PUBLIC INVESTMENT, CEMENT DECARBONISATION AND PEAK CLUSTER

Proposed by **Councillor Gail Jenkinson**
Seconded by **Councillor Jason Walsh-McDonald**

THIS COUNCIL:

- Recognises the depth and severity of the climate crisis and the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions at pace.
- Acknowledges that cement production is one of the largest industrial sources of CO_2 emissions globally, and that Wirral's regeneration ambitions will continue to require the use of cement.
- Would be concerned about any attempt to use Carbon Capture Usage and Storage to extract additional fossil fuels from oil and gas fields under any circumstances.
- Accepts that the Council has a responsibility to consider the carbon impact of the materials it specifies and procures, regardless of where they are produced.
- Notes that the proposed Peak Cluster project would require substantial public funding to support carbon capture and storage infrastructure serving private industrial operators, including a major CO_2 pipeline through the Wirral. Further notes that large-scale CCS remains an energy-intensive and technically complex system, with significant uncertainty regarding long-term performance, cost control and scalability. Large-scale pilots have largely underperformed or failed due to pressurisation difficulties.
- Recognises that lower-carbon cement technologies already exist and are commercially deployed internationally. Approaches such as reducing clinker content, using calcined clays and limestone blends including LC3, reformulating binders, and injecting captured CO_2 directly into concrete, can significantly reduce emissions without requiring large-scale carbon transport and offshore geological storage. Scaling these alternatives requires standards reform, supply-chain and research investment, and procurement leadership,but does not depend on long-term storage in depleted gas fields.

THIS COUNCIL BELIEVES:

- That climate policy should focus first on reducing emissions at source, rather than relying predominantly on capturing emissions after they are produced.
- That committing large sums of public money to infrastructure, such as the Peak Cluster pipeline, which enables existing high-carbon industrial processes to continue largely unchanged carries significant financial and technological risk.
- That where lower-carbon alternatives are already technically viable and capable of scaling, public investment should prioritise accelerating their deployment.

THIS COUNCIL THEREFORE RESOLVES TO:

1. call on the Government to reassess whether large-scale public subsidy for CCS in the cement sector represents the best use of limited climate funding given the 'high degree of uncertainty whether risky investment by the government will pay off' (House of Commons Public Accounts committee February 2026)
2. urge the Government to prioritise national investment in the rapid scaling of existing and new lower and zero-carbon cement technologies, including clinker substitution, alternative binders such as LC3, and CO_2 mineralisation within concrete production, over a short-term pipeline solution to a long-term problem; and
3. ask that the Director of Finance reviews and strengthens the Council's own procurement policies to maximise the use of low-carbon construction materials and resource-efficient design.

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