

SPSC Trade Union Briefing on Local Government Pension Scheme Divestment

The Scottish Government's 2025 genocide declaration, and the overwhelming vote by MSPs in the Scottish Parliament to support boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against the state of Israel is more than symbolic—it presents a clear mandate for public bodies to re-evaluate their financial relationships with those complicit in the destruction of Palestinian life and infrastructure. Local Government Pension Scheme Scotland (LGPS Scotland) funds must now act decisively to align their investments with our values, international law, and the ethical expectations of members.

Purpose of This Briefing

This briefing is intended to:

- Support and encourage relevant trade union representatives on LGPS Scotland Boards and the LGPS Scottish Advisory Board (LGPSAB Scotland) to pursue with all vigour the urgent case for LGPS Scotland portfolios to adopt an ethical investment policy and divest from companies implicated in international law violations in occupied Palestine.
- Support and encourage trade unions to enact existing policies on Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS), by campaigning for the removal of LGPS Scotland investments from complicit companies.
- Equip union representatives with the tools to engage Pension Committees, local councillors, scheme members, and the wider public in promoting socially responsible, lawful, values-aligned investment practices in line with union policy.
- Furnish the wider campaign for divestment with an understanding of both the limitations and opportunities for advancing the campaign by engaging with trade union representatives, providing the tools for a more effective campaigning.

Who it is for:

Key Figures	Benefit
Union Officers, senior figures, staff and current and future Union representatives on LGPS Scotland Boards and the LGPSAB Scotland	Ensuring all are fully informed on what Palestinians are asking us to do and the rationale for BDS. Promote awareness of existing union policies, and the potential options available in order to pursue
Union members in the LGPS Scotland	Raise awareness, and equip members with the tools to apply pressure, and campaign for divestment within the workplace, and encourage fellow workers to support
BDS Campaigners/ the Palestine Solidarity movement in Scotland	Provide the tools and a strategy for effective divestment campaigning. With a better understanding of how to engage with trade union reps

Key Framing - Divestment must be framed as aligning with standards, values and Scottish Government policy not simply activism

Background

The Local Government Pension Scheme in Scotland (LGPS Scotland) is a public sector pension scheme made up of 11 separate pension funds, each managed by a Scottish local authority.

The key governance bodies for the LGPS Scotland are:

Scheme Advisory Board (Scotland)

- This national board advises the Scottish Government on LGPS Scotland policy, membership is balanced: seven employer representatives and seven union representatives.
- It offers guidance to both local Pension Committees and Local Pension Boards, particularly around administration, effective governance, and legislative changes.

Local Pension Boards

- Each of the 11 LGPS Scotland pension funds in Scotland is required to operate a Local Pension Board.
- Boards consist of equal employer and union representatives. Their core role is to ensure that the fund complies with LGPS Scotland regulations, pension legislation and guidance from The Pensions Regulator when necessary.

Pension Committees

- Each administering authority appoints a Pension Committee who act in a similar way to trustees in a trust based occupational pension.
- Responsible for investment strategies, fund policies, and overall operation, Committees work closely with their corresponding Pension Board.

Summary Table

Board / Committee	Role	Union Influence
Scheme Advisory Board (Scotland)	Advises Scottish Ministers and guides fund governance, shapes pension policy and best practice across Scotland	50% of the Board are Union Representatives
Local Pension Board	Ensures compliance with LGPS Scotland rules and regulations	50% of the Board are Union Representatives
Pension Committee	Oversees fund strategy, investment, and safeguards pension member interests	No representation on committee, but Trade Union Reps on the Pension Board can influence Divestment

Strategic Targets

LGPS Scottish Advisory Board (LGPSAB Scotland)

Composition and Key Functions

With 7 employer representatives and 7 union representatives, the board supports administering authorities, pension committees, and pension boards. The focus is on promoting effective scheme management, transparent governance, and compliant decision-making.

The Board can recommend policy guidance to administering authorities, influence governance standards, and act as a platform for consensus or public position statements.

Does not control investment decisions directly, those are made by administering authorities via the Pension Committees.

The Board can shape national-level guidance or trigger reviews of investment policy across funds, so it is an important body to target. Funds must prioritise financial interests of members, but ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) factors can be considered if they present material financial risks (e.g. from international law violations), or if there is broad support from beneficiaries for ethical action, and such action does not materially undermine fund performance.

