

Sir Robert McAlpine Limited Staff Pension and Life Assurance Scheme - DC Section

Statement of Investment Principles

February 2025

Version Update

Version	Effective From
1.0	May 2019
2.0	September 2020
3.0	February 2023
4.0	September 2024
5.0	February 2025

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1. Introduction

This document constitutes the Statement of Investment Principles (the “SIP”) required under Section 35 of the Pensions Act 1995 for the (the “Scheme”). It describes the investment policy being pursued for the Scheme by the Trustees of the Sir Robert McAlpine Limited Staff Pension and Life Assurance Scheme (DC Section) (the “Trustees” of the “Scheme”) and is in compliance with the Government’s voluntary code of conduct for Institutional Investment in the UK (the “2001 Myners Principles”). This SIP also reflects the requirements of Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment) Regulations 2005, the Occupational Pension Schemes (Charges and Governance) Regulations 2015 and the Code of Practice in relation to governance of DC pension schemes issued by the Pensions Regulator in July 2016 (as amended). Detail on how the Scheme’s investment strategy is implemented is set out in a separate Statement of Investment Implementation (“SII”) documents which is maintained by the Trustees.

The Trustees confirm that, before preparing this SIP, they have consulted with Sir Robert McAlpine Limited (the “Employer”) and taken appropriate advice from its Advisers. The Investment Adviser is Schroders Solutions (a division of Schroders IS Limited) and the Legal Adviser is CMS Cameron McKenna LLP, collectively termed the “Advisers”.

The Trustees believe the Advisers to be qualified by their ability and practical experience of financial matters and to have appropriate knowledge, and experience of the management of the investment arrangements that the Scheme requires. The Trustees also confirm that they will consult with the Employer and take advice from the relevant Advisers as part of any review of this SIP.

The Trustees are responsible for the strategic decisions regarding the investment of the Scheme’s assets, but the day-to-day management has been delegated to the Platform Manager (who provide the platform for member investments) and the underlying Managers. Where they are required to make an investment decision, the Trustees receive written advice from the relevant Advisers first in order to achieve an appropriate level of understanding of the issues concerned.

In accordance with the Financial Services & Markets Act 2000, the Trustees set general investment policy, but have delegated the day-to-day investment of the Scheme’s assets to professional fund managers (the “Managers”) in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Pensions Act 1995. The Managers are authorised under the Financial Services & Markets Act 2000, provide the expertise necessary to manage the investments of the Scheme competently and will comply with the requirements of Section 36 of the Pensions Act 1995.

1.1 Declaration

The Trustees acknowledge that it is their responsibility, with guidance from the Advisers, to ensure the assets of the Scheme are invested in accordance with these Principles.

Signed **Date**

For and on behalf of the Trustees of the Sir Robert McAlpine Limited Staff and Life Assurance Scheme – DC Section.

2. Scheme Governance

The Trustees are responsible for the governance and investment of the Scheme's assets. They consider that the governance structure set out in this SIP is appropriate for the Scheme, as it allows the Trustees to make the important decisions on investment policy, while delegating the day-to-day aspects to the Manager or the relevant Advisers as appropriate. The responsibilities of each of the parties involved in the Scheme's governance are detailed in Appendix B.

The Trustees will review this SIP at least every three years, or following any changes to the investment strategy, and modify it with consultation from the Advisers and the Employer if deemed appropriate. There will be no obligation to change this SIP, the Investment Managers or the Advisers as part of such a review.

3. Objectives

The Trustees recognise that members have differing investment needs and that these may change during the course of members' working lives. They also recognise that members have different attitudes to risk. The Trustees believe that members should make their own investment decisions based on their individual circumstances.

The Trustees' Scheme objectives are:

- To provide a pension plan which aims to deliver valuable benefits into retirement.
- To help members manage the risks they face as far as possible.
- To provide members with a suitable range of investment options to enable them to tailor investment strategy to their needs.
- Consider environmental, social and governance ("ESG") factors, and stewardship in the context of long-term performance.

