

## **Motion for Time Limited Debate – Ecological Emergency**

Proposer – Mark Hood  
Secunder – Rich Lehmann

### **Background – Provided by the Green & Independents Group**

While recognising the work already undertaken in acknowledging a catastrophic decline in insects through Plan Bee, as well as the Plan Tree strategy to deliver greater tree cover across Kent, recent reports have underlined the scale of the decline of nature.

We need to ensure that we place the natural environment at the heart of our decision making as a council and landowner to ensure we play the fullest part possible in mitigating the effects of climate change, creating and maintaining habitat for Kent's flora and fauna. Kent is home to a rich array of plant and animal species, unique ecosystems, that contribute to our quality of life, cultural heritage, and economic well-being. Kent's wildlife, habitats and ecosystems are vitally important to us and future generations, enhancing our lives, from the insects that pollinate our food crops to our residents' health and wellbeing.

We need to embrace the potential for our current and future property assets to offer the greatest assistance for endangered species and to work with partner councils and agencies to ensure development across Kent puts wildlife first by promoting ponds, swales, woodland and managed decay of dead wood to ensure we have a healthy food chain for our threatened ecosystem.

The Government's Environment Bill has required a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Nature Recovery Network, now our council needs to continue playing its part. Adopting a Biodiversity Emergency Declaration will demonstrate our commitment to protecting and enhancing biodiversity within our jurisdiction and setting a precedent for outside partners and businesses.

### **MOTION:**

The Council resolves to:

1. Declare an ecological emergency; and

Recommend that the Executive;

2. Makes arrangements to require explicit consideration of ecological and climate change implications to Council reports as part of decision-making processes.
3. Ensures that addressing the climate and ecological emergencies and nature recovery are considered as strategic priorities for planning and related policies.

4. Sets measurable targets and standards for biodiversity increase, in both species and quantities, seeking also to increase community engagement via specific policies or strategies.
5. Works with our partners and River Catchment Organisations to explore what role the Council can play in improving the ecology of our rivers in keeping with the urgency of this declaration.
6. Seeks to ringfence the funding for the Plan Tree planting strategy and Kent's Plan Bee, to support nature protection and carbon sequestration, within its budget proposals.
7. Ensures that our property policies consider opportunities for biodiversity enhancements and tree planting on Council landholdings.
8. Writes to all Kent's MPs urging them to support the Climate and Ecological Bill, a private member's bill, in keeping with the declarations of this Council.