LGPS Scotland Pension Boards (LGPS Scotland)

Composition and Purpose

Pension Boards play a vital role in governance, oversight, and ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. They are distinct from, but work alongside, Pensions Committees, which make the strategic decisions.

Membership of the Pension Board consists of equal numbers of representatives from trade unions and employers, drawn from councils and bodies in membership of the fund, employer representatives will normally be elected Councillors.

Trade union representatives are appointed by the following trade unions GMB, UNISON, Unite, all these unions have policies in support of BDS.

Each of the trade unions arrange their own selection process with appointments confirmed once established that the person to be appointed does not have a conflict of interest.

The Board's core duty is to assist the Administering Authority in securing compliance with the LGPS Scotland regulations, and other legislation relating to governance and administration of the scheme. Pension Board representatives are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct as specified by the Scottish Government, and Codes of Practice published by the Pensions Regulator.

No person may be appointed to the Pension Board that has a significant conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as a financial or other interest which is likely to prejudice a person's exercise of functions as a member of the Pension Board.

Remember - this is essentially a watchdog and advisor, not a decision-making body

LGPS Scotland Pension Committees

Composition and Purpose

The Pensions Committee is the decision-making body for each LGPS Scotland fund, making strategic decisions. Composed primarily of elected councillors from the administering authority, some funds co-opt non-voting members (e.g. union observers).

Funds may hold joint meetings of both bodies to encourage transparency and dialogue engendering a positive and proactive partnership where in practice the two bodies act as one.

Understand Committee and Board Roles and Composition

Body	Role	Composition	Fiduciary Duty?
Pensions Committee	Strategic & investment decisions	Councillors & non-voting co-opted members	✓ Yes
Pension Board	Oversight & compliance	Equal number of employer and Trade Union Reps	✗ Not strictly fiduciaries, but there is an expectation that board members will act in line with Fiduciary Duty

Understanding Fiduciary Duty - The legal and ethical obligation to act in the best interests of another party. Fiduciary duty applies primarily to those who manage the pension funds, such as councillors on pension committees and investment managers. Those responsible for running LGPS Scotland have a fiduciary duty to:

- Act in the best interests of scheme members and beneficiaries
- Prioritise securing pensions and benefits over other interests (e.g. their own personal political, environmental, or economic development goals)
- Act prudently and responsibly, making decisions with care, skill, and diligence
- Avoid unnecessary risk to the fund and ensure long-term sustainability
- Personal or political interests must not override duties to the fund and its members
- Operate within statutory regulations, especially pension and investment law

There is ongoing debate about how fiduciary duty interacts with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) issues under Scottish and UK law -

- ESG considerations can be part of fiduciary duty if they're financially material
- Non-financial concerns (e.g. climate change, social justice) can be considered if not posing significant financial risk to the fund, if there is good reason to believe scheme members would support the decision
- All relevant unions have BDS policies (policies made by the union membership - scheme members)

Action Pathway For All Union Members

Engage With: Councillors on LGPSAB Scotland & LGPS Scotland Pension Committees
Engage With: Fellow trade union members, the community and wider public

Objective: Persuade councillors to publicly support and advocate for divestment.
Objective: Raise awareness and build support within your union (particularly if you are in the LGPS Scotland, or your union represents members in the LGPS Scotland), and amongst the general public for divestment and responsible investment choices.

Tools: Directly raise with councillors, requesting meetings to present evidence. When engaging with councillors, focus on those potentially sympathetic first. Seek support for the submitting of motions to full council calling for ethical pension fund practices aligned with human rights. Highlight precedents from other UK LGPS (e.g Tower Hamlets), and LGPS Scotland fund ethical divestments (e.g. fossil fuels).

Consider arranging a deputation, this is one of the most effective tools for community activists, trade unionists, and campaigners to directly raise divestment, and stronger ESG governance with local authorities. This is a formal request to speak at a council meeting, to present a concern or proposal directly to councillors, and urge support for a motion or policy change. Do your homework, and understand procedure, councils may have specific rules and only produce agendas a few days in advance. Be aware that deputations may be rejected if they are not addressing a specific subject which is on the committee meeting agenda.

Submit a written request several days in advance, advising of the subject you want to address. Request to appear on a specific meeting date, ideally timed to coincide with a relevant motion or agenda item. Reference rulings from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the International Court of Justice. Emphasise alignment with LGPS Scotland Responsible Investment policies and Scotland & UK human rights obligations.

