

United Kingdom Accreditation Service Pension Scheme

Statement of Investment Principles

Barnett Waddingham LLP

July 2025

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Choosing investments.....	3
3. Investment objectives.....	4
4. Kinds of investments to be held.....	4
5. The balance between different kinds of investments	4
7. Expected return on investments.....	6
8. Realisation of investments.....	6
9. Financially material considerations, non-financially material considerations, the exercise of voting rights and engagement activities	6
10. Policy on arrangements with asset managers	7
11. Agreement	8
Appendix 1: Investment policy of the Scheme as at September 2020	9
1. The balance between different kinds of investment.....	9
2. Choosing investments.....	10
3. Fee agreements.....	12
4. Investments and disinvestments.....	12
5. AVC arrangements.....	13
Appendix 2: Financially material considerations, non-financially material considerations, the exercise of voting rights and engagement activities	14
1. Financially material considerations	14
2. Non-financially material considerations	15
3. The exercise of voting rights.....	16
4. Engagement activities	16

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This is the Statement of Investment Principles prepared by the Trustee of the United Kingdom Accreditation Service Pension Scheme ("the Scheme"). This statement sets down the principles which govern the decisions about investments that enable the Scheme to meet the requirements of:
 - the Pensions Act 1995, as amended by the Pensions Act 2004;
 - the Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment) Regulations 2005 as amended by the Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment) (Amendment) Regulations 2010;
 - the Occupational Pension Schemes (Charges and Governance) Regulations 2015; and
 - the Pension Protection Fund (Pensionable Service) and Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment and Disclosure) (Amendment and Modification) Regulations 2018.
 - the Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment and Disclosure) (Amendment) Regulations 2019.
- 1.2. In preparing this statement the Trustee has consulted the Principal Employer, United Kingdom Accreditation Service ("UKAS") and obtained advice from Barnett Waddingham LLP, the Trustee's investment consultants. Barnett Waddingham is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.
- 1.3. This statement has been prepared with regard to the 2001 Myners review of institutional investment (including subsequent updates), and Scheme Funding legislation.
- 1.4. The Trustee will review this statement at least every three years or if there is a significant change in any of the areas covered by the statement.
- 1.5. The investment powers of the Trustee are set out in Section 15.2 of the Third Definitive Trust Deed and Rules dated 29 March 2012. This statement is consistent with those powers.

2. Choosing investments

- 2.1. The Trustee's policy is to set the overall investment target and then monitor the performance of their managers against that target. In doing so, the Trustee considers the advice of their professional advisers, who they consider to be suitably qualified and experienced for this role.
- 2.2. The day-to-day management of the Scheme's assets is delegated to one or more investment managers. The Scheme's investment managers are detailed in Appendix 1 to this Statement. The investment managers are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, and are responsible for stock selection and the exercise of voting rights.
- 2.3. The Trustee reviews the appropriateness of the Scheme's investment strategy on an ongoing basis. This review includes consideration of the continued competence of the investment managers with respect to performance within any guidelines set. The Trustee will also consult UKAS before amending the investment strategy.

3. Investment objectives

3.1. The Trustee has discussed key investment objectives in light of an analysis of the Scheme's liability profile as well as the constraints the Trustee faces in achieving these objectives. As a result, the Trustee's main investment objectives are:

- The acquisition of suitable assets of appropriate liquidity which will generate income and capital growth to meet, together with new contributions from members and the principal employer, the cost of current and future benefits which the Scheme provides.
- To reduce the risk of the assets failing to meet the liabilities over the long term.
- To minimise the long term costs of the Scheme by maximising the return on the assets whilst having regard to the preceding objective above.

3.2. The Trustee is aware of the relationship that exists between the particular investment portfolio that is held and the level of funding of the Scheme's liabilities. The Trustee has obtained exposure to investments that they expect will meet the Scheme's objectives as best as possible.

