“This Council notes that:

The Procurement Act 2023 provides mandatory and discretionary grounds for excluding suppliers where specified serious misconduct or other risks arise, including certain labour market, modern slavery, environmental, corruption and fraud-related misconduct.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires public authorities, when undertaking specified public services procurements, to consider how procurement activity can improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing in their area and beyond and to consider how procurement processes can secure those improvements, having regard to relevance and proportionality. Government guidance on the Social Value Model also identifies the contribution that public procurement can make towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

As part of their consideration of Social Value, spending authorities are instructed by government to follow the guidance set out to enable countries to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for 2030. SDG 16 requires that investments ‘Promote peaceful and inclusive societies’ SDG 16.2 aims to ‘end all forms of violence against children’. (See Government Commercial Function guide to using the Social Value Model – 3/12/20)

In February 2022, Russian forces invaded Ukraine and in October 2022 attempted to annex Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts. In March 2022, the Prosecutor for the International Criminal Court opened an investigation into Russia’s actions in Ukraine and has since issued arrest warrants for six individuals. The ICC Pre-Trial Chamber II considers that there are reasonable grounds to believe that each suspect bears responsibility for war crimes and/or crimes against humanity, variously including and not limited to the unlawful deportation of population (children), directing attacks at civilian objects, or causing excessive incidental harm to civilians or damage to civilian objects.

In July 2024, an Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice concluded that Israel’s continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory – including Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem - is unlawful and that states have obligations not to recognise as lawful, or render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation arising from that unlawful presence.

In September 2025 the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territories including East Jerusalem and Israel, led by Nobel Peace Laureate Navi Pillay, found that Israel was committing genocide in Gaza. In June 2026 the same commission found that Israel was purposely targeting children in Gaza.

In September 2026, the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary recognised the occupation of Palestinian Territories as illegal and announced the intention to

sanction businesses and persons for involvement in furthering the development of illegal settlements in Occupied Palestinian Territories.

This Council believes that:

Birmingham City Council is one of the largest public sector organisations in the United Kingdom and thus exercises significant influence through its procurement, commissioning, banking and treasury management.

The Council's spending and investment decisions have the potential to shape employment standards, environmental outcomes, respect for human rights, economic resilience and community wellbeing across Birmingham and beyond.

Public money should be used in ways that are consistent with respect for human rights, worker protections, environmental responsibility, transparency, accountability and the promotion of peace.

Organisations which profit from labour exploitation, modern slavery, war crimes, genocide, environmental destruction, corruption or other serious unethical conduct should not benefit from public expenditure wherever lawful and practicable alternatives exist. The Council should seek to use its purchasing, banking and investment powers to support organisations that deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.

The Council should seek to use its purchasing, banking and investment powers to support organisations that deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.

Procurement decisions should consider whole-life value, including social, environmental and economic impacts, rather than focusing solely on upfront cost.

The Council should be able to scrutinise suppliers and supply chains to ensure that materials and services are not being sourced from parties contributing to or benefitting from conflict or human rights abuses, such as those occurring in copper and cobalt mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo according to Amnesty International, or those sourced from the United Arab Emirates, who have been widely reported to be playing a "central role" in prolonging and funding the civil war and humanitarian crisis in Sudan.

The Council should be able to prioritise compliance with global frameworks promoting human rights, labour rights, ethical production, and sustainability, such as Fairtrade Standards and B Corp Certification. The Council should also be able to express and investigate concerns about potential unethical practices by suppliers in light of serious allegations and reserve the right to withdraw from contracts on ethical grounds if overwhelming evidence of wrongdoing is found.

Public spending should, wherever lawful and practicable, support local economic resilience through investment in local enterprises, co-operatives, social enterprises, direct delivery of service by the council, community organisations and businesses that create lasting social value.

Resources should be used efficiently and responsibly, prioritising the reduction of waste, use of renewable energy sources, extension of product life, repair, reuse, refurbishment and recycling wherever appropriate.

The Council's procurement and investment decisions should actively promote economic, social and environmental wellbeing and deliver measurable social value for Birmingham residents.

