

Amendment to motion received from Labour Group (motion 1)

Proposed by: Councillor David Smith

Seconded by: Councillor Adam Brown

Poor air quality is among the greatest health threats **a matter of concern** in West Northamptonshire. The British Heart Foundation attributed 1 in 20 deaths in Northampton to air pollution in 2017 and predicted air pollution would cause 1,700 deaths in Northamptonshire before 2030.

~~In 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) updated its guidelines on safe pollution levels. This included a maximum annual average of 5 µg/m³ for PM_{2.5}, the most dangerous pollutant which causes heart and lung disease and cancers. Recent measurements from IQ Air shows levels in areas of Northampton are worryingly twice this amount.~~

West Northamptonshire Council have made several commitments to deliver clean air, including signing up to the UK100 Net Zero Pledge in 2022, committing to be 'Clean and Green' in the corporate plan, and inheriting Northampton Borough Council's Northampton Low Emission Strategy (NLES) until 2025. Yet this council still has no overarching policy towards tackling air quality.

~~Recognized~~ Recognised change in pollution levels has been achieved by reducing idling through introducing smart traffic lights and School Streets initiatives. A trial of school streets in London effectively reduced levels of ~~lethal~~ **harmful** nitrogen dioxide outside schools by 23%, whilst the introduction of smart traffic lights at roadworks in Kent successfully reduced car idling and journey times by up to 41%.

This council recognises **that**:

- ~~Poor~~ **More needs to be done to tackle poor** air quality is a major problem that **where it** is affecting the health of residents in West Northamptonshire and **where** pollutant levels are dangerously above recognised safe level's **legal limits**.

Council therefore endorses the administration's ongoing work to:

- **Develop the local evidence base for assessing the health, economic and social impacts of extending the existing smoke control areas in West Northamptonshire through the grant funding of £292,378 awarded to WNC, consulting with parish councils and local communities to inform the data gathering.**
- **Publish and implement a comprehensive clean air policy as early as possible in 2024.**
- **Implement a project with public health and active travel colleagues to pilot a programme of schools engagement around reduction of idling and promotion of active travel. In accordance with good scientific practice, the selection of trial sites should be based on health data, air pollution and traffic data.**
- **Improve traffic management systems to reduce pollution levels linked to idling traffic.**

In addition This council resolves to request the Cabinet to:

- ~~Publish a cohesive clean air policy, pulling together the efforts of LAPs, parish councils and community groups, for their meeting in January 2024~~
- **Commit this council to meet ~~or surpass~~ WHO guidelines on safe air pollution levels by 2028 all relevant legal provisions on safe air pollution levels.**
- ~~Outline its plans for the £292,378 given to WNC to improve air quality for their meeting in December 2023~~
- ~~Consider and explore a trial of the School Streets Initiative for West Northants, looking at available sites, appropriate locations and inviting members and local residents to suggest locations to plan and initiate a trial.~~

- ~~Conduct research into trialling smart traffic light systems for future roadworks in West Northants and any funding available to trial a sensor or AI-based traffic system.~~

Amendment to motion received from Liberal Democrat Group (motion 2)

Proposed by: Councillor Jonathan Nunn

Seconded by: Councillor Adam Brown

In July 2021, West Northamptonshire Council passed a motion recognising the climate emergency. In December 2021, a resolution was passed to sign up to the UK100 net zero pledge, reaffirming the council's commitment to deliver a net zero position on its carbon emissions by 2030 and 2045 for the wider West Northants area.

Since that time the scale of the challenge has become greater, and the need for action more urgent. Climate change is driving extreme weather such as heatwaves that cost lives. Wildlife is under extreme pressure, and species loss is accelerating.

The surface temperature of the world's oceans has hit its highest ever level as climate breakdown from burning fossil fuels causes the oceans to heat.

Following the hottest June on record and a series of extreme weather events, including heatwaves in Europe, North America and Asia, and wildfires in Canada and Greece, data from the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S*) show that the first three weeks of July have broken several significant records.

This motion therefore offers members the opportunity to renew West Northamptonshire Council's commitment to taking action to tackle the climate and ecological emergency.

Motion

That this Council ~~therefore resolves to~~ **redeclares** its recognition of the climate emergency, and calls on the executive to:

- a) Fully Integrate consideration of climate mitigation and adaptation, and nature recovery, into all council decision-making; ensuring that all decisions are compatible with the goal of a zero-carbon council by 2030.
- b) Formalise the procedures for ~~this council and cabinet~~ **council and cabinet** decision-making, with automatic decision referral being made to the Sustainability Manager/and or the Sustainability team for input and contribution to key decisions, in much the same way as finance and legal contribute to sign off of all major decisions.
- c) Commit to ~~taking every opportunity to improve wildlife protection and better management of land for nature, including on council-owned land,~~ **therefore** ensuring wider biodiversity net gain in line with the forthcoming legislation.
- d) Support and strengthen action with partners, i.e., NPH, towards the goal of a zero-carbon, nature-rich West Northamptonshire by 2045.