

Investment Strategy Statement: MARCH 2017

Introduction and background

This is the Investment Strategy Statement (“ISS”) of the London Borough of Havering Pension Fund (“the Fund”), which is administered by Havering Council, (“the Administering Authority”). The ISS is made in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 (“the Regulations”).

The ISS has been prepared by the Fund’s Pension Committee (“the Committee”) having taken advice from the Fund’s investment adviser, Hymans Robertson LLP and having regard to guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The Committee acts on the delegated authority of the Administering Authority.

The ISS, which was approved by the Committee on 28 March 2017, is subject to periodic review at least every three years and without delay after any significant change in investment policy. The Committee has consulted on the contents of the Fund’s investment strategy with such persons it considers appropriate.

The Committee seeks to invest in accordance with the ISS, any Fund money that is not needed immediately to make payments from the Fund. The ISS should be read in conjunction with the Fund’s Funding Strategy Statement dated March 2017.

The suitability of particular investments and types of investments

The primary investment objective of the Fund is to ensure that the assets are invested to secure the benefits of the Fund’s members under the Local Government Pension Scheme. Against this background, the Fund’s approach to investing is to:

- Optimise the return consistent with a prudent level of risk;
- Ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet the liabilities; and
- Ensure the suitability of assets in relation to the needs of the Fund.

The Fund’s funding position will be reviewed at each triennial actuarial valuation, or more frequently as required.

The Committee aims to fund the Fund in such a manner that, in normal market conditions, all accrued benefits are fully covered by the value of the Fund’s assets and that an appropriate level of contributions is agreed by the employer to meet the cost of future benefits accruing. For employee members, benefits will be based on service completed, but will take account of future salary and/or inflation increases.

The Committee has translated its objectives into a suitable strategic asset allocation benchmark for the Fund. It plays an important role in meeting the longer-term cost of funding, and how that cost may vary over time. This benchmark is consistent with the Committee’s views on the appropriate balance between generating a satisfactory long-term return on investments whilst taking account of market volatility and risk and the nature of the Fund’s liabilities. This approach helps to ensure that the investment strategy takes due account of the maturity profile of the Fund (in terms of the relative proportions of liabilities in respect of pensioners, deferred and active members), together with the level of disclosed surplus or deficit (relative to the funding bases used).

It is intended that the Fund’s investment strategy will be reviewed at least every three years following actuarial valuations of the Fund.

Within each major market the Fund's investment managers will maintain a diversified portfolio of securities through direct investment or via pooled vehicles. An Investment Management Agreement is in place for each investment manager, which sets out the relevant benchmark, performance target and asset allocation ranges, together with further restrictions.

In addition, the Committee monitors investment strategy on an ongoing basis, focusing on factors including, but not limited to:

- Suitability given the Fund's level of funding and liability profile
- The level of expected risk
- Outlook for asset returns

The Committee also monitors the Fund's actual allocation on a regular basis to ensure it does not notably deviate from the target allocation. The Committee has adopted a rebalancing policy which is triggered if the Fund's asset allocation deviates by 5% or more from the strategic allocation.

In order to avoid excessive rebalancing, the assets will not be brought back to the absolute strategic benchmark, but to a position that is approximately half way between the tolerance level and the target allocation. This also takes into consideration that there is a time lag between reporting a variance, and the rebalancing of the funds.

If rebalancing is triggered, the assets will be rebalanced back to within 2.5% of the strategic asset allocation.

In exceptional circumstances, when markets are volatile or when dealing costs are unusually high, the Pensions Committee may decide to suspend rebalancing temporarily. The priority order for funding rebalancing is to first use surplus cash, followed by dividend and or interest income and lastly using sales of overweight assets. The Pensions Committee will seek the written advice of the investment adviser with regard to rebalancing and detailed distribution of cash or sale proceeds.