Pass motions in branches, regions, and committees calling for LGPS Scotland divestment from companies complicit in Israeli apartheid or breaches of international law. For ethical investment to be aligned with Scottish Government values including the 2025 genocide declaration. And for regular reporting and democratic oversight of investment decisions.

Coordinate cross-union motions for broader impact, pushing for revision of Responsible Investment (RI) and ESG policies to explicitly include respect for international law and human rights as core ESG factors. This should include exclusion of companies supplying weapons to regimes violating humanitarian law etc, and a commitment to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Encourage trade union members to raise divestment with councillors, to use union newsletters, social media, and meetings to raise awareness. Organise public events and join campaigns such as Time to Divest to increase pressure.

Building alliances is crucial to winning public support for ethical investment reforms, broad-based alliances amplify the message, show public legitimacy, and make it harder for local authorities and pension fund trustees to ignore the call for human rights-aligned investment. Target potential primary allies and find common ground, e.g. other unions, faith groups, human rights, justice and environmental groups, ask them to endorse your motion, and submit their own for stronger impact.

Action Pathway for Union Members In The LGPS Scotland

Engage With: Union Representatives on LGPSAB Scotland & LGPS Scotland Boards

Objective: To ensure union representatives on the LGPSAB Scotland and LGPS Scotland Boards are best informed and equipped to support divestment and advocate for responsible investment policies. This includes assisting them to convince other members of the relevant Board, and members of the Pensions Committee of the case for BDS

Tools: Raise divestment directly with the trade union reps on the boards, as representatives of local government workers and pension scheme members, their leadership is vital. The values of justice, human rights, and peace that members uphold require their pension funds to be invested ethically and responsibly.

The LGPSAB Scotland members are listed on [LGPSAB](#) Scotland website whilst the members of each of the 11 LGPS Scotland Boards are listed on the respective fund's website. Relevant codes of conduct and other documents that LGPS Scotland members and LGPS Scotland Pension committee members can be bound by, are also to be found on each fund's website. Members should familiarise themselves with these in order to gain a full understanding of these roles, and both their limitations and potential for effecting change.

The Trade unions represented on the LGPSAB Scotland and LGPS Scotland Boards (UNISON, GMB, UNITE) already support BDS, reps should be aware and be reminded of their union policy. They will want to adhere to policy and promote Union values on human rights, ethical investment, and democratic member control by accurately representing the members who have set policy.

Focus on the implications of the Scottish government genocide declaration, financial risk from international law violations, need for ESG to align with UN guidelines, and Unions' duty to uphold justice. Highlight precedents (e.g. Norway's KLP, New York State pension), present facts, not slogans.

Draft an advisory motion requesting union representatives on the LGPSAB Scotland and LGPS Scotland Boards formally propose a national-level governance review of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) policies, with screening for international law and human rights violations, and greater transparency in fund holdings.

Pass motions in your Union Branch or Region mandating your union to support BDS aligned ethical divestment, and to instruct your union's LGPSAB and LGPS Scotland Board reps to advocate for divestment from companies complicit in the occupation.

Submit motions to your union's national conference calling for their LGPSAB Scotland and LGPS Scotland Boards reps to champion divestment.

Take similar motions to STUC Congress and associated STUC equalities conferences seeking endorsement of this position.

Mobilise and organise members, building and illustrating support for divestment among scheme members.

Lobbying for divestment requires a careful, strategic, lawful approach. Public sector bodies operate within strict legal frameworks and are cautious of risking accusations of bias. To engage effectively and not be shut down immediately, campaigning must be grounded in universal principles, such as international law, human rights, fiduciary responsibility, and responsible investment. Focus on how companies that violate international law pose ESG risks

Action Pathway For Union Representatives On LGPSAB Scotland & LGPS Scotland Boards

Engage With: members of LGPS Scotland Pension Committee, fellow members of LGPSAB Scotland or LGPS Scotland Boards, and the union membership

Objective: Persuade councillors on the LGPSAB Scotland and the LGPS Scotland Pension Committees to publicly advocate for responsible investment policies, leading to divestment. Build support and pressure amongst fellow board members, and grow member-led pressure

Tools: The limitations of Pension Boards must be recognised, they have no direct power, they advise and monitor. While not fiduciaries, they are held to high standards and are expected to act in the best interests of the fund and its members.

