

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

On Thursday 25 July, local residents in the Council Chamber's Public Gallery clapped and cheered as Godalming Town Council unanimously passed a resolution acknowledging its commitment to support the climate emergency and bio-diversity motion put forward by Councillor Steve Williams.

In recognising the climate emergency, the Council resolved to work to reduce carbon emissions and become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 with an earlier target for carbon neutrality in scope 1 and scope 2 emissions by 2025. The Council agreed to audit its carbon emissions to enable it to monitor progress and also to create a budget to provide grants to support and encourage carbon reduction and mitigation schemes within Godalming and projects to encourage our community to reduce direct CO² emissions and to conserve and enhance the bio-diversity of our town.

The Mayor of Godalming, Councillor Penny Rivers, said "We recognise that there is a climate emergency which means we have to take action. I'm pleased that Godalming Town Council is leading the way locally. But we all need to change our life-styles radically - we need to live more simply so that our home planet may simply live."

In supporting the motion, Members agreed on an action plan to ensure that the Council transfers to green energy providers, reduces its reliance on gas heating, has carbon offsetting arrangements in place and will ensure that its vehicles are electric powered by 2030. The Council's action plan aims to achieve carbon neutral status without incurring extra operating costs or financial penalties. Cllr Paul Follows, Leader of Godalming Town Council said "The Town Council has examined all its existing energy supplies and will transfer to a green energy provider as soon as the existing fixed terms expire, this is a simple step that every other business and organisation in the town could take that would make a tangible reduction in CO² emissions."



The resolution was made on the UK's hottest day ever and as part of the debate Members heard how many residents and families had taken advantage of the weather to relax and enjoy the Phillips Memorial Park, but Members were also informed that as there is no public water supply at the park so many residents were using single use plastic bottles to provide water. To encourage the use of reusable bottles and to reduce the use of single use plastic, the Council agreed to work with colleagues at Waverley Borough Council to explore possibilities to provide a public water supply for the filling of reusable water bottles, along with a drinking fountain. The Town Council also gave approval to explore options to install water bottle filling points at locations in Farncombe and Godalming. Members also recognised the need to encourage bio-diversity by agreeing to explore options for creating areas of wildflower meadows within the Town boundaries.

END:

For full details please visit www.godalming-tc.gov.uk

Editors Notes:

Cllr Steve Williams is a Godalming Town Councillor for the Charterhouse Ward and is a Member of the Green Party.

The Motion: Climate Emergency & Biodiversity Motion

In recognition of the global climate emergency and to facilitate the reduction of carbon emissions, Godalming Town Council resolves to:

- 1) Commit to becoming a carbon-neutral organisation by 2030, to cover scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions¹, including an earlier target of 2025 for all scope 1 and 2 emissions;
- 2) Set up an annual carbon audit to include the Council's carbon footprint and a roadmap for achieving this aim by the end of 2019;
- 3) Godalming Town Council resolves to create a budget for grants to encourage and enable carbon-reduction and mitigation schemes within Godalming. The primary criterion for assessing applications to the fund should be CO² savings per pound spent. The budget for the current financial year to be £10,000 allocated from the Emerging Projects Fund, with an increase of the Council's grant budget for 2020/2021 onwards being established within the base budget as part of the budget setting process;
- 4) Include environmental implications of recommendations in officer reports alongside legal, financial and equality implications. These will include the impact of recommendations on CO₂ emissions as well as any other relevant environmental factors;

¹ 2. "Scope 1 and 2 cover direct emissions sources (e.g., fuel used in company vehicles and purchased electricity), scope 3 emissions cover all indirect emissions due to the activities of an organization."
www.carbontrust.com/resources/faqs/services/scope-3-indirect-carbon-emissions/

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- 5) Seek ways to facilitate and encourage our community to reduce direct and indirect CO² emissions and conserve and enhance biodiversity in order to become resilient to changes caused by the changing climate.

We will take active steps where possible to encourage:

- a) increased use of sustainable transport;
- b) reductions in energy use in homes, shops, businesses and elsewhere and a public education campaign in order to facilitate this;
- c) co-operation with organisations seeking to build sustainable developments that minimise carbon emissions;
- d) development and use of renewable energy sources;
- e) production, sale and consumption of locally sourced and sustainably produced food;
- f) any other methods of achieving the aims above; AND
- g) adoption of wildlife friendly land and water management practices.

Having resolved to agree the Motion set out above, Members considered Officers' recommendations in support of the Motion.

In support of the Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Motion, Members unanimously resolved to agree:

1. The Motion should be considered by the Aims & Objectives Working Group to ensure the outcomes of that group are compatible with the Motion.
2. The Town Clerk should attend the Climate Change workshop being delivered by the Society of Local Council Clerks.
3. To adopt the Carbon Reduction Action Plan.
4. Officers to work with Members to establish the application and approval criteria for the awarding of grants which encourage and enable carbon-reduction and mitigation schemes. The outcome proposals to be brought forward for consideration by the Full Council.
5. Officers to work with colleagues at Waverley Borough Council, Society of Local Council Clerks and Surrey & Sussex Association of Local Councils to establish best practice protocols for reporting environmental implications of recommendations.

In support of paragraph 3 of the Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Motion, Officers outlined a number of potential schemes aimed at carbon reduction and mitigation, which could be instigated and funded from the emerging projects fund, whilst the carbon reduction grants criteria is being considered. The schemes outlined were:

- Installation of free water bottle filling points in prominent locations managed by Godalming Town Council in Godalming & Farncombe.
- In collaboration with Waverley Borough Council, installation of a free water bottle filling point and fountain within the Phillips Memorial Park.
- In collaboration with Waverley Borough Council and the Godalming Joint Burial Committee re-wild 2 acres of land at Eashing Cemetery.
- Work with community groups and volunteers to support and encourage vulnerable groups within the community in the transition from incandescent and CFL lighting to LED lighting.

Members indicated support for the projects and agreed that Officers be authorised to progress with the planning of each proposal.

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