4. Kinds of investments to be held

4.1. The Scheme is permitted to invest in a wide range of assets including equities, bonds, cash, property and alternatives, as well as additional asset classes they deem appropriate within the investment strategy framework from time to time. No direct investment is permitted in:

- Securities issued by UKAS.
- Property leased to UKAS.

The Trustee monitors the above from time-to-time and will take steps to alter this if necessary. Typically this check is carried out annually by the Scheme's auditors.

5. The balance between different kinds of investments

5.1. The Scheme invests in assets that are expected to achieve the Scheme's objectives. The allocation between different asset classes is contained within Appendix 1 to this Statement.

5.2. The Trustee considers the merits of both active and passive management for the various elements of the portfolio and may select different approaches for different asset classes. The current arrangements are set out in Appendix 1 to this Statement.

5.3. From time to time the Scheme may hold cash and therefore deviate from its strategic or tactical asset allocation in order to accommodate any short-term cashflow requirements or any other unexpected items.

5.4. The Trustee is aware that the appropriate balance between different kinds of investments will vary over time and therefore the Scheme's asset allocation will be expected to change as the Scheme's liability profile matures.

6. Risks

- 6.1. The Trustee has considered the following risks for the Scheme with regard to its investment policy and the Scheme's liabilities, and has considered ways of managing/monitoring these risks:

Risk versus the liabilities	The Trustee will monitor and review the investment strategy with respect to the liabilities in conjunction with each actuarial valuation. The investment strategy will be set with consideration to the appropriate level of risk required for the funding strategy as set out in the Scheme's Statement of Funding Principles.
Covenant risk	The creditworthiness of the employer and the size of the pension liability relative to the employer's earnings are monitored on a regular basis. The appropriate level of investment risk is considered with reference to the strength of the employer covenant.
Solvency and mismatching	This risk is addressed through the asset allocation strategy and ongoing triennial actuarial valuations. The Trustee is aware that the asset allocation required to minimise the volatility of the solvency position may be different from that which would minimise the volatility on the Scheme's funding basis.
Asset allocation risk	The asset allocation is detailed in Appendix 1 to this Statement and is monitored on a regular basis by the Trustee.
Investment manager risk	The Trustee monitors the performance of each of the Scheme's investment managers on a regular basis in addition to having meetings with the managers from time to time as necessary. The Trustee has a written agreement with each investment manager, which contains a number of restrictions on how each investment manager may operate.
Governance risk	Each asset manager is expected to undertake good stewardship and positive engagement in relation to the assets held. The Trustee monitors these and will report on the managers' practices in their annual Implementation Statement.
ESG/Climate risk	The Trustee has considered long-term financial risks to the Scheme and considers ESG factors, as well as climate risk, to potentially be financially material and will continue to develop its policy to consider these, alongside other factors, when selecting or reviewing the Scheme's investments in order to avoid unexpected losses.
Concentration risk	Each investment manager is expected to manage broadly diversified portfolios and to spread assets across a number of individual shares and securities.
Liquidity risk	The Scheme invests in assets such that there is a sufficient allocation to liquid investments that can be converted into cash at short notice given the Scheme's cashflow requirements. The Scheme's administrators assess the level of cash held in order to limit the impact of the cashflow requirements on the investment policy.

Currency risk	The Scheme's liabilities are denominated in sterling. The Scheme may gain exposure to overseas currencies by investing in assets that are denominated in a foreign currency or via currency management. Currency hedging is employed to manage the impact of exchange rate fluctuations.
Loss of investment	The risk of loss of investment by each investment manager and custodian is assessed by the Trustee. This includes losses beyond those caused by market movements (e.g. default risk, operational errors or fraud).

7. Expected return on investments

- 7.1. The Trustee has regard to the relative investment return and risk that each asset class is expected to provide. The Trustee is advised by their professional advisors on these matters, who they deem to be appropriately qualified experts. However, the day-to-day selection of investments is delegated to the investment managers.
- 7.2. The Trustee recognises the need to distinguish between nominal and real returns and to make appropriate allowance for inflation when making decisions and comparisons.
- 7.3. In considering the expected return from investments, the Trustee recognises that different asset classes have different long-term expected returns and expected volatilities relative to the liabilities.
- 7.4. Having established the investment strategy, the Trustee monitors the performance of each investment manager against an agreed benchmark as frequently as appropriate, according to market conditions and the Scheme's funding position. The Trustee meets the Scheme's investment managers as frequently as is appropriate in order to review performance.