Their function is to provide checks and balances, holding the decision-makers to account, in doing so they must not conflict with legislation, pressure must be framed in legal, ethical, and risk terms. Even though Boards do not make direct investment decisions, they monitor compliance and influence policy, reviewing the Pension Committee's decisions and can challenge decisions that conflict with ESG policies, fiduciary duty, views of members, public sentiment, and human rights principles. The board can recommend updates to the Investment Strategy Statement or Responsible Investment Policy to include climate targets, human rights considerations, UN Guiding Principles, ethical investment exclusions etc. This can create the policy basis for divestment without needing to explicitly endorse BDS.

Call for transparency, ask for publication of full lists of holdings, including indirect investments (pooled funds, passive trackers) and screening for human rights or military links. Submit questions about companies linked to illegal settlements, arms exports, or human rights violations. Greater transparency helps build public pressure for divestment.

Highlight ESG risks particularly in light of the Scottish government genocide declaration, link complicity in breaches of international law to material investment risks (legal, reputational, regulatory). Expose inconsistencies and risks, challenging funds on double standards or regulatory inconsistency.

Act as a channel for concerns raised by members of the fund (union members) and campaigners, formally raising these issues at board meetings and pushing them onto the committee's agenda. Build member-led pressure - mobilising LGPS Scotland members to put political and moral pressure on funds to act, encouraging members to contact their councillors, particularly if they sit on Pension Committees

Recommend that all pension committee members receive training on human rights and international law, related financial risk, and ethical investment principles. This can help shift the investment culture and lay groundwork for divestment.

Lobby the Pension Committee Directly - meet with Committee members and present evidence, including case studies of successful divestment (e.g. tobacco and fossil fuel exclusions), and member sentiment (policy, petitions, surveys).

Submit formal requests for investments in high-risk companies to be reviewed, and for adoption of a human rights policy as part of investment strategy.

Argue the case for fiduciary duty and reputational risk, councillors, as fiduciaries, have a duty to act prudently and responsibly, which includes screening out companies that are not sustainable or ethical long term

LGPSAB Scotland & LGPS Scotland Board Representative Action Summary

Action Area	Example
Governance Oversight	Questioning arms investments as inconsistent with stated ESG policy
Policy Input	Suggesting investment exclusions for companies violating human rights
Member Advocacy	Campaign on issues raised by fund members (e.g. divestment)
Training & Education	Encouraging fiduciary and ethical investment awareness
Transparency Requests	Demanding publication of holdings and risk reports

Challenge the Framing - ethical investment is not about perfection — it's about aligning with clear red lines - illegal settlements, arming regimes committing war crimes, forced labour etc

“Pension funds already screen for financial risk — why not for legal and moral risk?”

“If it’s too difficult to screen for international law violations, then we shouldn’t be investing public money in global markets at all”

“Ethical investing is not a luxury — it’s a fiduciary duty in a globalised world”

Overcome Obstacles to Action

<p>"It's Too Difficult"</p> <p>"It is too laborious a task to screen for international law violations"</p>	<p>Is it really “too difficult” or just politically uncomfortable? This is one of the most common objections, but such responses mask a lack of political will, not a lack of practical feasibility.</p> <p>Whilst If it is so difficult to screen for international law violations, then the fund shouldn’t be investing public money in global markets at all.</p>
<p>“Screening for human rights violations is too complex”</p> <p>“We can’t divest from every company that violates international law”</p>	<p>Calling it “too complex” is an excuse for inaction. International law provides a framework and legal basis to assess violations.</p> <p>Some funds already have screening processes in place. Any divestment campaign must insist on stricter screening and due diligence to avoid complicity in human rights violations.</p>
<p>“There are too many grey areas, it’s impossible to implement fairly”</p>	<p>It’s already being done. International precedents prove it is feasible.</p>

There are clear, real-world examples of BDS actions taken by organisations, institutions, and governments

Norway's Pension Fund KLP has divested from multiple companies over settlement activity — using publicly available UN and NGO evidence.

Norway's Sovereign Wealth Fund (Norges Bank Investment Management) has divested from companies like Caterpillar and several Israeli banks over concerns about their role in human rights violations in Palestine.

The Church of England Pensions Board screens companies for human rights and climate risk, with dedicated ESG governance structures.

The Dutch ABP pension fund uses third-party research to screen for violations and has divested from Israel in limited ways over human rights policy risks.

In 2025 Tower Hamlets joined other London boroughs, Waltham Forest, Islington, and Lewisham that have pledged divestment actions. These councils have committed to withdrawing investments from companies alleged to be involved in Israeli war crimes, illegal military occupation, and apartheid policies.

