

7 – Administration Motion for Debate - regarding the Climate emergency – Conservative group amendment

Proposer – Cllr Peter Golds

Seconder – Cllr Andrew Wood

Amendments showed in bold red and underlined:

This Council notes:

1. In March 2019, Tower Hamlets became one of the first councils in the country to declare a climate emergency, **more than three years after the Paris Agreement was signed;**
2. **That the Oxford English dictionary defines emergency as a “situation requiring immediate action”**
3. The Council has committed to becoming a net zero carbon Council by 2025 and a net zero carbon borough by 2050;
4. The Council is implementing its Net Zero Carbon Action Plan which sets out the aim to do all we can to reach zero carbon by 2025, including actions around the new Town Hall, procurement, the electrification of the council’s vehicle fleet, amongst other actions. The Net Zero Carbon 2025 action plan sets out our commitment to tackling the climate emergency:
<https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=165906>
5. The council is delivering against its climate emergency ambitions through a number of actions and decisions including:
 1. Switching to a renewable energy supplier – in October 2019 LBTH transferred to a 100% renewable electricity tariff **more than ten years after it was possible to do so.**
 2. The Pensions Committee have actively engaged with the climate change agenda and are looking at revising their investment strategy towards a greener portfolio
 3. Commenced a Sustainable Workplace programme to instil sustainable behaviours for council employees including: promoting resource efficiency (reducing energy use; moving to paperless working); reduction in single use plastics including elimination of plastic cups from buildings; and introduction of food waste collection to council offices to reduce waste being sent to landfill and incineration.
 4. **Tower Hamlets has one of the worse records in the country for dealing with litter and punishing fly tipping.**
 5. Adoption of Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy which sets out our vision and priorities for travel in Tower Hamlets from 2020 – 2041 through sustainable means of transport
 6. **Which will include enforcement of parking restrictions on double yellow lines as opposed to the recent situation in Blackwall where a resident parked a vehicle so regularly on double yellow lines, without penalties that it could be seen on Google Maps. Ensuring that parking fines are collected, rather than the situation where one person alone ran up unpaid fines of over £30,000 for a single vehicle and when the council describes no residences as car free, this means that rather than the current situation whereby the developments and surrounding streets are clogged with residents ignoring the car free status because of the lack of enforcement by estate management and the Council.**
 7. Commenced the Liveable Streets programme which aims to improve the look and feel of public spaces in neighbourhoods across the borough and make it easier, safer, and more convenient to get around by foot, bike and public transport **and it seems delay the arrival of ambulances through blocking roads rather than providing lockable access.**
 8. Continuing to deliver our tree planting programme to deliver over

- 1,000 street trees. This programme will increase carbon capture
9. That the Council continue to agree to the cutting down of mature trees well in advance of construction work taking place including on sites it owns despite being areas of low air quality.
 10. Agreeing to the removal of two mature trees on what is becoming the densest road in the UK for a temporary sales office;
 11. Our programme of installation of electrical vehicle charging points across the borough, with 159 new points to be installed between February and April 2021 but none installed in 2019 and 2020 after the emergency was declared except for some test sites. That there are over 30,000 parking bays on Tower Hamlets streets.
 12. That there are no electric vehicle charging points in any Council building
 13. That the Council still only operates two all-electric vehicles, neither of them road worthy as can only be used in a park and the other at the transport depot. That it only has a couple of hybrid vehicles.
 14. That the Council spent £10 million on a fleet of new diesel refuse vehicles a year ago while our neighbours in the City of London now have an all-electric refuse fleet.
 15. That the Council after it declared a climate emergency installed new diesel storage tanks at its transport depot.
 16. That an increasing number of local petrol stations are being lost which has the short term impact of creating more traffic as drivers have to drive further to refill.
 17. That the new Local Plan 2031 only requires new developments to have 40% electric vehicle charging in their parking bays, most new development going through planning now won't complete until close to 2030.
 18. Tower Hamlets Councils record in recent years of locating new schools and permitting new housing right next to major roads..
 19. Adopted Local Plan policies that require all new developments to achieve net-zero carbon status.
 20. Only one Council building has a solar panel or other form of renewable energy.
 21. That solar panels are extremely rare in Tower Hamlets and even rarer are wind turbines.
 22. Commenced a review of Council Assets for Zero Carbon retrofit feasibility and successfully bid for the public sector decarbonisation fund to tackle our highest emitting buildings
 23. Completed initial feasibility for decarbonisation of Barkantine district heating network
 24. Undertaking a review of design standards for new council development to ensure that requirements align to the climate emergency declaration and deliver net-zero carbon objectives
 25. Developed a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for waste and recycling developments, currently out for consultation, which aims to revise planning policies to encourage and enforce waste reduction and recycling
 26. That the recycling rate in Tower Hamlets has been falling for years from 28% in 2016/17 to 19.9% in Q2 2020/21.
 27. Commenced a review of Tower Hamlets Homes properties for Bio-solar retrofit
 - o Other retrofit initiatives as set out in the housing capital programme, and the Net Zero Carbon Plan
 - o Continued delivery of carbon reduction projects: grants programme for schools to deliver carbon reduction measures; grants programme for SME's for energy efficiency measures; residential heating efficiency project
 - o Undertaking a review of new civic centre proposals to ensure design is as energy efficient as possible and the operating environment and systems are

low carbon which we should have already done.

- o Continuing to roll out the phased programme of LED street lighting upgrades to replace all lamp columns in the borough **and missing the opportunity in the early phases to equip them with EV chargers in the base when located next to parking bays.**
- o **That Brent Council has more EV chargers in its Town Hall car park than Tower Hamlets Council has in the whole of the Borough.**
- o Focus on delivering the proposal to roll out flats recycling package, as recommended by the Resource London project “making recycling work for people in flats”.

This Council also notes:

1. The Climate Engagement Event organised for 17th March to raise awareness and demonstrate progress made by the Council and its partners since the Climate Emergency Declaration **as we realised two years were up and we had not done very much yet.**

This Council believes:

1. We continue to face a climate emergency and need to take immediate action at a local, national and international level;
2. ~~That since the declaration of a Climate Emergency in Tower Hamlets, the Council has made significant progress but must continue to focus on this as a priority issue for the borough~~ **That since the declaration of a Climate Emergency in Tower Hamlets, the council has made little progress except in publicity and must therefore focus on actual delivery;**
3. The Council must continue to lead by example but given it accounts for a relatively small amount of the borough’s carbon, it is vital that we use our community leadership role to encourage and work alongside residents, businesses and partners to make changes in order to address the crisis;
4. Tower Hamlets is known for its diversity and we will use positive approaches to engage BAME residents with the climate emergency agenda.

This Council resolves:

1. To deliver its Net Zero Carbon Action Plan;
2. To continue to work with local residents, businesses and council partners to achieve our net zero commitment, including developing an action plan to meet our target;
3. To review our recycling targets and revise our waste strategy;
4. **To make pink recycling bags easy to access;**
5. To set up a new waste and recycling board **representative of the Borough and not just the administration** to enable us to work with our partners and residents which will work towards mitigating issues and help us work towards the aims of our waste strategy;
6. To adopt a targeted campaign strategy to decrease contamination and encourage recycling amongst residents and businesses.
7. **To stop cutting down its own trees or permitting others to do so until there is no other choice, to look instead at pruning trees rather than cutting them down as a compromise and with the knowledge that replacements are being grown in nurseries elsewhere in the country**