8. Realisation of investments

- 8.1. The Trustee has delegated the responsibility for buying and selling investments to the investment managers. The Trustee has considered the risk of liquidity as referred to above.
- 8.2. Ultimately, the investments will all have to be sold when the Scheme's life comes to an end. In this situation, the Trustee is aware of the fact that the realisable value of some investments, were there to be a forced sale, might be lower than the market value shown in the Scheme accounts.

9. Financially material considerations, non-financially material considerations, the exercise of voting rights and engagement activities

- 9.1. The Trustee has set policies in relation to these matters. These policies are set out in Appendix 2.

10. Policy on arrangements with asset managers

Incentivising alignment with the Trustee's investment policies

- 10.1. Prior to appointing an investment manager, the Trustee discusses the investment manager's approach to the management of ESG and climate related risks with the Scheme's investment consultant, and how their policies are aligned with the Trustee's own investment beliefs.
- 10.2. When appointing an investment manager, in addition to considering the investment manager's investment philosophy, process and policies to establish how the manager intends to make the required investment returns, the Trustee also considers how ESG and climate risk are integrated into these. If the Trustee deems any aspect of these policies to be out of line with their own investment objectives for the part of the portfolio being considered, they will consider using another manager for the mandate.
- 10.3. The Trustee carries out a strategy review at least every three years where they assess the continuing relevance of the strategy in the context of the Scheme's membership and their aims, beliefs and constraints. The Trustee monitors the investment managers' approach to ESG and climate related risks on an annual basis.
- 10.4. In the event that an investment manager ceases to meet the Trustee's desired aims, including the management of ESG and climate related risks, using the approach expected of them, their appointment will be terminated. The investment managers have been informed of this by the Scheme's investment consultant on behalf of the Trustee.
- 10.5. Investment manager ESG policies are reviewed in the context of best industry practice and feedback will be provided to the investment manager.

Incentivising assessments based on medium to long term, financial and non-financial considerations

- 10.6. The Trustee is mindful that the impact of ESG and climate change has a long-term nature. However, the Trustee recognises that the potential for change in value as a result of ESG and climate risk may occur over a much shorter term than climate change itself. The Trustee acknowledges this in their investment management arrangements.
- 10.7. When considering the management of objectives for an investment manager (including ESG and climate risk objectives), and then assessing their effectiveness and performance, the Trustee assesses these over a rolling timeframe. The Trustee believes the use of rolling timeframes, typically 3 to 5 years, is consistent with ensuring the investment manager makes decisions based on an appropriate time horizon. Where a fund may have an absolute return or shorter term target, this is generally supplementary to a longer term performance target. In the case of assets that are actively managed, the Trustee expects this longer term performance target to be sufficient to ensure an appropriate alignment of interests.
- 10.8. The Trustee expects investment managers to be voting and engaging on behalf of the Scheme's holdings and the Scheme monitors this activity within the Implementation Statement in the Scheme's Annual Report and Accounts. The Trustee does not expect ESG considerations to be disregarded by the investment managers in an effort to achieve any short term targets.

Method and time horizon for assessing performance

- 10.9. The Trustee monitors the performance of their investment managers over medium to long term periods that are consistent with the Trustee's investment aims, beliefs and constraints.
- 10.10. The Scheme invests exclusively in pooled funds. The investment manager is remunerated by the Trustee based on the assets they manage on behalf of the Trustee. As the funds grow, due to successful investment by the investment manager, they receive more and as values fall they receive less.
- 10.11. The Trustee believes that this fee structure, including the balance between any fixed and performance related element, enables the investment manager to focus on long-term performance without worrying about short term dips in performance significantly affecting their revenue.
- 10.12. The Trustee asks the Scheme's investment consultant to assess if the asset management fee is in line with the market when the manager is selected, and the appropriateness of the annual management charges are considered regularly as part of the review of the Statement of Investment Principles.