Investment of money in a wide variety of investments

Asset classes

The Fund may invest in quoted and unquoted securities of UK and overseas markets including equities and fixed interest and index linked bonds, cash, property and commodities either directly or through pooled funds. The Fund may also make use of contracts for differences and other derivatives either directly or in pooled funds investing in these products for the purpose of efficient portfolio management or to hedge specific risks.

The Committee reviews the nature of the Fund's investments on a regular basis, with particular reference to suitability and diversification. The Committee seeks and considers written advice from a suitably qualified person in undertaking such a review. If, at any time, investment in a security or product not previously known to the Committee is proposed, appropriate advice is sought and considered to ensure its suitability and diversification.

The Fund's target investment strategy is set out below. The table also includes the maximum percentage of total Fund value that it will invest in these asset classes. In line with the Regulations, the authority's investment strategy does not permit more than 5% of the total value of all investments of Fund money to be invested in entities which are connected with that authority within the meaning of section 212 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Table 1: Fund allocation

Asset class	Benchmark Proportion %	Maximum %
Global Equity	30.0	45.0
Multi Asset	42.5	50.0
Property	6.0	15.0
Infrastructure	2.5	10.0
Bonds & Cash	19.0	25.0
Total	100.0	

At 31 December 2016, the expected return of this portfolio was 4.2%p.a. with an expected volatility of 9.8%p.a. This volatility includes an assumed diversification benefit. In the absence of this diversification, the expected volatility would have increased to 13.2%p.a. Further details on the Fund's risks, including the approach to mitigating risks, is provided in the following section.

Managers

The Committee has appointed a number of investment managers all of whom are authorised under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 to undertake investment business.

The Committee, after seeking appropriate investment advice, has agreed specific benchmarks with each manager so that, in aggregate, they are consistent with the overall asset allocation for the Fund. The current manager benchmarks are set out in the Appendix to this Statement. The Fund's investment managers will hold a mix of investments which reflects their views relative to their respective benchmarks. Within each major market and asset class, the managers will maintain diversified portfolios through direct investment or pooled vehicles. The manager of the passive funds in which the Fund invests holds a mix of investments within each pooled fund that reflects the composition of their respective benchmark indices.

The approach to risk, including the ways in which risks are to be measured and managed

The Committee is aware that the Fund has a need to take risk (e.g. investing in growth assets) to help it achieve its funding objectives. It has a risk management programme in place that aims to help it identify the risks being taken and has put in place processes to manage, measure, monitor and (where possible) mitigate the risks being taken.

The principal risks affecting the Fund are set out below. We also discuss the Fund's approach to managing these risks and the contingency plans that are in place:

Funding risks

Asset values may not increase at the same rate as liabilities with an adverse impact on the funding position. A Funding Strategy Statement ("FSS") is prepared every three years as part of the triennial valuation and the Council monitors the Fund's investment strategy and performance relative to the growth in the liabilities at mid-cycle to the triennial valuation.

Financial mismatch – The Council recognises that assets and liabilities have different sensitivities to changes in financial factors. To mitigate the risk an investment strategy is set which provides exposure to assets providing inflation protected growth as well as cash flow generating assets that match the Fund's liabilities.

Changing demographics – This relates to the uncertainty around longevity. The Council recognises there are effectively no viable options to mitigate these risks and assesses the impact of these factors through the Funding Strategy Statement and formal triennial actuarial valuations.

Systemic risk - The possibility of an interlinked and simultaneous failure of several asset classes and/or investment managers, possibly compounded by financial 'contagion', resulting in an increase in the cost of meeting the Fund's liabilities.

The Committee measures and manages financial mismatch in two ways:

1. As indicated above, the Committee has set a strategic asset allocation benchmark for the Fund. This benchmark was set taking into account asset liability modelling which focused on probability of success and level of downside risk. This analysis will be revisited as part of the 2019 valuation process. The Committee assesses risk relative to the strategic benchmark by monitoring the Fund's asset allocation and investment returns relative to the benchmark.
2. The Committee also assesses risk relative to liabilities by monitoring the delivery of returns relative to a strategic benchmark. The current strategic benchmark is the return on index-linked Government bonds plus 1.8% per annum, which is consistent with the discount rate used by the Actuary to value the Fund's liabilities.

