

Prior to the Forum Meeting on 14.01.2020, Colin Watson from Chester Sustainability Forum provided an update on climate change issues, including the work of CWaC's Climate Emergency Taskforce



Colin divided his presentation into 4 sections

- ***CW&C Climate emergency***
- ***The Climate Emergency***
- ***Cathedral Exhibition***
- ***Update on IGas Inquiry***

Cheshire West & Chester Climate Emergency

Commitment:

The Council unanimously committed to:

Direct the Chief Executive to produce a report to Council within six months to determine the earliest date before 2045 that CW&C and the borough as a whole can be carbon neutral and revise its targets to meet that date (ideally 2030 to demonstrate leadership in the borough). These targets to be managed through the CW&C Annual Monitoring Report, business Carbon Management Plans, the Green House Gas Emissions Directive of 2019 and whatever other appropriate means become available.

Early Thoughts from Colin on this commitment:

- The borough's baseline position in terms of action and carbon emissions needs to be fully understood
- We need a programme of action rather than just high-level plans or strategies
- The Council contributes 0.6% of emissions and therefore all sectors need to be fully engaged to address the remaining 99.4%.
- Members will play a key role, and there will be challenging policy choices
- We need a long-term programme with a clear destination but with measurable milestones and short-term actions

Borough-wide high-level data:

- Borough wide emissions decreased from 6,739 kt CO₂ in 1990 to 4,054 kt in 2016 -a 40% reduction
- Per Capita Emissions: Local per capita emissions are 12t. The UK's average is 5.4t –mainly due to industry
- Of 391 local authorities, CW&C has the fourth highest carbon emissions.
- We will utilise all the area's 'Carbon Budget' for the next century in the next seven years

The Task Force – set up to implement the commitment:

- Chaired by the Leader's Champion for the Climate Emergency
- Brings people together under a common strategy
- Provides recommendations to the Council regarding the development of the borough's Climate Strategy.
- Provides recommendations regarding the Actions and interventions underpinning the Strategy.
- Makes representations to national government, the private sector etc.

And is augmented by "The Advisory Panel"

which provides advice, information, recommendations to the Taskforce from expert perspectives – housing, energy, transport, waste, industry, VCSE, etc.

Borough Wide Stakeholder Engagement

- Underpinned by a range of communications methods, including online engagement, social media and face to face.
- Built on the principle of inclusivity, recognising that the effects of climate change will disproportionately impact the most vulnerable
- Reaffirms its commitment to take rapid action to tackle the Climate Emergency
- Notes that, Cheshire West and Chester is one of the local authority areas with the highest carbon footprints in the UK; and that this creates an additional responsibility for action.
- Notes that Cheshire West and Chester has a strong foundation on which to build a comprehensive action plan.....
- Sets an ambitious target date of 2030 to achieve carbon neutrality for the Council's own emissions.....
- Continues to support the on-going work of the Climate Emergency Taskforce, and Advisory Panel.
- Requires reporting on progress and attainment annually to Council.

Programme for the coming year

- **October 2019:** The Council's organisational emissions;
- **February 2020:** Energy and Waste;
- **March 2020:** Business;
- **May 2020:** Transport;
- **July 2020:** Housing and Land Use;
- **September 2020:** Offsetting and Climate Repair;
- **October 2020:** Final recommendations discussion.

And the Task Force Meetings (open to the public)

- 24 January, 6pm -8pm: Ellesmere Port Library Committee Room -Public Evidence Session
- 14 February –Chester Zoo
- 27 February, 1:30pm Climate Summit
- 27 February, 6pm -8pm: Ellesmere Port Library Committee Room -Energy and Waste Advisory Board

Carbon Awards in place:

- Carbon Literacy rolled out to all staff (20 points)
- Carbon Footprint measured and plan to be carbon neutral in place and monitored annually. (2030 = 30 points, 2040 = 20 points, 2050 = 10 points)
- Business purchases all energy from renewable sources (10 points)
- Business promotes active travel for staff (10 points)
- Low carbon travel plans in operational i.e. electric vehicles / video conf. (10 points)
- Policies in place and working to reduce carbon in the procurement process (10 points)
- For establishments with canteens, meat free three days a week (10 points)
- Gold award 90 or over points, Silver award 60 or over points, Bronze award 30 or over points.

We are being urged to engage with the Council by, for example, signing up for the newsletter or researching the Carbon Literacy Project.

.....

The Climate Emergency

Colin is an active member of the Chester Sustainability Forum – working towards a greener city. He has recently shown this presentation to the local NHS who are about to declare a climate emergency.

