

## **John Cotton (Mirfield) Limited Retirement Benefits Scheme**

### **Statement of Investment Principles ("SIP")**

#### **Purpose of this Statement**

This SIP has been prepared by the Trustees of the John Cotton (Mirfield) Limited Retirement Benefits Scheme (the "Scheme"). This statement sets out the principles governing the Trustees' decisions to invest the assets of the Scheme.

The Scheme's investment strategy is derived from the Trustees' investment objectives. The objectives have been taken into account at all stages of planning, implementation and monitoring of the investment strategy.

Details on the Scheme's investment arrangements are set out in the Investment Implementation Document ("IID").

#### **Governance**

The Trustees of the Scheme make all major strategic decisions including, but not limited to, the Scheme's asset allocation and the appointment and termination of investment managers.

When making such decisions, and when appropriate, the Trustees take proper written advice. The investment advisers' remuneration may be a fixed fee or based on time worked, as negotiated by the Trustees in the interests of obtaining best value for the Scheme.

#### **Investment objectives**

The Trustees invest the assets of the Scheme with the aim of ensuring that all members' current and future benefits can be paid. The Scheme's funding position will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to assess the position relative to the funding target and whether the investment arrangements remain appropriate to the Scheme's circumstances. The Scheme's funding target is to target buyout over the medium term.

The Scheme's present investment objective is to achieve a return of around 1.2% per annum above the return on a liability matching portfolio of UK Government bonds.

#### **Investment strategy**

The Trustees take a holistic approach to considering and managing risks when formulating the Scheme's investment strategy.

The Scheme's investment strategy was derived following careful consideration of the factors set out in the risk section of this document. The considerations include the nature and duration of the Scheme's liabilities, the risks of investing in the various asset classes, the implications of the strategy (under various scenarios) for the level of employer contributions required to fund the Scheme, and also the strength of the John Cotton Group Limited ("the Company") covenant. The Trustees considered the merits of a range of asset classes.

The Trustees recognise that the investment strategy is subject to risks, in particular the risk of a mismatch between the performance of the assets and the calculated value of the

liabilities. This risk is managed by investing in assets which are expected to perform more than the liabilities over the long term, and also by investing in a suitably diversified portfolio of assets with the aim of minimising (as far as possible) volatility relative to the liabilities.

The assets of the Scheme consist of investments which are traded on regulated markets.

### Investment Management Arrangements

The Trustees have appointed several investment managers to manage the assets of the Scheme as listed in the IID. The investment managers are regulated under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000.

All decisions about the day-to-day management of the assets have been delegated to the investment managers via a written agreement. The delegation includes decisions about:

- Selection, retention and realisation of investments including taking into account all financially material considerations in making these decisions;
- The exercise of rights (including voting rights) attaching to the investments;
- Undertaking engagement activities with investee companies and other stakeholders, where appropriate.

### Risks

A non-exhaustive list of risks and financially material considerations that the Trustees have considered and sought to manage is shown below.

The Trustees adopt an integrated risk management approach. The three key risks associated within this framework and how they are managed are stated below:

Risks	Definition	Policy
Investment	The risk that the Scheme's position deteriorates due to the assets underperforming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selecting an investment objective that is achievable and is consistent with the Scheme's funding basis and the sponsoring company's covenant strength.</li> <li>• Investing in a diversified portfolio of assets.</li> </ul>
Funding	The extent to which there are insufficient Scheme assets available to cover ongoing and future liability cash flows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding risk is considered as part of the investment strategy review and the actuarial valuation.</li> <li>• The Trustees will agree an appropriate basis in conjunction with the investment strategy to ensure an appropriate journey plan is agreed to manage funding risk over time.</li> </ul>
Covenant	The risk that the sponsoring company becomes unable to continue providing the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When developing the Scheme's investment and funding objectives, the Trustees take</li> </ul>

	required financial support to the Scheme.	account of the strength of the covenant ensuring the level of risk the Scheme is exposed to is at an appropriate level for the covenant to support.
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The Scheme is exposed to a number of underlying risks relating to the Scheme's investment strategy, these are summarised below:

