

# Geo Adams Group Pension Plan

## Engagement Policy Implementation Statement for the year ending 30 June 2020

### Introduction

The Trustees of the Geo Adams Group Pension Plan (the 'Plan') have a fiduciary duty to consider their approach to the stewardship of their investments, to maximise financial returns for the benefit of members and beneficiaries over the long term. The Trustees can promote an investment's long-term success through monitoring, engagement and/or voting, either directly or through their investment managers.

This statement sets out how, and the extent to which, in the opinion of the Trustees, the policies (set out in the Statement of Investment Principles) on the exercise of rights (including voting rights) attaching to the investments, and engagement activities have been followed during the year ending 30 June 2020. This statement also describes the voting behaviour by, or on behalf of, the Trustees.

The Trustees, in conjunction with their investment consultant, appoint their investment managers to meet specific Plan policy objectives. They expect their investment manager to make decisions based on assessments about the financial performance of underlying investments, and that they engage with issuers of debt or equity to improve their performance (and thereby the Plan's performance) over an appropriate time horizon.

The Trustees have decided not to take non-financial matters into account when considering their policy objectives.

During the year, the Trustees received training from their investment consultant on ESG issues, including stewardship and the engagement policy statement.

The Trustees have also received the following additional training over the period:

Date	Provider	Subject
October 2020	Buck UK	Asset Class Training

### Stewardship - monitoring and engagement

The Trustees recognise that the investment manager's ability to influence the companies in which they invest will depend on the nature of the investment.

The Trustees' policy is to delegate responsibility for the exercising of rights (including voting rights) attaching to investments to the investment manager and to encourage the manager to

exercise those rights. The investment manager is expected to provide regular reports for the Trustees detailing their voting activity.

The Trustees' also delegate responsibility for engaging and monitoring investee companies to the investment manager. The Trustees expect the investment manager to use their discretion to maximise financial returns for members and others over the long term.

### **Investment manager engagement policies**

The Plan's investment manager has developed and publicly disclosed an engagement policy. This policy, amongst other things, provides the Trustees with information on how the investment manager engages in dialogue with the companies it invests in and how it exercises voting rights. It also provides details on the investment approach taken by the investment manager when considering relevant factors of the investee companies, such as strategy, financial and non-financial performance and risk, and applicable social, environmental and corporate governance aspects.

A link to the investment manager's engagement policy or suitable alternative is provided in the Appendix. The policy is publicly available on the investment manager's website.

### **Exercising rights and responsibilities**

The investment manager is expected to disclose annually a general description of their voting behaviour, an explanation of the most significant votes cast and report on the use of proxy voting advisers.

The investment manager publishes online the overall voting records of the firm on a regular basis.

Investment manager uses proxy advisers for the purposes of providing research, advice or voting recommendations that relate to the exercise of voting rights.

The Trustees do not carry out a detailed review of the votes cast by or on behalf of their investment manager but rely on the requirement for their investment manager to provide a high-level analysis of their voting behaviour.

The Trustees consider the proportion of votes cast, and the proportion of votes against management to be an important (but not the only) consideration of investor behaviour.

The latest available information provided by the investment manager is as follows:

Investment manager	Period	Proportion of votes against management
State Street Global Advisors	Q2 2020	14.3%
	Q1 2020	17.2%
	Q4 2019	16.9%
	Q3 2019	17.0%

### **Trustees' assessment**

The Trustees have undertaken a review of the investment manager's engagement policy including their policies in relation to financially material considerations.

The Trustees have considered the environmental, social and governance rating for each fund/investment manager provided by the investment consultant, which includes consideration of voting and/or engagement activities. This also includes those funds that do not hold listed equities.

Where an investment manager has received a relatively low rating from the investment consultant, the Trustees will consider whether to engage with the investment manager.

The Trustees have reviewed the investment manager's policies relating to engagement and voting and how they have been implemented and have found them to be acceptable at the current time.

The Trustees recognise that engagement and voting policies, practices and reporting, will continue to evolve over time and are supportive of their investment managers being signatories to the United Nations' Principles for Responsible Investment and the Financial Reporting Council's UK Stewardship Code 2020.

## Appendix

Links to the Engagement Policy for the investment manager can be found here:

<b>Investment manager</b>	<b>Engagement Policy (or suitable alternative)</b>
State Street Global Advisors	<a href="https://www.ssga.com/library-content/pdfs/ic/proxy-voting-and-engagement-guidelines-principle.pdf">https://www.ssga.com/library-content/pdfs/ic/proxy-voting-and-engagement-guidelines-principle.pdf</a>