

**OXTON FARMS RETIREMENT
BENEFITS SCHEME
STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT
PRINCIPLES**

SEPTEMBER 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Introduction		3
2 Investment Objectives		4
3 Investment Responsibilities		5
3.1. Trustees' Duties and Responsibilities	5	
3.2. Investment Adviser's Duties and Responsibilities	5	
3.3. Arrangements with Investment Managers	6	
3.4. Summary of Responsibilities	7	
4 Investment Strategy		8
4.1. Setting Investment Strategy	8	
4.2. Investment Decisions	8	
4.3. Types of Investments to be Held	9	
4.4. Social, Environmental and Ethical Policy	9	
4.5. Corporate Governance and Voting Policy	9	
4.6. Stewardship	10	
5 Risk		11
6 Monitoring of Investment Adviser and Managers		13
6.1. Investment Adviser	13	
6.2. Investment Managers	13	
6.3. Portfolio Turnover Costs	13	
7 Code of Best Practice		14
8 Compliance		15
Appendix 1: Asset Allocation Benchmark		16
Appendix 2: Cashflow Policy		17
Appendix 3: Investment Manager Information		18
Growth Assets	18	
Stabilising Assets	18	
Appendix 4: Responsibilities of Parties		20
Trustees	20	
Investment Adviser	20	
Investment Managers	20	
Scheme Actuary	21	
Administrator	21	

1 INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Investment Principles (“the Statement”) has been prepared by the Trustees of the Oxton Farms Retirement Benefits Scheme (“the Scheme”) in accordance with Section 35 of the Pensions Act 1995, as amended, and its attendant Regulations.

The Statement outlines the principles governing the investment policy of the Scheme and the activities undertaken by the Trustees to ensure the effective implementation of these principles.

In preparing the Statement, the Trustees have:

- obtained and considered written advice from a suitably qualified individual, employed by their investment consultants, Mercer Limited, whom they believe to have a degree of knowledge and experience that is appropriate for the management of their investments; and
- consulted with the Sponsoring Employer, although they affirm that no aspect of their strategy is restricted by any requirement to obtain the consent of the Sponsoring Employer.

The advice and the consultation process considered the suitability of the Trustees’ investment policy for the Scheme.

The Trustees will review the Statement formally at least every three years to coincide with the triennial Actuarial Valuation or other actuarial advice relating to the statutory funding requirements. Furthermore, the Trustees will review the Statement without delay after any significant change in investment policy. Any changes made to the Statement will be based on written advice from a suitably qualified individual and will follow consultation with the Sponsoring Employer.

2 INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES

The Trustees' primary investment objective for the Scheme is to achieve an overall rate of return that is sufficient to ensure that assets are available to meet all liabilities as and when they fall due.

In doing so, the Trustees also aim to maximise returns at an acceptable level of risk taking into consideration the circumstances of the Scheme.

The Trustees, during the process of revising the investment strategy, have ensured that their investment objectives and the resultant investment strategy are consistent with the actuarial valuation methodology and assumptions used in the Statutory Funding Objective. A copy of the Statement has been sent to the Scheme Actuary.

3 INVESTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. TRUSTEES' DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees are responsible for setting the investment objectives and determining the strategy to achieve the objectives. They carry out their duties and fulfil their responsibilities as a single body.

The duties and responsibilities of the Trustees include, but are not limited to, the following tasks and activities:

- The regular approval of the content of the Statement
- The appointment and review of the Investment Manager and investment adviser
- The assessment and review of the performance of each investment manager
- The setting and review of the investment parameters within which the investment managers can operate
- The assessment of the risks assumed by the Scheme at a total scheme level and also manager by manager
- The approval and review of the asset allocation benchmark for the Scheme
- The compliance of the investment arrangements with the principles set out in the Statement

3.2. INVESTMENT ADVISER'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees have appointed Mercer as the investment adviser to the Scheme. Mercer provides advice as and when the Trustees require it, as well as raising any investment-related issues, of which it believes the Trustees should be aware. Matters on which Mercer expects to provide advice to the Trustees include the following:

- Setting of investment objectives
- Determining investment strategy and asset allocation
- Determining an appropriate investment structure
- Liaising with JLT Investment Management ("JLT IM") to determine funds and investment managers that are suitable to meet the Trustees' objectives
- Setting cashflow management (investment and withdrawal) policies (see Appendix 2)

Section 3.3 describes the responsibilities of JLT IM as investment manager to the Scheme.

