

Press release from **Wirral Green Party**
Spokesperson available for comment
Contact: Cllr Pat Cleary
Phone: 0151 632 5366.
Mobile: 07852 842 559.
Email: patcleary@phonecoop.coop



January 25th 2018

GREEN WIN AS MERSEYSIDE PENSION FUND DIVESTS FROM FOSSIL FUELS

At this week's meeting of the Merseyside Pension Fund (MPF) Committee it was unanimously agreed that the fund would take active steps to reduce its investments in fossil fuels. Over **£370 million** will now be moved away from fossil fuel heavy stocks.

'This is something I have been pressing for ever since I was appointed to the pensions committee. While it is a long way from the full divestment I and the Green Party would like to see, it nevertheless means that millions of pounds will be divested out of fossil fuel companies'. **Wirral Green Councillor Pat Cleary, MPF committee member**



Three year campaign to secure divestment on Merseyside pays off

MPF currently invests over £1.1 billion in UK and US tracker indices. These track the overall stock market and make no allowance for the carbon intensity of these investment.

Now, an initial one-third of these passive investments (circa £370 million) will be moved into low-carbon index trackers. The time scale for this is the next four to five months. The carbon intensity of these investment funds is expected to reduce by 50-70%.

Cont...

Furthermore, this is just the start. The head of the pension fund has clearly indicated that he wants to see more steps in this direction and measures to further reduce carbon risk in both active as well as passive investments in the future. That is certainly something The Green Party will be pressing for.

The Green Party understand that Merseyside is only the second local authority pension fund to date to actively implement measures to reduce its carbon risk. It is also by far the largest to do so. Hopefully this is just the beginning and other local authority schemes will take similar, urgent steps to reduce the clear risk that holding high carbon assets poses for members of pension schemes. In particular, they are hopeful the MPF's pooling arrangements with Manchester and West Yorkshire will encourage those funds to take a leaf out of Merseyside's book.

This of course is merely part of a global divestment push that has seen many private sector schemes publicly divest from fossil fuels. Just this week, Lloyds of London announced it would no longer invest in coal companies.

The writing is on the wall for fossil fuels. The Green Party is delighted and proud that MPF has taken a lead on this and to have played an active role in its implementation.

NOTES

Details of what has been agreed under item 9 'Management of carbon risk'

<https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/g6028/Public%20reports%20pack%2022nd-Jan-2018%2018.00%20Pensions%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

Progress in local councils committed to fossil-free investments <https://gofossilfree.org/uk/local-councils-are-starting-to-go-fossil-free-and-heres-how/>

Lloyds of London to divest from fossil fuels <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/jan/21/lloyds-of-london-to-divest-from-coal-over-climate-change>