Adopting a Climate Adaptation Strategy for the Borough

This council notes:

1. Bury declared a climate emergency in 2019 and subsequently adopted a Climate Action Plan, identifying climate resilience and adaptation as a key priority
2. Since then the UK and Bury have experienced increasingly frequent extreme weather conditions, including prolonged, repeated heatwaves, droughts and flooding, with all scientific evidence pointing to human caused climate change increasingly the likelihood and severity of such actions.
3. The impacts of climate change are already being felt by residents, businesses and public services through increased flood risk, overheating, pressures on infrastructure, impacts on biodiversity, and risks to public health.
4. Whilst important work is already taking place across the borough, including investment in flood resilience, the protection and enhancement of green spaces, tree planting initiatives and support for local food-growing networks, climate adaptation activity remains spread across a number of programmes and strategies.
5. A number of local authorities, have adopted dedicated Climate Adaptation Strategies which identify local climate risks, assess future projections and establish clear action plans to increase resilience.
6. The consequences of climate change will disproportionately affect vulnerable residents, including older people, young children, those with existing health conditions and communities already experiencing disadvantage.

This council believes that:

1. Climate mitigation and climate adaptation must go hand in hand. Whilst reducing emissions remains essential, councils must also prepare for climate impacts that are now unavoidable and becoming more impactful

2. Bury should be a leading authority in responding proactively to climate risks and protecting residents, businesses, infrastructure and natural assets from future climate impacts.

3. A clear and comprehensive Climate Adaptation Strategy would provide a framework for coordinating existing work, identifying future risks and ensuring that resilience is embedded across all council services and partner organisations.

4. Preparing for hotter summers, increased flood risk, pressures on water resources and other climate impacts is not only an environmental necessity but also an economic and public health imperative.

This Council resolves to:

1. Develop a borough-wide Climate Adaptation Strategy, setting out how Bury will prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change over the coming decades.
2. Ensure that the strategy includes a comprehensive climate risk assessment, considering issues including flooding, extreme heat, water scarcity, infrastructure resilience, biodiversity loss, food security and risks to public health.
3. Engage residents, businesses, community organisations, emergency services, NHS partners, environmental groups and other stakeholders in the development of the strategy.
4. Explore adaptation measures adopted successfully elsewhere, including the creation of community cooling spaces, climate-resilient street design, enhanced tree planting, green and blue infrastructure planning and explore how changes to planning policy can make it easier for people to adapt their homes to a changing climate.
5. Identify and publish an action plan with measurable outcomes, setting out short, medium and long-term actions, responsibilities and potential opportunities to secure regional and national funding.
6. Regularly report back to Members on progress around implementing the strategy, including recommendations for future adaptation measures across the borough.