CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

Meeting date: 19 September 2023

Public Questions (2 total)

1. Question from Nick Hardy to Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Councillor Alisha Lewis

I have submitted a suggestion that the council look at the potential for deep geothermal energy to provide heating to the new developments. The town overlies a hot aquifer at around 2500m which could provide heating and hot water to the entire developments at Elm Park and Cyber Park - a source of energy that has been overlooked by both the council and developer (who have only included ASHP and GSHP system in their applications). The council's own "Climate Emergency Action Plan - Pathway to Net Zero" states that the council has a commitment to review the feasibility of alternative energy sources, new technologies and innovations.

Will the council look fully into this resource that could provide a continuous, fully renewable heating resource for houses, offices, school, medical facilities etc for many years to come as district heating plants have been running for more than 100 years in many area around the world and overlooked in this country (with the exception of Southampton which has been using this technology since 1986).

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2. Question from Saskia Whitfield to Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Councillor Alisha Lewis

Most councils have Climate Emergency Committees based on international Net Zero policies. However, 5G is recognised as a massive energy consumer. It has been projected to “increase power consumption by 61 times from 2020 to 2030, due to its energy demands” as reported in 2020 by the ABI Research Data Center Forum. It is said too that a 5G mast consumes 3 times as much energy as a 4G mast –

https://ehtrust.org/report-5g-to-increaseenergy-consumption-by-61-times/

Similarly, a report published by France's High Council on Climate warned that rolling out 5G technology could lead to a sharp increase in power consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. “The report, published in December 2020, found that 5G networks could be responsible for an extra 3 to 7 billion extra tonnes of CO^2 released into [the] atmosphere [in France].” https://www.hautconseilclimat.fr/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/hcc_rapports_5g-en.pdf

The whole Net Zero Climate Emergency agenda is based on the notion that human activity is already generating too much CO^2, which is heating up the earth. It is important to recognise that the resulting plan to implement Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Active Travel and 15-minute cities all require the high-energy consuming infrastructure of the 5G network.

Please can the member for Climate advise how this is compatible with CBC's plans for Net Zero by 2030 and what steps are being undertaken to mitigate these effects on CO2 emissions?