

Council

16 December 2019

Motions (2 total)

Motion A	Proposed by: Councillor Savage	Seconded by: Councillor Cooke
	<p>“This council recognises that trees have a crucial role to play in tackling the climate emergency.</p> <p>Following the declaration of a climate emergency in February 2019, and the endorsement of the ‘Carbon Neutral Cheltenham Leadership through Stewardship’ report in October 2019, this council further notes that:</p> <p>Doubling tree cover across the UK could draw down 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide annually, which is around 10% of current UK emissions.</p> <p>Trees also provide additional benefits beyond their critical importance in reaching net-zero greenhouse gas emissions: trees create more space for nature, supporting hundreds of species of insects, birds and mammals. Trees are also great for public health, helping clean the air and providing access to nature that’s important for our wellbeing.</p> <p>This council therefore commits to including the following in its Carbon Neutral action plan and allocate appropriate funding for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Increasing tree cover on council-owned land.2) Increasing tree cover across the Borough by updating council strategies and plans.3) Working with partner organisations to plant one million trees by 2030	
Motion B	Proposed by: Councillor Babbage	Seconded by: Councillor Savage
	<p>The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</p> <p>This Council notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Government recently commissioned a review of National Parks and AONB sites in England, led by Julian Glover. The findings of the review (Landscapes Review) were published in September.• The Cotswolds, which already has Conservation Board Status as an AONB, receives approximately 23 million visitor days each year, with tourism worth around £900m to the local economy.• The Landscapes Review identifies the Cotswolds as a ‘strong candidate, to be considered for National Park status’, suggesting Natural England and Ministers consider the case	

for this designation.

This Council further notes, however, that:

- The Cotswolds is not reliant upon just its landscapes and tourism for its economy, it is also a thriving area for a wide range of businesses and technologies with many established employment sites.
- A National Park designation can affect housing affordability as there is often a 'price premium' applied to National Park area designations.
- A National Park designation would remove planning powers over land within the National Park from existing planning authorities, including Cheltenham Borough Council, reducing democratic accountability.

This Council resolves to write to Natural England and relevant Ministers:

- To support aspects of the Landscape Review, including the underlying thrust of promoting and supporting national landscapes for our nation's wellbeing while protecting and enhancing our countryside.
- But to reject the notion of a National Park designation for the Cotswolds, noting that tourism is already thriving in the area and that no evidence has been provided to show how the costs to the wider economic future outweigh the smaller benefits that would come from a change in designation.
- To work with other local authorities within the AONB and the Cotswolds Conservation Board to address the challenges and opportunities highlighted in the Landscapes Review.