

Cabinet 29 April 2020 – Public Question Time

Submitted by Adam Shipp

Shropshire Council Leader Peter Nutting has repeatedly said that he is “not willing to risk the economy of the county” to tackle Climate Change and get to carbon neutrality by 2030.

While in some circumstances caution may be warranted, with climate change many others seem to believe that by not acting fast enough there is a bigger risk to the economy.

**Mark Carney, Head of the Bank of England** has said that up to \$20tn (£16tn) of assets could be wiped out if the climate emergency is not addressed effectively. There will be industries, sectors and firms that do very well during this process because they will be part of the solution,” he said. “But there will also be ones that lag behind and they will be punished.”

**The International Monetary Fund (IMF)** said “Global warming has become a clear and present threat. Actions and commitments to date have fallen short. The longer we wait, the greater the loss of life and damage to the world economy”.

**Minette Batters, NFU President** has said “As an industry, we must respond to the scientific evidence of the impacts of climate change, and the first-hand experience of our farmers and growers who have weathered extremes of cold, drought and flood in recent years. This unprecedented spell of weather (Summer 2018) and the recent devastating floods really should be a wake-up call for us all.”

**Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency** is quoted as saying, “And climate change risks undermining our ability to deliver the sustainable growth that people need and demand. That’s because more extreme weather will increasingly damage the inputs and the infrastructure on which our economies depend.

And finally **Michael Gove** said last year, “The scale of action required may be daunting, but the need to act is imperative. There is a political need to act - because we cannot leave this planet to the next generation more polluted, more dangerous, denuded of its natural riches and increasingly inhospitable to all life. There is an economic need to act - because unless we restore our natural capital then we will have depleted soils incapable of yielding harvests or sustaining livestock, we will have oceans with more plastic than fish, we will have dried up or contaminated water sources and we will have severe weather events increasingly endangering lives and livelihoods.”

- 1) Does the Cabinet agree or disagree with these sentiments? (Show of hands?)
- 2) Do they believe that the Shropshire Economy has suffered due to extreme flooding and droughts over the last 2 years?
- 3) Has any economic assessment been carried out to quantify the effects of these recent events on businesses in Shropshire, is one underway, or is one planned and if so, will it be made public?
- 4) Mr Nutting, in the light of these quotes, will you and use your considerable influence to move with haste to decarbonise Shropshire Council and set a firm date for carbon neutrality?