Portfolio turnover costs


- 10.13. The Trustee acknowledges that portfolio turnover costs can impact on the performance of their investments. Overall performance is assessed as part of the quarterly investment monitoring process.
- 10.14. During the investment manager appointment process, the Trustee may consider both past and anticipated portfolio turnover levels. When underperformance is identified, deviations from the expected level of turnover may be investigated with the investment manager concerned if it is felt they may have been a significant contributor to the underperformance. Assessments reflect the market conditions and peer group practices. The Trustee acknowledges that for some asset classes, such as Liability Driven Investment ("LDI"), a higher turnover of contracts such as repurchase agreements, can be beneficial to the fund from both a risk and cost perspective.

Duration of arrangement with asset manager

- 10.15. For the open-ended pooled funds in which the Scheme invests, there are no predetermined terms of agreement with the investment managers.
- 10.16. The suitability of the Scheme's asset allocation and its ongoing alignment with the Trustee's investment beliefs is assessed every three years, or when changes deem it appropriate to do so more frequently. As part of this review the ongoing appropriateness of the investment managers, and the specific funds used, is assessed.

11. Agreement

- 11.1. This statement was agreed by the Trustee, and replaces any previous statements. Copies of this statement and any subsequent amendments will be made available to UKAS, the investment managers, the Scheme Actuary and the Scheme's auditor upon request.

Signed: 
.....

Date: 29th July 2025
.....

On behalf of the United Kingdom Accreditation Service Pension Scheme

Appendix 1: Investment policy of the Scheme as at July 2025

1. The balance between different kinds of investment

The Scheme has a strategic asset allocation as set out in the table below, which has been agreed after considering the Scheme's liability profile and funding position, the expected return of the various asset classes and the need for diversification.

The Trustee recognises that the asset allocation of investments in different asset classes will vary over time as a result of market movements. The Trustee seeks to maintain a balance between maintaining the asset allocation in line with its benchmark and limiting the costs of rebalances. The Trustee will consider rebalancing the asset allocation no less than annually and will use cashflows to rebalance the asset allocation, both using the control ranges detailed in the table below:

Portfolio	Asset class	Allocation (%)	Control range
Growth portfolio	Equities	60.00	± 3.0%
	BlackRock ACS World ESG Equity Tracker Fund & BlackRock ACS World ESG Equity Tracker Fund – GBP Hedged	56.5	± 3.0%
	iShares Emerging Markets Index Sub-Fund	3.50	± 2.0%
	Property	5.00	± 5.0%
	BPF UK Property Fund	5.00	±5.0%
	Infrastructure	10.00	N/a*
	Fiera Global Infrastructure Fund (Eaglecrest Infrastructure)	10.00	N/a*
Protection portfolio	Bonds	25.00	± 5.0%
	Insight Buy and Maintain Bond Fund	12.50	± 5.0%
	Aquila Life 2040 Gilt Fund	4.16	± 5.0%
	Aquila Life 2052 Gilt Fund	4.16	± 5.0%
	Aquila Life 2060 Gilt Fund	4.16	± 5.0%
	Cash**	0.00	± 5.0%

* no control range provided for the Infrastructure allocation due to the relatively illiquid nature of this investment

** includes cash held within the Trustee bank account and with BlackRock for portfolio management purposes

2. Choosing investments

The Trustee has appointed BlackRock, Insight and Fiera Capital to carry out the day-to-day investment of the Scheme.