The Trustees may seek advice from Mercer with regard to both strategic and tactical investment decisions (see Section 4 - Investment Strategy); however, they recognise that they retain responsibility for all such decisions, including those that concern investments and disinvestments relating to cashflows (see Appendix 2). Mercer may be proactive in advising the Trustees regarding tactical investment decisions; however, there is no responsibility placed on Mercer to be proactive in all circumstances.

The Trustees monitor the performance of the Scheme's investment managers against their benchmarks.

Mercer makes a fund based charge. This charge covers the services of both JLT IM and Mercer as specified within the Investment Management Agreement and the Implemented Investment Consultancy Services Agreement.

Any additional services provided by Mercer will be remunerated primarily on a time-cost basis.

In particular, Mercer does not receive commission or any other payments in respect of the Scheme that might affect the impartiality of their advice, and as noted below, any discounts negotiated by JLT IM with the underlying managers and these discounts are passed on in full to the Scheme.

The Trustees are satisfied that this is an appropriate adviser remuneration structure for the Scheme.

Mercer is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (“FCA”).

3.3. ARRANGEMENTS WITH INVESTMENT MANAGERS

The Trustees are long term investors and do not look to change the investment arrangements on a frequent basis.

The Trustees, after considering appropriate investment advice, have appointed JLT IM as Investment Manager to the Scheme.

The key duty of JLT IM is to select investment managers suitable to each mandate within the Trustees’ agreed asset allocation.

JLT IM will therefore contract with and appoint underlying investment managers to manage the Scheme’s assets on behalf of the Trustees. Investment managers are appointed by JLT IM based on their capabilities and therefore their perceived likelihood of achieving the expected return and risk characteristics required for the asset class being selected. JLT IM will manage the asset allocation to ensure it is in line with the allocation defined in the IMA, and its tolerances.

JLT IM will only invest in pooled investment vehicles. The Trustees therefore accept that they cannot specify the risk profile and return targets of the manager, but pooled funds are chosen with appropriate characteristics to align with the overall investment strategy.

JLT IM will monitor the underlying investment managers to ensure their continuing appropriateness to the mandates given. If a manager is significantly downgraded by Mercer’s Manager Research Team, JLT IM will replace that manager with a suitable alternative.

JLT IM is also responsible for appointing a suitable Platform provider, which will provide the infrastructure to support the Scheme’s investments and host the underlying investment managers’ funds. The current Platform provider is Mobius Life Limited, whose appointment foregoes the need for a Custodian. Mobius Life Limited is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority (“PRA”) and regulated by the FCA and the PRA.

The underlying investment managers are responsible for all decisions concerning the selection and de-selection of the individual securities within the portfolios they manage.

In the case of multi-asset mandates, the underlying investment managers are responsible for all decisions concerning the allocation to individual asset classes and changes in the allocations to individual asset classes.

JLT IM is authorised and regulated by the FCA.

All of the investment managers that will be selected by JLT IM will be authorised and regulated by the PRA, the FCA or both.

The underlying investment managers are remunerated by a fee based on the value of the assets that they manage on behalf of the Scheme. Discounts have been negotiated by JLT IM with the underlying managers on their standard charges.

None of the underlying managers in which the Scheme’s assets are invested have performance based fees which could encourage the manager to make short term investment decisions to hit their profit targets.

The Trustees therefore consider that the method of remunerating fund managers is consistent with incentivising them to make decisions based on assessments of medium to long-term financial and non-financial performance of an issuer of debt or equity. By encouraging a medium to long-term view, it will in turn encourage the investment managers to engage with issuers of debt or equity in order to improve their performance in the medium to long-term.

The Trustees accept that they cannot influence the charging structure of the pooled funds in which the Scheme is invested, but are satisfied that the ad-valorem charges for the different underlying funds are clear and are consistent with each fund’s stated characteristics. The Trustees are therefore satisfied that this is an appropriate

basis for remunerating the underlying investment managers and is consistent with the Trustees' policies as set out in this SIP.

JLT IM makes a fund based charge for the services it provides. This charge is specified in the contractual agreement between the Trustees and JLT IM.

JLT IM does not receive commission or any other payments in respect of the Scheme that might affect the impartiality of its actions and any discounts negotiated by JLT IM with the underlying managers are passed on in full to the Scheme.

