INVESTMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT (ISS)

DORSET COUNTY PENSION FUND – MARCH 2018

1. Introduction

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 require administering authorities of LGPS funds to formulate and to publish a statement of its investment strategy, in accordance with guidance issued from time to time by the Secretary of State. This statement must be reviewed by the administering authority at least every three years, or more frequently should any significant change occur.

This statement replaces the previous version of the Investment Strategy Statement (ISS) first published March 2017, and has been amended to reflect the results of the strategic allocation review agreed by the Pension Fund Committee 13 September 2017.

2. Investment strategy and the process for ensuring suitability of investments

All functions of Dorset County Council ("the Council") as the administering authority for the Dorset County Pension Fund ("the Fund") have been delegated to the Pension Fund Committee ("the Committee"). This includes responsibility for determining the overall investment strategy and strategic asset allocation of the Fund, and in doing so taking proper professional advice.

The primary investment objective of the Fund is to ensure that over the long term the Fund will have sufficient assets to meet all pension liabilities as they fall due. To meet this objective a major review of the Fund's strategic asset allocation is undertaken every three years shortly after the results of the triennial actuarial valuation are known. The Fund's strategic asset allocation was last reviewed in this way in 2017, advised by Mercer, an investment consultancy firm, with considerable LGPS experience and expertise, and Alan Saunders, Allenbridge Epic Investment Advisers, the Fund's independent adviser. The Committee will also consider asset allocation at each of its quarterly meetings.

The Fund allocates across a variety of different asset classes in order to prudently diversify sources of investment return and risk. To be judged suitable for investment, asset classes must be consistent with the Fund's risk and return objectives, improve diversification and be fully understood by officers and the Committee. The Fund's current target strategic asset allocation is set out in the table below, together with tolerances by which the actual allocation can vary without further agreement by the Committee:

Asset Class	Allocation	Tolerance
UK Equities	20.0%	+/- 4.0%
Global Equities	22.0%	+/- 4.0%
Emerging Markets Equities	3.0%	+/- 0.5%
Bonds	6.0%	+/- 1.5%
Multi Asset Credit (MAC)	5.0%	+/- 1.0%
Property	12.0%	+/- 2.0%
Diversified Growth Funds (DGF)	8.0%	+/- 1.0%
Private Equity	5.0%	+/- 1.0%
Infrastructure	5.0%	+/- 1.0%
Total Return Seeking Assets	**86.0%**	-
Liability Driven Investment (LDI)	14.0%	+/- 3.0%
Total Assets	**100.0%**	-

The appointment of more than one manager, with differing investment approaches, in a number of the asset classes, adds a further level of diversification. All managers are required to report on portfolio management on a quarterly basis, they must comply with all instructions given to them by the Fund (in accordance with the mandates agreed) and contracts can be terminated at one month's notice.

UK Equities (20.0%)
Approximately two thirds of the allocation to UK Equities is managed internally by officers in the Chief Executive's Department on a passive basis. The target is to track the FTSE 350 index, with an annual deviation allowed of +/- 0.5%, and no derivatives or financial gearing are permitted. The constituents of the FTSE 350 index are fully replicated by the in house team. Exposure to the remaining 3% of the FTSE All Share index not included in the FTSE 350 index is captured by an external active allocation to a pooled fund specialising in 'small cap' investments managed by Schroders (effective April 2006), with a target to outperform the FTSE Small Cap index by 2.5% per annum. The remaining allocation to UK Equities is managed on an active basis by AXA Framlington (effective April 2006) in a pooled vehicle with a target of outperforming the FTSE All Share Index by 3.5% per annum.

Global Equities – Developed Markets (22.0%)
Equities in developed markets are managed by three external investment managers; Allianz Global Investors, Investec Asset Management and Wellington Management. The management agreements were effective from December 2015, and each manager has a target to outperform the MSCI Global Index. All three are managed on an active basis but each has a different investment approach, thus adding a further degree of diversification.

Global Equities – Emerging Markets (3.0%)
The Fund has exposure to Emerging Markets equities through JP Morgan Asset Management who have managed an active mandate since April 2012. The investment is in a pooled fund, which has a diversified strategy, and the target is to outperform the MSCI Emerging Markets Index by 2% per annum.

Bonds (6.0%)
The Fund's Bonds' manager is Royal London Asset Management (rlam), appointed with effect from July 2007, with a target to outperform the iBoxx Non-Gilt Over 5 Year Index by 0.75%. The allocation is invested in the RLPPC Core Bond Fund, which holds a diversified portfolio of mainly UK Bonds with an emphasis on the corporate sector.

