

**Date of Council Meeting: 18 February 2025**

**Title of Motion: Divestment of funds and procurement from companies engaged in arms trade with Israel**

**Motion Narrative and Action required:**

North Somerset Council, through its Gaza ceasefire motion of 9 January 2024 (COU 117) expressed deep sympathy for all those affected by the conflict in Israel and Palestine and called for an immediate release of all hostages and a sustainable ceasefire to allow more aid and the possibility of a peaceful solution. The Council resolved to write to the Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary and North Somerset's then two MPs asking them to do all in their power to work towards a viable two-state solution.

North Somerset Council notes that:

- North Somerset Council is one of many employers of the former Avon area that contributes to the Avon Pension Fund which administers the Local Government Pension Scheme. Bath & North East Somerset Council, the administering authority and legally responsible for the Fund, delegates this responsibility for administering the Fund to the Avon Pension Fund Committee, which is its formal decision-making body. North Somerset Council delegates authority to one of its councillors to be a co-opted member of this Committee (currently Cllr Robert Payne). The Committee has an **Investment Panel** responsible for the management and investment of the Fund's assets and for overseeing investment decisions.

North Somerset Council believes that:

1. We all have a responsibility to stand with Palestinians in the face of catastrophic violence and do everything in our power to bring such suffering to an end within a peace settlement.
2. Stemming from the obligations laid out by the International Court of Justice, councils must avoid procuring from or investing the funds they manage, including Local Government Pension Scheme funds, in companies that facilitate Israel's breaches of international law. This includes arms companies producing weapons and military technology used by Israel in its attacks on Palestinians, and financial institutions which finance these arms companies.
3. Councils are free to take human rights and other ethical considerations on board when making financial decisions.

North Somerset Council resolves to:

4. Call on our delegate co-opted to the Avon Pension Fund Committee to call for a divestment from any funds it administers, including Local Government

Pension Scheme funds, from companies that facilitate Israel's breaches of international law, such as arms companies supplying Israel with weapons and military technology; as well as from companies on the UN's list of businesses involved in activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and deemed to facilitate Israel's involvement in human rights abuses.

5. Agree not to enter procurement contracts with such companies in future.

Cllr Hannah Young  
6 February 2025