

Motion to review and strengthen the councils Low Carbon Advertising Policies

As of November 2020, over 480 councils in the UK have made climate emergency declarations. Low Carbon Advertising Policies present an opportunity for local authorities to further their existing health and environmental policy goals relating to air pollution, active travel, climate change, sustainability and town planning.

It should be noted that restricting advertising for harmful products (e.g tobacco or SUVs) is not the same as banning the products themselves.

Fossil fuel companies, car companies and airlines spend billions each year advertising their high carbon products -despite growing public concerns over air pollution and climate breakdown.

Extracts here have been taken from a toolkit for local authority councillors and officers in the UK wishing to implement a 'Low Carbon Advertising Policy' which would prohibit adverts for these products in council-owned ad spaces.

This motion looks at the ecological and climate impacts of advertising from these high carbon industries:

- petrol and diesel car advertising, particularly for the largest and most polluting cars such as Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs)
- airline advertising for flights
- fossil fuel companies (such as Shell and BP)

There is plenty of additional information available to read about this subject on these links

<https://www.badverts.org/>

Advertising's role in climate and ecological degradation. What does the scientific research have to say? Professor Tim Kasser with Andrew Simms, David Boyle and Emilie Tricarico

Upselling Smoke: The case to end advertising of the largest, most polluting new cars New Weather Institute and Possible, August 2020

Taking Down Junk Food Ads - how local areas are taking action on outdoor advertising Sustain, 2019
Why Taking Down Billboards is Good for the Local Economy Adblock Bristol, 2019

All here - <https://www.badverts.org/reports-and-publications>

This council notes:

- That it is possible for local authorities to implement advertising policies against specific products if they consider them to be harmful to the amenity of an area.
- This Council notes that the Greater London Authority (GLA), which controls Transport for London (TFL) property, were able to enact a *Healthier Food Advertising Policy* in 2018 prohibiting High Fat, Sugar or Salt (HFSS) food advertising on TFL property. Council planning departments will be able to advise on how to restrict the use of 'deemed consent' under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 including writing to the relevant Secretary of State.
- That North Somerset Council currently holds an Advertising Concession Agreement with Clear Channel UK involving the upkeep and maintenance of over 25 bus stops across the

area all of which include advertising panels (there are over 600 bus stops across the district).

- That advertising prohibitions and restrictions already exist regarding all tobacco products and e-cigarettes, guns and offensive weapons, breath testing and products designed to mask the effects of alcohol, 'pyramid schemes', prostitution services, 'obscene material' as well as other rules regarding marketing to children, high fat sugar and salt products, medical and health claims, religion, financial products, and pornography.
(<https://www.badverts.org/case-studies>)
- That a double-sided digital bus stop advertising screen uses four times the electricity of the average British home. (<https://adfreecities.org.uk/2019/11/the-electricity-costof-digital-adverts>)
- That a climate emergency was declared by this council in February 2019, which included a commitment to reduce area wide carbon emissions and become carbon neutral by 2030.

This council believes:

- That the purpose of advertising is to stimulate demand for goods and services.
- That some advertising content undermines the council's objectives regarding public health, air pollution and sustainable consumption. For example, High Fat Sugar and Salt products undermine health objectives, petrol and diesel car adverts, especially for Sports Utility Vehicles, undermine climate and air quality objectives and airline advertising undermines carbon emission reduction targets.

This council resolves:

- That the Director of Place in liaison with the Executive Member for public transport reviews the scope of the Advertising Concession Agreement[s] which are currently being updated in readiness for an imminent tendering process to investigate the possibility of amending the current set of prohibitions and restrictions to include products that contribute to climate change and air pollution – it is recognised that this may have some impact on the potential value of those concessions and in order to evaluate any impact the option of seeking variant bids should be considered
- That the Director of Place in liaison with the Executive Member for planning policy be asked to investigate and to the extent possible implements a Low Carbon Advertising Policy as part of the council's planning policies, to apply to bus stops, billboards and advertising spaces in the area within the jurisdiction of the local planning area

Proposed by Cllr Bridget Petty, Seconded by Cllr Ciaran Cronnelly