


Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 22 nd January 2025	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Motion for debate submitted by the Administration	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
Wards affected	All wards

SUMMARY

1. Council Procedure Rule 11 allows for time at each Ordinary Council meeting for the discussion of one specific Motion submitted by the Administration. The debate will follow the rules of debate at Council Procedure Rule 13 and will last no more than 30 minutes.
2. The motion submitted is listed overleaf. The Administration Motion is submitted by the Aspire Group.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council or its partners has a direct responsibility. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. Notice of any proposed amendments to the Motions must be given to the Monitoring Officer by Noon the day before the meeting.

MOTION

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

ADMINISTRATION MOTION - COUNCIL DIVESTMENT OF PENSION FUNDS

Proposer: Councillor Saied Ahmed

Secunder: Councillor Maium Talukdar

This council notes:

- That in Local Authorities across the country, millions of pounds from local government pension funds are being used to fund the unethical purchase of products, including arms.
- That the use of these arms is often used in serious conflicts across the globe – including the ongoing conflict in Gaza (which the UN Human Rights Office found consistent with genocide).
- That in August of 2024, Waltham Forest council took the decision to divest £773,000 of its £1.1billion pension fund, that appeared to be invested in companies engaged in the dealing of weapons.
- That in Palestine (specifically Gaza) and other conflicts weapons are being funded by Local Government Pension funds.
- That daily, civilians are killed by drone and aerial attacks across the globe.
- That these weapons – including deadly drones and missiles – are often part-paid for by funds drawn from local government pension pots.
- That at the September 30th meeting, the Pensions Committee requested legal advice in relation to divestment of any funds associated with arms dealing or any activities that facilitate death and destruction in other countries.
- That an update was provided by London CIV at the November meeting of the committee, where it was acknowledged that the council can divest its funds following due process and a declaration of intent to do so.
- That this was unanimously supported by all members of the committee.

This Council believes:

- That public pension funds should not be used to facilitate the mass murder of thousands of innocent men, women, children and infants.
- That Tower Hamlets council has a proud history of internationalism, and standing up in whatever way it can to global tyranny and acts of atrocity.
- That the people of Palestine, and all those living in war-torn countries, should not face death; injury; or displacement from weapons funded from public money in Tower Hamlets.
- That council staff have a right to know where their money is being spent.

This Council resolves:

- To call for a complete audit of how all pension funds are used, and where any funds are invested.
- To publicly declare its intent to divest all funds away from companies who deal in arms.
- To request a formal report be brought to the next available Pensions committee and Cabinet on how this divestment process will be accelerated.