



# South Tyneside Council

## Local Pension Board

Date: 28 March 2025

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## Training for the Local Pension Board (for information and discussion)

Report of the Head of Pensions

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. This report addresses the training requirements of the Local Pension Board.
2. The Board is asked to:
  - comment on the training delivered in February 2025; and
  - note the report.

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Contact Officer:

Paul McCann, Head of Pensions

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## Background

3. Training is an area taken very seriously by the Fund. An extensive training programme is provided for Committee and Board members to help with the fulfilment of their responsibilities.
4. The Board has used the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Technical Knowledge and Skills Framework for Local Pension Boards to benchmark their training requirements. This was issued in 2015.
5. CIPFA issued a revised 2021 version of the Knowledge and Skills Framework for Elected Representatives, which applies to the Pensions Committee. A review of this updated framework has been undertaken and the new Framework has been adopted by the Committee as the basis of its Training Policy and Programme.
6. Whilst this new framework for the Committee does not apply to the Local Pension Board, it is very similar to the 2015 Framework for the Local Pension Board. The Fund expects to receive a further update with a framework for Local Pension Boards at some point in the future.
7. Most recently, as part of the LGPS: Fit for the Future consultation, the Government has set out its intention to introduce enhanced training requirements, certainly for Committee members. The consultation remains ongoing at this time.

## Training Policy

8. The Local Pension Board and the Committee have adopted a joint Training Policy and operate a joint approach to the delivery of training.
9. The policy is reviewed annually and updated where appropriate.
10. The policy has been reviewed to take account of the requirements of the introduction of the General Code and now reflects the latest position on the training requirements for the Local Pension Board and the Pensions Committee members. The latest version of the Training Policy was approved by Committee in June 2024 and by the Local Pension Board in July 2024. The Training Policy is available on the Fund's website at [Plans and policies - Tyne and Wear Pension Fund \(twpf.info\)](https://www.twpf.info/plans-and-policies).

## TPR Code of Practice – Training Requirements

11. The Training Policy referred to above takes account of the training requirements set out by the Pensions Regulator's Code of Practice Number 14 (COP 14) on the Governance and Administration of Public Sector Pension Schemes.
12. On 28 March 2024, the Pension Regulator (TPR) General Code of Practice came into effect replacing the earlier Code of Practice.

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13. The requirement for knowledge and understanding set out in the new General Code is the same as that set out in COP 14. The requirements for knowledge and understanding are aimed primarily at members of the Local Pension Board, however good practice dictates that the standards should also be applied to Pensions Committee members. The training requirements for Board members are expected to be applied to Committee members in the near future through statutory guidance.
14. In relation to training, the General Code of Practice states:
1. *The governing body should:*
    - a. *have a balance of skills and experience throughout the board and be able to demonstrate this*
    - b. *be able to apply its knowledge to governing the scheme*
    - c. *have enough skills to judge and question advice or services provided by a third party*
    - d. *be able to identify and address skills gaps*
    - e. *have enough understanding of industry good practice and standards to assess scheme performance and its service providers.*
    - f. *keep records of the learning activities of individual members and the body as a whole*
    - g. *be able to demonstrate steps it has taken to comply with the law*
    - h. *have and maintain training and development plans to ensure that individual and collective knowledge and understanding is kept relevant and up to date.*

This places a requirement on the individual Board members, and the Committee members if we apply consistent standards, to undertake their own training needs analysis and develop a personalised training plan.

15. The Fund's Policy and Training Programme is considered to provide all the information and detail that individuals need to undertake this analysis and plan for training. It is one of the reasons why a significant level of detail is included in this report about sources of information, training frameworks and training programmes.
16. This allows everyone to review their own position and then have input into the future development of the training programme based on their own understanding, which is then largely delivered as a collective. Officers believe that this provides sufficient information to allow Board members to meet their requirements.
17. To align the Fund's approach more closely to training with the Code of Practice, in late 2018 the CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework was circulated to all members of the Local Pension Board. This allowed the individuals to self-assess themselves against this Framework. This information is now being used to inform the training programme delivered to the Local Pension Board.

18. Officers are operating a document to track the content of training provided to ensure all areas in the Framework are covered. A second document has also been produced which enables individual Board members to self-assess their own levels of knowledge against the Framework.
19. The analysis of the self-assessment results overall proves that there is a solid level of collective knowledge across the Pensions Committee and the Local Pension Board.
20. The summary of results was shared within the Training Report for the March 2024 Board meeting.
21. Officers will use the analysis from the self-assessment exercises to help inform the future training programme, incorporating the areas which had weaker levels of knowledge and the areas which were specifically requested by Committee or Board members.