The Committee also seeks to understand the assumptions used in any analysis and modelling so they can be compared to their own views and the level of risks associated with these assumptions to be assessed.

The Committee seeks to mitigate systemic risk through a diversified portfolio, but recognise that it is not possible to make specific provision for all possible eventualities that may arise under this heading.

Asset risks

Concentration risk - This relates to the risk that the performance of a single asset class, investment or manager has a disproportionate influence on the Fund's performance. The Council attempts to mitigate this risk by establishing a well-diversified strategic asset allocation, reviewing the investment strategy regularly and following a regular fund manager review process. The Fund's investment in multi-asset and absolute return mandates increases diversification further, with investment managers able to invest across the full spectrum of the investment universe in order to manage risk.

Liquidity risk - Investments are held until such time as they are required to fund payment of pensions. The liquidity risk is being very closely monitored as the Fund matures (i.e. as the level of benefit outgo increases relative to the contributions received by the Fund). The Council manages its cash flows and investment strategy to ensure that all future payments can be met and that sufficient assets are held in liquid investments to enable short term cash requirements to be met.

Currency risk – The strategic asset allocation adopted by the Council provides for an element to be held overseas to provide diversification and exposure to different economies. Such investment is however subject to fluctuations in exchange rates with an associated positive or adverse impact on performance. The Council however recognises that it can adopt a long term perspective on investments and consequently is able to absorb short term fluctuations in exchange rates.

Environmental, social and governance (“ESG”) risks – The Council recognises that environmental, social and ethical issues have the potential to impact on the long term financial viability of an organisation. The Council monitors both developments within the investment environment and the voting of its appointed managers, supported through annual reporting from the Fund's investment advisers on the voting and engagement activity of its investment managers.

Manager risk - Fund managers could fail to achieve the investment targets specified in their mandates. This is considered by the Council when fund managers are selected and their performance is reviewed regularly by the Committee as part of the manager monitoring process.

The Fund's strategic asset allocation benchmark invests in a diversified range of asset classes. The Committee has put in place rebalancing arrangements to ensure the Fund's “actual allocation” does not deviate substantially from its target. The Fund invests in a range of investment mandates each of which has a defined objective, performance benchmark and manager process which, taken in aggregate, help reduce the Fund's asset concentration risk. By investing across a range of assets, including liquid quoted equities and bonds, as well as property, the Committee has recognised the need for access to liquidity in the short term.

The Fund invests in a range of overseas markets which provides a diversified approach to currency markets. Some managers have the discretion to make use of currency exposure within their specific mandates. The Committee will assess the Fund's currency exposures during their risk analysis. Details of the Fund's approach to managing ESG risks are set out later in this document.

The Committee has considered the risk of underperformance by any single investment manager and have attempted to reduce this risk by appointing a number of managers and making use of passive investment. The Committee assesses the investment managers' performance on a regular basis, and will take steps, including potentially replacing one or more of their managers, if underperformance persists.

Other provider risks

Transition risk - The risk of incurring unexpected costs in relation to the transition of assets among managers. When carrying out significant transitions, the Committee seeks suitable professional advice.

Custody risk - The risk of losing economic rights to Fund assets, when held in custody or when being traded.

Credit default - This risk relates to the other party(s) in a financial transaction (the counterparty) failing to meet its obligations to the Fund. Where appropriate, the Council has set guidelines with its fund managers and its custodian to limit its exposure to counterparty risk.

Stock-lending risk – The possibility of default and loss of economic rights to Fund assets.