Multi Asset Credit (MAC) (5.0%)
The Fund is invested in the CQS Credit Multi Asset Fund with effect from 1 December 2017, with a target to outperform LIBOR by 4.0-5.0%, net of fees. The fund holds a diversified portfolio of corporate loans, bonds and asset backed securities in the US and Europe.

Property (12.0%)
CBRE Global Investors is the Fund's property adviser and manager. Approximately 90% of the Fund's investment is in directly owned commercial property in the UK, with a wide diversification both geographically and across sectors. The remaining 10% is invested in indirect property funds, the Lend Lease Retail Partnership (Jersey) Unit Trust, and the Standard Life Shopping Centre Trust Fund, which give exposure to the shopping centre sector not covered by the direct investments. The manager's target is to achieve a return on assets at least equal to the average IPD Quarterly Universe Portfolio Return, the industry standard benchmark, over a rolling five year period. Over time the mandate with CBRE will be amended to allow for a gradual transition to a portfolio more evenly split between core and high lease value (HLV) holdings.

Diversified Growth Funds (DGF) (8.0%)
The Fund has invested with Baring Asset Management in their Dynamic Asset Allocation Fund since April 2012. This pooled fund seeks to achieve equity like returns but with lower risk, by investing in a range of asset classes and focussing on asset allocation. The target return is cash plus 4%, with 70% of equity risk.

Private Equity (5.0%)
Since April 2006 the Fund has invested in Private Equity 'fund of funds' products managed by HarbourVest and Standard Life. HarbourVest specialise in the US, whereas Standard Life focus mainly on Europe, and both managers aim to outperform public equity markets by between 4-6% per annum over the life of the Fund (generally 10-15 years).

Infrastructure (5.0%)
Two Infrastructure managers, Hermes Investment Management and International Fund Management (IFM), were appointed in 2014. Hermes focus mainly on UK opportunities, whereas IFM have a wider global reach. Like Private Equity, it will take some time for all of the committed capital to be completely drawndown, but once invested these are intended to remain as long term holdings.

Liability Driven Investment (LDI) (14.0%)
Insight Investments were appointed in April 2012 with the objective to reduce the Fund's exposure to inflation risk by putting together a portfolio that moves in a similar way to the liabilities. The Fund is invested in a bespoke Qualifying Investor Fund (QIF) set up by Insight which enables them to use a range of derivative instruments in addition to index linked or conventional gilts.

3. Risk measurement and management

Achieving satisfactory investment returns will, to a considerable degree, reflect the risks taken, and therefore the Fund seeks to understand, measure and manage risk, not eliminate it.

Investment risk can be measured and managed in a number of ways:

The absolute risk of a reduction in the value of assets through negative returns: Whilst this cannot be avoided entirely, it can be mitigated by positioning the assets of the Fund across a number of different types of assets and markets.

The risk of underperforming the benchmarks or relative risk: The Fund's investment managers can, to a large extent, control relative risk by using statistical techniques to forecast how volatile their performance is likely to be relative to their benchmark or target. Each manager has a mandate specific benchmark and controls.

Different asset classes have different risk and return characteristics: In setting the investment strategy, the Committee considers the expected risks and returns of the various asset classes and the correlation between those returns to target or expected return within an acceptable level of risk.

Risks may also arise from a lack of suitable balance or diversification of the Fund's assets. The adoption of an asset allocation strategy and the detailed monitoring of performance and risks relative to the targets set, constrains the investment managers from deviating too far from the intended outcome, whilst at the same time allowing adequate flexibility to manage the portfolios in such a way as to enhance returns.

Other financially material risks arising from social, environmental and corporate governance issues are required to be considered and managed by the Fund's investment managers in relation to all asset classes. The Fund's approach is set out in more detail in section 5 below.

Consideration is also given to the on-going risks of a mismatch, over time, between the Fund's assets and its liabilities. The Fund's Funding Strategy Statement considers these risks in greater detail, however, the major risks that can lead to this mismatch are the impact of interest and inflation yields on liabilities. Following a strategic review of the Fund undertaken by JLT in June 2011, the Committee began a process to address this risk, leading to the current asset allocation of 12.0% to Liability Driven Investment (LDI), and the appointment of Insight Investments.

4. Approach to asset pooling

The Fund is working with nine other LGPS funds to pool investment assets through the Brunel Pension Partnership Ltd (Brunel Ltd). This is currently work in progress with the intention of meeting the Government's requirement for the pool to become operational and for the first assets to transition to the pool from April 2018.

Following the establishment of Brunel Ltd, the Fund, through the Committee, will retain the responsibility for setting the detailed strategic asset allocation for the Fund and allocating investment assets to the portfolios provided by Brunel Ltd.

