

## **Implementation Statement for the year to 31 July 2024**

### **The St John's College Staff Pension Fund**

#### **1. Introduction**

This statement describes the Trustees of the Scheme ('the Trustees') voting and engagement policies along with a summary of voting and engagement behaviour related to the Scheme's investments over the 12 month period to 31 July 2024.

#### **2. Stewardship, voting and engagement policies**

The Trustees have instructed the Scheme's investment manager to exercise their voting and other rights as shareholders in a manner the investment manager believes to be consistent with best practice in relation to Corporate Governance and in accordance with the Institutional Shareholders' Committee's ("ISC") Statement of Principles on the Responsibilities of Institutional Shareholders and Agents.

The Trustees have six engagement themes and encourage their investment manager to vote and engage on all of them: Climate; Corporate Governance; Human Capital Management; Human Rights; Inclusion and Diversity, and; Natural Capital and Biodiversity. The Trustees believe that these themes are material to the long-term value of the investments, and that companies which address these issues meaningfully will drive improved financial performance for the Scheme and ultimately benefit the Scheme's members.

The Trustees therefore require their investment manager in its stewardship of the Scheme's assets to pay appropriate regard to these six engagement themes, alongside the investee companies' performance, strategy, capital structure, management of actual or potential conflicts of interest, risks, social, ethical and environmental impact and corporate governance when considering the purchase, retention or sale of investments.

The Trustees oversee their investment manager's voting and engagement activities to ensure compliance with this requirement.

### 3. Summary of voting and engagement behaviour

The Trustees invest in pooled funds and direct holdings via their investment manager. By the nature of these investments, the Trustees oversee the investment manager's voting and engagement activities and policies, rather than directing how individual votes are exercised. The Trustees deem holdings in equities to be relevant in terms of voting behaviours and holdings in equities and corporate debt to be relevant in terms of engagement activities with investee companies.

The Trustees have considered the voting and engagement activity that took place on their behalf during the Scheme year – as described in this section. The Trustees are satisfied that their investment manager has demonstrated high levels of voting and engagement in line with its stewardship policy. In particular, the Trustees noted the following:

- The investment manager demonstrated very high levels of voting rights being exercised on their behalf;
- Challenge to investee company management was demonstrated through the proportion of votes against management led resolutions;
- The investment manager carried out a high level of engagement activities with the management of investee companies across their six engagement themes, including progress on some issues.

The table below summarises the manager's voting behaviour over the period. The manager's voting policies are described in section 4.

Meetings	45	
Voted	45	100%
Proposals	682	
Voted	682	100%
Abstain	0	0%
With Management	615	90.18
Against Management	67	9.82
With Vendor	609	89.30
Against Vendor	73	10.70
At least one Item Against Management	25	55.56

Source: Schroders, 31 July 2024 for the direct equity holdings

#### 4. The investment manager's voting policies

As part of their oversight of the Scheme's assets, the Trustees asked the investment manager to address the following questions regarding its voting policies.

Voting policy questions	Investment manager's response
What is your policy on consulting with clients before voting?	In order to maintain the necessary flexibility to meet client needs, local offices of Schroders may determine a voting policy regarding the securities for which they are responsible, subject to agreement with clients as appropriate, and/or addressing local market issues. Clients in the UK will need to contact their usual client services person(s) on whether or not this is available for the type of investment(s) they hold with Schroders.
Please provide an overview of your process for deciding how to vote.	We evaluate voting issues arising at our investee companies and, where we have the authority to do so, vote on them in line with our fiduciary responsibilities in what we deem to be the interests of our clients. We utilise company engagement, internal research, investor views and governance expertise to confirm our intention. Further information can be found in our <a href="#">Environmental, Social and Governance Policy for Listed Assets policy</a> .
How, if at all, have you made use of proxy voting services?	<p>We receive research from both Institutional Shareholder Services and the Investment Association's Institutional Voting Information Services (IVIS) for upcoming general meetings, however this is only one component that feeds into our voting decisions. In addition to relying on our policies we will also be informed by company reporting, company engagements, country specific policies, engagements with stakeholders and the views of portfolio managers and analysts.</p> <p>It is important to stress that our own research is also integral to our final voting decision; this will be conducted by both our financial and ESG analysts. For contentious issues, our Corporate Governance specialists will be in deep dialogue with the relevant analysts and portfolio managers to seek their view and better understand the corporate context.</p> <p>We continue to review our voting practices and policies during our ongoing dialogue with our portfolio managers. This has led us to raise the bar on what we consider 'good governance practice.'</p>
What process did you follow for determining the "most significant" votes?	<p>We consider "most significant" votes as those against company management.</p> <p>We are not afraid to oppose management if we believe that doing so is in the best interests of shareholders and our clients. For example, if we believe a proposal diminishes shareholder rights or if remuneration incentives are not aligned with the company's long term performance and creation of shareholder value. Such votes against will typically follow an engagement and we will inform the company of our intention to vote against before the meeting, along with our rationale. Where there have been ongoing and significant areas of concerns with a company's performance we may chose to vote against individuals on the board.</p> <p>However, as active fund managers we usually look to support the management of the companies that we invest in. Where we do not do this we classify the vote as significant and will disclose the reason behind this to the company and the public.</p>