In aiming to meet these Scheme objectives, the Trustees have specified a number of investment objectives:

- To achieve returns in excess of general price inflation in the long term.
- To achieve security of capital, low growth/volatility, or protection against annuity rate movements for members closer to retirement.

4. Default Investment Strategy

The Trustees have made a default lifestyle strategy available to members.

4.1 Aims and Objectives of the default strategy

The Trustees' aims and objectives in relation to the default strategy are to support members' investment needs where members either choose the default option or do not choose any option. The Trustees recognise that these investment needs may change during the course of members' working lives and therefore a key objective for the default strategy is to provide a scheme which is designed to deliver valuable benefits in retirement.

4.2 Trustees' Policies in relation to the default strategy

i. The kinds of investment to be held

ii. The balance between different kinds of investments

The kinds of investments within the default strategy and balance between them are designed to be adequately diversified and suitable. See sections 5.3, "Diversification" and 5.5, "Suitability" for more details.

iii. Risks (including the ways in which risks are to be measured and managed)

Risks applicable to the Scheme as a whole are shown in Section 9, "Risks". All of the risks shown, including how they are measured and managed, are relevant to the default strategy.

iv. Expected return on investments

The Trustees' policy on expected return is considered in section 5.2 "Expected Return", which covers both the default strategy and the investment strategy as a whole.

v. Realisation of investments

Liquidity is considered in section 5.6, "Liquidity".

vi. Environmental, Social and Governance ("ESG") considerations

The extent to which the Trustees consider ESG issues within the default strategy is shown in Section 10 "Other Risks".

vii. Financially material investment considerations and non – financial matters

The extent to which the Trustee considers financially material considerations and non-financial matters, including, but not limited to, social, environmental or ethical issues is shown in Section 10, titled 'Other Risks'.

viii. Corporate governance and stewardship policy

The Trustee's policy in respect of these considerations is shown in Section 10, titled 'Other Risks'.

ix. Exercise of rights (including voting rights) attaching to the investments

The extent to which the Trustees consider the exercise of rights within the default strategy is shown in Section 10 "Other Risks".

In May 2024, following an investment strategy review, the Trustees automatically transferred members who were invested in the Ethical fund within the self-select range to the newly created ESG Equity fund. As a result, the ESG Equity fund is now considered an additional default arrangement within the Scheme. Further details on this additional default arrangement can be found in Appendix A.

4.3 Best interests of members and beneficiaries

In designing the default strategy, the Trustees carried out a comprehensive review of the previous investment strategy and alternatives (in conjunction with the Investment Adviser), with a key focus on member needs and outcomes. The Trustees believe the default strategy is in the best interest of members and beneficiaries, and undertake periodic reviews on the suitability of the strategy.

5. Investment Strategy

Having considered advice from the Investment Adviser, and having due regard for the objectives and the members of the Scheme, the Trustees have made available a number of investment options. Members can choose to invest their contributions in one or more of these investment options, detailed in the SII.

The Trustees will instruct the Administrator to invest each member's investments in accordance with the fund options selected by the member.

5.1 Investment Options

A range of funds has been made available to members. These are detailed in the SII.

5.2 Expected Return

The Trustees considered the expected returns of the investment strategy (including the default arrangements) in constructing benchmarks to assess performance against. Where applicable, these benchmarks are related to observable market-based indices and may change from time to time. More details are set out in the SII.

5.3 Diversification

The choice of investment options for members (including the default arrangements) is designed to enable members to choose investments that are adequately diversified and suitable for their profile. The Trustees monitor the strategy regularly to satisfy themselves that they are comfortable with the choice of funds offered to members.

5.4 Active and Passive Management

The Trustees have selected a range of both active and passive fund options for Scheme members.

5.5 Suitability

The Trustees consider the range of investment options offered to members (including the default arrangements) to be suitable. Members are responsible for choosing which of the funds are most appropriate, or may choose to rely on the default arrangement for the investment of their own and their employer's contributions, based on their own individual circumstances.

The suitability of the range of investment options, including the default arrangements, will be reviewed regularly.