Prepare For Pushback — And stick to principles

Acknowledge complexity, but emphasise due diligence is a minimum standard, not a bonus. Highlight that ethical investment is increasingly mainstream, not a fringe demand. Ask fund managers and councillors to explain why they think our pensions should remain invested in companies complicit in human rights abuses.

Tools and Frameworks That Already Exist

UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)
Adopted: 2011 by the UN Human Rights Council

Core Principles:

- State Duty to Protect human rights
- Corporate Responsibility to Respect human rights
- Access to Remedy for victims of business-related abuses

Use by Pension Funds & Institutions:

- Serves as the global baseline for responsible business conduct.
- Many investors, including ABP, NYS Common Retirement Fund, and Church of England, align ESG policies with UNGPs.
- Guides human rights due diligence, impact assessments, and escalation processes.

Example Use: Investors screen companies operating in conflict zones or involved in surveillance, displacement, or forced labour based on their adherence to UNGP standards.

Tools and Frameworks That Already Exist

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises - Administered by: OECD governments (including UK and most developed countries)

Content:

- Covers areas such as human rights, labour rights, environment, anti-bribery, and disclosure.
- Provides sector-specific guidance (e.g. on mining, garment, agriculture).

Key Features:

- Due Diligence Guidance for institutional investors.
- National Contact Points (NCPs) allow for grievances against companies to be raised and mediated.

Use in Investment:

- Used by many European pension funds (e.g., ABP, PFZW) as a mandatory screening tool.
- Forms part of SFDR compliance under EU law, especially for “Principal Adverse Impact” disclosures.

Example Use: If a company is found violating OECD norms, funds may place it on an exclusion list or engage for reform.

Tools and Frameworks That Already Exist

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC)

Type: Independent NGO database and tracking platform

Purpose:

- Monitors corporate human rights performance globally.
- Hosts allegations, company responses, and legal developments.
- Tracks investor engagement, litigation, and ESG advocacy.

Use in Screening & Campaigns:

- Used by unions, journalists, and ESG teams to check if a company is implicated in:
 - Land grabs
 - Occupation-related activity
 - Supply chain abuses
- Often referenced by campaigns urging divestment or shareholder pressure.

Example Use: If a mining or tech company is accused of complicity in abuses in occupied territories, BHRRC may have records and responses that inform investor decision-making.

If you have any questions or would like guidance on taking forward an initiative for divestment from complicity companies, contact:

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Appendix

Scottish Pension Funds

There are **11 LGPS Scotland Funds**, each administered by a different local authority:

1. **Strathclyde Pension Fund** (Glasgow City Council) <https://www.spfo.org.uk/>
- 2.
3. **Lothian Pension Fund** (City of Edinburgh Council) <https://www.lpf.org.uk/>
4. **Tayside Pension Fund** <https://www.taysidepensionfund.org/>
5. **North East Scotland Pension Fund** <https://www.nespf.org.uk/>
6. **Fife Pension Fund** <https://www.fifepensionfund.org/>
7. **Highlands Pension Fund** <https://www.highlandpensionfund.org/>
8. **Dumfries & Galloway Pension Fund**
<https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/council-elections/pensions>
9. **Borders Pension Fund** <https://www.scottishborderscouncilpensionfund.org/>
10. **Falkirk Pension Fund** <https://www.falkirkpensionfund.org/>
11. **Orkney Islands Council Pension Fund**
<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/your-council/finances-services/pensions/>
12. **Shetland Islands Council Pension Fund** <https://www.shetlandpensionfund.org/>

What Is the Goal of BDS?

BDS seeks to hold Israel accountable until it complies with **three core demands**, grounded in international law:

1. **End the occupation and colonisation** of all lands and dismantle the separation wall.
2. **Recognise the rights of Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel** to full equality.
3. **Respect the right of return** of Palestinian refugees, as per UN Resolution 194.

What Do the Three Tactics Mean?

