

Rother District Council

Report to	-	Council
Date	-	16 September 2019
Report of the	-	Executive Director
Subject	-	Rother District Council Alliance – Climate Change Motion

Background

1. Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt around the world. Global temperatures have already increased by 1°C from pre-industrial levels. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2018 report states that a global temperature rise of above 1.5°C brings greater risk to human life including:
 - extreme floods, causing damage to homes, buildings, infrastructure, crops and farmland;
 - rising sea levels particularly affecting coastal areas, potentially up to 1m in Rother's coastal communities;
 - extreme heat, bringing drought and associated health problems;
 - loss of half the world's insects vital for pollination and wild life;
 - increased food and fuel poverty for all, especially the most disadvantaged; and
 - higher energy costs.
2. In order to reduce the chance of runaway Global Warming and limit the effects of Climate Breakdown, it is imperative that we as a species reduce our CO₂eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible.
3. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, infrastructure, etc., to make low carbon living easier and the new norm.
4. Carbon emissions result from both production and consumption.
5. Our current plans and actions are not enough. The world is on track to overshoot the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit before 2050.
6. The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in October 2018, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared to a 1.5°C, and told us that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities.
7. Local Councils around the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing resources to address this emergency.

Rother District Council believes that:

1. All governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts of Climate Breakdown, and local governments that recognise this

should not wait for their national governments to change their policies. It is important for Rother District Council and other Councils to commit to carbon neutrality as quickly as possible by 2030 at the latest.

2. Towns, Cities and Local Authorities at all tiers are uniquely placed to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions; they are well placed to help decarbonise villages and more remote areas as they have closer links with their residents.
3. Bold climate action can deliver economic benefits in terms of new jobs, economic savings and market opportunities, as well as improved personal, social and environmental well-being for people, locally and worldwide.