



Pension Fund Committee

Date: Tuesday, 9 September 2025
Time: 1.30 pm
Venue: Meeting Room 1, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Membership: (Quorum 3)

Andy Canning (Chair), Andy Todd (Vice-Chair), David Brown, Patrick Canavan, Will Chakawhata, Adrian Felgate, Steve Murcer, Felicity Rice and Andy Skeats

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services
Meeting Contact joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

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Public Questions

Question submitted by Kim Creswell

At the Dorset Council Pension Fund Committee (DCPF) meeting, 24 June 2025, a deputation requesting the divesting of the Local Government Pension Scheme fund (LGPSF) from 71 companies complicit in Israel's violations of international law and internationally recognised crimes against humanity was considered and rejected. DCPF's recommendations were to not divest over £173million invested in companies assisting genocidal activities, citing

- I. Fears that divestment from companies complicit in Israeli genocidal actions will negatively affect the value of the pensions
- II. Lack of evidence that stakeholders wish divestment due to concerns about complicity with genocidal actions and heavily relying upon "Counsel opinion on the LGPS and current events concerning Gaza Nov 24 "(Giffin N, Oct '24).

I put it to you that the DCPF recommendation are legally flawed and lacking due diligence for the following reasons:

- I. LGPSFs have a duty to consider non-fiscal factors in investment
- II. The LGPSF have not sought to gather views of members (pension fund holders), and in any case should not be investing public monies in companies which are complicit in illegal activity according to international law, thereby making pension holders and council tax contributors complicit with international crimes against humanity
- III. the legal opinion piece relied upon is written by someone who states from the start that they are not an expert in this area; their opinion is problematic in several areas, not least their referral to advice from UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI), an unregulated organisation currently under investigation for abuses of legal structure to further Zionist aims.

(All references available upon request)

It is clear that under international law, local councils (even in the absence of direction from central government) should ensure their investment strategies give effect to the prevention and non-assistance duties. They must refrain from making new investments in involved companies, exercise due diligence, and take reasonable steps towards divesting from such companies.

Question: Given the attached information, I therefore ask Dorset Council Pension Fund Committee to comply with international law by ending procurement contracts with all companies complicit in Israel's violations of international law

and human rights against Palestinians, to include arms companies supplying Israel with weapons and military technology; companies providing infrastructure for Israel's unlawful military occupation of Palestinian land; companies conducting business activity in Israel's illegal settlements on stolen Palestinian land; as well as banking arrangements with companies providing financial support to companies complicit in crimes against humanity; and to provide a time frame in which this divestment process will occur.