Did any of your “most significant” votes breach the client’s voting policy (where relevant)?	<p>It is our policy to disclose our voting activity publicly. On a monthly basis, we produce our voting report which details how votes were cast, including votes against management and abstentions. While we implement an ESG policy, voting is comply or explain and we do not have a tick box approach, we rely on analysis and engagement to determine our vote intention. The reports are publicly available on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://www.schroders.com/en/sustainability/active-ownership/voting/">https://www.schroders.com/en/sustainability/active-ownership/voting/</a></p>
If ‘Y’ to the above. Please explain where this happened and the rationale for the action taken.	Not Applicable
<p>Are you currently affected by any of the following five conflicts, or any other conflicts, across any of your holdings?</p> <p>1) The asset management firm overall has an apparent client-relationship conflict e.g. the manager provides significant products or services to a company in which they also have an equity or bond holding;</p> <p>2) Senior staff at the asset management firm hold roles (e.g. as a member of the Board) at a company in which the asset management firm has equity or bond holdings;</p> <p>3) The asset management firm’s stewardship staff have a personal relationship with relevant individuals (e.g. on the Board or the company secretariat) at a company in which the firm has an equity or bond holding;</p> <p>4) There is a situation where the interests of different clients diverge. An example of this could be a takeover, where one set of clients is exposed to the</p>	<p>Schroders accepts that conflicts of interest arise in the normal course of business. We have a documented Group wide policy, covering such occasions, to which all employees are expected to adhere, on which they receive training and which is reviewed annually. There are also supplementary local policies that apply the Group policy in a local context. More specifically, conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest can arise when voting on motions at company meetings which require further guidance on how they are handled. Outlined below are the specific policies that cover engagement and voting.</p> <p>Schroders’ Corporate Governance specialists are responsible for monitoring and identifying situations that could give rise to a conflict of interest when voting in company meetings.</p> <p>Where Schroders itself has a conflict of interest with the fund, the client, or the company being voted on, we will follow the voting recommendations of a third party (which will be the supplier of our proxy voting processing and research service). Examples of conflicts of interest include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ where the company being voted on is a significant client of Schroders,</li> <li>▪ where the Schroders employee making the voting decision is a director of, significant shareholder of or has a position of influence at the company being voted on;</li> <li>▪ where Schroders or an affiliate is a shareholder of the company being voted on;</li> <li>▪ where there is a conflict of interest between one client and another;</li> <li>▪ where the director of a company being voted on is also a director of Schroders plc;</li> <li>▪ where Schroders plc is the company being voted on.</li> </ul> <p>Separation of processes and management between Schroder Investment Management and our Wealth Management division helps to ensure that individuals who are clients or have a business relationship with the latter are not able to influence corporate governance decisions made by the former.</p> <p>If Schroders believes it should override the recommendations of the third party in the interests of the fund/client and vote in a way that may also benefit, or be perceived to benefit, its own interests, then Schroders will obtain the approval of the decision from the Schroders’ Global Head of Equities with the rationale of such vote being recorded in writing. If the third-party recommendation is unavailable, we will vote as we see is in the interests of the fund. If however this vote is in a way that might benefit, or be perceived to benefit, Schroders’</p>

target and another set is exposed to the acquirer;  5) There are differences between the stewardship policies of managers and their clients.	interests, we will obtain approval and record the rationale in the same way as described above.  In the situation where a fund holds investments on more than one side of the transaction being voted on, Schroders will always act in the interests of the specific fund. There may also be instances where different funds, managed by the same or different fund managers, hold stocks on either side of a transaction. In these cases the fund managers will vote in the best interest of their specific funds.  Where Schroders has a conflict of interest that is identified, it is recorded in writing, whether or not it results in an override by the Global Head of Equities.
Please include here any additional comments which you believe are relevant to your voting activities or processes	Schroders fully supports the UK Stewardship Code and complies with all its principles. Although the Code is focused on the UK, it sets a standard for stewardship and engagement for non-UK equity investments and we seek to apply the same principles globally, taking into account local practice and law. Further information on our Environmental, Social and Governance Policy can be found at the below address:  <a href="https://www.schroders.com/en/sustainability/active-ownership/">https://www.schroders.com/en/sustainability/active-ownership/</a>

Source: Schroders

Dated 31 July 2024

Signed for an on behalf of the Trustees of the Scheme:

Name Zoe Hancock

Signature

Date 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Name Sue Black

Signature

Date 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025