

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

11 December 2018

Questions

James Brown – Resident

Statements and Questions on Climate Change

**To Councillors Jerry Wickham – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection; and
Toby Sturgis – Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property**

Declaration of Rebellion

We hold the following to be true:

This is our darkest hour.

Humanity finds itself embroiled in an event unprecedented in its history. One which, unless immediately addressed, will catapult us further into the destruction of all we hold dear: this nation, its peoples, our ecosystems and the future of generations to come.

The science is clear:- we are in the sixth mass extinction event and we will face catastrophe if we do not act swiftly and robustly.

Biodiversity is being annihilated around the world. Our seas are poisoned, acidic and rising. Flooding and desertification will render vast tracts of land uninhabitable and lead to mass migration.

Our air is so toxic that the United Kingdom is breaking the law. It harms the unborn whilst causing tens of thousands to die. The breakdown of our climate has begun. There will be more wildfires, unpredictable super storms, increasing famine and untold drought as food supplies and fresh water disappear.

The ecological crises that are impacting upon this nation, and indeed this planet and its wildlife can no longer be ignored, denied nor go unanswered by any beings of sound rational thought, ethical conscience, moral concern, or spiritual belief.

In accordance with these values, the virtues of truth and the weight of scientific evidence, we declare it our duty to act on behalf of the security and well-being of our children, our communities and the future of the planet itself.

We, in alignment with our consciences and our reasoning, declare ourselves in rebellion against our Government and the corrupted, inept institutions that threaten our future.

The wilful complicity displayed by our government has shattered meaningful democracy and cast aside the common interest in favour of short-term gain and private profits.

When Government and the law fail to provide any assurance of adequate protection, as well as security for its people's well-being and the nation's future, it becomes the right of its citizens to seek redress in order to restore dutiful democracy and to secure the solutions needed to avert catastrophe and protect the future. It becomes not only our right, it becomes our sacred duty to rebel.

We hereby declare the bonds of the social contract to be null and void, which the government has rendered invalid by its continuing failure to act appropriately. We call upon every principled and peaceful citizen to rise with us.

We demand to be heard, to apply informed solutions to these ecological crises and to create a national assembly by which to initiate those solutions needed to change our present cataclysmic course.

We refuse to bequeath a dying planet to future generations by failing to act now.

We act in peace, with ferocious love of these lands in our hearts. We act on behalf of life

Statement from Dan Hunt (14 yrs) – James Brown's son

I wanted to talk to you today because we are facing a climate emergency. Like many people, I'm sure you don't realise how serious the situation is. Right now, with the lack of action in our society, we are going to endanger our own lives. Climate change isn't only about rising sea levels or extreme weather; on our current course of action, it will lead to the collapse of society and maybe even the extinction of our own species.

This is the grim reality, told by people from the UN to climate scientists to David Attenborough.

I won't go far into the details and I encourage you to really look at the evidence presented by scientists. For context, the UN has told us the safest achievable upper limit for temperature rise is 1.5 degrees. While we as a country are aiming for 2 degrees. While as a planet we are on the course for a 3C rise - or worse.

And despite this, global emissions are back on the rise.

I am calling on you to declare a climate emergency. With the amount of evidence out there it would be criminal for you to be complacent. For you to deny me a future.

I call on you to follow the lead of Bristol Council, who last month declared an emergency and set a target to be carbon neutral by 2030.

The government can and will sort out the logistics for you. Ask for their help to achieve the target. Piling local pressure will help convince them to act. Instead of worrying about realism, we have to strive for what seems unlikely. It's our only choice.

Question from Alice Brown (24 yrs) – James Brown's daughter:

Will Wiltshire Council join Bristol City, Manchester and a growing number of other Councils in declaring a state of climate emergency?