

Lincolnshire Pension Fund Significant Accounting Policies 2021/22

Fund account – revenue recognition

a. Contributions income

Normal contributions are accounted for on an accruals basis as follows:

- Employee contribution rates are set in accordance with LGPS regulations using common percentage rates for all Funds which rise according to pensionable pay; and
- Employer contributions are set at the percentage rate recommended by the Fund actuary for the period to which they relate.

Employer deficit funding contributions are accounted for on the basis advised by the Fund actuary in the rates and adjustment certificate issued to the relevant employing body.

Additional employers' contributions, for example, in respect of early retirements, are accounted for in the year the event arose.

Any amount due in year but unpaid will be classed as a current financial asset.

b. Transfers to and from other schemes

Transfer values represent the amounts received and paid during the year for members who have either joined or left the Fund. They are calculated in accordance with the LGPS Regulations 2013:

- Individual transfers in/out are accounted for when received/paid, which is normally when the member liability is accepted or discharged.
- Bulk transfers are accounted for in accordance with the terms of the transfer agreement.

c. Investment Income

i) Interest income

Interest income is recognised in the Fund account as it accrues, using the effective interest rate of the financial instrument as at the date of acquisition or origination.

ii) Dividend income

Dividend income is recognised on the date the shares are quoted ex-dividend. Any amount not received by the end of the reporting period is disclosed in the net assets statement as a current financial asset.

iii) Distributions from pooled funds

Distributions from pooled funds are recognised at the date of issue. Any amount not received by the end of the reporting period is disclosed in the net assets statement as a current financial asset.

iv) Changes in the net market value of investments

Changes in the net market value of investments are recognised as income/expense and comprise all realised and unrealised profits/losses during the year.

Fund account – expense items

d. Benefits payable

Pensions and lump sum benefits payable are included in the accounts at the time of payment.

e. Taxation

The Fund is a registered public service scheme under section 1(1) of Schedule 36 of the Finance Act 2004 and as such is exempt from UK income tax on interest received and from capital gains tax on the proceeds of investments sold. Income from overseas investments suffers withholding tax in the country of origin, unless exemption is permitted. Irrecoverable tax is accounted for as part of the overall cost of transactions (e.g. purchase price).

f. Management expenses

The Fund discloses its pension fund management expenses in accordance with the CIPFA guidance: Accounting for Local Government Pension Scheme Management Expenses (2016), using the headings shown below. All items of expenditure are charged to the Fund on an accruals basis.

i) Administrative expenses

All staff costs of the pension's administration team are charged to the Fund. Associated management, accommodation and other overheads are apportioned to this activity and charged as expenses to the Fund.

ii) Oversight and Governance

All staff costs associated with the governance and oversight are charged directly to the Fund. Associated management, accommodation and other overheads are apportioned to this activity and charged as expenses to the Fund.

iii) Investment management expenses

Investment management expenses are charged directly to the Fund as part of management expenses and are not included in, or netted off from, the reported return on investments.

Fees on investments where the cost is deducted at source have been included within investment expenses and an adjustment made to the change in market value of investments.

Fees for the external investment managers and custodian are agreed in the respective mandates governing their appointments. Broadly, these are based on the market value of the investments under their management and therefore increase and decrease as the value of the investments change.

In addition, the Fund has negotiated with Invesco Asset Management (for Global Equities – ex UK) and Morgan Stanley Investment Management Ltd (for Alternative Investments) that an element of their fee will be performance related.

Where an investment manager's fee invoice has not been received by the financial year end, an estimate based upon the market value of their mandate is used for inclusion in the Fund accounts.

Net assets statement

g. Financial assets

All investment assets are included in the net assets statement on a fair value basis as at the reporting date. A financial asset is recognised in the net asset statement on the date the Fund becomes party to the contractual acquisition of the asset. Any amounts due or payable in respect of trades entered into, but not yet completed at 31 March each year are accounted for as financial instruments held at amortised cost. From this date, any gains or losses arising from changes in the fair value of the asset are recognised by the Fund and are classified as Fair Value through Profit and Loss (FVPL).

The values of investments as shown in the net assets statement have been determined at fair value in accordance with the requirements of the Code and IFRS13 (see Pension Fund Note 14). For the purposes of disclosing levels of fair value hierarchy, the Fund has adopted the classification guidelines recommended in Practical Guidance on Investment Disclosures (PRAG/Investment Association, 2016).

Alternatives, private equity, property venture and infrastructure valuations are based on valuations provided by managers at the year-end date. Where more up to date valuations are received during the accounts preparation or audit period, their materiality, both individually and collectively will be considered, and the accounts revised to reflect these valuations if necessary. If valuations at the year-end are not produced by the manager, the latest available valuation is adjusted for cash flows in the intervening period.

The investment in the LGPS asset pool, Border to Coast Pensions Partnership, is also carried at fair value. This has been classified as Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income (FVOCI) rather than FVPL as the investment is a strategic investment and not held for trading.

h. Foreign currency transactions

Dividend, interest, purchases and sales of investments in foreign currencies have been accounted for at the spot rates at the date of the transaction. End of year spot market exchange rates are used to value cash balances held in foreign currency bank accounts, market values of overseas investments and purchases and sales outstanding at the end of the reporting period.

i. Derivatives

The Fund uses derivative financial instruments to manage its exposure to certain risks arising from its investment activities. The Fund does not hold derivatives for speculative purposes.

Future value of forward currency contracts are based on market forward exchange rates at the year-end date and determined as the gain or loss that would arise if the outstanding contract were matched at the year-end with an equal and opposite contract. The contracts are valued using Northern Trust closing spot/forward foreign exchange rates on 31 March.

j. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash comprises of cash in hand, deposits and includes amounts held by external managers. All cash balances are short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and are subject to minimum risk of changes in value.

k. Financial liabilities

A financial liability is recognised in the net assets statement on the date the Fund becomes legally responsible for that liability. The Fund recognises financial liabilities relating to investment trading at fair value as at the reporting date, and any gains or losses arising from changes in the fair value of the liability between contract date, the year-end date and the eventual settlement date are recognised in the Fund account as part of the Change in Value of Investments.

Other financial liabilities classed as amortised cost, are carried at amortised cost i.e. the amount carried in the net asset statement is the outstanding principal repayable plus accrued interest.

l. Actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits is assessed on a triennial basis by the scheme actuary in accordance with the requirements of IAS 19 and relevant actuarial standards. At year end, the promised retirement benefits have been projected using a roll forward approximation from the latest formal funding valuation. As permitted under the Code, the Fund has opted to disclose the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits by way of a note to the net assets statement (see Pension Fund Note 18).

m. Additional voluntary contributions

The Fund provides an additional voluntary contribution (AVC) scheme for its members, the assets of which are invested separately from those of the Pension Fund. The Fund has appointed Prudential as its AVC provider. AVCs are paid to the AVC provider by employers and are specifically for providing additional benefits for individual contributors. Each AVC contributor receives an annual statement showing the amount held in their account and the movements in the year.

AVCs are not included in the accounts in accordance with Regulation 4(1)(b) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 but are disclosed as a note for information (see Pension Fund Note 21).

n. Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place giving rise to a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed or otherwise by the occurrence of future events.

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place prior to the year-end giving rise to a possible financial obligation whose existence will only be confirmed or otherwise by the occurrence of future events. Contingent liabilities can also arise in circumstances where a provision would be made, except that it is not possible at the balance sheet date to measure the value of the financial obligation reliably.

Contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the net asset statement but are disclosed by way of narrative in the notes (see Pension Fund Note 24 and 25).

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