Tactic	What It Targets	Examples
Boycott	Israeli and international companies/institutions complicit in oppression	Cultural, academic, and product boycotts (e.g. SodaStream)
Divestment	Withdrawal of investments from companies profiting from the occupation	Pension funds divesting from Elbit Systems, Caterpillar, etc.
Sanctions	Government-level action against Israeli state institutions	Calls to suspend arms trade, military cooperation, or agreements

Databases and resources on complicit companies

UN Human Rights Office database of businesses involved in certain activities in illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, listing a total of 158 business enterprises from 11 countries:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/ahrc6019-database-all-business-enterprises-involved-activities-detailed>

Who Profits is an independent research centre dedicated to exposing the commercial involvement of Israeli and international corporations in the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Syrian land and population: <https://www.whoprofits.org/companies/all>

Investigate is a project of the Action Center for Corporate Accountability at the American Friends Service Committee which uses the Who Profits database. You can carry out an initial search of investment holding of a pension fund by uploading the document and receive recommendations for divestment. *Note that this is the start of decision making on which companies to focus on; there will be other factors and cross referencing with active BDS target lists and complicit company databases:* <https://investigate.afsc.org/>

From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967:

<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/a-hrc-59-23-from-economy-of-occupation-to-economy-of-genocide-report-special-rapporteur-francesca-albanese-palestine-2025/>

Model Motions

Model Council Motion 1:

Ethical Investment and Divestment from Arms, Occupation, and Fossil Fuels

Council Notes:

1. That the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS Scotland) invests significant public funds on behalf of council workers and other public sector employees.
2. A portion of these funds are currently invested in companies linked to:
 - The manufacture and export of weapons used in armed conflict,
 - Human rights abuses, including companies complicit in the Israeli occupation and genocide in Palestine,
 - Fossil fuel extraction and infrastructure, which are major contributors to global climate breakdown.
3. These investments are inconsistent with the ethical, environmental, and human rights values that this Council seeks to uphold.
4. Other local authorities have taken action to align their pension fund policies with ethical investment principles.

Council Believes:

1. Pension investments should be consistent with this Council's commitments to social justice, human rights, and environmental sustainability.
2. Continued investment in arms, occupation, and fossil fuels undermines public confidence, ethical governance, and our climate commitments.
3. Ethical divestment is both a moral responsibility and a financially sustainable choice over the long term.

Council Resolves To:

1. Call on the [*Name of LGPS Scotland Pension Fund or Committee*] to:
 - Conduct a comprehensive and transparent audit of all current investments in the arms trade, fossil fuels, and companies complicit in human rights abuses.
 - Develop and publish a clear, time-bound plan for full divestment from these sectors.
 - Commit to reinvestment in socially beneficial, low-carbon, and community-focused initiatives that support the just transition and local resilience.
2. Write, urging support for an LGPS Scotland-wide ethical divestment policy to:
 - The Chair and Members of the [*Name of Pension Fund*] Pension Committee,
 - The Council's representative(s) on the Pension Committee,
 - Political group leaders within the Council,
3. Engage with local residents, trade unions, and civil society groups (including campaigners on divestment and human rights) to ensure transparency, accountability, and public involvement in shaping ethical investment policy.
4. Request that the [*Name of Pension Fund*] Pension Committee publishes an annual public report detailing:
 - The extent of investments in arms, fossil fuels, and companies involved in occupation or rights violations,
 - Progress on divestment and reinvestment activities,
 - Engagement with scheme members on investment decisions.

This Council further recognises the right of its employees and residents to have their pension funds invested in ways that do not contribute to harm, conflict, or climate catastrophe.

Branch Model Motion 1

Ethical Investment – Divestment from Human Rights Abuses

This Branch Notes:

That the [*Name of Pension Fund*] invests members' deferred wages into companies:

- Involved in arms trading and military technologies used in war, occupation and what the Scottish Government has described as genocide (e.g. in Palestine).
- Who drive the climate crisis through fossil fuel extraction and infrastructure.

That Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds across the UK have begun responding to member and public pressure to adopt ethical investment policies, including:

- Tower Hamlets Council (2025) committing to divest from arms firms complicit in war crimes,
- East Lothian and South Lanarkshire Councils calling for fossil fuel divestment by their pension funds.

That the UK Supreme Court (2020) confirmed it is lawful for public pension funds to consider ethical and human rights factors in investment decisions.

- That our union has clear policy commitments in support of:
 - Climate justice and a just transition,
 - Human rights and solidarity with oppressed peoples,
 - Boycott, Divestment and sanction on Israel,
 - Democratic control over public funds.

This Branch Believes:

That pension funds must be accountable to members and not be invested in:

- Human rights abuses,
- Environmental destruction,
- Reputationally and financially risky sectors.
- That divestment and ethical reinvestment are both morally necessary and financially responsible.