5.6 Liquidity

The assets are held in asset classes that are considered sufficiently liquid.

6. Strategy Implementation

The Trustees have decided to delegate the day-to-day investment of the Scheme's assets to professional managers. The details of the Managers' mandates are detailed in the SII.

6.1 Investment Management

The Trustees have appointed a Platform Manager to provide the platform for member investments and carry out investment administration. The Trustees have selected a range of investment options for the members of the Scheme. Full details can be found in the SII.

6.2 Administration

The Platform Manager also carries out the day to day management of member contributions, communications and other member administration.

6.3 Fund Options

The range of funds offered to members was chosen from those offered by the Platform Manager to give members a diversified range of investments from which they can select according to their individual circumstances. The funds available to members are detailed in the SII.

6.4 Investment of Contributions

A member's contributions will be invested in line with their selected choice of funds. Where a member has not made an active selection, their contributions will be invested in the default strategy provided, which is detailed in the SII.

6.5 Performance Objectives

The performance objectives vary depending on the fund in question. A detailed breakdown of the objectives can be found in the SII.

6.6 Transitions

The Trustees will look to mitigate the potential risks and costs to members as a result of any investment transitions to the best of their ability. The Trustees will take advice from their Advisors in relation to different transition methods and other ways in which these potential risks/costs can be mitigated.

7. Monitoring

7.1 Managers

The Trustees, or the Advisers on behalf of the Trustees, will monitor the performance of the Managers against their own or the Trustees' specified benchmarks.

The Trustees, or the Advisers on behalf of the Trustees, will regularly review the activities of the Managers to satisfy themselves that each Manager continues to carry out their work competently and has the appropriate knowledge and experience to manage the assets of the Scheme.

As part of this review, the Trustees will consider:

- Each Manager's performance versus their respective benchmarks
- The level of risk given the specified risk tolerances.
- For funds used in the default arrangements, the extent to which returns are consistent with the aims of the Trustees
- Whether or not each Manager:
 - Has regard to the need for diversification of investment holdings.
 - Has regard to the suitability of each investment and each category of investment.
 - Has been exercising his powers of investment with a view to giving effect to the principles contained in this SIP, so far as is reasonably practical.

If the Trustees are not satisfied with a Manager, it will ask the Manager to take steps to rectify the situation. If the Manager still does not meet the Trustees' requirements, the Trustees will remove the Manager and appoint another.

7.2 Advisers

The Trustees will monitor the advice given by the Advisers on a regular basis.

7.3 Statement of Investment Principles

The Trustees will review this SIP on a triennial basis, or, as soon as practical following any changes to the investment strategy or significant change to member demographics, and modify it with consultation from the relevant Advisers and the Employer if deemed appropriate. There will be no obligation to change any Manager, Platform Manager or Adviser as part of such a review (although strategy changes made will be reflected in this SIP, if appropriate).

7.4 Recordkeeping

The Trustees maintain a record of all investment related decisions it has taken, together with the rationale in each case.

8. Fees

8.1 Managers

Details of the fund charges are set out in the SII and will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis.

8.2 Advisers

Fees paid to the Advisers are based either on actual time spent and hourly rates for relevant individuals, or on fixed fees agreed in advance for specifically defined projects.

8.3 Custodian

There is no custodian appointed directly by the Trustees.

8.4 Value for Members

The Trustees review all sources of fees levied on members' accounts (including management charges, additional expenses, platform charges and administration, as appropriate), and levels of service provided to use best efforts to ensure value for money is present.