BlackRock, Insight and Fiera Capital are all authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

The investment benchmarks and objectives for BlackRock, Insight and Fiera Capital are given below:

Fund	Benchmark	Objective
Growth portfolio – Equities		
BlackRock ACS World ESG Equity Tracker Fund	MSCI World ESG Focus Low Carbon Screened Index	Track the benchmark
BlackRock ACS World ESG Equity Tracker Fund – GBP Hedged	MSCI World ESG Focus Low Carbon Screened Index	Track the benchmark
iShares Emerging Markets Index Sub-Fund	MSCI Emerging Markets Index (Net)	Track the benchmark
Growth portfolio – Property		
BPF UK Property Fund	IPD All Balanced Property Funds Index Weighted Average	Outperform the benchmark
Growth portfolio – Infrastructure		
Fiera Global Infrastructure Fund (Eaglecrest Infrastructure)	N/a	Gross Internal Rate of Return target of 10-12% p.a. with a target cash yield of 4-6% p.a.
Protection portfolio – Bonds		
Aquila Life 2040 Gilt Fund	BlackRock Composite Benchmark	Track the benchmark
Aquila Life 2052 Gilt Fund	BlackRock Composite Benchmark	Track the benchmark
Aquila Life 2060 Gilt Fund	BlackRock Composite Benchmark	Track the benchmark
Insight Buy and Maintain Bond Fund	iBoxx Sterling Corporate & Collateralised Index (reference index only)	There is no formal benchmark index or performance objective given the nature of the fund

The performance of the investment managers will be monitored as frequently as the Trustee considers appropriate in light of prevailing circumstances. The monitoring takes into account both short-term and long-term performance.

3. Fee agreements

The fee arrangements with the investment managers are summarised below:

Fund	Annual Management Charge
Growth portfolio – Equities	
BlackRock ACS World ESG Equity Tracker Fund	0.10% p.a.
BlackRock ACS World ESG Equity Tracker Fund – GBP Hedged	0.12% p.a.
iShares Emerging Markets Index Sub-Fund	0.20% p.a.
Growth portfolio – Property	
BPF UK Property Fund	1.00% p.a.
Growth portfolio – Infrastructure	
Fiera Global Infrastructure Fund	1.00% p.a. plus a performance related fee of 15% of return in excess of the hurdle rate, 7%, calculated annually
Protection portfolio – Bonds	
Aquila Life single-dated gilts	0.08% p.a. on first £15m, 0.04% on next £85m
Insight Buy and Maintain Bond Fund	0.15% p.a. on first £50m, 0.10% p.a. thereafter

The Trustee has appointed Barnett Waddingham LLP to advise on investment matters. Barnett Waddingham are normally remunerated on a time-cost basis, although fixed fees may be agreed for specific tasks.

4. Investments and disinvestments

Investment of new money and realisation of investments

Disinvestment will usually be raised through the sale of assets in such a way as to move the portfolio closer to the strategic asset allocation, subject to consideration of liquidity issues, transaction costs, market conditions and the speed with which monies are required.

Similarly, where cash inflows are received, monies will usually be invested in such a way as to move the portfolio closer to the strategic asset allocation, unless market conditions suggest otherwise. The BlackRock UK Property Fund is to be excluded from this process.

5. AVC arrangements

The Scheme provides a facility for members to pay AVCs into the Scheme to enhance their benefits at retirement. The payments under AVCs are used to offer members a range of funds with Royal London in which to invest their AVC payments, including a default lifestyle strategy. The Trustee's objective is to provide a range of funds which will provide a suitable long term return for members, considered by the Trustee to be satisfactory. The suitability of the AVC arrangements in place is reviewed periodically. The annual management charge is 0.34% p.a.

Appendix 2: Financially material considerations, non-financially material considerations, the exercise of voting rights and engagement activities

1. Financially material considerations

The Trustee believes that Environmental, Social and Governance ("ESG") factors are financially material and therefore have a policy to consider these, alongside other factors, when selecting or reviewing the Scheme's investments.

The Trustee appreciates that the method of incorporating ESG in the investment strategy and process will differ between asset classes.

The Trustee has reviewed the approach to ESG of all of the managers taking into account UN Principles for Responsible Investment scores where appropriate. The Trustee is comfortable that the funds currently invested in by the Scheme are managed in accordance with their views on financially material factors, as set out in this policy. This position is monitored periodically, at least annually. The Trustee has the opportunity to meet the managers and question them on policies. The views set out below will be taken into account when appointing and reviewing managers.

