

**Committee and Date**

Pensions Board

7 July 2023

PENSIONS BOARD**Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2023**

In the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

10.00 - 11.32 am

Responsible Officer: Michelle Dulson

Email: michelle.dulson@shropshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01743 257719

PresentMember Representatives

John Hall

Dave Wright

Employer Representatives

Liz Furey (virtual)

Helen Woodvine

49 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mike Morris and Clare Charlesworth-Jones.

50 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

51 Minutes of the previous meeting**RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the meetings held on 17 February 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

52 Public Question Time

No public questions had been received.

53 Administration and Regulatory Updates

The Board received the report of the Pensions Administration Manager – copy attached to the signed Minutes – which provided Members with the latest

administration and regulatory updates affecting the Local Government Pensions Scheme since the Administration report provided to Pensions Board on 17 February 2023 and Pensions Committee on 17 March 2023.

The Communications and Governance Team Leader introduced and amplified the report. She updated the Board in relation to take up of the 'My Pensions Online' which had increased slightly following delivery of four webinars aimed at all active members telling them more about the Local Government Pension Scheme and the benefits of being a member. She went on to highlight the opened email rate for the bulk email functionality used to update Members with the latest fund news, along with the open rate for employer bulk emails, set out in paragraphs 8.6 and 8.7 of the report.

In response to a query, the Communications and Governance Team Leader explained some of the reasons why the emails were not being opened, for example, they were going into junk folders. She reported that an exercise was currently underway to review the employer contact details held to ensure they were correct. She went on to explain the tool used to check the opened email along with plans to use other formats instead of a newsletter which people may only read if they have time and she agreed to arrange for examples to be shared at the next meeting.

She informed the Board that they were on track to produce the active and deferred annual benefit statements by 31 August and that the fund's Annual Report for 2022/23 would be presented to the September meeting of the Board.

Turning to the McCloud judgement, the Communications and Governance Team Leader reported that the Government had now published the outcome of the consultation undertaken in 2020 on proposals to remove age discrimination from the LGPS in England and Wales. National guidance was still awaited on the response, but a revised consultation was expected around the treatment of records that had already been aggregated.

The Communications and Governance Team Leader updated the Board in relation to the work being done with the actuary to categorise employers according to the quality of its data (paragraph 10.5). Further to a query raised in the February meeting, the actuary had carried out a stand alone estimate of the cost of the McCloud judgement and estimated that the cost was an increase in past service liabilities of £23m (0.9%) as at the valuation date.

The Communications and Governance Team Leader updated the Board in relation to the Pensions Dashboard and following a request at the previous meeting, provided further feedback from the employers meeting including the number of employers who attended the meeting, the number who requested a one-to-one with the actuary and the results from the feedback forms. In order for Members to better understand the profile of employers in the fund, they requested a breakdown showing how many active members each employer had.

The Communications and Governance Team Leader also drew attention to the introduction of the Fund Business Plan, changes to the scheme following the Spring 2023 Budget, the Frozen Refund project, whereby 87 out of 435 refunds had been

paid, and finally, she explained the changes in the SCAPE discount rate (Superannuation contributions adjusted for past experience).

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

54 Pensions Committee Reports and Feedback

The reports considered by the Pensions Committee at its meeting on 17 March 2023 had been received by the Board.

Concern was raised that representatives from Telford & Wrekin Council had not attended the meeting, however, as they had recently held elections it was hoped that, once members were appointed to the Committee, they would be in attendance at the next meeting.

Following a query raised at the Pensions Committee meeting about carbon training, the Pensions Investment and Responsible Investment Manager confirmed that training would be delivered once the Telford and Wrekin representatives had been appointed and would be held either prior to the September meeting or later in the year for both Board and Committee members.

It was confirmed that the In touch newsletter was published twice yearly in the Spring and Autumn.

55 Update on LGPS Central Chairs meetings

The Board received a briefing note from the Chairman – copy attached to the signed Minutes – which provided Members with an update on the LGPS Central Chairs meeting held on Monday 27 March 2023 in Wolverhampton with the Cheshire Pension Fund chairing. The next meeting was due to be held on Monday 23 October 2023 and Mike Morris had agreed to attend in place of the Chairman.

56 Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman reported that the next meeting would be held on Friday 7 July 2023 at 10.00am.

The Chairman thanked the Communications and Governance Team Leader on behalf of Employers and the Board for all her hard work and wished her every success in her new position. The Chairman also welcomed the Senior Communications and Governance Officer and looked forward to working with her going forward.

57 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with the provision of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations and Paragraphs 3 of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following items.

58 Exempt Minutes (Exempted by Category 3)

RESOLVED:

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

59 Economic Update (Exempted by Category 3)

The Board received the exempt report of the Pensions Investment and Responsible Investment Manager – copy attached to the signed Exempt Minutes – which provided an update on the general economic conditions for the first quarter of 2023 and gave an unaudited indication of the impact on the pension fund investments as at 31 March 2023.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report and Appendix A be noted.

60 Cyber Security update (Exempted by Category 3)

The Board received a verbal update from the Infrastructure Security and Innovation Manager.

RESOLVED:

To note the contents of the update.

61 Pensions Committee Exempt Reports and Feedback (Exempted by Category 3)

The exempt reports considered by the Pensions Committee at its meeting on 17 March 2023 had been received by the Board.

62 Governance Update (Exempted by Category 3)

The Board received the report of the Communications and Governance Team Leader – copy attached to the signed Exempt Minutes – which provided an update on the Breaches of LGPS regulations recorded for the quarter ending 31 December 2022 affecting the Shropshire County Pension Fund. Updates on all other governance issues were also included within the report.

RESOLVED:

To note the contents of the report, the contents of Appendix A and to agree Appendix B.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: