

Climate Change Task Force Inaugural Meeting – Introduction from the Chair

It's wonderful to welcome everyone to this inaugural meeting of the Climate Change Task Force. I'm pleased that so many officers, Councillors and particularly the Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayor have agreed to be part of this most important initiative.

Greta Thunberg, the young woman who has done so much to raise awareness of this issue, addressed the UN Climate Summit yesterday and her message to world leaders was "we'll be watching you".

Well this Task Force will be evidence to future generations that we took our climate emergency declaration seriously and immediately took action to meet the objectives of that declaration, most importantly to make Enfield Council carbon neutral by 2030.

Our scope is wide: We will look at physical supply chains, Council operations and buildings, staff, residents, landscape, commercial and community tenants, investing in/building renewable energy and many other initiatives.

Some goals of this Task Force will take years to achieve but in the meantime we will build on the success of our cycle lanes, and our push to increase recycling with our new waste strategy. Our support for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods is testament to the fact that we are determined to make our borough a better place for our residents to live. And I am delighted to announce that we've committed to free cycling lessons for particular years across all schools in the borough.

The Chair of the Pensions Committee and I will continue to meet with Divest Enfield with a view to obtaining a timescale to achieve the incredibly difficult task of divesting the pension fund from fossil fuel investments. And we will continue to liaise with Extinction Rebellion in the hope that both Divest and XR will take part in our thematic groups. Their input is extremely valuable and we value our partnership with these organisations.

Scientists have long predicted that climate change will have the biggest impact on the poorest, most vulnerable people across the world and this also stands for the people in our borough.

We are a major influencer across Enfield; our reach goes far and wide so we need to continue to educate our residents as to the perils of climate change so they are fully behind our measures. And this first meeting today is the start of that journey.

Ian Barnes
Chair of the Climate Change Task Force