Risk	Definition	Policy
Interest rates and inflation	The risk of mismatch between the value of the Scheme assets and present value of liabilities from changes in interest rates and inflation expectations.	To invest 70% of the Scheme's assets in gilts and corporate bonds.
Liquidity	Difficulties in raising sufficient cash when required without adversely impacting the fair market value of the investment.	To maintain a sufficient allocation to liquid assets so that there is a prudent buffer to pay members benefits as they fall due (including transfer values).
Market	Experiencing losses due to factors that affect the overall performance of the financial markets.	To remain appropriately diversified and hedge away any unrewarded risks, where practicable.
Credit	Default on payments due as part of a financial security contract.	To diversify this risk by investing in a range of credit markets across different geographies and sectors.
Environmental, Social and Governance	Exposure to Environmental, Social and Governance factors, including but not limited to climate change, which can impact the performance of the Scheme's investments.	To appoint managers who satisfy the following criteria, unless there is a good reason why the manager does not satisfy each criteria: 1. Responsible Investment ('RI') Policy / Framework 2. Implemented via Investment Process 3. A track record of using engagement and any voting rights to manage ESG factors 4. ESG specific reporting
Currency	The potential for adverse currency movements to have an impact on the Scheme's investments.	To hedge all currency risk where reasonably possible.

## Investment Manager Monitoring and Engagement

The Trustees have the following policies in relation to the investment management arrangements for the Scheme:

<p><b>How the investment managers are incentivised to align their investment strategy and decisions with the Trustees' policies.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the Scheme is invested in pooled funds, there is not scope for these funds to tailor their strategy and decisions in line with the Trustees policies. However, the Trustees invest in a portfolio of pooled funds that are aligned to the strategic objective.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How the investment managers are incentivised to make decisions based on assessments of medium to long-term financial and non-financial performance of an issuer of debt or equity and to engage with them to improve performance in the medium to long-term.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Trustees review the investment managers' performance relative to medium and long-term objectives as documented in the investment management agreements.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How the method (and time horizon) of the evaluation of investment managers' performance and the remuneration for their services are in line with the Trustees' policies.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Trustees review the performance of all of the Scheme's investments on a net of cost basis to ensure a true measurement of performance versus investment objectives.</li> <li>The Trustees evaluate performance over the time period stated in the investment managers' performance objective, which is typically 3 to 5 years.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The method for monitoring portfolio turnover costs incurred by investment managers and how they define and monitor targeted portfolio turnover or turnover range.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Trustees do not directly monitor turnover costs. However, the investment managers are incentivised to minimise costs as they are measured on a net of cost basis.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The duration of the Scheme's arrangements with the investment managers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The duration of the arrangements is considered in the context of the type of fund the Scheme invests in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For open ended funds, the duration is flexible.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Voting Policy - How the Trustees expect investment managers to vote on their behalf</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Trustees have acknowledged that voting policies are implemented by the Scheme's investment managers on their behalf.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engagement Policy - How the Trustees will engage with investment managers, direct assets and others about 'relevant matters'</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Trustees have acknowledged that engagement policies that are implemented by the Scheme's investment managers on their behalf.</li> </ul>

The Trustees take investment managers' policies into account when selecting and monitoring managers. The Trustees also take into account the performance targets the investment managers are evaluated on. The investment managers are expected to exercise powers of investment delegated to them, with a view to following the principles contained within this statement, so far as is reasonably practicable.

As the Scheme's assets are invested in pooled vehicles, the custody of the holdings is arranged by the investment manager.

The Trustees monitor and engage with the Scheme's investment managers and other stakeholders on a variety of issues. Below is a summary of the areas covered and how the Trustees seek to engage on these matters with investment managers.