### **Fund Documents and Training Material**

22. The Fund's website at [www.twpf.info](http://www.twpf.info) holds documents that set out the Fund's policies and working practices in its publicly accessible area.
23. There is also a password protected area that has been set up to hold training material and exempt and commercially sensitive documents. All members have access to this material.

### **Pensions Regulator Training Toolkit**

24. The Pensions Regulator has provided an online training resource to assist those involved with public service pension schemes.
25. This is accessed via a "Trustee Toolkit" link on its website.
26. It has been updated with four additional modules, to update the existing seven modules covering the key themes in the General Code of Practice on governance and administration of public service schemes. Each module provides an option to complete an interactive tutorial online and an assessment to test knowledge.
27. The modules will assist with meeting the minimum knowledge and understanding requirements in relation to the contents of the Code of Practice but would not meet the knowledge and skills requirements in other areas such as Scheme regulations, the Fund's specific policies and the more general pensions legislation. Therefore, this toolkit should be used to supplement the existing training plans.

### **Training Programme for 2024/25**

28. The training programme for 2024/25 has largely focussed on two off-site training events, supplemented by shorter virtual sessions. In addition to

this, induction training was provided to new Committee members at appropriate times in the year.

29. The first off-site event of the year took place from Wednesday 18 September to Friday 20 September 2024 at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in Leeds.
30. Sessions to cover the Fund's Net Zero Commitments, Service Plan and Budget and the Pensions Investment Review have recently been delivered as online sessions, along with a session on Climate Scenario Analysis in February 2025. The Board's feedback on the most recent session is requested.
31. The second off-site training event was recently held in Edinburgh. This training covered a range of topics including sessions on administration, governance and investments. The Board's feedback on the event is also requested.
32. The Board's views on future topics are requested. The topics to be covered will evolve over time depending on the economic and market environment and the latest developments at the Fund and in the LGPS.

### **Induction Training**

33. Induction training sessions were delivered during June and July 2024. A new format was developed by officers which included an introductory overview session which was only open to new members and a series of sessions focussing on different areas of Pensions which were open to all Pensions Committee and Local Pension Board members.
34. There have been some recent changes to Pensions Committee and further induction training has been provided to new members.

### **Hymans Robertson Training Package**

35. Hymans Robertson operate an online learning platform which is used to supplement the training programme. A new package of licences has been arranged starting from June 2024 for a period of two years. The package has been updated to reflect the CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework and was more closely aligned to the National Knowledge Assessment exercise which was carried out in Autumn 2024.
36. The focus of the training package is likely to be extremely useful for new Committee and Local Pension Board members. However, due to changes in the package and changes in the wider world of pensions, the training package will still be useful to longer standing members.

### **Hymans Robertson National Knowledge Assessment 2024**

37. As stated above, the National Knowledge Assessment exercise has been run again by Hymans Robertson.

38. The assessment had eight sections which aligned with the CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework and consisted of a number of multiple-choice format questions. The assessment ran on a national basis allowing LGPS funds to receive a measure of the collective knowledge levels across the Local Pension Board and the Pensions Committee, whilst also benchmarking the Tyne and Wear Pension Fund against other participating LGPS funds.
39. The Tyne and Wear specific results have now been received and were presented at the off-site training event in Edinburgh.

### **Training Records**

40. Members will be aware that records relating to training are published in the Annual Report and Accounts each year. We therefore track training attended on an ongoing basis to help members be aware of what training they have participated in.
41. Appendix A includes the training provided to members of Pensions Committee, along with information about participation.
42. Appendix B includes the equivalent details for members of the Local Pension Board.
43. Board members are asked to note the training attended to date and to discuss any areas of concern.

