

Dear County Councillor

On behalf of the Divest Derbyshire campaign and the Derbyshire Pensioners' Action Group we would like to congratulate you on your recent election/re-election to County Hall.

We know that many of you supported the Derbyshire Climate Coalition climate pledge, or your own party's climate pledge and are committed to working towards net zero carbon. We welcome the offer to work with local communities towards this end.

Our groups and members have been campaigning for many years to reduce the climate risk of the Derbyshire Pension Fund, which has millions of pounds invested in fossil fuel and mining companies. As well as this being incompatible with the climate emergency, this represents an enormous risk to people's pensions and a huge loss of potential income.

Although the Derbyshire Pension Fund agreed a new Climate Strategy last year with a commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of the Fund's portfolio by 2030 and reinvest at least 30% of the portfolio in low carbon and sustainable investments by the end of 2025, we don't think this goes far or fast enough to protect our pensions and the planet.

In the last few weeks there have been several reports and events that underscore just how risky fossil fuel companies are in terms of investment:

- The International Energy Agency net zero report <https://www.iea.org/reports/net-zero-by-2050> suggests that if we are to meet both Paris and net-zero by 2050 targets, then all fossil fuel companies must stop new oil and gas exploration projects this year. The most popular fossil fuel companies invested in by local government pensions have yet to make this commitment, despite having "net-zero" plans in place.
- The landmark ruling in a Dutch court that Shell must cut its global emissions in line with Paris climate agreements. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-57257982> This verdict is likely to trigger a wave of climate litigation against fossil fuel companies, to force them to stop extracting and burning fossil fuels.
- US oil giants Exxon and Chevron suffered shareholder rebellions from institutional investors over their failure to set a strategy for a low-carbon future <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/may/26/exxonmobil-and-chevron-braced-for-showdown-over-climate>

Although fossil fuel companies can and should change to become renewable energy companies, the risk is that they will be left with billions of 'stranded assets' which could destroy shareholder value <https://euobserver.com/energy/147333>

We attach below a link to our 2020 briefing paper, which new councillors will not have seen, which gives some of the arguments for full divestment. <http://transitionchesterfield.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Divest-Derbyshire-Briefing-200216.pdf>

We look forward to working with you all, and would be more than happy to meet with any or all of you at any point.

Best regards

Lisa Hopkinson

On behalf of Divest Derbyshire

Sue Owen

On behalf of the Derbyshire Pensioners' Action Group