Areas for engagement	Method for monitoring and engagement	Circumstances for additional monitoring and engagement
Performance, Strategy and Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trustees receive a quarterly report which details information on the underlying investments' performance, strategy and overall risks, which are considered at the relevant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are significant changes made to the investment strategy.</li> <li>• The risk levels within the assets managed by the investment managers have increased to a level above and beyond the Trustees' expectations.</li> <li>• Underperformance vs the performance objective over the period that this objective applies.</li> </ul>
Environmental, Social, Corporate Governance factors and the exercising of rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trustees' investment managers provide annual reports on how they have engaged with issuers regarding social, environmental and corporate governance issues.</li> <li>• Where applicable, the Trustees will engage, via their investment adviser, with investment managers and/or other relevant persons about relevant matters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The manager has not acted in accordance with their policies and frameworks</li> </ul>

### Employer-related investments

The policy of the Trustees is not to hold any employer-related investments as defined in the Pensions Act 1995 and the Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment) Regulations 2005 except where the Scheme invests in collective investment schemes that may hold employer-related investments. In this case, the total exposure to employer-related investments will not exceed 5% of the Scheme's total asset value. The Trustees will monitor this on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance.

### Direct investments

Direct investments, as defined by the Pensions Act 1995, are products purchased without delegation to an investment manager through a written contract. When selecting and reviewing any direct investments, the Trustees will obtain appropriate written advice from their investment advisers.

### Compliance

This Statement has been prepared in compliance with the Pensions Act 1995, the Pensions Act 2004, and the Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment) Regulations 2005. Before preparing or subsequently revising this Statement, the Trustees consulted the sponsoring company and took appropriate written advice. The Statement is reviewed at least every three years, and without delay after any significant change in the investment arrangements.

Signed: 

Signed: 

Date:.....31.3.2023.....

## John Cotton (Mirfield) Limited Retirement Benefits Scheme

### Investment Implementation Document (“IID”)

This Investment Implementation Document (“IID”) covers the John Cotton (Mirfield) Limited Retirement Benefits Scheme (the “Scheme”) and details the policy of the Trustees relating to the implementation of the Scheme’s investment arrangements, based on the Principles set out in the Scheme’s Statement of Investment Principles (“SIP”) dated March 2023.

#### **Investment strategy**

The Scheme’s investment strategy is currently invested with Scottish Widows. Following a review of the investment arrangements and the agreement to target buyout over the medium term, the proposed investment strategy will be invested according to the following broad asset allocation shown in the following table. The Trustees have appointed Mobius Life as the platform provider who in turn invests in the underlying pooled funds. The Trustees have indirectly invested in pooled funds managed by the following investment managers. All the investment managers and platform provider are regulated under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000.

<b>Asset Class</b>	<b>Manager</b>	<b>Fund Name</b>	<b>Proportion (%)</b>	<b>Expected Return (over Gilts<sup>1</sup>) %</b>
Government Bonds	Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Ltd	AP - Over 5 Year Index-Linked Gilts Index Fund	35%	0.0%
		AF - Over 15 Year Gilt Index Fund	5%	
Corporate Bonds	Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Ltd	DC - Active Corporate Bond – All Stocks Fund	30%	1.5%
Diversified Credit	M&G Investments	M&G Total Return Credit Investment Fund	30%	2.6%
<b>Total</b>			<b>100%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>

*(1) 10 year assumptions as at 31 December 2022 relative to Bank of England 10 Year Gilts (net of management fees).*

The expected returns shown in the table above represent long-term expectations of asset classes as a whole. Short-term returns in some asset classes may exhibit considerable variability.

**Mandate target returns, objectives and fees (p.a.)**

**Mobius Life (Platform Provider)**

Asset class	Fees
Liquid Funds	0.050%

Asset Class	Manager	Fund Name	Objective	Fees p.a.
Government Bonds	Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Ltd	AP - Over 5 Year Index-Linked Gilts Index Fund	To track the performance of the FTSE Actuaries UK Index Linked Gilts Over 5 Year Index to within +/- 0.25% for two out of three years	0.038%
		AF - Over 15 Year Gilts Index Fund	To track the performance of the FTSE Actuaries UK Index Linked Gilts Over 15 Year Index to within +/- 0.25% for two out of three years	
Corporate Bonds	Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Ltd	DC - Active Corporate Bond – All Stocks Fund	To exceed the Markit iBoxx £ Non-Gilts Index by 0.75% p.a. (before fees) over a three year rolling period.	0.200%
Multi Asset Credit	M&G Investments	Total Return Credit Investment Fund	To exceed 1 Month SONIA + 3.0% to 5.0% p.a. (gross of fees) over any 5 year period	0.400%

Fees are shown as Total Expense Ratio (Mobius platform fees shown separately).