



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB
Telephone 01453 766321 • Facsimile 01453 750932
www.stroud.gov.uk

Council

Members of the Public's Questions to Full Council answered by Councillor Simon Pickering, Chair of Environment Committee

Question from Katerina Hasapopoulos

1. The question I would like the whole committee to answer is - by way of a show of hands as to who in the council has read the IPCC report and understood the time-frame and emergency that we are in. It would be good to hear from the chair what their understanding is for the climate emergency

Answer 1. This is a good question

However I would suggest that the fact the Climate Change Emergency Motion was supported unanimously at both Environment Committee and Strategy and Resources indicates that councilors whether or not they have read the full IPCC report (October 2018) do understand the implications of this report .

With regard to the second part of the question I cannot answers for individual members of the council. The term Climate Change Emergency has only recently come into common use in this county since the IPCC report in October 2018, although it has been used in other countries since at least 2016 maybe longer . My understanding of the term would be that the increases in greenhouse gases since the industrial revolution are now at such a level that they are causing unprecedented changes to the world's weather patterns.

Questions from Senan Clifford

2. My question to the Full Council Meeting on Thursday 24th Jan concerns SDC response to declaring a Climate Emergency:

'In the meeting of the Budget and Resources committee last week, the chair Doina suggested the importance of things being 'done properly' in Council business. Does the Council feel it has behaved 'properly' in the light of the IPCC report of Oct 2018 which stated that to meet the aspirational target of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrialisation levels, there would need to be very rapid, total transformation of all aspect of our civilisation'?

Answer 2. Local councils in England have rules and guidance by which they operate which have evolved over hundreds of years . At times I find these very frustrating as I am sure do other councillors, officers and members of the public. Technically the council did act properly at the Strategy and Resources committee meeting. Whether the council is moving fast enough in light of the IPCC report probably only time will tell.

A Climate Emergency was announced by the Stroud District Council Administration on 16th November 2018 which pledged to “do everything within the Council’s power to make Stroud District Carbon Neutral by 2030“ making it the third council in England to make such a declaration. This public call for action was followed up by a motion to the Environment Committee on 13th December 2018 which was passed with unanimous support from all political parties.

As a council Stroud has a long record with cross party support in addressing environmental issues (I have a whole 40 minutes presentation on progress to date) . Stroud District council started monitoring it's environmental impact in 1999 and in 2007 adopted a 20 year environment strategy.

By 2015 it became the first carbon neutral council in Europe by more than offsetting the emissions from it's own operations (2925 tCo2e) by policy interventions mainly through insulation of council and private houses throughout the whole district (3,275 tCo2e) on audited saving alone each year. More recently the introduction of the food waste collection scheme taking the waste to an anaerobic digestion is now making very large and significant reductions in the release of greenhouse gasses each year.

Many of the activities required for Stroud District to become Carbon Neutral are not within the direct control of the Council. The implementation plan will need to be rapidly developed in partnership with the citizens and a wide range of partners . A crucial role for the council will be to provide leadership to enable the dramatic changes required.