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NFLA UK & Ireland Sustainable Energy Forums joint media release -

For immediate release, 16th December 2019

NFLA outlines the top 10 actions Councils need to undertake to tackle the 'climate emergency'

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) publishes today its top ten actions that Councils need to undertake as part of their local response to deal with the climate emergency. (1)

With over 250 Councils in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland passing specific 'climate emergency' resolutions, and many more devising low carbon strategies, the NFLA – a long-term advocate for decentralised renewable energy solutions – has been asked to develop a short guide to the core actions that need to follow from such resolutions.

The guide outlines 10 core actions that Councils need to do, and signposts Councils to some of the leading examples in local government across the UK and Ireland who are undertaking such activity.

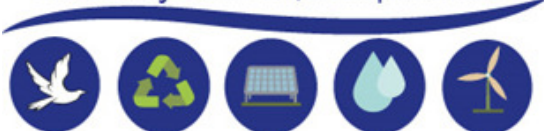
The 10 recommended actions Councils should take to start delivering on 'zero carbon' resolutions are:

- Buy only 100% renewable electricity for council use and seek to install renewables on council buildings and council land (and in cooperation with other agencies).
- Develop wider and innovative renewable energy schemes like solar farms, low carbon district heating and heat pump schemes as part of efforts to offset the Council carbon footprint.
- Carry out a program of energy efficiency improvements on council properties (including with all social housing providers and community energy cooperatives) and enforce building standards to deliver zero-carbon homes and buildings.
- Stop buying fossil fuelled vehicles immediately.
- Start replacing current vehicle inventory with electric vehicles (EVs) and hydrogen powered vehicles.
- Begin a program of installing EV charging points.
- Draw up a plan for tree planting in parks, along roadside etc.
- Switch to locally grown sources for food in schools and council run institutions. Implement plans to introduce more allotments.
- Prioritise pedestrians and cycling strategies over road building schemes, whilst encouraging low carbon transport use.
- Draw up a detailed climate emergency plan in consultation with citizen assemblies and large sectors of the local economy including health, education, leisure, business, transport and so on.

The report notes that the recognition of the 'climate emergency' has arguably been one of the key political issues of 2019, and it is likely to remain at the top of the political agenda throughout the next decade. The apparent failure of the 'COP 25' climate change talks in Madrid emphasise the many challenges that come from an increased political and public appetite for radical action with those parts of the economy and some governments resisting such change. With 'COP 26' in Glasgow the 'climate emergency' will remain a major political issue in 2020.

Of course all of the actions prioritise renewable sources of energy for generation, heating and transport. NFLA see new nuclear as an expensive, waste-laden and overly time-consuming alternative that does not reflect the existing reality of the energy market now and in the next decade. Decentralised renewable solutions led by local authorities and partner agencies should play an essential part in the local, national and global challenge to deliver carbon neutral societies over that next decade and onwards.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR & RENEWABLE ENERGY ISSUES



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Climate change is clearly taking place now, and the window of opportunity to mitigate its worst effects is narrowing. It is incumbent that local government plays its part **now**, and over the next decade onwards. NFLA will do its level best to support its member authorities in this endeavour.

NFLA Steering Committee Chair, Councillor David Blackburn said:

“The NFLA across its four Forums has been promoting decentralised and renewable energy solutions since the early 1990s as the answer for our long-term low carbon needs. It is welcome now that, due to grassroots and governmental action, tackling the climate emergency has become a core priority at the local, national and international level. NFLA has consistently sought to provide best practice solutions in delivering deep decarbonisation which is renewable rather than new nuclear or fossil fuel derived. I commend this report and I urge councillors and council officers to take forward its core message. NFLA was originally set up to call for a safer world and we will continue to deliver for our member authorities in now dealing with the twin core risks of our age – climate change and the need for a more peaceful, sustainable world.”

NFLA All Ireland Forum Sustainable Energy Forum Co-Chair, Councillor Malcolm Noonan added:

“Ireland is in great need of speeding up its activity in decarbonisation. Whilst we welcome recent government initiatives to support local low carbon solutions, there is an urgent need for more dynamic local authority action across the island. This simple step-by-step guide from the NFLA provides all councillors and council officers with the direction they need to take to embed low carbon action into the Local Development Plan. I encourage Councils to take up the NFLA’s call for action and I shall be bringing it to the attention of my Council as we understand better how to deal with the greatest challenge of the upcoming decade.”

Ends - for more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary, on 00 44 (0)161 234 3244.

Notes for editors:

- (1) NFLA Policy Briefing 194 – the top 10 actions for local authorities to tackle the climate emergency, 16th December is attached with this media release and will be on the NFLA website homepage <https://www.nuclearpolicy.info>