

<b>Report title</b>	<b>Council’s support for the Climate and Nature Bill and proposal to join the ‘Zero Hour’ campaign</b>
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<b>Department</b>	Law and Governance
<b>Exempt?</b>	No

**Purpose of report:**

- **To recommend to full Council**

**Synopsis of report:**

The Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee has requested, in accordance with Standing Order 27.4(c), that this matter be considered by the Committee in advance of the Council on 27 February 2025.

The full wording of the Chair’s proposed resolution is available at appendix 1 of this report.

The chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee proposes that the Council:

- **Formally support the Climate and Nature Bill, which is expected to receive its second reading in the House of Commons in the near future.**
- **Lobbies local members of parliament to support the Bill.**
- **Formally joins other councils in supporting the [‘Zero Hour’ campaign](#), which has been formed to lobby for the Bill to be passed into legislation.**
- **Inform residents and the local press about the Council’s support for the Climate and Nature Bill.**

**Recommendation(s):**

**That the Committee consider the Chair’s proposed resolution of the Council, and make a recommendation to the Council, for its consideration on 27 February 2025 (in the event that the Climate and Nature Bill passes its second reading on 24 January 2025).**

**1. Context and background of report**

- 1.1 The Council is required to consider motions that members submit in accordance with Standing Order 15.
- 1.2 When considering motions, the Council must consider Standing Order 15.6, which permits the agreement of matters without referring to a Committee in limited circumstances. These circumstances are broadly summarised as: matters of urgency; the expression of views; or the writing to individuals/organisations. Where

there is a requirement to use existing or new resources, or undertake new activity, consideration by the relevant Committee is required.

- 1.3 The Council is also required to consider matters that committees recommend, in accordance with Standing Order 10.1(k) (items recommended by a committee). In this instance, whilst the matter is presented as a motion, should the committee wish to support the Chair's proposal, it would be put to the Council as a recommendation from the Committee instead of as a proposed motion from an individual.
- 1.4 It is however important to ensure that the matter is transacted in accordance with Standing Order 15.
- 1.5 The requirement for the Committee's recommendation to be proposed, seconded and debated are unaffected and would be the same should the matter have come forward as a motion in accordance with Standing Order 15.

## **2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended**

### **2.1 Supporting the Climate and Nature Bill**

- 2.2 Standing Order 15.6(b)(iii) permits the Council to express its support for matters without reference to a committee. On the passing of this resolution, the Council's support would become a matter of public record.

### **2.3 Informing residents and local news/media about the resolution**

- 2.4 This element of the Chair's proposal cannot be agreed by the Council without consideration by the Committee as it is not a matter of urgency, the expression of a view, or the writing to individuals/organisations. However, as the Committee is giving the resource implications consideration prior to the Council reviewing the Chair's proposal, this matter will not need to be considered by the Committee again in the event that it is agreed by the Council.

- 2.5 Due to the Council's budgetary challenges, it is appropriate that the use of existing communications channels be utilised, so that it does not attract additional costs beyond the officer time already budgeted for. Ways in which this element of the resolution can be carried out include:

- A press release
- Referencing in the Council's climate change newsletter
- Referencing in the Council's newsletter to its housing tenants
- A news item on the Council's website
- Referencing in social media activities (where this does not attract additional costs to promote)

### **2.6 Writing to the local members of parliament Dr Ben Spencer and Jack Rankin**

- 2.7 Standing Order 15.6(b)(iii) permits the Council to write to individuals without reference to a Committee.

### **2.8 Writing to the 'Zero Hour' campaign to formally offer the Council's support**

- 2.9 Standing Order 15.6(b)(iii) permits the Council to write to individuals without reference to a Committee.

### **3. Policy framework implications**

- 3.1 In the lead up to, and following the Council's declaration of a 'climate emergency' on 7 December 2023, work has been undertaken to develop a comprehensive strategy to enable the Council to positively respond to climate change. The Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee is of the opinion that this proposal complements these activities.

### **4. Resource implications/Value for Money**

- 4.1 The proposed activities within this report will be delivered from within existing resources.
- 4.2 Given the current financial challenges faced by the Council, it is not possible to allocate additional resources towards this proposal.

### **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 The legal and procedural implications of this matter are covered elsewhere in this report.

### **6. Equality implications**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

### **7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

- 7.1 See section 3 (policy framework implications).

### **8. Risk Implications**

- 8.1 Not applicable.

### **9. Other implications**

- 9.1 Not applicable.