9. Risks

The Trustees recognise a number of key risks both to themselves and to the members of the Scheme:

- i. **Value for members risk** – the risk that the Scheme fails to offer value for money to members. This is addressed through regular value for members reviews.
- ii. **Inflation risk** – the risk that the purchasing power of members' investment accounts is not maintained. To try and manage this risk, the Trustees have offered a range of funds designed to achieve a return above the rate of inflation.
- iii. **Conversion risk** – the risk that the value of pension benefits that can be purchased by or drawn from a given defined contribution amount is not maintained. This risk cannot easily be mitigated as it depends on market conditions ahead of retirement, and each member's retirement income decision. However, the Trustees have offered a range of funds to reflect different retirement income decisions.
- iv. **Capital risk** – the risk that the value of the element to provide a cash sum or income drawdown pot is not maintained. This could be due to the impact of any of the risks above and is addressed where possible in the same ways.
- v. **Active Manager risk** – the risk that the active investments underlying the Scheme's investment options underperform due to the underperformance of the underlying Managers. The Trustees have mitigated this risk by primarily investing in passively managed funds.
- vi. **Platform risk** – the assets are currently held by the Platform Manager. This risk relates to potential losses that could arise if the Platform Manager ran into financial difficulties. The Trustees monitor the Platform Manager regularly.
- vii. **Manager risk** – the assets are invested in funds managed by the Managers. This risk relates to potential losses that could arise if the Managers ran into financial difficulties. This is addressed through understanding the security of members' assets and protections available.
- viii. **Communication risk** – the risk that communication to members is misleading or unclear and leads to inappropriate decisions being made. This is addressed through the Trustees receiving advice from the Advisers and regular monitoring and updates, where appropriate, of member communications.
- ix. **Inappropriate member decision** – the risk that members make inappropriate decisions regarding their investments. This is addressed where possible through communication to members and the recommendation that members seek independent financial advice.
- x. **Organisational risk** – the risk of inadequate internal processes leading to problems for the Scheme. This is addressed through regular monitoring of the Managers and Advisers.
- xi. **Liquidity risk** – the risk that members are not able to realise the value of their funds when required. The Trustees have addressed this risk by not offering funds which are considered illiquid.

- xii. **ESG risks** – the risk of adverse performance due to ESG related factors including climate change. This is addressed by ESG assessment at the point of investment with the Managers where applicable, or by requesting information on the ESG policies, adopted by the Managers.

The Trustees recognise that an efficient process for identifying, evaluating, managing and monitoring risk needs to be in place for the Scheme. The Trustees will identify and assess the impact of any risk, what controls can be put in place to manage or identify risk and regularly review both the individual risks and the effectiveness of the risk management process as a whole.

10. Other Risks

10.1 Corporate Governance and Stewardship Policy

As part of the appointment of the Investment Managers to the Scheme, the Trustees have accepted the terms of pooled investment vehicles, setting out the scope of each pooled fund vehicle's activities, their charging basis and other relevant matters. The Trustees periodically review the overall value-for-money of using the Investment Adviser (as specified in the Scheme's Investment Consultant objectives) and Investment Managers.

The Scheme's investments are made via pooled investment funds via the Platform Manager, in which the Scheme's investments are pooled with those of other investors. As such, direct control of the process of engaging with the companies that issue the underlying securities, whether for corporate governance purposes (including the exercise of voting right) or other financially material considerations, is delegated to the Investment Managers. The Trustees have, to date, not set any conditions or restrictions on the Investment Managers in respect of any voting rights nor in relation to the Environmental, Social and Governance ("ESG") profiles of any issuer of securities within the investment fund. Due to the nature of these pooled investment funds, the Trustees may have difficulty imposing such voting restrictions or ESG requirements on the Investment Managers. However, although the Trustees cannot influence Investment Managers directly, they can monitor the Investment Managers' ESG policies and practices during Investment Manager reviews as part of the wider strategy review which is undertaken over a 3 year rotational cycle. Were the Trustees to have any specific concerns, they can take this up with the Investment Manager in review meetings or decide to divest from the fund.

The Trustees also consider the Investment Managers' engagement process directly with their Investment Adviser who monitors Investment Managers' engagement with investee companies directly. The Investment Adviser has set out its voting and engagement priorities which focus on six themes including Climate, Natural Capital and Biodiversity, Human Rights, Human Capital Management, Diversity and Inclusion and Corporate Governance. In 2022, the Trustees have carried out an exercise to identify those ESG priorities they think are important and, based on the close degree of similarity between the two, have agreed to align their engagement priorities with those of the Investment Adviser.

