

Minutes of the Pensions Board Meeting held on 24 September 2021

Present: Rob Birch (Chairman)

Corrina Bradley

Also in attendance: John Mayhew (Observer)

Apologies: Rachel Bailye

PART ONE

101. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest on this occasion.

102. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2021

The Director for Corporate Services reported that the appointment of a person to represent local authorities on the Board was still awaited

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

103. Appointment of Pensions Board Member

The Board considered the appointment of John Mayhew to the Board, as a Scheme Member Representative, to represent the Active, Deferred and Pensioner Members of the Staffordshire Pension Fund.

The Board were informed that Mr Mayhew was is a qualified CIPFA accountant with significant experience of working in finance. He had dealt with the LGPS for South Staffordshire Council and was an active scheme member.

RESOLVED – That John Mayhew be appointed as a Scheme Member Representative on the Board, to represent the Active, Deferred and Pensioner Members of the Staffordshire Pension Fund, for a 4-year term to 2025.

104. Matters arising from the Pensions Committee Meetings of 25 June and 25 September 2021

Mr Birch referred to the progress on the development of the Staffordshire Pension Fund Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21 which were on track to be published by the 1 December deadline. The Director for Corporate Services added that, although there had not been the same challenges in the

audit of the 2020/21 accounts that were experienced during the audit of the 19/20 accounts and the Pension Fund's external audit had been predominantly completed as planned, additional, and last-minute assurances in relation to the IAS19 actuarial valuation processes were being sought by auditors nationally. This had meant that EY now had some additional testing to complete that they had not originally planned for. This in turn had delayed their ability to issue the ISA260 and their Independent Auditors Statement for the Pension Fund. The Board also noted that the Pension Fund's accounts would be included within the County Council's Statement of Accounts which were due to be presented to the County Council's Audit and Standards Committee on 26 October 2021.

RESOLVED – That the matters arising from the Pensions Committee meetings held on 25 June and 24 September 2021 be noted.

105. Staffordshire Pension Fund Risk Register and Risk Management Policy

The Board were informed that, at their meeting in June 2021, the Pensions Committee noted the high-level risks identified within the Staffordshire Pension Fund Risk Register. The Committee also asked the Local Pension Board to continue to undertake a regular detailed review of the risks identified and the process for maintaining the Risk Register, and report back to the Committee on any areas of concern.

To assist with their review, the Pensions Board had requested that one of the four main risk areas (Governance, Funding, Administration, and Investment), be presented to the Board at each meeting, for their consideration. This was to align with the risk area considered by the Officer working group that quarter. Local Pensions Board members had joined the Assistant Director for Treasury & Pensions and Senior Pensions and Investment Officers, forming the Officer working group, on a quarterly basis. Working through the detail of the individual risks, they collectively determine individual risk scores by considering the potential impact any one risk might have, together with the likelihood of that risk occurring. Members of the Pensions Board were invited to continue to attend these working groups if they so wish.

At a meeting on 12 August 2021, the Officer working group reviewed the risk area of Governance. Pre and post control ratings were re-assessed, considering any new controls or sources of assurance. New areas of potential risk were also considered. Post control, Fund Officers did not believe there are any high-level risks in this area, however there were 5 areas of medium risk. The Board considered and noted the current Governance risks (Appendix 2 to the report) and discussed what action needed to be taken with regard to those risks rated "Red" and "Amber".

Mr Birch also confirmed that he felt that there was value in Members of the Pensions Board being invited to continue to attend meetings of the officer working group.

RESOLVED – That the risks and associated controls relating to Governance from the current Staffordshire Pension Fund Risk Register be noted.

106. Dates of Future Meetings

RESOLVED – That the following dates for meetings of the Pensions Board be noted:

- Friday, 17 December 2021
- Friday, 25 March 2022

107. Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below.

PART TWO

The Board then proceeded to consider reports on the following issues:

108. Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2021
(Exemption paragraph 3)

109. Exempt matters arising from the Pensions Committee Meetings of 25 June and 25 September 2021
(Exemption paragraph 3)

110. Staffordshire Pension Fund Internal Audit Reports - Recommendations Progress Log
(Exemption paragraph 3)

Chairman