

Cabinet – 10 February 2021

Agenda Items 8 (Council Vision, Corporate Strategy and Revised Delivery Plans 2021/22), 9 (High Streets Strategy) and 10 (Wessex Fields – Proposed Land Disposal)

Public Question from Zoe Tees

The Dasgupta Report, commissioned by the UK Treasury, warns of the "devastating cost" to the ecosystems that provide humanity with food, water and clean air. Natural capital has plunged. Sound economics means rebalancing our demands on nature's goods and services to avoid accelerating mass extinction.

Please can BCP rethink its approach to its priorities including valuing the irreplaceable natural beauty of the Wessex Fields and how we should use the changing high street for community well-being as well as alerting the public to the extremely dangerous imminent loss of planetary protective, cooling, albedo ice in its report of 24.11.20?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration Economy and Strategic Planning

Creating a Sustainable Environment is a Corporate Priority and as such, we endeavour to reduce any negative environmental impacts of our operations and take every opportunity to maximise social, economic and environmental benefits across all of our activities, including the projects mentioned by Mrs Tees and Ms Chapman (namely Wessex Fields and High Streets Strategy). Compliance with planning, environmental and other legal and regulatory frameworks is essential, and we work collaboratively across council services and with external partners to meet and exceed best practice wherever possible.

BCP Council's declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency in July 2019 demonstrates its commitment to addressing the causes and impacts of climate change. We aim to become carbon neutral through activities such as energy efficiency, reduced consumption of fossil fuels and waste reduction, both within the organisation and across the three-town area. We also continue to improve the quality of natural spaces to maximise carbon sequestration, encourage biodiversity net gain and protect our local landscape and communities from the impacts of extreme weather and ongoing climate change. The 2050 Climate Action Plan consultation is currently underway, and we urge all residents, businesses and visitors to take part in the survey and share their views on priorities for achieving our climate action targets.

We welcome the findings and sentiment of the Dasgupta Report and hope that these strong messages will help create the policy and behaviour changes needed to tackle the global climate crisis.

Public Question from Soo Chapman

Perfect Planet, the Dasgupta Report and BCP's own Climate Report deserve a covid-type campaign which says, "Look them in the eye and say.....you weren't bothered about their future on a compromised planet." Shockingly, EDFOE's survey report speaks of BCP's delayed, inadequate response to the climate and biodiversity crises.

The failure of Earth's albedo/cooling system in a decade or so with risk of domino-feed-backs and runaway climate change means protective policies are overdue. When will BCP alert residents of the need to reduce atmospheric carbon to 280 parts per million CO₂ instead of our dangerously accelerating mass extinction incineration event?

Response as above