Composite Motion agreed by Wakefield Council on Wednesday 16th July 2025

This Council Notes:

* The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza has caused immense civilian suffering, includingwidespread displacement and severe shortages of food, water, and medical supplies.
* On October 18, 2023, Wakefield Council demonstrated its commitment to peace by raising a peace flag above Wakefield Town Hall and calling for an end to the violence in Gaza.
* The recent motion passed by Bradford Council, demanding a permanent ceasefire in Gaza, reflects a growing regional call for peace and justice.
* On the 7th May 2025, a group of over 20 UN independent experts, including the Special Rapporteur, Francesca Albanese on the situation of human rights in Palestinian territories stated that the actions unfolding in Gaza ‘bear the hallmarks of genocide’ and in their words, ‘the international community has failed to prevent genocide before, we must not fail again’.
* That East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Golan Heights and Gaza are illegally occupied by Israel; and that prior to the current genocide, Gaza had been subject to a blockade since 2007.
* The establishment of illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.
* That across the country, millions of pounds from local government pension funds are beingused to fund the unethical purchase of products, including weapons, military components and technology. That the use of these arms is often deployed in serious conflicts across the globe, including in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, as well as conflicts in Sudan and Congo, all of which are the subject of current and pending international legal cases concerning violations of human rights, war crimes and/or the crime of genocide.
* That a number of Local Authorities, including Waltham Forest and Islington Pension Committees in July 2024, Lewisham Pension Committee in September 2024, Manchester City Council in November 2024, Bristol City Council and Tower Hamlets Council in January 2025, North Somerset and Sandwell Councils in February 2025 and Dudley Council in March 2025 took the decision urging their respective pension funds to divest.

This Council Further Notes:

* All civilians, regardless of nationality or location, have the fundamental right to live in safety and dignity.
* The international community, including local authorities, has a moral duty to condemn human rights violations and support efforts toward peace.
* Local Councils must reflect the ethical values of their communities, particularly in decisions involving public funds and investments.

This Council Resolves to:

* Publicly reiterate our previous demands for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, urging all parties toadhere to international humanitarian law and protect civilian lives.
* Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, calling on them to:

- Advocate for an immediate ceasefire and the safeguarding of civilians in Gaza.

- Halt all arms exports to Israel.

- Recognize the State of Palestine on its 1967 borders and work towards the genuine

right of self-determination for all living in the region, which may include a just and lasting

two-state solution.

- Continue backing humanitarian aid efforts for those impacted, working with local

charities and organizations.

- Urge Israel to end the occupation of all Palestinian land; end illegal settlement

activity; release innocent Palestinians being “administratively detained” without

charge or trial (this includes Palestinian children as young as 12 years old); and

guarantee equal rights for all, regardless of ethnicity or religion.

- End the UK’s involvement in Israel’s genocide by: a) suspending all British Spy flights

over the Occupied Palestinian Territories; b) suspending the sharing of British

intelligence; c) ending the use of all UK military bases and assets in supporting Israel

(which includes the use of such assets by Israel or third countries).

* Conduct a thorough review of the council’s financial ties and procurement practices

to see whether there are any investments in, or, any goods, services or

consumables supplied by, companies with links to the arms industry, or those directly or

indirectly involved in either: a) the Gaza conflict, and/or b) illegal settlement activity in the

Occupied Palestinian Territories.

- The result of this review should be reported back to Full Council once concluded.

* Develop an ethical framework for procurement and investments which:

- Should avoid procuring with/investing in companies that are directly or indirectly

involved in (or whether on the balance of probabilities they are likely to be directly or

indirectly involved in) human rights abuses, breaches in international law, and the

production or supply of weapons, armaments or military components.

- Must be developed in regular consultation with elected members.

- Urge that the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (‘WYPF’) to begin the process of divestment

from all companies that are complicit in genocide, occupation and apartheid in the

Occupied Palestinian Territories as outlined by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC)

as well as those listed on the United Nations database of business enterprises that are

involved with or in the illegal settlements.

- Urge the Council’s representatives on WYPF bodies to work towards achieving

this objective and to ensure that WYPF does not invest in alternative companies which

funds weapons, armaments, military components and technology.

- Work with other organisations including, but not exclusively, the four other West

Yorkshire Council’s to achieve the objective of divestment.

- Work to ensure that WYPF invests ethically, including local good quality jobs,

empathising the need to develop sustainability and enhancing our environment.

* Provide support to local Palestinian and Jewish communities affected by the conflict, encouraging dialogue and unity within the district.
* Reaffirm Wakefield Council’s opposition to all forms of hate, including antisemitism and Islamophobia, ensuring our district remains inclusive and safe for all.