

Submission to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Meeting on
28th February 2019 by Basingstoke Transition Network



Basingstoke Transition Network asks Councillor Hayley Eachus, as portfolio holder for the environment, how the Council will deliver its commitments on climate change without funding for a full-time equivalent Climate Change Officer. At present the post is part-time because it was held by two job-sharers, one of whom has left and not been replaced.

The 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states baldly that global warming must be kept below 1.5 deg C above present levels to avoid the most harmful effects, and that political action at ALL levels is needed. The Government's Clean Growth Strategy (April 2018) says the country needs to de-carbonise its economy; but that needs to work to local level.

The Council has already signed the Climate Local Commitment; but real reductions in CO2 output need lifestyle change. This is where the Climate Change Officer comes in. 2017 Council policy on Climate Change, Pledge 2, says "The Council will support and encourage residents, community groups and businesses to reduce their carbon emissions across the Borough", so there is work in Green Week, home energy efficiency, low-carbon planning for the new housing estates, transport strategy, and fulfilling commitments in the Local Plan. Also, in waste and recycling, incinerating plastic is adding fossil-fuel CO2 to the atmosphere, so the Climate Change Officer should help increase recycling rates and reduce wasteful use of plastic, and work to attract recycling businesses to the town's industrial estates, making recycling cheaper for the Council.

For all these reasons we believe that the Climate Change Officer role should be expanded and ask why it has not been made up to a whole FTE (or more) in the 2019 budget. How will the Council show significant commitment to reducing climate change while making a 50% cut in the Climate Change Officer post?

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