



**LGPS LOCAL PENSION BOARD
16 MARCH 2023**

PRESENT:

Independent Chair: Roger Buttery

Employer Representatives: Councillor M A Whittington and Gerry Tawton

Scheme Member Representatives: Kim Cammack and David Vickers

Councillors: attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Michelle Grady (Assistant Director – Finance), Jo Kempton (Head of Pensions), Claire Machej (Accounting, Investment and Governance Manager), Matthew Mott and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Gerry Tawton advised that his wife was a deferred member of the Pension Fund.

17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18 PENSION FUND UPDATE REPORT

Consideration was given to a report which updated the Board on a number of Fund Matters for the quarter ending 31 December 2022. These matters included: TPR Checklist Dashboard and Code of Practice, Breaches Register Update, Risk Register Update, Asset Pooling Update, Pensions Committee Academy Representative, Independent Investment Advisor, 2022 Triennial Valuation, TPR Governance and Administration Survey, and Committee Paper Comments.

During discussion of the report, the following was noted:

- There were two new members of the Pensions Committee who still needed to complete their TPR training.
- The next Border to Coast Board meeting would be held on 21 March 2023, Councillor Strengeil would welcome any questions Board members would like him to raise at the meeting.
- The Pensions Committee Independent Advisor would be stepping down from his role from 30 April 2023, and the Committee had agreed that it would review what advice it needed following the publication of the Good Governance Guide.
- It was queried whether there had been any issues with the survey, and officers advised it had been very straightforward and there was nothing contentious in any of the responses. It was expected that a summary of all responses would be available later in the year, possibly in autumn.
- It was noted that members of the Board were welcome to attend the June meeting of the Pensions Committee, to be held at Border to Coast's offices. The focus of the meeting would be Investment and Stewardship and the meeting would be followed by a training session looking at compliance and governance within Border to Coast.
- It was confirmed that Border to Coast had been recognised for the work they were doing and nominated for a national award.

RESOLVED

That the Pension Fund Update report be noted.

19 PENSIONS ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Fund's pension administrator, West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF). The Governance and Business Development Manager was in attendance to update the Board on current administration issues. The Board received updates in relation to Performance and Benchmarking; scheme information; member and employer contact; Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure; administration update; current technical issues; web registrations; shared service budget; and awards.

During discussion, the following was noted:

- 'Deferred Benefits into Payment quote' it was noted that these were taking twice as long as target and it was queried whether there was an increasing backlog. It was reported that this team had been under resourced, but new appointments were being trained, and work was underway on resource planning.
- Receiving fewer IDRPs was one way to identify whether the service delivery was successful.
- There was a need to encourage more members to use the portal to access their annual benefit statements. If people wanted to opt out of the digital process, they could contact WYPF and they would be sent a paper copy instead.

- It was noted that there was a legal requirement to provide an annual statement to members, but it did not specify if it should be paper or digital. It was queried whether there were concerns that someone would complain that they hadn't received a copy of their statement. The Board was advised that this was not currently a concern, as members were advised that they could request a paper copy as well as accessing their statement online.
- It was noted that the online estimate option had been developed, and that further work was required to get more active members using the portal. It was also noted that there were security benefits to accessing this information online. In terms of the bigger picture, there was also a need to monitor the carbon footprint, and reduce the amount that was posted, so digital options should be the first priority. However, there was a need to accept that in some instances a paper copy would be required.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

20 EMPLOYER MONTHLY SUBMISSIONS UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Board with up-to-date information on Employer Monthly Submissions for the third quarter of the financial year 2022/23 (October to December inclusive).

It was noted that paragraph 1.7 of the report referred to action being taken if occurrences of late contributions worsened, and it was queried what sort of action could be taken. Officers advised that they had contacted all employers with late submissions and reminded them of their responsibilities. It was confirmed that the three district councils with late submissions all used the same payroll provider.

It was reported that whilst there had some delays with specific providers, the actual number of cases of late submissions was quite low.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted, and no further action be taken at this point.

21 TEMPORARY BANK ACCOUNTS

Consideration was given to report which updated the Board on the number of temporary bank accounts created by West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) to hold monies due to beneficiaries of the scheme. The Governance and Business Development Manager from WYPF was in attendance to update the Board on the details.

It was reported that the number of unpaid pensions had reduced from 36 to 23, as some beneficiaries had been traced. However, the number of Post 2014 refunds had increased from 466 to 526.

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It was requested that the Board receive a further update in six months time.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted, and no further action be taken at this time.

22 THE PENSIONS DASHBOARD

Consideration was given to a report by the Fund's pension administrator, West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF). The Governance and Business Development Manager from WYPF was in attendance to update the Board on progress with the development of the Pensions Dashboard.