A summary of the Trustee's views for each asset class in which the Scheme invests is outlined below.

Passive Equities

The Trustee accepts that investment managers must invest in line with the specified index and, therefore, may not be able to disinvest if they have concerns relating to ESG. However, the Trustee believes that positive engagement on ESG issues can lead to improved risk-adjusted returns over the Trustee's intended time horizon for the investment in question. Therefore, the Trustee looks to the passive equity manager to positively engage with companies where there is scope to improve the way ESG issues are taken into account when running the company. However, engagement activities (including the exercise of rights) should be consistent with, and proportionate to, the rest of the investment process.

Further, the Trustee has invested in the BlackRock ACS World ESG Equity Tracker Funds. These funds seek to tilt exposure to positive ESG factors while reducing the carbon exposure, targeting risk and return characteristics similar to those of the MSCI World Index, the parent index. The funds achieve this by increasing exposure to companies that rank higher on their ESG scores while still maintaining a high level of return, and aiming to engage with companies on sustainability issues that impact long-term performance.

Property

The Trustee believes that ESG issues can be financially material to the risk-adjusted returns achieved by the Scheme's property manager over the Trustee's intended time horizon for the investment in question. Environmental issues are particularly important when selecting appropriate properties for the property portfolio, and so the Trustee looks to the manager to incorporate environmental issues into their investment process.

Infrastructure

The Trustee believes that ESG issues can be financially material to the risk-adjusted returns achieved by the Scheme's infrastructure manager over the Trustee's intended time horizon for the investment in question.

Environmental issues are particularly important when selecting appropriate projects for the infrastructure portfolio, and so the Trustee looks to the manager to incorporate environmental issues into their investment process.

Corporate Bonds

The Trustee believes that ESG issues will be financially material to the risk-adjusted returns achieved by the Scheme's corporate bond holdings over the Trustee's intended time horizon for the investment in question. The investment process for the manager should take ESG into account when selecting holdings. The Trustee also supports engagement activities, although they appreciate that fixed income assets do not typically provide voting rights. The process for incorporating ESG issues should be consistent with, and proportionate to, the rest of the investment process.

Passive gilts

The Trustee does not believe there is scope for ESG issues to improve risk-adjusted returns within the Scheme's passive gilt holdings.

The Trustee takes ESG factors into account in the selection, retention and realisation of investments as follows:

Selection of investments: assess the investment managers' ESG integration credentials and capabilities, including stewardship, as a routine part of requests for information/proposals as well as through other regular reporting channels.

Retention of investments: Developing a robust monitoring process in order to monitor ESG considerations on an ongoing basis by regularly seeking information on the responsible investing policies and practices of the investment managers.

Realisation of investments: The Trustee will request information from investment managers about how ESG considerations are taken into account in decisions to realise investments.

The Trustee will also take those factors into account as part of its investment process to determine a strategic asset allocation, and consider them as part of ongoing reviews of the Scheme's investments.

The Trustee will continue to monitor and assess ESG factors, and risks and opportunities arising from them, as follows:

- The Trustee will obtain regular training on ESG considerations in order to understand fully how ESG factors including climate change could impact the Scheme and its investments;
- As part of ongoing monitoring of the Scheme's investment managers, the Trustee will use any ESG ratings information available within the pensions industry or provided by its investment consultant, to assess how the Scheme's investment managers take account of ESG issues; and
- Through their investment consultant the Trustee will request that all of the Scheme's investment managers provide information about their ESG policies, and details of how they integrate ESG into their investment processes on an annual basis.

2. Non-financially material considerations

The Trustee does not take into account the views of Scheme members and beneficiaries in relation to ethical considerations, social and environmental impact, or present and future quality of life of the members and

beneficiaries of the Scheme (referred to as "non-financial matters" in the relevant Regulations) in the selection, retention and realisation of investments.

