

COUNCIL MEETING – 3 February 2021

NOTICE OF MOTION – STRATEGIC THEME MOTION

Merton's Climate Strategy and Action Plan was adopted by Council in November 2020 with cross party support. The Plan aims to make the borough of Merton carbon neutral by 2050, with ambitions for the council to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030.

The Delivery Plan monitors progress towards these goals. In year 1 the Plan records good progress on most workstreams, but further advances depend on external funding for two workstreams which are rated "Red" (RAG):

- Retro fit of residential and non-residential building stock to decarbonise energy
- Decarbonisation of LBM estate and fleet management

The scale of investment required is beyond Merton's own resources, but central government has announced several initiatives to provide grants for projects aiming to achieve zero carbon:

- 10-point plan for a green industrial revolution (£12bn) includes green public transport, cycling and walking
- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (£1bn in 2020 + £0.5bn in prospect for 2021)
- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (£3.8 bn) open to bids from LA led consortia

All of these grants are subject to competitive bids which require extensive research and documentation, yet must be submitted to tight deadlines.

Merton's excellent but already stretched climate change team does not have the capacity to submit convincing bids for all the grants likely to be available in the future. Winning even a fraction of these could be transformational in realising the ambitions of Merton's Climate Action Plan.

Council therefore requests the Cabinet Member for Climate Change to work with senior officers to determine the additional resources needed, and appoint an officer/contractor whose primary responsibility will be to submit winning bids for external funding. In this competition there are no prizes for coming second.

Cllr Edward Foley

Cllr Peter Southgate

Cllr Dickie Wilkinson

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