The Trustees believe that this is an appropriate basis for remunerating managers.

3.4. SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A summary of the responsibilities of all relevant parties, including the Scheme Actuary and the scheme administrators, so far as they relate to the Scheme's investments, is set out at Appendix 4.

4 INVESTMENT STRATEGY

4.1. SETTING INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Trustees have determined their investment strategy after considering the Scheme's liability profile and requirements of the Statutory Funding Objective, their own appetite for risk, the views of the Sponsoring Employer on investment strategy, the Sponsoring Employer's appetite for risk, and the strength of the Sponsoring Employer's covenant. The Trustees have also received written advice from their Investment Adviser.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, the Trustees have determined that the benchmark asset allocation, as set out in Appendix 1, is suitable for the Scheme.

In making this decision, the Trustees have been satisfied that this is consistent with its investment objectives and is supported by both the Sponsoring Employer and the Sponsoring Employer's covenant.

In respect of the investment of contributions and any disinvestments to meet member benefit payments, the Trustees have decided on a structured approach to rebalance the assets in accordance with the overall strategy. This approach is set out in Appendix 2.

4.2. INVESTMENT DECISIONS

The Trustees distinguish between three types of investment decision: strategic, tactical and stock-level.

Strategic Investment Decisions

These decisions are long-term in nature and are driven by an understanding of the objectives, needs and liabilities of the Scheme.

The Trustees take all such decisions themselves. They do so after receiving written advice from their investment adviser and consulting with the Sponsoring Employer. Examples of such decisions and of tasks relating to the implementation of these decisions include the following:

- Setting investment objectives
- Determining the split between the growth and the stabilising portfolios
- Determining the allocation to asset classes within the growth and stabilising portfolios
- Determining the Scheme benchmark
- Reviewing the investment objectives and strategic asset allocation

Tactical Investment Decisions

These decisions are short-term and based on expectations of near-term market movements. Such decisions may involve deviating temporarily from the strategic asset allocation and may require the timing of entry into, or exit from, an investment market or asset class.

These decisions are the responsibility of the Trustees. However, where such decisions are made within a pooled fund, they are the responsibility of the investment manager of the fund.

Stock Selection Decisions

All such decisions are the responsibility of the investment managers of the pooled funds in which the Scheme is invested.

4.3. TYPES OF INVESTMENTS TO BE HELD

The Trustees are permitted to invest across a wide range of asset classes.

All the funds in which the Scheme invests are pooled and unitised. The use of derivatives is as permitted by the guidelines that apply to the pooled funds.

4.4. SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ETHICAL POLICY

The Trustees understand that they must consider all financially relevant factors in making investment decisions on behalf of the Scheme. However, they may also consider any non-financial factors, to the extent that they have the ability to impact the financial results of the Scheme's investments over the duration of the Scheme, if they believe that such factors reflect the views of members.

The Trustees recognise that Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors, including climate change, can all influence the investment performance of the Scheme's portfolio and it is therefore in members' and the Scheme's best interests that these factors are taken into account within the investment process and that ESG risks are identified and avoided or mitigated as best as possible.

The Trustees believe that investing with a manager who approaches investments in a responsible way and takes account of ESG-related risks will lead to better risk adjusted performance results as omitting these risks in investment analysis could skew the results and underestimate the level of overall risk being taken.

Therefore, the Trustees will work with the Investment Consultant to help select the investment managers that have passed the initial ESG screening. ESG screening will involve some of the following activities, but is not limited to: ensuring the managers are signatories to UNPRI, reviewing the managers' own ESG policies, investigating the extent to which these policies are integrated into their standard procedures of investment research and analysis etc. As part of the Mercer Manager Research Team appraisal process, investment managers are rated on a number of quantitative and qualitative factors, ESG considerations are taken into account in this process.

The Trustees are aware of their investment manager's approaches to social, environmental and ethical factors with respect to their selection of investments and are satisfied that a responsible approach, which is consistent with the long-term financial interests of the Scheme and its members, is undertaken.

As noted earlier, the Scheme's assets are invested in pooled funds. The Trustees have identified that the influence they can have on the social, environmental and ethical policies and practices of the companies in which their managers invest, is potentially limited. The Trustees will continue to review the available products and approaches in this space and strive for the Scheme to continue to deliver strong risk-adjusted returns, incorporating responsible investments principles into the process, where possible.