The Committee monitors and manages risks in these areas through a process of regular scrutiny of its providers, and audit of the operations it conducts for the Fund, or has delegated such monitoring and management of risk to the appointed investment managers as appropriate (e.g. custody risk in relation to pooled funds). The Committee has the power to replace a provider should serious concerns exist.

A separate schedule of risks that the Fund monitors is set out in the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement.

The approach to pooling investments, including the use of collective investment vehicles and shared services

The Fund is a shareholder and a participating scheme in the London CIV Pool. The London CIV is authorised by the FCA as an alternative investment Fund Manager with permission to operate a UK based Authorised Contractual Scheme Fund. The structure and basis on which the London CIV Pool will operate was set out in the July 2016 submission to Government.

The Fund's intention is to invest its assets through the London CIV Pool as and when suitable Pool investment solutions become available. An indicative timetable for investing through the Pool was set out in the 2016 submission to Government. The key criteria for assessment of Pool solutions will be as follows:

- 1 That the Pool enables access to an appropriate solution that meets the objectives and benchmark criteria set by the Fund.
- 2 That there is a clear financial benefit to the Fund in investing in the solution offered by the Pool, should a change of provider be necessary.

At the time of preparing this statement, 42.5% of the Fund's assets were invested through the Pool as follows:

Asset Class	Invested through pool	Retained outside pool
Global Equity	15.0%	15.0%
Multi Asset	27.5%	15.0%
Property	-	6.0%
Infrastructure	-	2.5%
Bonds & cash	-	19.0%
Total	42.5%	57.5%

The Fund currently holds 15% of its assets in life funds and intends to retain these outside of the London CIV in accordance with government guidance.

The Fund holds 6% of the Fund in property assets and these will remain outside of the London CIV pool as the cost of exiting this strategy would have a negative financial impact on the Fund. These will be held until such time as a cost effective means of transfer to the Pool is available or until the Fund changes asset allocation and makes a decision to disinvest.

Any assets not currently invested in the Pool will be reviewed at least annually to determine whether the rationale remains appropriate, and whether it continues to demonstrate value for money.

How social, environmental or corporate governance considerations are taken into account in the selection, non-selection, retention and realisation of investments

It is recognised that a range of factors, including Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors, can influence the return from investments. The Fund will therefore invest on the basis of financial risk and return having considered a full range of factors contributing to the financial risk including ESG factors to the extent these directly or indirectly impact on financial risk and return. In making investment decisions, the Fund seeks and receives proper advice from internal officers and external advisers with the requisite knowledge and skills.

The Fund requires its investment managers to integrate all material financial factors, including corporate governance, environmental, social, and ethical considerations, into the decision-making process for all fund investments. It expects its managers to follow good practice and use their influence as major institutional investors and long-term stewards of capital to promote good practice in the investee companies and markets to which the Fund is exposed.

The Fund expects its external investment managers (and specifically the London CIV through which the Fund will increasingly invest) to undertake appropriate monitoring of current investments with regard to their policies and practices on all issues which could present a material financial risk to the long-term performance of the fund such as corporate governance and environmental factors. The Fund expects its fund managers to integrate material ESG factors within its investment analysis and decision making.

Effective monitoring and identification of these issues can enable engagement with boards and management of investee companies to seek resolution of potential problems at an early stage. Where collaboration is likely to be the most effective mechanism for encouraging issues to be addressed, the Fund expects its investment managers to participate in joint action with other institutional investors as permitted by relevant legal and regulatory codes.

The Fund monitors the activity of its investment managers on an ongoing basis and will review the approach taken annually.

At the present time the Committee does not take into account non-financial factors when selecting, retaining, or realising its investments. The Committee will review its approach to non-financial factors periodically, taking into account relevant legislation and the Law Commission's guidance on when such factors may be considered. Additionally, the Committee monitors legislative and other developments with regards to this subject and will review its approach in the event of material changes.