It was queried whether there was confidence that the Dashboard would go live, and it was confirmed that there was and that work would continue based on meeting the prescribed staging date of September 2024.

RESOLVED

That the Board note the progress to date on implementing the Pensions Dashboard.

23 LINCOLNSHIRE PENSION FUND POLICIES REVIEW

The Board received a report which set out any changes to the main policies of the Pension Fund for review. The Board was advised that there were two policies with key changes to highlight in this report – the Governance Policy and Compliance Statement and the Funding Strategy Statement. It was noted that the Funding Strategy Statement had been approved that morning by the Pensions Committee.

In terms of the valuation review, it was highlighted that the Deficit Recovery Period had reduced to 17 years. It was queried whether this was a recommended period of time, and officers advised that it did vary by Fund, but many Funds had started to bring this down to meet the requirements of GAD.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

24 LINCOLNSHIRE PENSION FUND - BUSINESS PLAN 2023/24

Consideration was given to a report which brought the Lincolnshire Pension Fund Business Plan 2023/24 to the Board for review.

It was reported that two new tasks had been identified: to review the Pension Committee's requirements for independent advice and to tender for Custody services. Members commented that this was a very good document.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

25 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2022-23: REVIEW OF ACCOUNTING ARRANGEMENTS AND ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Board received a report which summarised the changes to the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting which would be incorporated into the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts for Lincolnshire Pension Fund; the amendments to the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the impact this would have on the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts; the review of the Council's Accounting Policies for the Pension Fund Statements; and an update from the External Auditor on the 2021/22 and 22/23 audit.

During discussion of the report, the following was highlighted:

- It was confirmed that the Annual Report and Accounts needed to be published by the 1 December 2023, including the audit opinion. The Pension Fund accounts would form part of the County Council accounts.
- Reassurance was sought that the same timing issues would not be experienced with the new Auditors. It was noted that initial discussions had taken place with KPMG and they had provided assurance about their capacity to carry out this work within agreed timescales.
- It was reported that the accounts would be prepared for the auditors by the statutory deadline.
- In terms of an on site presence, it was noted that Mazars had not been on site for the audit.

RESOLVED

1. That the changes required to the Statement of Accounts from the Code of Practice 2022/23 be noted.
2. That the changes to the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 be noted.
3. That the Statement of Accounting Policies (attached at Appendix A to the report) be considered in preparing the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Pension Fund accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2023; and
4. That the update from the External Auditor (attached at Appendix B to the report) be noted, and that they be invited to the Board meeting in July to present their Audit Strategy Memorandum.

26 PENSION BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Board received a report which set out the Pension Board roles which were up for appointment in July and the process to be followed. The Head of Pensions advised that there were two roles to be filled, one scheme member representative, and one employer representative.

The Board formally thanked Gerry Tawton, employer representative, who would be stepping down at the end of his term of office, for his four years on the Board, and the time and input he had given.

It was queried whether there had been any expressions of interest in the employer representative role, and it was noted that none had been received to date, but a further e-mail would be sent out to strategic contracts in April 2023.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Board formally record its thanks to Gerry Tawton, employer representative whose term of office would come to an end in July 2023.

27 TRAINING NEEDS

Consideration was given to a report which provided Board members the opportunity to discuss any training attended since the last Board meeting and provide feedback to other Board Members on its content. The report also brought to the Board any conference or training highlight notes from the previous three-month period.

It was requested that all members, that hadn't already done so, send their certificates for completed training through to the Head of Pensions or the Accounting, Investment and Governance Manager.

During discussion of the report, the following was noted:

- It was requested whether feedback could be provided to CIPFA that Manchester and Birmingham were not the easiest places to travel to from Lincolnshire.
- It was commented that the Hymans Robertson LGPS Online Learning Academy (LOLA) was not particularly user friendly. Members were advised that Hymans Robertson were updating their online academy, and further details would be brought to the July meeting.
- Potential topics that Board Members may be interested in receiving training on were suggested by WYPF – Care Revaluation and the death grant age 75 cap being removed.

RESOLVED

1. That information on any relevant events attended since the last Board meeting be noted.
2. That the conference and training feedback from the previous three months be noted.
3. That the training suggested be built into the work programme.

28 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Board with an opportunity to consider its work programme for the coming meetings.

It was noted that it was planned for the next meeting of the Pensions Committee to be held in Leeds, and it would need to be confirmed whether this meeting would be available to observe virtually.

RESOLVED

That the work programme, as presented, be noted.

29 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that if they were present there could be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

30 PENSIONS ADMINISTRATION SERVICE PROVIDER REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report which set out information in relation to the Pensions Administration Service Provider Review.

RESOLVED

That the exempt report be noted.

The meeting closed at 4.03 pm

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