



ISLE OF WIGHT PALESTINE SOLIDARITY

14 May 2025

Dear Councillor

We wish to inform you of our grave concern in respect of the Isle of Wight Council's investment of Local Government Pension Scheme members' funds. Our concerns relate to the council investing in companies which are complicit in both the Israeli government's illegal apartheid control and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, and the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

We ask you, as an elected representative of your local community, to please give this matter your urgent consideration and to raise the issue with the Isle of Wight Council by asking them the following:

1. Why is Local Government Pension Scheme members' money being invested in supporting the regime responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent Palestinians, along with the destruction of their public infrastructure, agricultural land and livestock?
2. a. Has the ACCESS Pool Joint Committee discussed the humanitarian plight and destruction that is being wrought upon Palestinians by Israel and invested in by the IoW LGPS investments?

If not:

b. Would the IoW LGPS Fund Committee please explain why it is written on the ACCESS Pool website condemning Russia's actions in Ukraine, but not Israel's actions in Palestine.

For context, on 22 February 2022 Russia attacked Ukraine. A search on the ACCESS Pool website for the word *Russia* brought up the results of the ACCESS Joint Committee meeting held on Monday 7 March - less than one month later - stating that the eleven local authorities that make up the ACCESS Pool unanimously condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Yet a search for the words *Gaza*, *Palestine* or *Israel*, on the same website - over eighteen months after Israel escalated its actions in Palestine - brought up zero results.

3. Will the Isle of Wight Council, through the LGPS Committee, use its influence on the members of the ACCESS Pool to divest all investments from Israel and its proxies?
4. Will the Isle of Wight Council use its influence to call on central government to use its voice in the United Nations, to propose that a United Nations force be formed to secure the borders of Palestine and shield Palestine from Israel?

The enclosed leaflet contains information obtained by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, through their research and freedom of information requests. It exposes the substantial amount of money (£31,856,457) that the Isle of Wight Council is investing in companies that are complicit in assisting Israel to commit ongoing war crimes and ethnic cleansing by genocide in the Gaza Strip.

Please also note the bullet points on page 8 which outline the advisories and rulings of the United Nations International Court of Justice, in accordance with the Statute of Rome and the Geneva Convention - of which Britain is a signatory to both.

The Gaza 'Strip' was listed as being 25 x 7.5 miles at its widest (141 square miles).
The Isle of Wight is listed as being 23 x 13 miles (147 square miles).

Before the Israeli regime began its current so-called war on Palestine - with a population of 2.3 million - Gaza was 6 square miles smaller than is the Isle of Wight with its population of 142,296.

During the past eighteen months, the illegal Israeli Occupation Force (IOF) have driven the Palestinian people back and forth across Gaza repeatedly, by use of violent force. They have been herded into ever smaller areas, some of which have been designated as safe zones, which the IOF have then bombed regardless and fired at in 'turkey shoot' fashion.

This has enabled the IOF to seize more and more land by sectioning off further areas around the Gaza/Israeli border. The buffer zone now encroaches 1.8 miles into Gaza. It extends to both the Philadelphi Corridor on the Gaza/Egypt border, as well as to the Netzarim Corridor, which isolates Northern Gaza.

On 7 April 2025, The Guardian reported on a document, produced by Breaking the Silence, titled *The Perimeter*. This details Israeli soldiers' descriptions of their war crimes in Gaza. Their confessions describe how their orders and actions in Gaza, to greatly expand the buffer zone between Israel and Gaza, have resulted in utterly destroying housing, public infrastructure, sewage works, greenhouses, agricultural land, livestock and Palestinians. Particular determination was given to make the land completely uninhabitable, so as to prevent any Palestinians from attempting to return. Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/apr/07/israel-military-gaza-perimeter-land-testimony-report>

Since then, Israel has razed to the ground yet another swathe of land from East to West across Gaza, slicing off and separating Rafah from Khan Yunis to create yet another forbidden area named the Morag Corridor. On 28 April 2025, the Australia/Israel Jewish Affairs Council reported that the Morag Corridor was "already two miles wide" (by seven miles across the Strip). Satellite photos by Planet Labs indicate that Israel has seized 50% of Gaza. Source:

<https://apnews.com/article/gaza-buffer-zone-ceasefire-b7dada19483a3f8ef2fdec745ee6b5>

On 5 May 2025, the Knesset Security Cabinet approved a plan to expand the offensive, leaving Gaza entirely destroyed. Mr Netanyahu said that Gaza's Palestinian population "will be moved, for its own protection". Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/may/06/hamas-israel-hunger-war-in-gaza>

Since 2 March 2025, Israel has blocked all aid, including food, water and medical supplies, from entering Gaza. It has used this tactic before. Israeli officials have denied the Gaza Coastal Municipalities Water Utility's (CMWU) request to repair one of the three water pipelines that provides water to Gaza. Meanwhile, the world watches in despair as starvation adds to the death toll of the slaughtered.

Thank you for your consideration in this urgent issue. We very much hope to receive a response from you. Please find enclosed a stamped, self-addressed, envelope for your convenience.

Yours sincerely

Jenni Agricola and Marilyn Barrett

Enclosure: Isle of Wight Local Government Pension Scheme - Investments leaflet