

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen

"I am here as a representative of Fossil Free UK, part of a global network of groups calling for urgent action on climate change.

Whilst we recognise and the progress the APF have made in decarbonising their investments, given the scale of the problem this process must accelerate. The current trajectory of emissions means that we are on course for a disastrous 3 degree rise in global temperatures.

It is widely understood that Investments in Fossil Fuels carry high risks as compliance with the Paris Climate Agreement requires that large oil, gas and coal companies leave the bulk of their reserves in the ground with big negative consequences for their share prices.

Furthermore, according to rules published by the Department for Work & Pensions in September, trustees of pension funds have to state their policy on taking account of "financially material" considerations, including climate change when assessing risks (1). I cannot see any mention of this in APFs published risk assessments. Has this been undertaken?

Pension funds policy of engagement with Fossil Fuel Companies have patently failed. Fleetinglly rebranding themselves "Beyond Petroleum" back in 2000, BP have deprioritised their renewable businesses in recent years in favour of new investment in deep sea and arctic drilling, highly-polluting tar sands developments, and fracking. (2)

Fossil fuel companies have become financial laggards during the past three to five years, and their declines reflected in investment returns. A recent report by the The Institute for Energy Economics

and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) sets out in detail the financial case for divestment: (3)

Last week Bath and North East Somerset passed a motion declaring a climate emergency, joining Bristol CC, Wiltshire, South Gloucs and North Somerset who have also done so:

Amongst other things, the motion passed contained the following clause:

- Request that the Cabinet takes steps to identify work streams and budgets with the aim of making B&NES Council carbon neutral by 2030, **across all functions**, as our contribution to fighting climate change;

The Brunel pooling process presents opportunities to APF to choose non fossil fuel options from the portfolio offered by Brunel.

It is time for the Avon pension Fund to join the 1000 institutions worldwide, including New York City and Norway's Sovereign wealth fund and commit to rapid and total divestment from fossil fuels. (4)

(1) <https://www.ftadviser.com/pensions/2018/09/11/pension-schemes-mandated-to-disclose-esg-risks/>

(2) <https://cdn.friendsoftheearth.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/Briefing%20Pension%20Funds%27%20engagement%20with%20fossil%20fuel%20companies%20March%202018.pdf>

(3) <http://ieefa.org/ieefa-report-fund-trustees-face-growing-fiduciary-pressure-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels/>

(4) <https://gofossilfree.org/divestment/commitments/>