

This motion recognises the adaptation and mitigation work undertaken by Reading Borough Council in response to climate change risks. The findings of the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicate that there are opportunities to substantially and significantly increase the transformation of our carbon intensive economy. Local investment now will bring substantial future savings and opportunities that benefit local economies.

In light of the above, this council resolves to form and enact policy to develop the ‘zero carbon economy’ that reduces greenhouse gas emissions according to AR5 recommended targets. Actions will include:

- i. Effective adaptation to climate change in the local transport plan, in waste management, in flood management and in energy use.
- ii. Support and investment in employment by promoting innovation and investments in environmentally sound technologies and infrastructure that enable sustainable livelihoods and zero-carbon behavioural and lifestyle choices.
- iii. A further promotion of long-term sustainability and conservation to enhance biodiversity and special habitats, whilst also enabling responses in the viability of new and innovative types of agriculture and local energy and food production.

The Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concludes:

- Human influence on the climate system is clear, warming is unequivocal and recent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history.
- Continued emission of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and long-lasting changes in all components of the climate system, increasing the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems. Limiting climate change would require substantial and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions which, together with adaptation, can limit climate change risks.
- Adaptation and mitigation are complementary strategies for reducing and managing the risks of climate change. Substantial emissions reductions over the next few decades can reduce climate risks in the 21st century and beyond, increase prospects for effective adaptation, reduce the costs and challenges of mitigation in the longer term, and contribute to climate-resilient pathways for sustainable development.
- Many adaptation and mitigation options can help address climate change, but no single option is sufficient by itself. Effective implementation depends on policies and cooperation at all scales, and can be enhanced through integrated responses that link adaptation and mitigation with other societal objectives¹

¹ ‘Headline statements from the Summary for Policymakers’ IPCC AR5 CLIMATE CHANGE 2014 Synthesis Report. These are the overarching highlighted conclusions of the approved Summary for Policymakers which, taken together, provide a concise narrative. The four statements here are those summarizing the assessment in the Summary for Policymakers, sections 1-4. http://www.ipcc.ch/news_and_events/docs/ar5/ar5_syr_headlines_en.pdf