The findings of the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry concerning genocide in Gaza demand more than expressions of concern. Public institutions should consider whether their financial relationships risk providing economic support to entities implicated in these violations.

Ethical investment should move beyond voluntary engagement and establish clear consequences where companies are found to be materially involved in genocide, apartheid or systematic persecution, irrespective of where those violations occur.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Ask the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance to request that officers bring forward proposals, within 12 months, for a comprehensive and long-term Ethical Procurement and Investment Framework, which incorporates standards for human rights, labour rights, environmental sustainability, transparency, accountability and social value, and to provide annual reports through the appropriate scrutiny arrangements on progress in implementing this Framework.
- Ask the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance to ensure that the above Framework and future procurement exercises continue to support:
    a. Delivery of measurable social value;
    b. Fair employment practices;
    c. Opportunities for locally owned small and medium-sized enterprises, voluntary, community and social enterprises, co-operatives, and wider community wealth-building;
    d. Local employment, apprenticeships, skills and training opportunities;
    e. Environmental sustainability and the efficient use of resources.
- Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Foreign Secretary welcoming the 8 October 2026 announcement of further sanctions against Russian oil companies, shadow fleet oil tankers, and organisations supporting Russia to evade sanctions.

- Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Foreign Secretary welcoming the decision to sanction involvement in furthering the illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and express regret at accepting changes to the consulate in East Jerusalem despite Israel having no legal authority over East Jerusalem.

- Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the other local authorities represented on the West Midlands Pension Fund's Pensions Committee, inviting them to support the establishment of a time-limited, cross-authority task and finish group, or other appropriate joint working arrangement, to examine the available evidence, investment holdings, responsible investment policies and options for engagement, exclusion or divestment, subject to the Fund's legal obligations and investment responsibilities.

- Ask that Birmingham City Council's representative on the West Midlands Pension Fund's Pensions Committee formally raise these concerns and seek consideration of a transparent review of the relevant investments, including those held indirectly through pooled investment vehicles and external asset managers.

- Ask that the proposed cross-authority review, working with the administering authority where appropriate, make recommendations concerning human rights due diligence, responsible investment, transparency and the representations participating authorities may make to the Fund.

- Commit to making the outcome of Birmingham City Council's engagement and any resulting recommendations publicly available, subject to applicable legal and confidentiality requirements.

- Review the Council's banking relationships and Treasury Management to identify opportunities to strengthen ethical, environmental, and social considerations, subject to the Council's statutory duties and treasury management requirements.

- Seek to maximise the wider economic, social and environmental benefits generated by Council expenditure within Birmingham, where this is compatible with value for money and the Council's legal obligations."

- Request that Birmingham City Council formally considers a prohibition, wherever legally permissible, on new investments in companies materially implicated in genocide, apartheid or other grave violations of international law, where these have been established through relevant competent international findings.
- Request that the Council's representative on the West Midlands Pension Fund's Pensions Committee requests a specific commitment that companies identified as materially implicated in the ongoing genocide in Gaza will not receive new investment pending the Fund's assessment, and that existing holdings be considered for exclusion or divestment.

- Resolve that Birmingham City Council shall aim that no public money shall be received from, paid to, invested in, or otherwise used to financially support any state, state-owned entity, corporation, business or organisation responsible for, complicit in, facilitating, financing or profiting from genocide, war crimes or other grave violations of international humanitarian law. This prohibition shall extend to both direct and indirect financial relationships, including procurement contracts, subcontractors, investments, banking arrangements, grants, sponsorships and other sources of income. The Council shall, to the fullest extent of its lawful powers, refuse to enter into such financial arrangements, terminate existing relationships where legally permissible, and establish rigorous due diligence procedures to identify and prevent such connections. Furthermore, the Council shall undertake an urgent and comprehensive review of all monies received and expended, with its findings and proposed actions reported publicly to Full Council. Birmingham City Council must not become a financial beneficiary of atrocities committed against innocent civilians, nor shall a single pound of Birmingham taxpayers' money be permitted to finance, facilitate or reward those responsible for genocide or war crimes.
- Seek to maximise the wider economic, social and environmental benefits generated by Council expenditure within Birmingham, where this is compatible with value for money and the Council's legal obligations."