A Summary of 2019 – the figures/the evidence:

Startling figures from the Met Office:

- Highest rainfall in 48hrs with 250% of monthly average recorded in June in Lincolnshire
- Highest Feb. temperature of 20.4C in Manchester
- Highest Dec. temperature of 18.7C in Sunderland
- Highest recorded temperature of 38.7C in Cambridgeshire

Public Health England estimated 900 additional deaths due to summer heat wave

And from Copernicus (EU weather service)

- Globally – hottest decade since records began
- Globally –1.15oC above pre-industrial levels
- Globally – CO2 reached 415 parts per million – the highest for 3 million years. Pre-industrial figures show 280ppm. Safe levels are 350ppm (A concentration of **400 ppm** means that for every million air particles, **400** of them are carbon dioxide molecules (0.04%).

And look at what happened in the UK in 2019 – Whaley Bridge dam incident, floods in Chester and widespread failure of trains to name but a few.

The Climate Emergency being widely recognised:

“Climate change risks are high to very high, with a global mean temperature increase of 4°C ... and include severe and widespread impacts on unique systems, substantial species extinction, and large risks to global and regional food security”

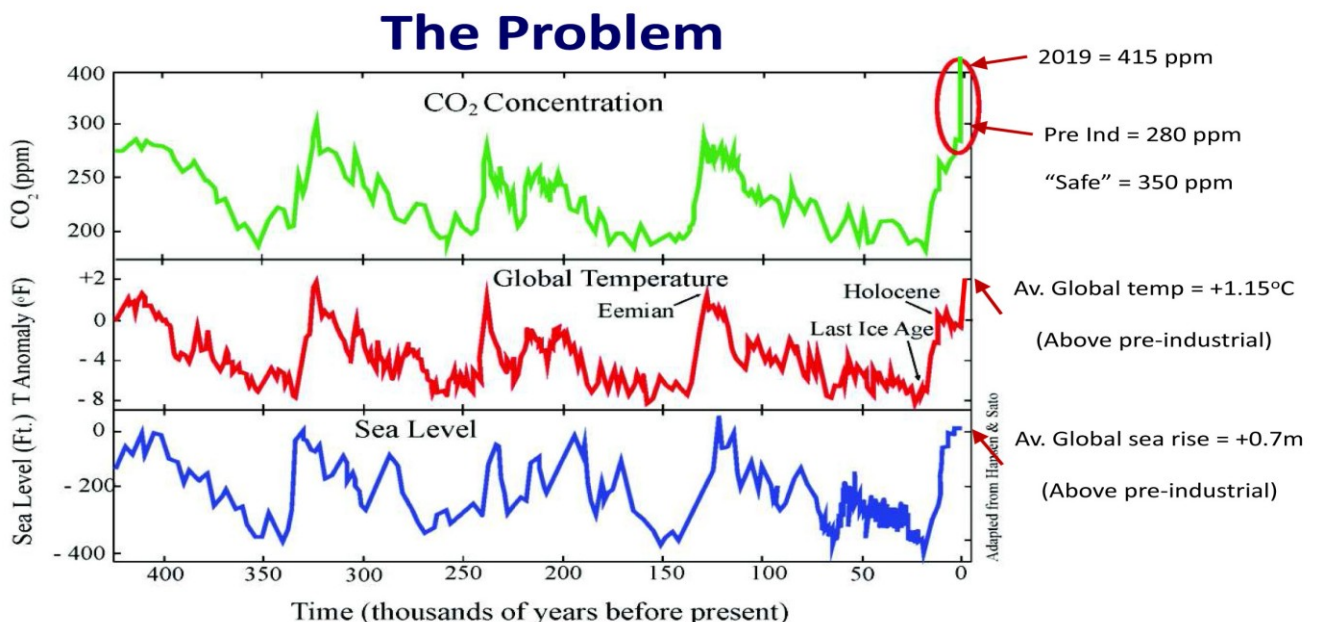
International Panel on Climate Change 2018

“The global financial system faces an existential threat from climate change and must take urgent steps to reform”

Mark Carney –Bank of England 2019

“These new figures show air pollution is now causing thousands of strokes, cardiac arrests and asthma attacks, so it’s clear that the climate emergency is in fact also a health emergency”.

Simon Stevens, the chief executive of NHS England (21 Oct 2019)



- The graph shows that Global Temp rise have correlated exactly with CO2 concentrations
- A similar picture with Sea Level change

Why is a 1.5C rise dangerous?

