
Subject:	CLIMATE & ECOLOGY BILL
Meeting and Date:	COUNCIL – 18 OCTOBER 2023
Report of:	Roger Walton, Strategic Director (Place & Environment)
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Beer (Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, Climate Change & Environment)
Decision Type:	Non-Executive Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report:	To advise Council of the proposals contained within the draft CE Bill and seek Council agreement to support the proposals.
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Recommendation:	That Council formally record their support for the Climate & Ecology Bill.
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1. Summary

- 1.1 The Climate & Ecology Bill (CE Bill) is a Private Members Bill, currently under discussion by Parliament. The Bill, if approved, would require the United Kingdom to achieve climate and nature targets; to give the Secretary of State a duty to implement a strategy to achieve those targets; to establish a Climate and Nature Assembly to advise the Secretary of State in creating that strategy; to give duties to the Committee on Climate Change and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee regarding the strategy and targets; and for connected purposes.
- 1.2 This report asks Council to confirm their support for the Bill and the objectives contained therein.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The CE Bill was originally introduced into Parliament in July 2021 by Caroline Lucas, Green Party MP For Brighton Pavilion. Having not progressed due to lack of parliamentary time the Bill was reintroduced into Parliament in May 2023 by Olivia Blake, Labour MP for Sheffield Hallam. The Bill is now co-sponsored by a cross-party group of MPs and has the backing of MPs and Peers from all parties.
- 2.2 The Bill received the first reading on 10 May 2023 and is due for a second reading on 24 November 2023.
- 2.3 The Climate and Ecology (CE) Bill is a plan for a new UK law that addresses the full extent of the climate and nature crisis in line with the most up-to-date science. The Bill is the only proposed legislation currently before the UK Parliament that ensures a comprehensive and joined-up approach to the emergency and acknowledges the full extent of the UK's emissions and ecological footprint as well as its responsibility to ensure that it prevents and reverses damaging impacts, globally, so that the least developed nations still have the chance to develop sustainably.
- 2.4 Parliament has yet to publish the text of the 2023 Bill, but it is understood to be broadly similar to the 2021 version, which is attached at Appendix 1. A detailed outline of the proposals can be found at: <https://cieem.net/the-climate-and-ecology-bill-reintroduced-to-parliament-on-10th-may-by-jane-king-nathalie-pettorelli/>

3. **Identification of Options**

3.1 Options considered are:

1. To confirm Council support for the Climate & Ecology Bill
2. To decline to support the Climate & Ecology Bill.

4. **Evaluation of Options**

4.1 Whilst current legislation contains a target to halt and reverse this decline of nature by 2030, there are cross party concerns that the absence of any concrete plan to do this means that the state of nature is on course to worsen, not restore, which risks pushing ecosystems beyond danger points from which they may not be able to recover.

4.2 The Climate & Ecology Bill seeks to create a joined-up strategy to cut emissions in line with the 1.5°C target, while halting and reversing nature loss by 2030. Christine Oliver put the issue before this Council at the Council meeting in July 2023 in posing her question to the Leader: "Will DDC leaders support the Climate & Ecology Bill, introduced in the House of Commons on 10 May?"

4.3 It is therefore recommended that Council formally record their support for the Climate & Ecology Bill.

5. **Resource Implications**

5.1 None

6. **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

6.1 The proposal to formally record the Council's support for the Climate & Ecology Bill is a clear statement of the Council's concerns regarding the impact of climate change and the commitment to net zero targets.

7. **Corporate Implications**

7.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): Accountancy has been consulted on the report and have no further comments to add (SK)

7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: 'The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.' (HR)

7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: 'This report seeking Council agreement to support the proposals of the Climate & Ecology Bill, does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>' (KM)

8. **Appendices**

Appendix 1. Draft CE Bill as presented to Parliament.

9. **Background Papers**

None

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