### **10. Timetable for Implementation**

- 10.1 On consideration of this matter by the Environment and Sustainability Committee, the Council will be asked to consider the Committee's recommendations on 27 February 2025 before agreeing its own resolution.
- 10.2 In the event that the proposal is agreed, officers will write to the individuals and organisations mentioned within the report shortly after 27 February 2025.

### **11. Conclusions**

- 11.1 The Committee is asked to consider the recommendations that it wishes to make to the Council.

### **12. Background papers**

- The Council's Standing Orders, as published in [the Constitution](#)

### **13. Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – draft resolution from the Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee

## Appendix 1 – proposed resolution from the Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee

### **Climate and Nature Bill Motion**

#### **Preamble**

The average global temperature has already increased by 1.3°C above pre-industrial levels, and July 2024 marked the thirteenth consecutive month that the world exceeded the 1.5°C threshold. Above 1.5°C, we risk reaching climatic tipping points, meaning we could lose control of our climate for good. Climate change remains a major concern for UK voters with 80% of people expressing they are ‘very or fairly concerned about climate change.’

The natural world has also reached a crisis point, with 28% of plants and animals threatened with extinction. The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, as more than one in seven of our plants and animals face extinction, and more than 40% are in decline. Alongside this, the popularity of Sir David Attenborough’s Save Our Wild Isles initiative demonstrates public concern that UK wildlife is being destroyed at a terrifying speed.

#### **Climate and Nature Bill**

The Climate and Nature Bill, a private member’s (ballot) bill currently passing through the House of Commons, would address the challenge that this greatest, long-term, global risk poses by delivering a whole-of-government approach to securing a net zero and nature positive future.

Based on the latest scientific evidence, the Bill aims to align current UK environmental policy with the need to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030, which was a goal agreed to at COP15, via the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (22 December 2022); and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the UK’s fair share of the remaining global carbon budget to give the strongest chance of limiting global heating to 1.5°C, which was the goal agreed to at COP21, via the Paris Agreement (12 December 2015).

By bridging the gap between the UK Government’s current delivery, and what has been agreed at international levels, Britain has a chance to be a world leader on climate and the environment; seizing the opportunities of the clean energy transition, including green jobs and skills; reduced energy bills; boosting the UK’s food and energy security and creating a nature-rich UK.

#### **Runnymede Council notes that:**

The Climate and Nature Bill (formerly, the Climate and Ecology Bill) has been introduced in the UK Parliament on four occasions since 2020, including most recently in the House of Commons on 16 October 2024 by Dr Roz Savage MP. Its second reading will take place on 24 January 2025, and it is now progressing through the UK Parliament with cross-party support.

The Bill is backed by [255] cross-party MPs and Peers; [377] local authorities and the London Assembly; [1,240] scientists, such as Prof Sir Partha Dasgupta and Prof Sir David King; NGOs, such as The Wildlife Trusts, Doctors’ Association UK, Friends of the Earth, The W.I., The Climate Coalition and CPRE; businesses, such as The Co-operative Bank, Arup, JLL, SUEZ UK and Ecotricity; and 53,000 members of the public.

The Bill would require the UK Government to develop and deliver an integrated climate and nature strategy, as part of:

1. Tackling the intertwined crises in climate and nature in a joined-up way;
2. Reducing emissions fairly and rapidly for the highest chance of meeting the UK's obligation to limiting global warming to 1.5°C;
3. Halting and reversing the decline in biodiversity by setting nature measurably on the path to recovery by 2030;
4. Taking responsibility for the UK's overseas emissions and ecological footprints;
5. Prioritising nature in decision-making, and ending fossil fuel imports and production as rapidly as possible;
6. Ensuring that no-one and no community is left behind in the just transition by providing retraining for those currently working in fossil fuel industries; and
7. Involving citizens in finding a fair way forward via an independent, representative and temporary 'Climate and Nature Assembly', in order to bring public opinion along with the pace of change required.

**Runnymede Council therefore resolves to:**

1. Support the Climate and Nature Bill;
2. Inform local residents, and inform local press/media, of our motion, via the means set out in the accompanying paper;
3. Write to Dr Ben Spencer MP and Jack Rankin MP to inform them that our motion has been passed, urging them to support the Bill;
4. Write to Zero Hour, the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the Bill, expressing our official support ([councils@zerohour.uk](mailto:councils@zerohour.uk)); and
5. Offer all co/group leaders the opportunity to sign the letters mentioned in 3 and 4 above.