- “Tipping Points” accelerate change:
- Ice Sheet melts -increased absorption of sun’s rays

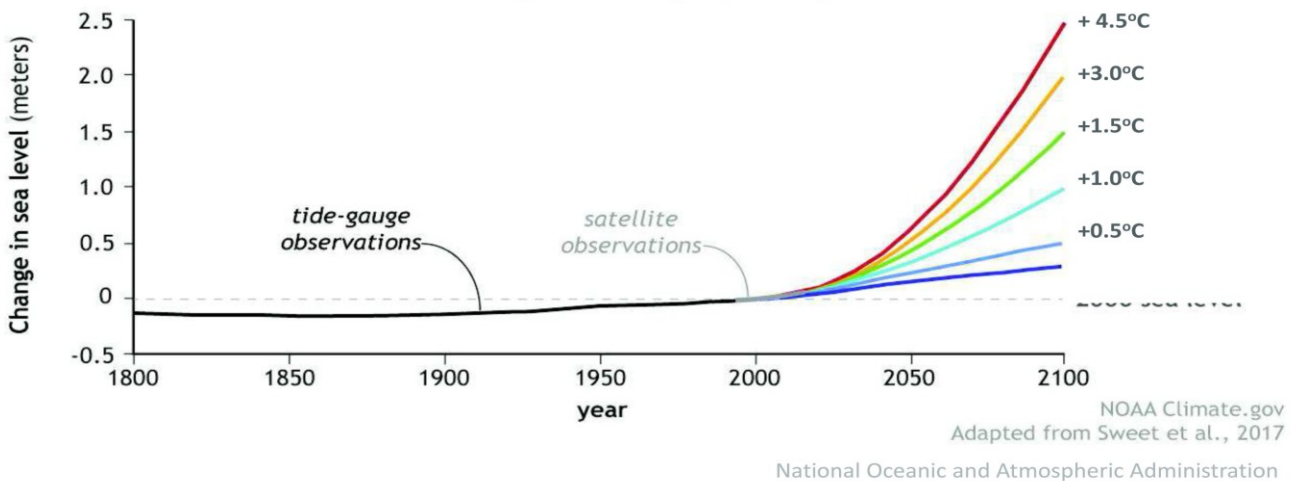
- Permafrost melts -releases CO2 and methane (84 x CO2)
- Amazon rainforest collapses –biggest land sink of CO2
- Becomes irreversible:
- Accelerated loss of food production
- Equatorial areas become uninhabitable
- 1,000,000,000 refugees by 2050 (UN)
- Knock-on effects –migration, conflict (e.g. Syrian war)

Further predictions:

- Global sea level rise

Global Sea Level Rise

Possible future sea levels for different greenhouse gas pathways



- Impact of Australian fires. - 16 times more likely to get fires. 1.9C rise in Australian temp
- Humanitarian disasters as predicted by the Red Cross – likely to affect over 200million people.
- Health risks (insert UK climate change committee chart)
- Health risk from breathing in Particulates (Diesel) - reducing a major contributor to climate change would dramatically reduce 9,000,000 cases of asthma / COPD in the UK - 40,000 deaths caused by air pollution in the UK every year
- Displacement figures 17m people had to find new homes

What is the UK’s response so far to the Climate Emergency?

- UK Climate Change Act of 2008 provides for 80% CO2 reduction by 2050
- This to be reviewed and restated every five years by UK Committee on Climate Change
- Paris Climate Agreement (2016) committed all nations to keeping a global temperature rise to below 2 degrees C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees C
- However, the latest IPCC Report 2018 (International Panel on Climate Change) states we have until 2030 to halve our carbon emissions and we have until 2050 to cease / mitigate them altogether
- The most recent Act is the Theresa May Act of Jun 2019 which commits to 100% reduction by 2050 but excludes shipping, aviation, imports and permits “Carbon Credits”

Conclusion – the Government is not taking enough action

And Finally - Zero Carbon Targets:

- The IPCC has set a target for the UK to be Zero-Carbon by 2045
- The UK Government has set a target to Zero-Carbon by 2050
- Cheshire West and Chester Council has set a target to be Zero-Carbon by 2030

- Cheshire West and Chester Council is asking all organisations to become Zero-Carbon before 2045

.....

The Cathedral Exhibition and Conference - “Our Journey to Sustainability” 12th – 17th May

A week- long exhibition and associated events organised by Chester Sustainability Forum in association with Chester Cathedral. Opening event to include national level speakers. Displays by many diverse groups all working towards a more sustainable future.

.....

Update on IGas Inquiry

Colin gave a very brief update in that the final decision is now in the hands of the Secretary of State and could take up to 6 months.

Links to PDF versions of Colin’s two PowerPoint presentations shown to the Forum can be seen on the News page of the CWDF website: <https://www.chesterwdf.org.uk/news>

AMcC
18-2-20