The Trustees believe those engagement priorities which have been chosen by the Investment Adviser will result in better management of financially-material ESG and climate risks and, therefore, expected to improve the financial outcome of the Scheme which ultimately is in the members' and beneficiaries' best interest.

The Trustees also consider Investment Managers' voting and engagement records in relation to ESG priorities at least annually. This help to ensure that the Managers' stewardship priorities are at least broadly consistent with those of the Trustees'.

The Trustees and Investment Adviser undertake regular reviews of the Investment Managers. These reviews incorporate benchmarking of performance and fees as well as performance reviews (including understanding key drivers of performance). The Trustees and Investment Adviser review the governance structures of the Investment Managers, as well as assessing whether their fees, expenses and any other charges are in line with industry peers at inception and from time to time whilst invested.

Where it can be determined, the Trustees and Investment Adviser assess whether the Investment Managers' remuneration arrangements are aligned with the Trustees' objectives. The Trustees expect the Investment Managers':

- to align their investment strategy and decisions with the Trustees investment policies, such as its return target and any restrictions detailed in the Trustees' policy documentation with the Platform Manager.
- to assess and make decisions based on the medium- to long-term financial and non-financial performance of an issuer of debt or equity, and to engage with the issuers to improve this medium- to long-term performance. The success of such engagement will contribute to the Scheme's performance, which is reflected and measured relative to the Trustees' long-term performance objectives.

The Trustees acknowledge the inherent potential for conflicts of interest which exist as part of ongoing investment management business activities. Where investment managers are regulated, they are likely to be subject to such requirements to manage conflicts of interest as are applicable in their jurisdiction of incorporation or operations. The Trustees and Investment Adviser monitor this as part of ongoing review. As an FCA regulated firm, the Investment Adviser is required to prevent or manage conflicts of interest. The Investment Adviser's Conflicts of Interest policy is available here:

<https://www.schroders.com/en/identification-and-management-of-conflicts-of-interest/>

The Trustees do not monitor portfolio turnover cost in detail. However, the Trustees consider portfolio turnover costs indirectly through consideration of transaction cost data as part of the annual Value for Members ("VFM") assessment. Though the Trustees do not currently define target portfolio turnover ranges for funds, they will engage with managers if the portfolio turnover is higher than expected as a result of the monitoring undertaken.

10.2 Financially material investment considerations

When managing the Scheme's investments (including exercising discretion concerning engagement and voting), Investment Managers are expected to take into account of all financially material considerations.

These considerations which include the above "Risks" can affect the long-term financial performance of investments and can (but do not have to) include environmental, social and governance factors (otherwise known as "ESG") where relevant. The Trustees policy is to delegate the day-to-day consideration of financially material factors to the Investment Managers, who consider these factors for funds that are available to beneficiaries through the default arrangements and as self-select funds, when making funds available on its investment platform. All references to ESG relate to financial factors only. All references to ESG also include climate change.

ESG factors and stewardship are considered, in the context of long-term performance, by the Trustees (in conjunction with its advisors) as part of the Investment Manager selection criteria. This review occurs before funds are approved for investment. For invested funds, the Trustees request the Investment Managers monitor ongoing compliance with ESG and other factors, like stewardship, as a part of overall governance and engagement.

The Trustees recognise that ESG considerations can have a material effect on long-term investment performance. The Trustees further recognise that, other than in and during an Investment Manager selection process, their ability to influence the investment strategy of individual Investment Managers (particularly in relation to the policies and approaches to ESG) may be limited, particularly in the case of Investment Managers appointed on an active mandate and where the Scheme's investments are invested indirectly or represent only a small proportion of the overall fund.

The Trustees have adopted ESG priorities which they deem to be financially material investment considerations. These have been aligned with those of their Investment Adviser to improve how the

Trustees engage with their Investment Managers and these are set out in the “Corporate governance and stewardship” section above.

