

ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Charlton St. Peter & Wilsford, Wiltshire

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Parishes of Charlton St. Peter & Wilsford lie in the Vale of Pewsey in the county of Wiltshire and share a Parish Council ('the Council') that represents the best interests of the two communities.
- 1.2 In respect of environmental issues, Councillors have no defined responsibility beyond compliance with government regulations, nor does the modest level of expenditure or activity of the Council generate any material impact on the environment; yet Councillors can through their good offices bring influence and expertise to bear on Council activity that can minimize environmental impact and promote environmental good practice.
- 1.3 In respect of environmental impact, however, the Councillors are mindful of the Report of 8th October 2018, issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ('IPCC') on the state of climate science and of the unanimous approving of a non-binding motion to declare a climate emergency by the UK Parliament on 1st May 2019, calling on the government to adopt more ambitious targets for reaching net zero emissions.
- 1.4 Minded of the weight of scientific evidence pointing to widespread environment degradation and to the moral imperative for positive action and for the promotion and adoption of counter measures, the Councillors discussed the issue at their quarterly meeting on 14th August 2019 and resolved to establish a Working Group with a Chair and parishioners with relevant knowledge, to debate the wider issue and to present to the Council the Group's findings and recommendations, which are here laid out as the Council's Environmental Policy, adopted unanimously by the Council on 13th November 2019.
- 1.5 Minded that government (national, regional and local) acknowledges the imperative to act, and that local governments recognise the effects of climate change and environment abuse, this should not wait for, nor be dependent upon national governments to introduce policy or legislation;
- 1.6 Minded that the cutting of emissions (and associated pollutants) also has associated health, wellbeing and economic benefits to the community and that, recognising this, a growing number of UK local authorities have already passed 'Climate Emergency' motions.
- 1.7 The Parish Council of Charlton St. Peter & Wilsford resolves to pass a motion declaring a 'climate emergency' and to publish its policy towards the Environment.

2. Commitment

- 2.1 The Council, recognising the imperative to combat climate change and environmental degradation will make all reasonable efforts not to engage in business or conduct which adversely impacts the environment in which it operates and is avoidable and within the means and authority of the Council. The Council aims to achieve this through:
 - acknowledging that mankind has an impact on the physical environment and climate;
 - recognizing the key issues and the need to remain aware of the impacts and also of the initiatives and activities recommended by experts to address the issues;
 - adopting a policy of minimising harm to the environment;
 - promoting behaviour that limits mankind's impact by minimizing consumption and waste, and maximizing the recycling of materials;
 - setting objectives and recording data to evidence the impact of those objectives on the environment;
 - encouraging parishioners and third parties to likewise act to protect the environment.
 - encouraging the initiatives of volunteers, authorities and commercial business to positively improve the natural environment for the benefit of biodiversity and habitat.

3. Principles

- 3.1 The Council will apply the following principles in the conduct of its business in order to achieve its commitment at 2 above:
- develop awareness of the issues through self-education and, where appropriate, through consultation with acknowledged experts;
 - hold environmental considerations to be a fundamental priority in the conduct of Council business (i.e. holding ‘Planet’ and ‘People’ to come before ‘Profit’);
 - comply with the laws and regulations that relate to the environment and are applicable to Council business;
 - report breaches of any law or regulation to relevant authorities;
 - as a criterion in selecting any third-party service provider to consider the extent to which its activities or that of its parent or associated companies adversely impacts the environment;
 - treat other peoples’ environments as if they were its own; and
 - consider other actions that could be implemented, including (but not restricted to): renewable energy generation and storage, providing electric vehicle infrastructure and encouraging alternatives to private car use, increasing the efficiency of buildings, in particular to address fuel poverty; proactively using local planning powers to accelerate the delivery of net carbon new developments and communities, coordinating a series of information and training events to raise awareness and share good practice;
 - encourage consideration of ecological impact in planning applications, property development and alteration, and on property and habitat management (e.g. hedge, tree and verge cutting);

4. Due Diligence

- 4.1 The Council shall carry out due diligence prior to entering into any contract for the provision of equipment or services to assess the impact on the environment of the supply chain and to ensure the Council does not knowingly, or foreseeably, act in breach of local regulations protecting the environment and where feasible to enable the Council to limit its environmental impact in selecting those goods and services. .

5. Legal liability

- 5.1 For the avoidance of doubt, the adoption of this Environment Policy by the Council does not create any obligation or legal duty on the Council to act in accordance with the Policy or to act in relation to the Climate Emergency.

Neil Golding
Chair, Parish Council of Charlton St. Peter and Wilsford
 13 November 2019

References – external

Summary for Policymakers of IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C approved by governments on 8th October, 2018, which can be reviewed at:
<https://www.ipcc.ch/2018/10/08/summary-for-policymakers-of-ipcc-special-report-on-global-warming-of-1-5c-approved-by-governments>

BBC report on the motion of the UK Parliament of 1st May 2019, which can be viewed at:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48126677>

Version Control

Ser.	Author/Reviewer	Key Revision(s)	Date	Authority

1.	Environment Working Group	Initial issue	2019-11-13	Parish Council Minutes
2.				