

OPEN

Environment and Communities Committee

05 June 2025

Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty

Report of: Philip Cresswell – Executive Director - Place

Report Reference No: EC/18/25-26

Ward(s) Affected: All

Decision

Purpose of Report

- 1 At the full Council Meeting of 11th December 2024, a notice of motion was proposed with regard to a fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty. This report responds to that notice of motion.

Executive Summary

- 2 A Notice of Motion regarding a fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty was presented to Council at its meeting on 11th December 2024. The motion was proposed by Councillor Sam Corcoran and seconded by Councillor Dawn Clark.

- 3 The motion proposed that:

The scientific consensus is clear that fossil fuels are primarily responsible for accelerating global climate change, and that the climate crisis now represents one of the preeminent threats to global lives and livelihoods.

A new global initiative is underway calling for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty that would plan the end of new fossil fuel exploration and expansion, phase out existing production in line with the global commitment to limit warming to 1.5°C and accelerate equitable transition plans globally.

- 4 This Council resolves to:

Formally endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and make that endorsement public.

- 5 Council resolved that the motion be referred to the Environment and Communities Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Environment and Communities Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the Notice of Motion
2. Consider whether it would wish to endorse the motion as presented

Background

- 6 The full text of the Notice of Motion proposed to Council on the 11th December 2024 was as follows:

This Council notes that:

- 7 *The scientific consensus is clear that fossil fuels are primarily responsible for accelerating global climate change, and that the climate crisis now represents one of the preeminent threats to global lives and livelihoods.*
- 8 *The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report states that it is unequivocal that climate change has already disrupted human and natural systems and that societal choices and actions implemented in the next decade determine the extent to which medium- and long-term pathways will deliver higher or lower climate resilient development.*
- 9 *The International Energy Agency stated in its May 2021 report "Net Zero by 2050" that in order to reach that goal there should be no new oil or gas fields, or new coal mines, as of that moment.*
- 10 *The Paris Climate Agreement is silent on coal, oil and gas, an omission with respect to the supply and production of fossil fuels (the largest source of GHGs) that needs to be collectively addressed by other means; and that global governments and the fossil fuel industry are currently planning to produce more than double the amount of coal, oil and gas by 2030 than can be burned if the world is to limit warming to 1.5°C and avert catastrophic climate disruption, and such plans risk undoing the work of our Council to reduce GHG emissions.*

11 A new global initiative is underway calling for a Fossil Fuel NonProliferation Treaty that would plan the end of new fossil fuel exploration and expansion, phase out existing production in line with the global commitment to limit warming to 1.5°C and accelerate equitable transition plans globally.

12 *Our entire global community will be impacted by the climate crisis. Vulnerable communities, and those who have contributed the least to climate change, however, will often be impacted most acutely.*

This Council believes that:

13 *New fossil fuel infrastructure and expanded reliance on fossil fuels exposes communities to untenable risks to public health and safety at the local and global levels; and that the economic opportunities presented by a clean energy transition far outweigh the opportunities presented by an economy supported by expanding fossil fuel use and extraction.*

This Council resolves to:

14 Formally endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and make that endorsement public.

15 *Call on the UK government to also endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.*

16 *Reaffirm our commitment to rapidly decarbonising our economy at a local and national level.*

17 *Write to the Local Government Association and raise the need for a planned phase out of fossil fuels, and to call on it to promote the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty among its members.*

18 The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative is a global movement supported by stakeholders including governments, academics, scientists, faith institutes and nineteen local councils in the UK.

19 The aim of the treaty is to explicitly stop the expansion of fossil fuels and to manage a global just transition away from coal, oil and gas.

20 There is no single organisation leading the initiative, it terms itself an idea rather than an organisation.

21 Cheshire East Council recognised the climate emergency in 2019 and committed to the decarbonisation of its own operations and to influence the reduction of carbon within the borough.

- 22 The Cheshire East Plan confirms the council's targets to be a carbon neutral council with minimum offset by 2030, influencing carbon reduction and green energy production across the borough by 2045.
- 23 In support of these aims the council has a Carbon Neutral Action Plan and a Wider Borough Carbon Action Plan, both linked at the end of this paper.

Response

- 24 With respect to the statement of belief and resolutions of the proposal. Committee may wish to discuss and debate the proposals submitted.

Consultation and Engagement

- 25 This report addresses the notice of motion submitted to full Council on the 11th December 2024, and referred to Environment and Communities Committee as the appropriate service committee.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 26 The Cheshire East Council Constitution sets out the procedure for Notices of Motion submitted to Council. A motion referred to the relevant decision-making body must be considered within two meeting cycles. At the meeting to which the motion has been referred for consideration, the proposer of the motion if present shall be invited to speak first, followed by the seconder. The matter will then be opened up to wider discussion.

Other Options Considered

- 27 None – it is a requirement under the constitution that notices of motion should be referred to the appropriate service committee

Option	Impact	Risk
Do nothing	The council would not be in compliance with the constitution with regard to notices of motion	Democratic process and transparency

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal/Governance

- 28 Consideration of the notice of motion was appropriately referred to the committee and is in line with its remit. There are no direct legal implications within this report, as it responds to the notice of motion. The report asks the committee to consider whether it would wish to endorse the treaty and identifies if action is to be undertaken in light of the same.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 29 The matters concerned within this report do not have a direct financial impact on Cheshire East Council.

Human Resources

- 30 There are no Human Resources implications of this report.

Risk Management

- 31 There are no risk management implications of this report.

Impact on other Committees

- 32 The matters concerned within this report do not impact other committees within the council.

Policy

- 33 The matters concerned within this report have an impact on the corporate priority of Cheshire East Council to influence carbon reduction.

Commitment 1: Unlocking prosperity for all

1.6 Carbon neutral council with minimum offset by 2030, influencing carbon reduction and green energy production across the borough by 2045

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 34 The matters contained within this report do not have equality, diversity and inclusion implications within Cheshire East.

Other Implications

- 35 Initiatives to reduce the production and use of fossil fuels will have a positive effect on the drive to limit the impacts of climate change.

Consultation

Name of Consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Statutory Officer (or deputy) :</i>			
Sal Khan	S151 Officer	19/05/25	20/05/25
Janet Witkowski	Acting Monitoring Officer	19/05/25	20/05/25
<i>Legal and Finance</i>			
Adrian Leslie	Lawyer Contracts and Procurement Team	28/04/25	06/05/25
Steve Reading	Accountant		
<i>Other Consultees:</i>			
<i>Executive Directors/Directors</i>			
Philip Cresswell (at DMT)	Executive Director - Place	08/05/25	08/05/25

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Emma Williams – Carbon Manager Emma.williams2@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	
Background Papers:	Carbon Neutral Action Plan Wider Borough Carbon Action Plan