

KING'S SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Climate and Nature Emergency Policy

1. Introduction

At its meeting on 03 October 2019, King's Sutton Parish Council received, and approved, the following motion:

To consider acknowledging the local implications of the global climate emergency by developing and adopting a policy a) to consider the climate and sustainability impact of any actions it takes in its areas of responsibility; b) to do the same for any areas on which it is invited to comment (e.g. planning, transport infrastructure); and c) to consider, as and when appropriate, any actions it can take in its areas of responsibility to enhance sustainability by way of changes within the parish. (Item 99.19/20)

It is now understood that NALC proposes to draft a model policy on climate change for adoption by parish councils. In the meantime, therefore, it is proposed that the a climate emergency policy, as detailed in this document, be adopted by the Parish Council with immediate effect, and reviewed, and revised as the Council deems appropriate, in light of any model policy provided by NALC at earliest opportunity.

2. Definitions & Coverage

The term 'climate emergency' is intended to denote the harmful consequences of human activity on the natural environment, including, but not limited to, the global rise in temperature, a principal cause of which, by near-universal scientific consensus, is human carbon consumption. It therefore includes, but is not limited to:

- i. Carbon-based fuel consumption for purposes of generating heat, light, locomotion and the manufacture of goods, and activities and developments which increase such consumption.
- ii. The adoption, or retention, of activities, practices, and policies which decrease, or fail to increase the use of more environmentally sustainable energy sources (e.g. 'renewables').
- iii. The purchase, use and disposal of plastic and plastic-containing products; in particular, 'single-use' plastics.
- iv. The purchase, use and disposal of consumable goods and packaging and the distribution of consequential materials between recycling, re-use, and landfill.
- v. Activities, policies, and developments which decrease, or fail to take opportunities to increase, the capacity of the natural environment (e.g. tree-felling/tree-planting), and of environmentally-sustainable artificial means (e.g. conversion of carbon emissions into new products), to provide long-term 'carbon capture'.
- vi. Activities, policies and developments which decrease, or fail to take opportunities to increase, biodiversity, e.g. conversion of 'green' space into built

- environment and/or artificial surfaces, the unnecessary maintenance of mowed grass surfaces as against diversity of flora, the construction of artificial boundaries as against natural boundaries (replacement of hedges with walls and fences)
- vii. The adoption of practices which are damaging to, or fail to take opportunities to enhance, an environment which sustains the natural health and activity of pollinating insects.

3. Obligations of the Parish Council

By adoption of this policy, therefore, King's Sutton Parish Council is undertaking:

- i. to consider, with respect to all matters within its responsibility, whether there are potential environmental consequences of taking, or declining to take, any actions proposed; and, if so,
- a. whether any detrimental consequences might be avoided or mitigated by measures which are within a reasonable cost; and
- b. whether any beneficial consequences may be achieved by measures which are within a reasonable cost,
- ii. to consider, with respect to all matters on which it is invited to comment, whether there are potential environmental consequences of policies, actions, or developments proposed; and, if so, whether it wishes to comment, object, or endorse proposals in full, or in part, in light of such consideration.
- iii. to review, at least annually, opportunities within its areas of responsibility to enhance sustainability by way of changes within the parish. It is proposed that such review take place at either, or both, the annual review of Parish Council policy documents and/or the annual budget-setting round.¹

4. To whom this policy applies

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of King's Sutton Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity.

Reviewed by the Finance, Governance and Policy Committee on 14th January 2020

Minute Reference FGP 82.19/20

Adopted by King's Sutton Parish Council on 6th February 2020

Minute Reference 170.19/20 B2

Signed _____ (Chairman)

¹ Friends of the Earth suggests 20 actions that could be taken by parish and town councils to address the climate and nature emergency. See <https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/reports/20-actions-parish-and-town-councils-can-take-climate-and-nature-emergency>