

APSE Energy

Heat Networks and Climate Emergency Declarations

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Climate Emergency Declarations by Local Authorities

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Introduction

- Climate emergencies – the latest trend
- What is a climate emergency motion?
- Why do we need one?
- What are the implications?



Climate Change - Background

- Climate change has been around for decades
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Reports
- Work of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- How effective has this work been?



The IPCC Special Report

- Published in October 2018
- Hard hitting and a consensus amongst nations
- Last chance for the planet
- 12 years to get it sorted



The Message

- 2 degrees above pre industrial levels is not enough
- The new target should be 1½ degrees
- Or dire consequences
- This touched a nerve



Public Opinion Changing

- The public had never really been too bothered, aside from the activists and greens
- Greta Thunberg in Sweden started a protest movement
- New groups sprung up, like Extinction Rebellion
- The Guardian reported climate change now no 3 issue with the public after health and Brexit



Local Authority Motions

- Local authorities in Australia declared climate emergency motions
- Bristol and Manchester followed
- Then a wave of other authorities
- Finally the national Government declared a climate emergency



The Legal Framework

- Set down by the Climate Change Act 2008
- The target is 80% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, against a 1990 baseline
- Committee on Climate Change advice
- New Statutory Instrument to raise this to 100%



Climate Emergency Motions

- What are we pledging?
- Is it net zero carbon by 2030 for the Council or the whole area?
- Precedent motions being circulated
- Examples of motions



Choosing A Target

- Climate or energy?
- A scientific basis
- Definitions
- The Council or the whole area?
- Achievable or not?



Local Authority Roles

- The Council's own activities
- Community leadership
- A regulatory role
- The service provider role



Political Risk

- Primary risk is reputational
- Do we have the evidence of what can be achieved?
- Be open and honest about the challenge
- Choose the target carefully



Conclusions

- Local authorities have a pivotal role to play in this space
- As community leaders, they can show the Government the way forwards
- But they need to tread carefully and be committed themselves, rather than be following a trend
- The key is to have a clear action plan



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