

Item 14

Council Procedure Rule 10 - Motions (two received)

Motion 1 – Residents First: Review of Climate Emergency Declaration

This Council notes that:

1. South Tyneside Council declared a Climate Emergency on 18 July 2019.
2. Since then, climate-related targets and policies have become part of Council decision-making.
3. The Council's main responsibility is to deliver good local services, support vulnerable residents and provide value for money.
4. Residents expect the Council to focus on essential services, financial responsibility and local priorities.

This Council believes that:

1. The Council can continue to improve the local environment without maintaining a Climate Emergency declaration.
2. Spending decisions should be based on affordability, value for money and clear benefits for South Tyneside residents.
3. Core services, economic growth and the cost of living should take priority over climate targets that are not statutory requirements.

This Council resolves to:

1. Rescind the Climate Emergency Declaration adopted on 18 July 2019.
2. Request officers to review any policies, targets and spending commitments that were introduced as a result of the Climate Emergency declaration.
3. Report back to Council on:
 - Any financial or legal implications.
 - Opportunities to reduce costs and improve value for money.
 - Recommended changes to affected policies and strategies.
4. Ensure that future environmental initiatives are only pursued where they are practical, affordable, evidence-based and deliver clear benefits for South Tyneside residents.
5. Reaffirm the Council's commitment to clean streets, parks, recycling, flood protection and other local environmental services that matter to residents.

Signed: S. Smith (proposer)
S. Sybenga (seconder)
E. Curry
P. Brown
A. Rice

Motion 2 – Nature Recovery and Environmental Resilience in South Tyneside

This Council notes that:

Nature is essential to the health, to the wellbeing and to the prosperity of South Tyneside's communities.

Healthy woodlands, parks, coastlines, rivers, wetlands and wildlife rich habitats improve air quality, reduce flood risk, support biodiversity and also provide opportunities for recreation and better physical and mental health.

Investing in nature recovery and sustainable environmental management can help future-proof the borough, reduce long-term costs and strengthen resilience to climate change.

National legislation, including the Environment Act 2021, places increasing importance on biodiversity recovery and protecting the natural environment.

Council believes that:

Environmental stewardship should be guided by evidence, innovation and sound science.

Decisions should seek practical solutions that reduce harm to the environment while supporting economic growth, resilient communities and value for money.

Protecting and restoring nature is a shared responsibility that benefits current and future generations.

Council therefore resolves to:

Reaffirm its commitment to protecting and enhancing South Tyneside's natural environment.

Continue supporting practical measures that restore biodiversity, protect trees, improve habitats and expand access to high-quality green and blue spaces.

Ensure environmental considerations continue to inform Council policies, regeneration projects, procurement and major investment decisions where appropriate.

Encourage the use of evidence, innovation and less environmentally harmful technologies and practices that reduce pollution, improve resource efficiency and strengthen the borough's resilience.

Continue working with residents, schools, community groups, environmental organisations and local businesses to support nature recovery across South Tyneside.

Request that progress on biodiversity, habitat restoration and environmental improvements continues to be reported through the Council's existing governance and reporting arrangements.

Signed: R. Taylor (proposer)
T. Leather (seconder)
S. Ford
M. Blair
S. Stonehouse
S. McKeown
A. Muquith
D. Herbert
J. Uddin
R. Rahman