Brunel Ltd is a new company wholly owned by the administering authorities. The company is seeking authorisation from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to act as the operator of an unregulated Collective Investment Scheme (CIV). It will be responsible for implementing the detailed strategic asset allocations of the participating funds by investing funds' assets within defined outcome focused investment portfolios. In particular it will research and select the Manager Operated Funds (MOFs) needed to meet the requirements of the detailed strategic asset allocations. These MOFs will be operated by professional external investment managers.

The Fund will be a client of Brunel Ltd and as a client will have the right to expect certain standards and quality of service. A detailed service agreement will set out the duties and responsibilities of Brunel Ltd, and the rights of the Fund as a client, including a duty of care for Brunel Ltd to act in its clients' interests.

An Oversight Board has been established, comprised of representatives from each of the administering authorities, set up according to an agreed constitution and terms of reference. Acting for the administering authorities, it will have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that Brunel Ltd delivers the services required to achieve investment pooling. It will therefore have a monitoring and oversight function and consider relevant matters on behalf of the administering authorities, but will not have delegated powers to take decisions requiring shareholder approval. These will be remitted back to each administering authority individually.

The Oversight Board will be supported by the Client Group, comprised primarily of pension investment officers drawn from each of the administering authorities but will also draw on administering authorities' finance and legal officers from time to time. It will have a primary role in reviewing the implementation of pooling by Brunel Ltd, and provide a forum for discussing technical and practical matters, confirming priorities, and resolving differences. It will be responsible for providing practical support to enable the Oversight Board to fulfil its monitoring and oversight function.

The proposed arrangements for asset pooling for the Brunel Pension Partnership pool have been formulated to meet the requirements of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 and Government guidance. Regular reports have been made to Government on progress towards the pooling of investment assets, and the Minister for Local Government has confirmed that the pool should proceed as set out in the proposals made.

The Council has approved the full business case for the Brunel Pension Partnership. It is anticipated that investment assets will be transitioned across from the Fund's existing investment managers to the portfolios managed by Brunel Ltd between April 2018 and March 2020 in accordance with a timetable that will be agreed with Brunel Ltd. Until such time as transitions take place, the Fund will continue to maintain the relationship with its current investment managers and oversee their investment performance, working in partnership with Brunel Ltd where appropriate.

Following the completion of the transition plan outlined above, it is envisaged that all of the Fund's assets will be invested through Brunel Ltd. However, the Fund has certain commitments to long term illiquid investment funds which will take longer to transition across to the new portfolios to be set up by Brunel Ltd. These assets will be managed in partnership with Brunel Ltd until such time as they are liquidated, and capital is returned.

5. Social, environmental and corporate governance policy

The primary aim of the Committee is to maximise the value of investments made for the benefit of the many stakeholders, including council tax payers, employer bodies, the current employee contributors and pensioners. The Committee does not place restrictions on investment managers in choosing individual investments in companies or sectors in either the UK or overseas markets. It is noted that emerging markets investments, are made in a wide range of developing countries where conditions of employment and standards of environmental protection are not the same as they are in the developed countries.

However the Committee expects that the boards of companies in which the Fund invests should pay due regard to social environmental matters and thereby further the long-term financial interests of the shareholders. Social and environmental issues arise not only in board policy decisions but also in daily operations, and the Committee therefore looks to the directors of a company to manage that company's affairs taking proper account of the shareholders' long-term interests.

The Fund is a member of the Local Authority Pension Fund Forum (LAPFF). The LAPFF exists to promote the investment interests of local authority pension funds, and to maximise their influence as shareholders while promoting corporate social responsibility and high standards of corporate governance among the companies in which they invest.

Please follow the link below to view the Fund's policies relating to responsible investment:

http://www.yourpension.org.uk/Dorset/Investments-Governance/Responsible-Investment.aspx

6. Policy of the exercise of rights (including voting rights) attaching to investments

The Fund has a voting issues policy for UK and overseas equity investments. Advice on such issues is taken from the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) and the Fund's voting rights are used according to this advice and the agreed policy. LAPFF also advise the Fund on any contentious areas where voting differently to the agreed policy may be considered.

The Fund has outsourced proxy voting to Institutional Shareholder Services (ISS). ISS's core business is the provision of proxy research, vote recommendations and related governance research services, including an end-to-end proxy voting platform and leading compliance and risk management solutions, to institutional investors worldwide. ISS has close to 30 years of experience and is a recognised industry leader in the field of corporate governance and proxy voting.

The Pension Fund Committee receives an annual report on voting activity in the previous year. Please follow the link below to view the most recent report:

http://dorset.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=380&Ver=4