However, when it comes to the climate crisis, I often think of a line by environmentalist Bill McKibben: "Winning slowly is the same as losing."

A year ago, I gave a statement to council about a global transition to 100% renewable energy. When I looked back at the 12 months since then, I was overwhelmed by the magnitude of extreme weather events around the globe, and the lack of proportionate action to tackle global heating. I've picked just one example to highlight how bad things are now: in September, average global temperatures were so far off the scale, one respected climate scientist went on record to describe it as "absolutely gobsmackingly bananas." We are in serious trouble, and as stated in your climate emergency declaration, we must take urgent action.

Burning fossil fuels is one of the main causes of global heating, and we must rapidly reduce fossil fuel emissions year on year. But this is not happening: global fossil fuel CO2 emissions hit a record high in 2022. Today is the start of COP28 in Dubai, where the head of an oil company presides over a process that has been captured by the fossil fuel industry, an industry described by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres as "planet wreckers." Today he has called for COP28 to seek the total phase out of fossil fuels. He's also said that fossil fuels are "incompatible with human survival", and that "we are in the fight of our lives, and we are losing." We must phase out all fossil fuels, yet the only global process that exists to achieve this, the COP, fails year after year to reach agreement on this existential issue. The situation seems hopeless.

And yet, there is a glimmer of hope. At COP28, a handful of small nations have got together to call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. The proposed treaty would complement the Paris Agreement by providing the global roadmap needed to halt the expansion of fossil fuel, manage an equitable phase-out of coal, oil and gas, and lay the foundations for a true just energy transition in which no worker, community or country is left behind. History proves that this is possible. Global treaties are successful in facing global threats like nuclear weapons or landmines, and can be negotiated quickly in the face of a crisis.

So how can you help? Well, the campaign has attracted huge support from local and regional governments, which in turn puts pressure on world leaders to negotiate such a treaty. I implore you to add BaNES to this growing list, by passing a motion endorsing the fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty, which will help to accelerate the transition to a cleaner energy future that's compatible with a liveable planet.

Thank you.