This Branch Resolves To:

Request a formal meeting with relevant local councillors, including those serving on the pension committee, to:

- Share evidence on fund investments linked to arms and fossil fuels
- Discuss precedents set by other local authorities
- Seek support for a full council motion on ethical investment.

The branch Secretary will be instructed to write to councillors with the following message:

"I am writing on behalf of [*Name of Branch & Union*] to request a meeting to discuss [*Name of Pension Fund's*] investments in companies linked to human rights abuses and fossil fuel extraction. Other councils (e.g. Tower Hamlets, East Lothian) have taken steps toward ethical divestment. We would welcome the opportunity to share evidence and the following draft council motion for your consideration.

Branch Model Motion 2:

Ethical Pension Investment and Divestment from Human Rights Violators

This union branch notes that:

1. The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS Scotland) invests in numerous companies complicit in violations of international law and human rights, including in the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories.
2. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has listed companies involved in illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank.
3. Many of these companies are held in LGPS Scotland portfolios, including arms manufacturers (e.g. Elbit Systems, Lockheed Martin), surveillance providers (e.g. Motorola Solutions), and corporations facilitating settlement infrastructure.
4. The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry has found that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza.
5. That trade unions have a proud tradition of standing up for international law, workers' rights, and ethical investment.

This branch believes:

1. That our members' pensions should not be invested in companies complicit in genocide, war crimes, occupation, or apartheid.
2. That investment decisions should reflect our union's values of solidarity, justice, and peace.
3. That our union's representatives on pension boards have a responsibility to push for investment policies aligned with human rights and international law.

This branch resolves:

1. To call on our union to publicly support the campaign for LGPS Scotland funds to divest from companies complicit in the occupation of Palestine and violations of international law.
2. To write to our union's representatives on the Scottish LGPS Advisory Board, and [*Name of LGPS Scotland Pension Fund*] Board extending an invite to attend a future branch meeting, further urging them to;
 - Raise the issue of investments in such companies at the Board.
 - Support a review of LGPS Scotland holdings against the UN database of settlement-linked companies.
 - Advocate for divestment from those identified as complicit in human rights violations.
3. To work with other branches, civil society groups, including those involved in solidarity and divestment campaigning, and affected pension fund members to campaign for ethical pension investment.
4. To circulate this motion to the regional/national union structures as appropriate.

Branch Model Motion 3:

Solidarity with LGPS Scotland Ethical Divestment Campaigns

This branch is aware that the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry has found that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza.

This branch notes that:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS Scotland) holds significant investments in:
 - Arms manufacturers and other companies complicit in the Israeli occupation of Palestine, including the commission of genocide and other human rights violations,
 - Fossil fuel corporations that are accelerating the global climate crisis.
- While we do not have members directly enrolled in the LGPS Scotland, the fund represents public money and the deferred wages of thousands of public sector workers.
- Several councils have made positive commitments toward ethical investment and divestment from harmful industries.
- Campaigns such as Time to Divest and the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign (SPSC) are working to hold pension authorities accountable and push for investments aligned with climate justice, peace, and human rights.

This branch believes:

- Public money should not be invested in ways that support genocide, war, occupation, or environmental destruction.
- Trade unions have a moral responsibility to show solidarity with workers and communities impacted by unethical investment — whether or not our members are directly affected.
- Ethical investment is achievable and urgent, and requires coordinated pressure from unions, campaigners, and local communities.

This branch resolves to:

- Express public support for ethical divestment from arms companies, fossil fuel corporations, and companies complicit in occupation and human rights violations within LGPS Scotland.
- Write to the Chair and members of the relevant Pension Fund Committee, local councillors, and union structures to:
 - Share this branch's support for ethical divestment,
 - Call for a transparent, time-bound divestment process,
 - Advocate for reinvestment in socially useful, climate-safe, and community-beneficial sectors.
- Coordinate with and support local and national divestment campaigns, including:
 - Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign (SPSC),
 - Time to Divest,
 - Other organisations working for human rights, climate justice, and democratic control of public funds.
- Educate and inform our members about the ethical and political issues surrounding pension fund investments and promote solidarity actions where appropriate.

This union branch further recognises the right of workers and communities around the world to live free from war, occupation, and climate devastation. We stand in solidarity with those affected by the arms trade, fossil fuel extraction, and human rights abuses, and we commit to supporting ethical alternatives wherever public money is invested.