4.5. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND VOTING POLICY

The Trustees have concluded that the decision on how to exercise voting rights should be left with their investment managers, who will exercise these rights in accordance with their respective published corporate governance policies. These policies, which are provided to the Trustees from time to time, take into account the financial interests of shareholders and should be for the Scheme's benefit.

The Trustees note that the investment managers' corporate governance policies are available on request and on their respective websites.

Where the Trustees are specifically invited to vote on a matter relating to corporate policy, the Trustees will exercise their right in accordance with what they believe to be the best interests of the majority of the Scheme's membership.

4.6. STEWARDSHIP

JLT IM and Mercer will monitor the performance, strategy, risks, ESG policies and corporate governance of the investment managers on behalf of the Trustees. If the Trustees have any concerns, they will raise them with JLT IM or Mercer, verbally or in writing.

The Trustees also expect the investment manager to engage with investee companies on the capital structure and management of conflicts of interest.

5 RISK

Under the Pensions Act 2004, the Trustees are required to state their policy regarding the ways in which risks are to be measured and managed. These are set out below.

Solvency Risk and Mismatching Risk

- These are measured through a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the expected development of the assets relative to the liabilities.
- These are managed by setting a scheme-specific strategic asset allocation with an appropriate level of risk.

Manager Risk

- This is assessed as the expected deviation of the prospective risk and return, as set out in the managers' objectives, relative to the investment policy.
- It is measured by monitoring the actual deviation of returns relative to the objective and factors supporting the managers' investment process, and by appointing JLT IM to monitor and replace any managers where concerns exist over their continued ability to deliver the investment mandate.

Liquidity Risk

- This is monitored according to the level of cashflows required by the Scheme over a specified period.
- It is managed by holding an appropriate amount of readily realisable investments. The Scheme's assets are invested in pooled funds which are readily realisable.

Political Risk

- This is measured by the level of concentration in any one market leading to the risk of adverse influence on investment values arising from political intervention.
- It is managed by regular reviews of the investments and through investing in funds which give a wide degree of diversification.

Corporate Governance Risk

- This is assessed by reviewing the Scheme's investment managers' policies regarding corporate governance.
- It is managed by delegating the exercise of voting rights to the managers, who exercise this right in accordance with their published corporate governance policies. Summaries of these policies are provided to the Trustees from time to time and take into account the financial interests of the shareholders, which should ultimately be to the Scheme's advantage.

Sponsor Risk

- This is assessed as the level of ability and degree of willingness of the sponsor to support the continuation of the Scheme and to make good any current or future deficit.
- It is managed by assessing the interaction between the Scheme and the sponsor's business, as measured by a number of factors, including the creditworthiness of the sponsor and the size of the pension liability relative to the sponsor. Regular updates on employer covenant are provided to the Trustees by senior staff of the sponsor.

Legislative Risk

- This is the risk that legislative changes will require action from the Trustees so as to comply with any such changes in legislation.

- The Trustees acknowledge that this risk is unavoidable but will seek to address any required changes so as to comply with changes in legislation.

Credit Risk

- This is the risk that is associated with the inability of a borrower to repay, in full or part the monies which it owes to a creditor.
- The Scheme invests in pooled investment vehicles and is therefore directly exposed to credit risk in relation to the instruments it holds in the pooled investment vehicles and is indirectly exposed to credit risks arising on the financial instruments held by the pooled investment vehicles.
- The Scheme's holdings in pooled investment vehicles are unrated. Direct credit risk arising from pooled investment vehicles is mitigated by the underlying assets of the pooled arrangements being ring-fenced from the pooled manager, the regulatory environments in which the pooled managers operate and diversification of investments amongst a number of pooled arrangements.
- Indirect credit risk arises in relation to underlying bond investments held in the pooled funds. This risk is mitigated by investing in funds with diversified portfolios.

Currency Risk

- This is the risk that occurs when the price of one currency moves relative to another (reference) currency. In the context of a UK pension scheme, the scheme may be invested in overseas stocks or assets, which are either directly or indirectly linked to a currency other than Sterling. There is a risk that the price of that overseas currency will move in such a way that devalues that currency relative to Sterling, thus negatively impacting the overall investment return.
- The Trustees acknowledge that currency risk related to overseas investments is delegated to the underlying investment managers.

