

Climate Emergency Consultation Briefing from Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire.

For more information email leicesterclimateaction@gmail.com

**Please take part in Leicester City Council's
Climate Emergency Conversation before 9/2/20
- and ask your friends to as well.**

Leicester City Council's Climate Emergency Consultation can be seen in full or by section here:
https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/climate-emergency/supporting_documents/Climate%20emergency%20%20full%20proposals.pdf

This consultation suggests that Leicester City Council is taking its Climate Emergency Declaration seriously, but there will be a lot of local opposition to moving away from business as usual and we need to show the council that there is also strong support for them taking effective action quickly, so please respond to them in some form before 9/2/20 when the consultation closes.

There are many ways in which you can take part in the consultation:

- **Fill in the council's on-line consultation survey** which you will find at <https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/climate-emergency/> This carries maximum weight with the council.
- **Write a personal letter** and email it to sustainability@leicester.gov.uk This letter, written in your own words, also carries maximum weight with the council – make sure it includes your postcode. If you want to post it then mark it “Climate emergency consultation” and send it to Sustainability, Leicester City Council, 1st Floor Phoenix House, 1 King Street, Leicester, LE1 2RN
- **Use our on-line template letter** if you don't have the time or energy for one of the above. If you personalise the template letter adding your own thoughts and feelings it will carry extra weight, but even if you just send it as it stands it will carry weight and be recorded as a consultation response. Email leicesterclimateaction@gmail.com if you want a weblink to this template letter which will exist by 3rd Jan.

What you could include in your consultation response if you want to write your own:

- Your name, address and postcode
- Say you support them consulting on this and look forward to them putting together an action plan and acting on it.
- Say what important things you feel are missing from the potential actions which the council could take
See our table below for ideas about the important things we feel are missing.
- Say which of the potential actions they list you most support and why.
If you don't want to read the whole consultation, you could choose the section you are most interested in and comment on that. Their categories which you can find in their consultation document are At home; Travel and Transport; Our choices as consumers; Waste; At Work; Land use, green space and development. We include some of our thoughts in page 3 of this briefing.
- Say if there are potential actions the consultation lists which you would not support and why
- If you use our template letter, please make sure your personalised bit is at the top and clearly visible

It's up to you how long or short your submission is, but please try to include some of the important points in the table on page 3.

Please don't get overwhelmed by the table, you can just use the left-hand column and pick the bits which matter to you.

The rest of this briefing contains:

Page 3: a table of the **big important things which we feel this consultation does not cover** and that the council urgently needs to do. It would be great if you could include some of these in your letter/submission.

Page 4 and 5: **examples of things which the council could do** around education, housing and energy, transport, biodiversity etc. which are not in the council's consultation document, or are only mentioned in passing. They are ideas and thoughts, not things you need to write about unless you are inspired to.

The council must set annual, measurable carbon reduction goals for Leicester to achieve net zero greenhouse emissions by 2030, use these as a **carbon budget** in council decision making, and **publish annual independent and audited reports to the public on progress** in meeting climate change targets.

IMPORTANT ACTIONS THE COUNCIL COULD AND SHOULD TAKE	EXAMPLES	HOW THEY COULD DO IT
<p>Review the Local Plan, Strategic Growth Plan and other strategic plans systematically to ensure they support reducing greenhouse emissions or at least do not add to them. If this does not happen Leicester will be locked into damaging long term policies.</p>	<p>Set requirements rather than targets for standards of insulation, renewable energy generation and proportions of social housing. Fast track planning permission for developers who will build to high standards of insulation, higher proportions of social housing, in ways which promote sustainable transport options etc.</p>	<p>Until they have thoroughly reviewed, improved, and had these plans agreed by government, the council needs to put in place a Climate Emergency Supplementary Planning Document. This means they wouldn't be in such a rush to get the new Local Plan and Strategic Growth Plans in place and could get on with tackling climate change in the meantime.</p>
<p>Ensure that climate impact is given its real value and embedded in all council decision making. Make sure the whole council is committed to, and understands how, to act on the climate emergency.</p>	<p>This requires: Training across the board as well as specialists in every department Ensuring everyone understands they are working to a clear carbon budget Prioritisation by the City Executive, planning committee, scrutiny commissions and high up officers.</p>	<p>Within one year all the City Executive as well as at least two councillors on the planning committee and two high up officers in planning must be trained. One of each of them needs to be at every planning meeting. Within 2 years all senior officers across the council need this training, and the council should be looking for detailed specialist training for officers in each department.</p>
<p>Divest your pension funds from fossil fuels - at the moment this money is actively fuelling climate change.</p>	<p>Your pensions scheme has 200 million pounds invested in fossil fuel companies.</p>	<p>Work with the County council to divest the pension fund from fossil fuels</p>
<p>Support cultural change in attitudes and behaviours and knowledge around what is acceptable and what should be respected or celebrated.</p>	<p>Sharing things like cars, tools, housing. Sharing skills like how to repair, insulate, resolve conflict. Doing things in a low carbon way like having messy green gardens, old mended rather than new possessions, holidaying in the UK, car sharing. Educating and making information available about what can be done.</p>	<p>Train people in useful skills like how to insulate a house, repair things, organise at a street level. Provide spaces for neighbourhoods to share tools, mend things and work together. Put in place support systems such as acting as a broker for people wanting to take lodgers; giving low carbon advice. Promote carbon reducing activities eg reuse shops and repairers.</p>
<p>Systematically lobby national government for change in planning and transport laws and for more resources and money to tackle the climate crisis.</p>	<p>National planning law needs to require all new buildings to be highly insulated and to include renewable energy generation like solar panels. Councils need to be allowed to run their own not-for-profit public transport services.</p>	<p>Work with other councils across the country. Work with Client Earth.</p>

The council needs a set of overlapping strategies designed to work together to tackle carbon reduction and climate mitigation.

