## Shropshire ALC Executive Motion to NALC National Assembly, 4 Dec 2019

The SALC Executive Committee supports the motion from Wem Town Council to request NALC Policy Committee to lobby government to unlock resources to town and parish councils to help them to combat Climate Change in their own communities. In supporting this motion, SALC asks the Policy Committee to review the extent to which support is needed in the parish and town council sector to enable councils to comply with a growing demand to declare a climate emergency.

Over this last year there has been a huge increase in parish and town councils being lobbied to declare a climate emergency. The IPCC's special report on global warming of 1.5 degrees C, published in October 2018 describes the enormous harm that a 2 degrees C rise is likely to cause compared with a 1.5 degrees C rise and confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5 degrees C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities and others.

As well as increasing temperatures and more extreme weather, human activities are also having a massive impact on nature. The worldwide population of mammals, birds, fish and aquatic creatures, amphibians and reptiles has plunged by almost 60% since 1970.

Current rates of species extinction are 100-to 1,000-times higher than the standard rate of extinction. There are also huge health impacts associated with fossil fuels, eg air pollution causes 40,000 excess deaths every year in the UK and reduces average life span globally by 2 years.

To reduce the chance of runaway global warming and limit the effects of climate breakdown, it is imperative that, as a species, we reduce our CO2eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible.

Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, infrastructure etc, to make low carbon living easier and the new norm. The good news is there are many social, environmental and economic benefits in doing so.

We welcome action by London, Bristol and other City Councils around the world to declare and commit resources to tackling a 'Climate Emergency'. We also welcome actions by town and borough councils such as Scarborough, Frome and Stroud and more locally Machynlleth and Oswestry to pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030.

We therefore support Wem and other TC's resolution to

.. Support the declaration of climate emergency

.. Pledge to become carbon neutral by 2030

.. Call upon Westminster to provide powers and resources to make this possible.

We support their initiatives to develop action plans in pursuit of these objectives but acknowledge that parish and town councils do not normally employ Climate Change/Biodiversity/Sustainability Officers and the capacity therefore to develop a meaningful action plan to become carbon neutral by a set time is difficult.

The majority of town councils in Shropshire have declared a climate emergency and this is being extended to many of the larger parish councils and particularly in the recent climate of a General Election that call to action to be more climate conscious is on the political agenda.

There are similar motions having a similar impact including:

Local Electricity Bill

Plastic Free Town

Adoption of the Tree Charter

Adoption of the Charter for Walking Neighbourhoods

There is a need to ensure that such motions are meaningful in their implementation

*Please tell us exactly what other action your County Association would like NALC and its Policy Committee to take if this motion is adopted*.

1. Have broader and meaningful conversations with all Government Departments to determine support for parish councils.

2. Link up with the Carbon Trust to develop a Parish Council Toolkit

3. Feature Climate Emergency at a Future Conference

4. Have a Climate Emergency Champion/Guru.

5. Develop resources to support implementation once action plans are created.

SALC will be seeking the support of the West Midlands CALC at the next meeting on 18 December 2019. We will be seeking the support of the MPs when we meet with them in January.

Wem Town Council has submitted the original motion. This was supported with a similar motion by Shrewsbury Town Council. The County Secretary has met with both Town Clerks to take this forward and Helen Ball, supported by the Executive, will be pleased to attend the policy committee meeting on 14 January in London to present Case Study and documentary evidence to aid the Policy Committee's consideration of this motion.