

**LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**  
**COUNCIL MEETING – 18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

- 1. To consider the following motion, notice of which was given by Councillor Anna Wright and which was seconded by Councillor Nina de Ayala Parker**

This Council notes:

Camden Council has declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to implementing an ambitious Climate Action Plan. But meanwhile global destruction of ecosystems continues. These global issues require global solutions but current global environmental laws and governance are clearly inadequate.

In June 2021, an international legal working group, convened by the Stop Ecocide Foundation, adopted a definition of ecocide as an international crime, to serve as an amendment to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The definition has received broad support, including from the UN Secretary General and the European Parliament.

The inclusion of ecocide in the Rome Statute would add a new crime to international criminal law, the first since 1945, building on the existing crime of severe damage to the environment during armed conflict, reflecting that today, most severe environmental damage occurs during times of peace, and is currently outside ICC jurisdiction.

This Council resolves:

- To recognise the definition of the crime of ecocide as “...*unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts*”.
- To support the concept of ecocide as defined above and calls for the introduction of the crime of ecocide into international law as an amendment to the Rome Statute.

- 2. To consider the following motion, notice of which was given by Councillor Tom Simon and which was seconded by Councillor Linda Chung**

The Plant Based Treaty (<https://plantbasedtreaty.org>) aims to put food systems at the heart of combating the climate crisis, to halt the widespread degradation of critical ecosystems caused by animal agriculture, to promote a shift to more healthy, sustainable plant-based diets and to actively reverse damage done to planetary functions, ecosystem services and biodiversity.

It is increasingly recognised that meat and dairy production is a significant contributor to climate breakdown, with the livestock sector accounting for at least 14% of global greenhouse gas emissions, as well as being a major contributor to global deforestation. The catastrophic effects of climate breakdown mean climate and risk experts predict a world with systemic cascading risks related to food insecurity including food shortages, societal tensions, hunger and malnutrition, unrest and conflict (according to a Chatham house report from 2021), which furthermore predicts a 50% chance of synchronous crop failure in the decade of the 2040s. Producing a kilo of beef creates, on average, 12 times more CO<sub>2</sub> than a kilo of tofu or other soya based proteins. Meanwhile, producing a litre of dairy milk uses, on average, at least four times as much land as producing a litre of plant milk. Growing numbers of people are adopting plant-based diets, which do not include meat or dairy.

As well as a smaller carbon footprint, eating more plant-based foods also reduces the land footprint of our diets and would improve UK food security and self-sufficiency, thereby making our diets more local. As a country, we currently import much more food than we export. In 2021 we had a trade deficit for all dairy products of £1.04 billion and a trade deficit for just beef, pork and lamb of £1.7 billion. Only 55% of the world's crop calories feed people directly with 36% going to feed livestock; only a fraction of the calories in feed given to livestock make their way into the meat and milk that we consume which is a huge food waste issue on top of making our food production much more carbon intensive.

The Government-commissioned National Food Strategy concluded that a 30% reduction in meat consumption is necessary for future food security. The National Food Strategy also states that obesity alone accounts for 8% of annual health spend in the UK, or £18bn. Savings to the NHS will come from healthier, plant-based diets. Over 40% of Britons are trying to reduce their meat consumption and 14% already follow a flexitarian diet, but plant-based food options are not consistently available at all events or food venues. Other countries have taken a stance; for example, in Portugal it is a legal requirement for all public catering – including local authority facilities – to provide plant-based food options, and other local authorities such as Oxfordshire County Council and Cambridge City Council have decided to promote plant-based food via serving a fully plant-based menu at Council meetings and events, where cost-effective. The University of Cambridge Catering Service reduced food-related greenhouse gas emissions by a third via replacing beef and lamb with plant-based products.

In 2019 Camden Council formally declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency, which committed the Council to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Council can build on its achievements to date and lead by example by promoting and normalising the consumption of plant-based food, recognising that plant-based meals are frequently nutritious and low-cost food options. This is in line with the vision of net zero by 2030.

The Council therefore RESOLVES to:

1. Endorse the Plant Based Treaty.
2. Continue to follow the lead of other councils around the country in transitioning to ensure that food and drink provided at all meetings and events hosted by the Council, including those hosted by the Mayoralty, include

appropriate plant-based food, and where possible, is provided by a local caterer paying the Real Living Wage and sourcing sustainable local ingredients.

3. After exploring a wide variety of catering options (including consideration of social enterprises), use Camden Council civic events to promote and showcase appropriately environmentally friendly plant-based food and drink options, alongside displayed information about the climate and health benefits and relative cost of different protein/food sources and informing people about how to achieve a balanced plant-based diet.
4. When events occur on Camden Council open spaces, and where catering is provided, ensure that environmentally friendly plant-based options are included and available (i.e. minimum from at least one caterer), secured through the use of terms and conditions of hire (where reasonably and appropriately possible).
5. Secure through a contract specification when re-tendering for suppliers that environmentally friendly, locally sourced plant-based food and drink options are to be available at providers on Camden Council open spaces (where reasonably possible). Similarly, when possible and reasonable, via future contract specification when re-tendering for suppliers for Council-run cafes, kiosks or leisure centres, specify that vegetable/legume rich plant-based options are available, while respecting individuals' freedom and their right to choose what they eat.
6. Continue to use Council communications channels to promote sustainable (and affordable) food and drink practices throughout the borough, including details of the climate and health benefits of plant-based food and drinks and educating people on the best ways to achieve a balanced plant-based diet, while also appropriately highlighting food poverty and the support available to respond to it.
7. Work with community groups across the borough to promote the establishment of new and appropriate community gardens as part of a biodiversity strategy. Identify sites that have been previously derelict or contaminated, so that these sites can be appropriately assessed and brought back into beneficial use to meet the wider demands posed by the social, economic, and environmental crisis, including that of supporting the growth of cheap and accessible plant-based food and drinks for all our communities.
8. Work with businesses in Camden to investigate the opportunities to promote the benefits of plant-based foods, appropriately and respectfully give people information about the best ways to achieve a balanced plant-based diet, while respecting individuals' right to choose, and improve the availability of plant-based options.
9. Write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs supporting UK endorsement of the Plant Based Treaty and invite all Group Leaders to sign the letter.

**3. To consider the following motion, notice of which was given by Councillor Gio Spinella and which was seconded by Councillor Andrew Parkinson**

This Council notes that the ongoing climate emergency requires action to be taken at all levels of government and while it welcomes the report to Cabinet from the advisor on promoting green spaces and biodiversity, it believes it doesn't go far enough as a response from the administration.

More concrete actions is needed at a local government level.

The Council calls on the Cabinet to take action to reduce Scope 3 emissions which result from Camden's services, such as construction work on public highways or by Housing maintenance; to consider embodied carbon in Camden's Community Investment Programme (CIP) projects and find ways to reduce it or alleviate it; and that it must hold developers to account through Section 106 agreements on high energy efficiency.

This Council also calls for the Cabinet to propose a consultation in Camden's conservation areas, to discuss whether conservation area statements should be amended to take into account and allow home modifications such as solar panels, air source pumps and UPVC windows, all of which would help reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency.

**ENDS**