3. The exercise of voting rights

The Trustee's policy on the exercise of rights attaching to investments, including voting rights, and in undertaking engagement activities in respect of the investments is that these rights should be exercised by the investment managers on the Trustee's behalf. In doing so, the Trustee expects that the investment managers will use their influence as major institutional investors to exercise the Trustee's rights and duties as shareholders, including where appropriate engaging with underlying investee companies to promote good corporate governance, accountability and to understand how those companies take account of ESG issues in their businesses.

The Trustee will monitor and engage with the investment managers about relevant matters (including matters concerning an issuer of debt or equity, including their performance, strategy, capital structure, management of actual or potential conflicts of interest, risks, social and environmental impact and corporate governance), through the Scheme's investment consultant.

Investment managers will be asked to provide details of their stewardship policy and engagement activities on at least an annual basis. The Trustee will, with input from their investment consultant, monitor and review the information provided by the investment managers. Where possible and appropriate, the Trustee will engage with their investment managers for more information and ask them to confirm that their policies comply with the principles set out in the Financial Reporting Council's UK Stewardship Code.

The Trustee believes the stewardship policies of their investment manager who exercises the majority of the voting rights on behalf of the Scheme, BlackRock, are aligned with the Scheme's policies on voting and engagement which forms part of this Statement of Investment Principles. As such, the Trustee has adopted the same stewardship priorities as BlackRock as the Scheme's stewardship priorities. Full details of the individual priorities are within the Scheme's latest Implementation Statement. The Trustee, with assistance from their independent investment advisor, will keep the stewardship priorities established by BlackRock under review to ensure continued alignment with the Trustee's view. Note that while Fiera may carry out voting on behalf of the Scheme on the assets that it owns, these votes are not currently reportable, so the Trustee will instead carry out a review of the acquisitions and ongoing management of the assets with regard to ESG considerations on an annual basis.

4. Engagement activities

The Trustee acknowledges the importance of ESG and climate risk within their investment framework. When delegating investment decision making to their investment managers they provide their investment managers with a benchmark they expect the investment managers to either follow or outperform. The investment manager has discretion over where in an investee company's capital structure it invests (subject to the restrictions of the mandate), whether directly or as an asset within a pooled fund.

The Trustee is of the belief that ESG and climate risk considerations extend over the entirety of a company's corporate structure and activities, i.e. that they apply to equity, credit and property instruments or holdings. The Trustee also recognises that ESG and climate related issues are constantly evolving and along with them so too are the products available within the investment management industry to help manage these risks.

The Trustee considers it to be a part of their investment managers' roles to assess and monitor developments in the capital structure for each of the companies in which the managers invest on behalf of the Scheme or as part of the pooled fund in which the Scheme holds units.

The Trustee also considers it to be part of their investment managers' roles to assess and monitor how the companies in which they are investing are managing developments in ESG related issues, and in particular climate risk, across the relevant parts of the capital structure for each of the companies in which the managers invest on behalf of the Scheme.

Should an investment manager be failing in these respects, this should be captured in the Scheme's regular performance monitoring.

The Scheme's investment managers are both unable and not permitted by the Trustees to invest in the Principal Employer's business.

Through their consultation with the Principal Employer when setting this Statement of Investment Principles, the Trustee has made the Principal Employer aware of their policy on ESG and climate related risks, how they intend to manage them and the importance that the pensions industry as a whole, and its regulators, place on them.

The Scheme's investment consultant is independent and no arm of their business provides asset management services. This, and their FCA Regulated status, makes the Trustee confident that the investment manager recommendations they make are free from conflict of interest.

The Trustee expects all investment managers to have a conflict of interest policy in relation to their engagement and ongoing operations. In doing so the Trustee believes they have managed the potential for conflicts of interest in the appointment of the investment manager and conflicts of interest between the Trustee/investment manager and the investee companies.

In selecting and reviewing their investment managers, where appropriate, the Trustee will consider investment managers' policies on engagement and how these policies have been implemented.