10.3 Non-financial matters

The Trustees do not currently take into account non-financial matters (such as members’ ethical considerations, social and environmental impact matters or future quality of life considerations for members and beneficiaries) when making investment decisions as part of the default arrangements, as there is no likely common view on any ethical matters which members are likely to hold. At this time the Trustees have no plans to seek the views of the membership on ethical considerations. This policy is reviewed periodically.

10.4 Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Reporting (“TCFD”)

The Trustees and Investment Advisor will be working to develop a reporting framework ahead of when TCFD reporting requirements are expected to apply to the Scheme.

10.5 Illiquid Assets

At present, the Trustees do not allocate to illiquid assets within the default arrangements, as illiquid investments are a new and evolving area for DC schemes. Currently, the Trustees do not plan to invest in illiquid assets but will keep this policy under review.

Appendix A – Additional default arrangement

Aims and Objectives of the Additional default arrangement

The ESG Equity fund invests in global equities and aims to maximise exposure to positive environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors while minimising the carbon exposure. It aims to deliver returns (gross of charges) in line with its composite benchmark, which consists of the following allocations: 50% MSCI ESG Focus Low Carbon Screened Index and 50% MSCI ESG Focus Low Carbon Screened Index (GBP hedged).

The Trustees' aims and objectives in relation to this fund are to provide a low-cost, index-tracking solution for members who wish to invest in line with ESG principles.

Trustees' Policies in relation to the ESG Equity fund

Please refer to Section 4.2 for the Trustees' policies in relation to the default arrangements.

Best interests of members and beneficiaries

In choosing to automatically switch members from the Ethical fund to the Global Equity ESG fund, the Trustees, in conjunction with the investment adviser, carried out a comprehensive review of the options available, with a key focus on member needs and outcomes. The Trustees decided that the Global Equity ESG fund was the most suitable low-cost, index-tracking solution for members who wish to invest in line with ESG principles. Therefore, they believe the ESG equity fund is in the best interests of members and beneficiaries and undertake periodic reviews on the suitability of the strategy.

Appendix B - Responsibilities

Trustees

The main investment related responsibilities of the Trustees of the Scheme include:

- i. Reviewing, at least triennially, or following a change in investment strategy or significant change in member demographics, the content of this SIP and modifying it if deemed appropriate.
- ii. Reviewing, at least triennially, or following a change in investment strategy or significant change in member demographics, the content of the SII and modifying it if deemed appropriate.
- iii. Assessing the quality of the performance and process of the Managers by means of regular reviews of the investment results and other information, through meetings and written reports.
- iv. Monitoring compliance of the investment arrangements with the SIP on an ongoing basis.
- v. Appointing and dismissing Platform Managers and Managers.
- vi. Assessing the performance of the Advisers.
- vii. Consulting with the Employer when reviewing investment policy issues.
- viii. Providing any appointed organisations/individuals with a copy of the SIP or SII, where appropriate.

Platform Manager

The main responsibilities of the Platform Manager are:

- i. At their discretion, but within the guidelines agreed with the Trustees, selecting and undertaking transactions in specific investments within each fund.
- ii. Acting in accordance (as administrator) with the instructions of the Member
- iii. Acting in accordance with the principles set out in the SIP (where appropriate).
- iv. Providing the Trustees with sufficient information each quarter to facilitate the review of its activities, including :
 - A full valuation of the assets.
 - A transaction report.
 - Informing the Trustees immediately of any serious breach of internal operating procedures.

Investment Adviser

The main responsibilities of the Investment Adviser are:

- i. Participating with the Trustees in reviews of this SIP.
- ii. Advising the Trustees of any changes in the Scheme's Managers or Platform Manager that could affect the interests of the Scheme.

- iii. Advising the Trustees of any changes in the investment environment that could present opportunities or problems for the Scheme.
- iv. Undertaking reviews of the Scheme's investment arrangements including reviews of the Scheme structure, current Managers, and selection of new managers as appropriate.

Legal Adviser

The Legal Adviser will be responsible for, amongst other things:

- i. Liaising with the Trustees to ensure legal compliance including those in respect of investment matters.