Interest rate risk

- This is the risk that an investment's value will change due to a change in the level of interest rates. This affects debt instruments more directly than growth instruments.
- The Trustees acknowledge that the interest rate risk related to individual debt instruments is managed by the underlying investment managers through a combination of strategies, such as diversification, duration and yield curve management.

Other Price risk

- This is the risk of volatility that principally arises in relation to the return seeking assets.
- The Trustees acknowledge that a scheme can manage its exposure to price risk by investing in a diverse portfolio across various markets.

6 MONITORING OF INVESTMENT ADVISER AND MANAGERS

6.1. INVESTMENT ADVISER

The Trustees assess and review the performance of their adviser in a qualitative way.

6.2. INVESTMENT MANAGERS

The Trustees receive quarterly monitoring reports on the performance of the underlying investment managers from Mercer, which present performance information over 3 months, 1 year and 3 years.

The reporting reviews the performance of the Scheme's individual funds against their benchmarks, (over the relevant time period) on a net of fees basis. They also provide returns of market indices so that these can be used to help inform the assessment of the underlying managers' performance.

The reporting also reviews the performance of the Scheme's assets in aggregate against the Scheme's strategic benchmark and also of the development of the Scheme's assets relative to its liabilities.

JLT IM, as Investment Manager, has the role of replacing the underlying investment managers where appropriate. It takes a long-term view when assessing whether to replace the underlying investment managers and such decisions would not be made based solely on short-term performance concerns. Instead, changes would be driven by a significant downgrade of the investment manager by Mercer's Manager Research Team. This in turn would be due to a significant reduction in Mercer's confidence that the investment manager will be able to perform in line with their fund's mandate over the long term.

Changes will also be made to the underlying managers if there is a strategic change to the overall strategy that no longer requires exposure to that asset class or manager.

6.3. PORTFOLIO TURNOVER COSTS

Portfolio turnover refers to the frequency within which the assets of the Scheme are expected to be bought or sold whilst turnover range refers to the minimum or maximum frequency within which the assets of the Scheme are expected to be bought or sold.

The Trustees note that the performance monitoring reports which they receive are net of all charges, including such costs. Portfolio turnover costs means the costs incurred as a result of the buying, selling, lending or borrowing of investments.

As the Trustees currently invest in index funds, portfolio turnover costs are expected to be low and will be mainly incurred in relation to reinvestment of income and dealing with index changes. The Trustees will monitor this going forward and will engage with the manager should turnover be higher than anticipated.

7 CODE OF BEST PRACTICE

The Trustees note that in March 2017, the Pensions Regulator released 'Investment Guidance for Defined Benefit Pension Schemes'.

The Trustees are satisfied that the investment approach adopted by the Scheme is consistent with the guidance so far as it is appropriate to the Scheme's circumstances.

The Trustees meet with their Investment Adviser on a regular basis, monitoring developments both in relation to the Scheme's circumstances and in relation to evolving guidance, and will revise the Scheme's investment approach if considered appropriate.

8 COMPLIANCE

The Scheme's Statement of Investment Principles and annual report and accounts are available to members on request.

A copy of the Scheme's current Statement plus Appendices is also supplied to the Sponsoring Employer, the Scheme's investment manager, the Scheme's auditors and the Scheme Actuary.

This Statement of Investment Principles, taken as a whole with the Appendices, supersedes all others and was approved by the Trustees on **29 September 2020**.

APPENDIX 1: ASSET ALLOCATION BENCHMARK

The Scheme's strategic asset allocation benchmark is set out below.

Asset Class	Strategic Allocation (%)	Control Range (%)
Growth Assets	80	+/- 20
UK Equities	24	
Overseas Equities	56	
Property	0	0 – 10
Stabilising Assets	20	+/- 20
Corporate Bonds	10	0 – 20
Index-Linked Gilts	10	0 – 20

The asset allocation will be monitored by JLT IM so as to maintain it within the control ranges.

The policy for the investment / disinvestment of cashflows is set out in Appendix 2.

Appendix 3 provides information about the funds in which the assets are invested.

APPENDIX 2: CASHFLOW POLICY

The Trustees have put in place a suitable procedure for managing the Scheme's cashflows.

Cashflows will be used to bring the portfolio into line with the control ranges.

For avoidance of doubt, this Statement will not be revised purely in relation to a change in cashflow policy.

APPENDIX 3: INVESTMENT MANAGER INFORMATION

The Scheme invests with JLT IM, whose key responsibility is to appoint suitable investment managers to each of the mandates within the Trustees' agreed investment strategy, as set out in Appendix 1.

