NORWICH
City Council

Cabinet
9 July 2025
Tabled Papers

Item 9 – Motion 11(d) Local Government Pay

Motion 11(d) Wording as Referred by Council	Cabinet Response
1. Support the pay claim submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of the council and school workers for an increase of £3,000 on all pay points	**Recommendation partially accepted:** The council is committed to working collaboratively with unions and staff to advocate for fair and equitable wages for local government employees. However, it will not pre-empt the final decision to be determined by the government. In doing so, the council must operate within its financial constraints to ensure that all staff are compensated fairly and sustainably.
2. Call on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to central government to fund the NJC pay claim	**Recommendation partially accepted:** Request that the Local Government Association (LGA) make formal representations to central government in support of funding the National Joint Council (NJC) pay claim.
3. Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State to call for a pay increase for local government workers to be funded with new money from central government	**Recommendation Accepted**
4. Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and consider practical ways in which the council can support the campaign	**Recommendation Accepted:** The Leader will meet with the NJC union representative to explore how the council can best support the current pay claim.

5. Encourage all local government workers to join a union.	**Recommendation Accepted:** The council will issue an all-staff communication encouraging employees to consider joining a trade union as part of its commitment to supporting workforce representation.

Item 10 – Motion 7(A) Divest the Norfolk Pension Fund

Motion 7(a) wording as referred by Council	Cabinet Response
1) To ask the leader of the Council to write to the Chair of Pension Committee at Norfolk County Council, urging the Pensions Committee to: a) Publish all current investments – including those held via the ACCESS Pool and those made by fund managers – in an open, detailed and transparent way, including breakdowns by sector and company. b) Take immediate steps to develop adequate investment screening and due diligence procedures to ensure that going forward no investments are made in bonds from governments that commit war crimes and crimes against humanity, or in companies	**Recommendation partially accepted (replaces points a-f with amended text):** To ask the leader of the Council to write to the Chair of Pension Committee at Norfolk County Council, urging the Pensions Committee to: • Develop a robust, evidence-based ethical investment policy that reflects: - legal obligations under international and domestic law, - the views of scheme members, and - the need to safeguard the long-term financial performance of the fund. • Establish and apply enhanced due diligence and screening procedures to identify and avoid investments in governments, industries or companies demonstrably proved to be involved in serious human rights violations, environmental destruction, or breaches of international humanitarian law. • Define a clear process and timeline for divesting from companies and bonds in breach of the ethical investment policy, with quarterly reporting on progress. • Engage with recognised trade unions representing LGPS members (e.g. UNISON, Unite, GMB) to ensure their voices help shape the fund's ethical investment strategy. • Write to the Joint Committee of the ACCESS Pool to: - Share Norwich City Council's position; - Request the development of clear ESG screening aligned with international human rights standards; - Urge review and, where appropriate, divestment from investments not meeting ethical or fiduciary criteria.

Motion 7(a) wording as referred by Council	**Cabinet Response**
that are complicit in such crimes. c) Develop a timeline for divesting from government bonds and companies linked to war crimes and crimes against humanity. d) Make a public statement on the Committee's plans for divesting from government bonds and companies linked to war crimes and crimes against humanity. e) Report quarterly on divestment as a standing item on the Pension Committee until divestment goals are achieved. f) Engage with trade unions representing LGPS members, including UNISON, Unite, and GMB, to develop an ethical investment policy	

Motion 7(a) wording as referred by Council	**Cabinet Response**
that respects members' voices.	
2) To make a public statement reaffirming the Council's support for ethical investment and pension fund divestment from companies linked to war crimes and crimes against humanity.	**Recommendation partially accepted:** Norwich City Council believes in a long term ethical investment strategy: • Ethical investing is not at odds with fiduciary responsibility; in fact, investing in stable, rights-respecting environments can support the long-term performance of pension funds. • An ethical investment strategy must be long-term in nature, ensuring that investments deliver on trustees' fiduciary duty to achieve a prudent balance between the interests of current and future beneficiaries of the pension fund. • Council recognises that pension fund investments are made for the long-term benefit of scheme members and across generations, and should not be subject to short-term political pressures. Ethical investment policies must therefore be consistent, evidence-based, and balanced. • Council staff and other scheme members have a right to transparency regarding how their pensions are invested, and to have their ethical concerns taken into account. • Engagement with companies can sometimes be effective, but in cases of repeated non-compliance or involvement in egregious practices, divestment may be the only effective course of action.

Motion 7(a) wording as referred by Council	**Cabinet Response**
3) To write to the Chair of the Joint Committee of the ACCESS Pool, urging the Joint Committee to take immediate steps to divest from government bonds and companies linked to war crimes and crimes against humanity, and to develop adequate investment screening and due diligence procedures to ensure that none of its investments facilitate violations of international humanitarian law.	**Recommendation partially accepted:** Define a clear process and timeline for divesting from companies and bonds in breach of the ethical investment policy, with quarterly reporting on progress. • Write to the Joint Committee of the ACCESS Pool to: - Share Norwich City Council's position; - Request the development of clear ESG screening aligned with international human rights standards; - Urge review and, where appropriate, divestment from investments not meeting ethical or fiduciary criteria.
4) To write to the Leaders of the Councils who form part of the ACCESS Pool to highlight members' concerns about problematic investments and to urge them to use their leverage to demand that the ACCESS Pool divests from government bonds and companies linked to war crimes and crimes against humanity, and implements adequate investment screening and due diligence procedures to ensure that none of its investments facilitate	**Recommendation partially accepted:** Instead of a standalone public statement, include this as part of the quarterly reporting and transparency commitments in the ethical investment policy. Promote collaborative dialogue with other councils to share Norwich's position and encourage ethical investment alignment.

Motion 7(a) wording as referred by Council	Cabinet Response
violations of international humanitarian law.	
5) To proactively advocate for a potential future Greater Norwich Unitary Authority to become the administering authority of the Norfolk Pension Scheme.	**Recommendation rejected** We are not in a position to pre-empt the outcome of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and therefore cannot accept this recommendation at this time.
6) To actively engage with and seek advice from Councils and Pension Committees that have already taken steps to exclude and/or divest from companies linked to the arms trade and violations of international humanitarian law, and to work with trade unions representing scheme members on developing ethical investment principles in preparation of Local Government Reorganisation.	**Recommendation partially accepted** To actively engage with and seek advice from Councils and Pension Committees that have already implemented ethical investment policies.

Motion 7(a) wording as referred by Council	**Cabinet Response**
7) To seek appointment of a representative of Norwich City Council as second-largest council employer within the Norfolk Pensions Scheme to the Norfolk Pensions Committee at the earliest opportunity, and to proactively use such a position on the Committee to push for ethical investment.	**Resolution accepted** Following a meeting of the Norfolk Leaders' Group on 27 June 2025. Councillor Stonard has been appointed as a member of the Pensions Committee.