



Dear Councillor Johnson Situ,

Congratulations on your recent re-appointment as the Southwark Council cabinet member for planning, with the added responsibilities of transport and climate. This new portfolio could be a real opportunity to address the climate crisis we're facing holistically, through transport and planning together.

Extinction Rebellion Southwark wants to take this opportunity to remind you that the Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019, almost two years ago. So far, we have seen little meaningful action from the Council, either in actual steps taken to combat the climate crisis at borough-level, or in the alignment and ambition of Council policies to show how Southwark plans to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. Following its Climate Conference, we were concerned that the Council selected an image of a plant pot in a bench as a symbol of its flagship measure to "better address the Climate Emergency". Ridiculed on social media, this not only demonstrates both a lack of ambition and understanding but also a breakdown of genuine partnership with residents.

In our view, the most important issues within your portfolio are:

- 1. To have an ambitious Climate Strategy that focuses on all scope emissions and is fully compatible with the Council's 2019 commitment to "do all it can to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030".** Extinction Rebellion Southwark submitted suggestions in good faith in April 2020 and engaged with residents and groups across the borough to provide extensive feedback on the first draft of the Council's Climate Strategy in August 2020. There has been no clear response or update since then. We are deeply concerned about the lack of ambition, lack of expert review, and lack of focus of the draft Climate Strategy.
- 2. To align the New Southwark Plan with the Council's March 2019 Climate Emergency commitments to hit the target of carbon neutrality by 2030.** This should be done before the NSP plan is examined, rather than through time-consuming and complex amendments following adoption that will hinder public engagement. Failure to amend the New Southwark Plan now will represent a failure of commitment in planning to the climate declaration.
- 3. To revise the Movement Plan to ensure it delivers the degree of ambition needed to deliver the Council's Climate Emergency declaration.**
- 4. To lead effective engagement on how we can address the climate emergency as a borough.** Extinction Rebellion Southwark has been repeatedly frustrated by the lack of meaningful engagement with residents on how Southwark can do its part in tackling the climate crisis. Citizens' Assemblies, a deliberative form of democracy, would ensure that a genuine cross section of local residents were engaged in decisions about how to meet the Council's net zero target.

Recognising the severity of the situation we're faced with, we ask that the Council immediately commit to a thorough revision of the Climate Strategy, the New Southwark Plan and the

Movement Plan under independent expert review and support from organisations such as Carbon Trust or Anthesis Group to ensure that they are completely aligned with and fully support the Council's own March 2019 Climate Emergency declaration and its commitment to "do all it can to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030".

Without a commitment to the above by 31st December 2020, and without a reinforced commitment to a Citizens' Assembly as an essential process in the Council's response to the climate crisis (as other councils like Camden have done) by the same date, Extinction Rebellion Southwark will not be able to continue to engage in good faith with the Partnership Steering Group and will formally withdraw. We know that other key environmental groups in the borough share this sentiment. However, once you make these commitments, we stand ready to continue to advise and support Southwark Council in tackling the climate crisis and utilising genuinely democratic forms of engagement in our borough.

Time is of the essence. We have to tell the truth; and we have to act now.

Extinction Rebellion Southwark