



## South Tyneside Council

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### Local Pensions Board Minutes

19 December 2018

Present: Jim Woodlingfield (*in the Chair*), John Pearson, Tom Hunter, Chris Sharkey, Nicholas Wirz, Phil Smith and Mick Brodie

Mike Harding (Head of Legal Services)  
Ian Bainbridge (Head of Pensions)  
Heather Chambers (Principal Pensions Manager)  
Paul Baldasera (Strategy and Democracy Officer)  
Brian Springthorpe (Strategy and Democracy Support Officer)

Apologies: Cllr Pat Hay

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#### 1. Declarations of Interest

***J Woodlingfield, N Wirz, M Harding, I Bainbridge, H Chambers, P Baldasera, B Springthorpe and P Smith*** declared non-pecuniary interests in all issues, as contributing members of the Pension Fund.

***T Hunter, J Pearson and C Sharkey*** declared a non-pecuniary interest in all issues, as a recipient of a pension from the Pension Fund.

They remained in the meeting for the discussion and determination of all matters.

#### 2. Minutes of 17 October 2018

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2018 be confirmed as a true record subject to a number of typographical amendments.

### **3. Matters Arising**

Discussion took place on the preparations and distribution of minutes and associated agenda documents and the need to be able to access the documentation electronically.

Agreed: (a) That the comments be noted and (b) that the Head of Pensions investigate the issue and report back to the Chairman.

### **4. Presentation: Scrutiny Training**

Paul Baldasera gave a presentation which included:

- Methods of scrutiny;
- Role of the Local Pensions Board;
- Principles of Good Scrutiny;
- Types of scrutiny;
- Key issues.

The Board was relatively new and was still moving forward on its journey. It was imperative the Board recognised its role and that the right information was available at the right time, including agenda papers, to allow it to provide challenge and scrutiny.

Agreed: That the presentation be noted.

### **5. Performance Assessment**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Pensions

The Head of Pensions presented this report which outlined a proposed approach to the Performance assessment of the Board.

The Board indicated that the proposed approach was an improvement on past practice and that they would adopt it for the performance assessment exercise in February 2019.

Agreed: (a) That the report be noted and (b) that the issue be considered at the February training.

### **6. Risk Management**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Pensions

The Head of Pensions presented the report which contained the current Fund level Risk register.

The report highlighted minor changes to the methodology and definitions and the change to the ranking of one risk.

Discussion took place on the uncertainty of financial markets and Brexit and the potential impact on the Fund.

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This issue of auto-enrolment was discussed. It was noted that there were 6/7,000 new joiners each year and often the same person had more than one job.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

## **7. Feedback from Local Pension Board Chairs meeting**

The Board was advised that a meeting of Local pensions Board Chairs had been held in Leeds. As Jim Woodlingfield was unable to attend John Pearson deputized on behalf of Tyne and wear. A range of funds had attended and it was clear that Boards had adopted different approaches and practices.

It was noted that Border to Coast Joint Committee had agreed that one Scheme Member representative would be appointed to the Joint Committee in an Observer capacity. The process to be followed was discussed.

It was agreed that Nicholas Wirz would be the nominated candidate from Tyne and Wear and that John Pearson would cast the vote as part of the selection process on behalf of Tyne and Wear.

Agreed: (a) That John Pearson be the nominated 'voter' and that Nicholas Wirz would put forward a nomination.

## **8. Items Brought Forward and Future Agenda Items**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Legal Services

The report set out items from previous meetings that remained outstanding and laid out the current status of each issue.

Agreed: (a) That the report be noted and (b) consideration be given to introducing a prioritised approach to monitoring the items brought forward.

## **9. Training for Local Pensions Board Training**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Pensions

A summary of the knowledge and skills analysis was circulated following completion of self-assessment carried out by Board members. The analysis highlighted a number of areas for future training which would be addressed as part of the ongoing training plan.

The report further detailed the scheduled training programme for 2018/19 and other relevant training issues.

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Agreed: That the report be noted.

#### **10. Chairman's Urgent Items**

There were no Chairman's Urgent Items.

#### **11. Resolution to Exclude the Public**

Resolved: That the public be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the agenda items as they involve exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 to 7 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### **12. Breaches and the Role of the Regulator and the Local Pensions Board**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Pensions

The report updated the Board on matters concerning the reporting of breaches of the law in respect of pensions administrations.

Compliance rates were reasonable and it was recognised that 100% would never be achieved. The Board discussed the procedures followed following the death of a member.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

#### **13. Data Quality**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Pensions

This report updated the Board on matters concerning the data quality in respect of pensions administration and member benefits.

The Board discussed the Data Improvement Plan which identified areas for improvement. It was felt to be a really useful document for the Board.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

#### **14. Pensions Processing – Employer Monitoring**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Pensions

The Principal Pensions Manager detailed a report which updated the Board on pensions processing and the monitoring of individual employers.

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The Board was advised that there was a focus on pensions processing and that further progress had been made. Improvements had been made to software and measures were in place to monitor and Client Managers worked with individual employers.

During discussion, it was advised that an electronic form was being piloted to improve the process for queries and avoid the need for individual paper forms.

Agreed: (a) That the report be noted and (b) that a Client Manager attended a future of the Local Pensions Board.

#### **15. Pensions Committee Minutes – 6 and 23 November 2018**

The minutes of the Pension Committee meetings held on 6 and 23 November 2018 were received.

A number of items were highlighted and discussed including, Corporate Governance arrangements, monitoring of the funding level and the use of AVCs.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

#### **16. Pensions Regulator – Governance and Administration Survey**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Pensions

The report contained the Fund's response to the Pension Regulator's survey.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

#### **17. Scheme Employer Update**

Submitted: Report of the Head of Pensions

The report contained details of matters concerning individual employers in the Fund.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

#### **18. Pooling of Assets - Update**

The report detailed the latest position regarding the implementation of pooling Local Government Pension Funds' investments.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

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## **19. Review of Meeting and Lines of Enquiry**

The Board reviewed the meeting and a number of points and suggestions were made:

- Investigate areas of work that could be delegated from Pensions Committee to the Local Pensions Board;
- Consider a possible review of the Terms of Reference for the Local Pensions Board once the workload and remit had fully bedded in.

Agreed: That any ideas or suggestions should be forwarded to the Chairman.

## **20. Date and time of next meeting**

Agreed: That the next meeting of the Local Pensions Board would be held on Thursday 28 March 2019 at 10.00am.

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