The tables below show the details of the mandate(s) with each manager.

GROWTH ASSETS

Manager / Fund	Benchmark	Objective	Dealing Frequency	SORP / IFRS Class
Equities				
Legal & General UK Equity Index	FTSE All-Share Index	To track the performance of the FTSE All-Share Index to within +/-0.25% p.a. for two years out of three.	Daily	2
Legal & General World Equity Index Fund	FTSE World Index	To track the performance of the FTSE World Index (less withholding tax if applicable) to within +/- 0.5% p.a. for two years out of three	Daily	2

STABILISING ASSETS

Manager / Fund	Benchmark	Objective	Dealing Frequency	SORP / IFRS Class
Corporate Bonds				
Legal & General Investment Grade Corporate Bond All Stocks Index Fund	Markit iBoxx £ Non-Gilts All Stocks Index	To track the performance of the Markit iBoxx £ Non-Gilts (All Stocks) Index to within +/- 0.5% p.a. for two years out of three	Daily	2

Index-Linked Gilts

Legal and General Over 5 Year Index- Linked Gilts Index Fund	FTSE A Index-Linked (Over 5 Year) Index	To track the performance of the FTSE A Index- Linked (Over 5 Year) Index to within +/- 0.25% p.a. for two years out of three	Daily	2
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The assets for the underlying managers are hosted on an investment platform provided by Mobius Life Limited.

If one of the underlying managers is significantly downgraded by Mercer's Manager Research Team, JLT IM will replace that fund with a suitable alternative as soon as is practicable.

For avoidance of doubt, this SIP will not be updated solely in response to a replacement of one of the underlying investment managers, although it will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis.

APPENDIX 4: RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTIES

TRUSTEES

The Trustees' responsibilities include the following:

- Reviewing at least triennially, and more frequently if necessary, the content of this Statement in consultation with the Investment Adviser and modifying it if deemed appropriate
- Reviewing the investment strategy following the results of each actuarial review, in consultation with the Investment Adviser and Scheme Actuary
- Appointing the Investment Manager(s) and custodian (if required)
- Assessing the quality of the performance and processes of the Investment Manager(s) by means of regular reviews of investment returns and other relevant information, in consultation with the Investment Adviser
- Consulting with the sponsoring employer regarding any proposed amendments to this Statement
- Monitoring compliance of the investment arrangements with this Statement on a continuing basis

INVESTMENT ADVISER

The Investment Adviser's responsibilities include the following:

- Participating with the Trustees in reviews of this Statement of Investment Principles
- Production of performance monitoring reports
- Advising the Trustees, at their request, on the following matters:
 - Through consultation with the Scheme Actuary, how any changes within the Scheme's benefits, membership, and funding position may affect the manner in which the assets should be invested
 - How any significant changes in the Investment Managers' organisation could affect the interests of the Scheme
 - How any changes in the investment environment could present either opportunities or problems for the Scheme
- Undertaking project work, as requested, including:
 - Reviews of asset allocation policy
 - Research into and reviews of Investment Managers
- Advising on the selection of new managers and/or custodians

INVESTMENT MANAGERS

As noted in this SIP, JLT IM has been appointed as Investment Manager and will sub-contract with underlying investment managers on behalf of the Trustees.

JLT IM's responsibilities include the following:

- Providing the Trustees on a quarterly basis (or as frequently as required) with a statement and valuation of the assets and a report on their actions and future intentions, and any changes to the processes applied to their portfolios
- Informing the Trustees of any changes in the internal performance objectives and guidelines of any pooled fund used by the Scheme as and when they occur
- Having regard to the need for diversification of investments, so far as appropriate for the particular mandate, and to the suitability of investments
- Giving effect to the principles contained in the Statement as far as is reasonably practicable

The underlying investment managers contract with JLT IM and therefore do not have any direct responsibility to the Trustees.

SCHEME ACTUARY

The Scheme Actuary's responsibilities include the following:

- Assessing the funding position of the Scheme and advising on the appropriate response to any shortfall
- Performing the triennial (or more frequent, as required) valuations and advising on the appropriate contribution levels

ADMINISTRATOR

The Administrator's responsibilities include the following:

- Ensuring there is sufficient cash available to meet benefit payments as and when they fall due
- Paying benefits and making transfer payments