

Statement: CS19.01

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 19 – COP26 Glasgow Outcomes

Statement submitted by: Cllr Tim Wye

We note the report celebrating the efforts of Bristol's administration in relation to COP 26. We would support these aims but also feel that it is important to put it into context given the catastrophic outcome of the appeal by Bristol Airport Authority over the Bristol airport expansion.

The airport has previously been criticised by climate experts for underestimating the climate impact of airport expansion – estimating this at 154ktpa CO₂e – six times lower than the 920ktpa CO₂e calculated once other factors are taken into account. This figure will rise way over 1 million tonnes, once the new multiplier of 3 confirmed in the new EU research is accounted for (the previous 920ktpa CO₂e used a multiplier of 1.9). A multiplier is the additional impact that non-CO₂ emissions and contrails have on the climate.

On top of the environmental damage, the decision also, as North Somerset Leader Donald Davies puts it, “flies in the face of local democracy”. Quite literally in this case.

In summary, expanding Bristol airport will therefore generate a million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent every single year – that's 50% of Bristol's current carbon emissions. This sadly negates the efforts and, albeit limited, progress made during COP and we would like to put on the record that the Mayor's representative at the WECA meeting (Craig Cheney) abstained on a vote opposing the airport expansion, despite Bristol Council's vote in favour of a Green motion which noted that the airport expansion is incompatible with our local and regional carbon targets and “must not go ahead.”

This seems entirely inconsistent to the aspirations to use city leadership to tackle carbon emissions. City Leadership on the environment means supporting difficult decisions to put climate needs at the forefront of what we do.