

## Agenda item 5

### **For decision: Whether to agree to long term aspirations for a healthy and clean environment for Frome**

Authors: Anna Francis, Resilience Officer and Peter Macfadyen, Chair of Town Matters Committee.

#### **Summary**

This report recommends that Council agrees the principle that Frome should become healthier and cleaner through adopting a 2046 target of becoming carbon free.

Recognizing that Frome alone will not achieve this ambition, the target opens opportunities for lobbying and engagement, as well as attracting inward investment to the town.

#### **Introduction**

In 2014 the Town Council commissioned an initial report to research how much energy Frome used and in what ways. The intention of this was to inform the broad strategic direction of the Council in its work to reduce both energy costs and the pollution caused by the carbon fuels which provide most of our energy.

This initial report provided some useful markers and a general direction and was not designed to be specific enough to use in furthering the Council's growing agenda for Frome to become a healthier, cleaner and more economically resilient town or to support our fundraising work on these areas.

With this in mind the Council commissioned Bristol based Climate Works to produce a more detailed report. This came in two sections. First, a discussion document considering how Frome might respond to the Paris Agreement on climate change at the end of last year and the call to limit the average rise in global temperature to 2 deg C, and preferably 1.5 deg C. The second, provided greater detail of exactly what renewable energy and energy reduction measures Frome would need to take to meet a 2046 (30 years from now) target.

These reports formed the basis of a public meeting of experts in Frome in July 2016 and later discussion and amendments. The reports have been available to and discussed by Cllrs subsequently. A key outcome of these discussions was to widen public discussion from the scientific alone (focussing on fossil (or carbon) free targets) and to highlight and recognise the broader environmental, social and economic necessity of ensuring a healthier and cleaner town in the future.

The combined report has been available for public discussion over the last few months and is not attached here to save space. It can, however, be read and downloaded from <http://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk/cleanfuture/>

## Why should FTC now adopt a formal target for 2046?

- To draw national attention to Frome's ambitions and intent, thus attracting and encouraging business and individuals for whom this is important. Other countries and cities such as Bristol have already declared similar ambitions and Ex-President Nasheed of the Maldives (who spoke at our recent Clean Healthy Future event) explained that by publicising their intentions to go 'zero carbon' they were able to attract \$20m of investment.
- To further underpin the Council's Strategy and Neighbourhood Plan – both of which highlight the need to cut emissions
- To guide future strategy of the Council and especially Resilience and Wellbeing thinking
- To enable Frome to sign up to the Covenant of Mayors (a global network of Mayors who have committed to significant carbon reductions)
- To raise the profile of this work and secure political and financial support, for example, through linking with Ex-President Nasheed's contacts and supporters
- To tie in with the Climate Coalition's 'Week of Action' from 8 to 16 October which David Warburton MP is supporting and Archbishop Justin Welby's visit to Frome in November to support environmental action.
- To minimize the risks associated with carbon emissions, including flooding, fuel poverty and health impacts caused by air pollution.<sup>i</sup>

### Recommendations

1. Agree the principle that Frome should seek to become healthier and cleaner by 2046 through becoming carbon free.
2. Note that, while this target is achievable through various combinations of the steps set out, Frome alone will not achieve the ambition. We will therefore meet with our MP and other key stakeholders to secure support and funding to achieve these aspirations.
3. Report annually to the Council on progress made.

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- <sup>i</sup> In Frome and Somerton 716 homes are at risk of flooding, 600 people in Somerset die prematurely due to fuel poverty and several places in Frome regularly exceed recommended maximum levels for air pollution which kills 150,000 people prematurely each year in the UK and causes health issues such as asthma.