The Committee understands the Fund is not able to exclude investments in order to pursue boycotts, divestment and sanctions against foreign nations and UK defence industries, other than where formal legal sanctions, embargoes and restrictions have been put in place by the Government.

The Fund does not at the time of preparing this statement hold any assets which it deems to be social investments; however, this ISS places no specific restrictions on the Fund in respect of such investments beyond those of suitability within the Investment Strategy as a whole and compatibility with the Committee's fiduciary

duties. In considering any such investment in the future, the Committee will have regard to the Guidance issued by the Secretary of State and to the Law Commission's guidance on financial and non-financial factors.

The Fund in preparing and reviewing its Investment Strategy Statement will consult with interested stakeholders including, but not limited to Fund employers, investment managers, Local Pension Board, advisers to the Fund.

The exercise of rights (including voting rights) attaching to investments

The Fund recognises the importance of its role as stewards of capital and the need to ensure the highest standards of governance and promoting corporate responsibility in the underlying companies in which its investments reside. The Fund recognises that ultimately this protects the financial interests of the Fund and its ultimate beneficiaries. The Fund has a commitment to actively exercising the ownership rights attached to its investments reflecting the Fund's conviction that responsible asset owners should maintain oversight of the companies in which it ultimately invests recognising that the companies' activities impact upon not only their customers and clients, but more widely upon their employees and other stakeholders and also wider society.

The Fund's investments through the London CIV are covered by the voting policy of the CIV which has been agreed by the Pensions Sectoral Joint Committee. Voting is delegated to the external managers and monitored on a quarterly basis. The CIV will arrange for managers to vote in accordance with voting alerts issued by the Local Authority Pension Fund Forum as far as practically possible to do so and will hold managers to account where they have not voted in accordance with the LAPFF directions.

In respect of the Fund's investments outside the London CIV, the Committee has delegated the exercise of voting rights to the investment managers on the basis that voting power will be exercised by them with the objective of preserving and enhancing long term shareholder value. Accordingly, the Fund's managers have produced written guidelines of their process and practice in this regard. The managers are strongly encouraged to vote in line with their guidelines in respect of all resolutions at annual and extraordinary general meetings of companies under Regulation 7(2)(f). The Committee monitor the voting decisions made by all its investment managers and receive reporting from their advisers to support this on an annual basis.

The Fund will incorporate a report of voting activity as part of its Pension Fund Annual report which is published on the Council website.

At the time of production of the ISS the Fund has not issued a separate Statement of Compliance with the Stewardship Code, but fully endorses the principles embedded in the seven Principles of the Stewardship Code.

In addition, the Fund expects its investment managers to work collaboratively with others if this will lead to greater influence and deliver improved outcomes for shareholders and more broadly.

The Fund through its participation in the London CIV will work closely with other LGPS Funds in London to enhance the level of engagement both with external managers and the underlying companies in which invests.

Appendix: Current manager benchmark allocations

Asset class	Manager	Benchmark and target	Benchmark Allocation %
Equities			30.0
Global Equity	State Street	FTSE All World Equity Index	7.5
Fundamental Equity	State Street	FTSE RAFI All World 3000 Index	7.5
Active Global Equity	Baillie Gifford	MSCI All Countries Index plus 2.5%	15.0
Multi-asset			42.5
Absolute Return	Ruffer	LIBOR+	15.0
Diversified Growth	Baillie Gifford	UK Base Rate plus 3.5%	12.5
Real Return	GMO	OECD CPI g7 plus 5%	15.0
Real assets			8.5
UK Core Property	UBS	IPD All Balanced Property Funds Weighted Average Index	6.0
Local infrastructure	Internal		2.5
Bonds and cash			19.0
Active bonds	Royal London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% iBoxx £ non- Gilt over 10 years • 16.7% FTSE Actuaries UK gilt over 15 years • 33.3% FTSE Actuaries Index-linked over 5 years • Plus 1.25% 	19.0
Total			100.0