### **Recommendations**

44. The Board is asked to:
  - comment on the training delivered in February 2025; and
  - note the report.

### **Reason for Recommendations**

45. To ensure that an appropriate approach to training is in place.

## Appendix A

Training Information for Pensions Committee Members

	Induction Overview	Induction detailed sessions	September training event*	February training event*	Service Planning Session	LGPS Online Learning Academy**	Other training	Total Training Hours
Cllr G Bell	1.5 hrs			8 hrs		Started	1.5 hrs	<b>11 hrs</b>
J Cook	n/a	2.5 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs				<b>2.5 hrs</b>
Cllr R Coombes	0.5 hrs	2.25 hrs	11.75 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs	1.5 hrs***	4 hrs	<b>33.25 hrs</b>
Cllr C Davies	0.5 hrs	0 hrs	11.75 hrs	11.25 hrs		Completed	1.5 hrs	<b>25 hrs</b>
Cllr K Dawes	n/a	1.5 hrs	0 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs		18 hrs	<b>32.75 hrs</b>
Cllr R Dodd	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	11.25 hrs				<b>11.25 hrs</b>
Cllr J Foreman	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs		5.5 hrs	<b>18.75 hrs</b>
Cllr P Frew	n/a	0.75 hrs	0 hrs	8 hrs	2 hrs		14.5 hrs	<b>25.25 hrs</b>
J Green	n/a	1 hr	11.75 hrs	10.25 hrs	2hrs		3.5 hrs	<b>28.5 hrs</b>
Cllr G Haley	n/a	1 hr	11.75 hrs	9 hrs		1.5 hrs***	31 hrs	<b>54.25 hrs</b>
G Hall	1.5 hrs			11.25 hrs				<b>12.75 hrs</b>
Cllr C Hardy	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs				<b>0 hrs</b>
Cllr D Herbert	n/a	2.5 hrs	0 hrs	11.25 hrs		Started 1.5 hrs***	5 hrs	<b>20.25 hrs</b>
Cllr H Kelly	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	5 hrs	2 hrs		3.5 hrs	<b>10.5 hrs</b>
J Kelly	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs			3 hrs	<b>3 hrs</b>

Cllr A Lamonte	0 hrs	1.75 hrs	11.75 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs	1.5 hrs***	18 hrs	<b>46.25 hrs</b>
Cllr S Laws	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs				<b>0 hrs</b>
J Liepins-Hall	0.5 hrs	2.5 hrs	11.75 hrs	0 hrs		Completed	5 hrs	<b>19.75 hrs</b>
Cllr J O'Shea	0 hrs	0 hrs	8 hrs	11.25 hrs				<b>19.25 hrs</b>
Cllr K Owens-Palmer	1.5 hrs	n/a	3 hrs	11.25 hrs		Started 1.5 hrs***	5 hrs	<b>22.25 hrs</b>
Cllr J Price	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs			1.5 hrs	<b>1.5 hrs</b>
Cllr W Samuel	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs	2 hrs		3.5 hrs	<b>5.5 hrs</b>
L Smith	0.5 hrs	3.25 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs				<b>3.75 hrs</b>
C Wallace	n/a	1.75 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs				<b>1.75 hrs</b>
Cllr J Welsh	n/a	2.25 hrs	11.75 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs	Completed	38.25 hrs	<b>65.5 hrs</b>
Cllr M Williams	0 hrs	2.5 hrs	11.75 hrs	0 hrs			2 hrs	<b>16.25 hrs</b>
Cllr K Wood	0 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs				<b>0 hrs</b>

\*Based on actual attendance

\*\*As at 1 March 2025

\*\*\*Hymans Live LOLA session



## Appendix B

Training Information for Local Pension Board Members

	Induction Overview	Induction detailed sessions	September training event*	February training event*	Service Planning Session	LGPS Online Learning Academy**	Other training	Total Training Hours
T Bell	n/a	0 hrs	6 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs		5.5 hrs	<b>24.75 hrs</b>
M Brodie	n/a	0.75 hrs	8 hrs	3.00 hrs	2 hrs		6.5 hrs	<b>20.25 hrs</b>
A Carr	n/a	1.5 hrs	0 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs	Started	7 hrs	<b>21.75 hrs</b>
R Dunn	n/a	1.5 hrs	11.75 hrs	11.25 hrs		Started 1.5 hrs***	1.5 hrs	<b>27.5 hrs</b>
Cllr E Gibson	0.5 hrs	1.75 hrs	0 hrs	0 hrs				<b>2.25 hrs</b>
T Hunter	n/a	2.5 hrs	11.75 hrs	11.25 hrs		Started	5 hrs	<b>30.5 hrs</b>
J Pearson	n/a	2.5 hrs	8 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs	Started	20.5 hrs	<b>44.25 hrs</b>
N Wirz	n/a	0 hrs	0 hrs	11.25 hrs	2 hrs	Started	30 hrs	<b>43.25 hrs</b>

\*Based on actual attendance

\*\*As at 1 March 2025

\*\*\*Hymans Live LOLA session

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## Training for Local Pension Board

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**The following is a list of the background papers (excluding exempt papers) relied upon in the preparation of the above report:**

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>File Ref:</b>	<b>File Location</b>
Local Pension Board Training File		Investments Office, South Shields Town Hall