
Agenda Item: National Emergency Briefing

Meeting Date: 19 May 2026

Contact Officer: Committee Clerk

The purpose of this report is for Members to consider showing the National Emergency Briefing film and recommend a suitable date.

Background

At the meeting of the Council on 13 April 2026, following consideration of correspondence received, Members resolved that the decision be deferred to the Climate & Biodiversity Committee. (Full Council Minute 206 13.04.2026 Refers)

Current Situation

The National Emergency Briefing is a 50-minute film that sets out the case for urgent government action in response to the climate and nature crisis, including informing the public through a national televised briefing supported by regular updates. It advocates for a science-led emergency response to accelerate emissions reduction and improve resilience, helping to strengthen understanding of these issues at both national and local levels.

A number of community screenings are already scheduled within the local area, including Charlbury on 11 June, Eynsham on 14 June, Chipping Norton on 14 July, and St Mary's Church in Witney on 16 July. In order to complement these events and avoid duplication, whilst maximising opportunities for residents to attend, potential dates for a screening at the Corn Exchange have been identified as 27 July and 3 August, reflecting venue availability and providing a suitable gap following other local screenings.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

7. A Green & Resilient Town

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – Showing the film supports inclusive community engagement in line with the Council’s duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- b) Biodiversity - While the proposal has no direct impact on biodiversity, it supports increased awareness of climate and nature issues, aligning with the Council’s duty to conserve and enhance the natural environment.
- c) Crime & Disorder - There are no crime and disorder implications.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - The proposal supports the Council’s Climate Emergency declaration by promoting awareness and community engagement on climate change and environmental issues.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial implications

- To maximise public access, community screenings are offered free of charge
- There would be a potential staffing cost dependent on the time of the showing of the film and if the café is to be open.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and

1. Decide whether to show the film
2. If yes, when and at what time should it be scheduled.
3. Consider if the café should be open ahead of the film showing
4. Consider Inviting the Witney MP and other local influential people including journalists
5. Consider if a member of the committee should host a follow up discussion following the film for those gathered to consider how to respond to Parliament.