They could raise money for the actions in them in many ways including: the UK Municipal Bonds Agency for low carbon infrastructure; by crowdfunding; by applying for national grants; by working with energy companies; by congestion charging.

A climate education strategy could support everyone including individuals, businesses and schools and could include:

- Organise a city-wide, council led 'Climate Change' week to encourage schools, businesses and individuals to focus on climate change at least once a year.
- More staff for the Council's Environmental Education Team
- Ensure every school has a minimum of one teacher qualified to lead on climate change education. In larger schools it will be important for the teacher to be a member of the senior leadership team.
- All schools and libraries to have clearly visible Climate Change and Climate Justice section
- Endorse Leicester Climate Strike as safe and well organised, and support the strikers.
- Produce information and disseminate it, for example:
 - How to talk to your child/parents about climate change
 - How you can set up a neighbourhood sharing scheme
 - Where you can get things repaired
 - 5 simple things you could do to reduce your homes/business carbon footprint

A sustainable transport strategy would support and push people to move away from car use towards public and active transport.

We propose a series of real clear improvements in public/active transport, each one linked to an action making cars less attractive. This series of improvements should be announced in advance as a series and should come in systematically over time so people know the trend is away from cars.

Examples would be:

- Introduce a Congestion charge across the city. Make it cheaper for low income car owners, and extend the blue badge scheme. It should apply to all cars electric and otherwise. Money to be spent on additional Park and Ride schemes as well as bus passes for people on low incomes.
- Close streets outside schools at pick up and drop off time (red no stop zones where the road is too busy to close) combined with free bus travel for children and under 18s. Also work with the county to ensure all school age bus travel to school is free and that the bus services exist.
- City-wide residents parking permits with differential charging as in parts of London, more for additional cars in family, raise fees over time, at same time as free reserved parking spaces for carpool cars.
- 20mph city wide limit on all roads to reduce air pollution and make cycling safer.
- More bus and segregated cycle lanes, make roads one way for cars to make the space. Stop car access to some side streets which link up usefully to make safe cycle/walking ways into and across the city. Only deliveries and residents to have access here.
- Set up or improve football and rugby match day park and rides, require them to be promoted and parking to be substantially more expensive. Encourage the football and rugby clubs to discount tickets for anyone who shows a park and ride ticket so that the park and ride is free for all match attendees.

Food, waste, work and consumerism strategies could include:

- Train people in repair. Find, certify and promote people who can repair specific things; encourage them to set up small businesses; subsidise to begin with to make it financially viable.
- Check and enforce the safe recycling and destruction of all refrigerants at the end of life for products – these gases are thousands of times more powerful than carbon dioxide.
- Ban the use of single-use plastics and require meat-free and low waste catering in council premises and events.
- Encourage all local schools (not just those buying meals from the council) to instigate meat free days and reduce meat and dairy in their meals – the majority of options on menus should be cheese, butter and meat free, with less but better meat in the others.
- Start measuring the city's success by some alternative indicator to economic growth – for example the Genuine Progress indicator.
- Provide tools and training for carbon footprinting and advice for businesses, especially SMEs – have a rating system to say how they are doing publicly; offer awards; give examples of basic things they can do to get the basic rating (for example buy green electricity, % of profit spent on insulation, support for staff not to drive to work or have to drive or own a car to hold the job).

A biodiversity and climate mitigation strategy might include:

- Tree planting targets for the council to plant far more trees (mostly nut and chestnut) on its own land and green spaces, encouraging others to do the same. We are aware that fallen leaves create a lot of work and a slippage problem, but they also represent raw material for compost and help to moderate Summer heatwaves – they also potentially provide food and timber for the future as well as improving people's mental health. There is a lot of support for more trees in Leicester, the council could probably crowdfund for the additional staff costs of managing the leaves, and sell the resulting compost to continue funding these posts.
- The council to stop using pesticides, weedkiller, artificial fertiliser and peat based products and encourage others to do the same.
- Support for rewilding (allowing yards, gardens, verges and other green areas to go wild). Encouraging people and businesses to take up some or all of their paving, put in food trees for future food and shade, and let the rest of the garden/yard go wild. Promote having a wild green garden as a positive thing.

Housing and energy strategies could include:

- Solar on all viable council roofs in next 5 years and support for solar on all privately owned roofs.
- Licencing scheme for all private landlords requiring them to improve energy efficiency to not just adequate but high levels.
- Training people to insulate their own and their neighbours homes; to put up external blinds during heatwaves; to clear gutters and replace tiles in severe weather conditions. Set up and support neighbourhood schemes to get this happening – it doesn't all have to be done by professionals.
- Promote people taking lodgers by setting up and advertising a council support service for people wanting to share their homes. This would make homes more energy efficient, allow home owners to generate tax free money which they could put into insulation, reduce the city's housing demand, reduce under occupancy and reduce loneliness. Such a service could: do security and credit checks; sort out contracts and agreements; offer support and mediation in the event of disputes.
- All solid wall homes to be externally insulated where possible, otherwise internally. Ensure all council homes are done in the next 5 years. Offer loans and discounts to ensure that where whole terraces are being insulated by the council, privately owned homes also get done at the same time. Find, support and promote schemes to help home owners insulate.