

## DEVON PENSION BOARD

2 February 2022

Present:-

Councillor C Slade (Chair), Councillor S Randall-Johnson, C Hearn, J Bailey, P Phillips, A Bowman, C Shipp and R Jeanes

Members attending in accordance with Standing Orders 8 and 25

Councillor J Hodgson

\* 26

**Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 October 2021 be approved.

\* 27

**Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

No item was raised as a matter of urgency.

\* 28

**Pension Board membership**

The Director of Finance reported that an Employer Representative place remained vacant and Employers had been asked to nominate a replacement.

\* 29

**Review of Attendance and Terms of Reference**

The Board noted the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/06) on the Pension Board's Terms of Reference and attendance record at these meetings and training events. The Terms of Reference had been updated to allow the Chair and Vice Chair to determine the number of in-person meetings (currently one per year after the Council's annual meeting).

\* 30

**Contribution Monitoring**

The Board noted the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/07) on the current procedures for monitoring of timely payment of contributions from employers. Where contributions were received after the legal deadline and the Authority considered that late payment was of material significance, the Authority had a duty to notify the Pensions Regulator of the employer's failure to meet the legal deadline. This would be done when late payments were persistent and without reasonable explanation.

\* 31

**Devon Pension Fund Risk Register**

The Board noted the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/08) on the role of the Board in monitoring the Risk Register as part of its scrutiny role in

relation to risk and compliance. The Board had previously considered the Risk Register at its meeting on 11th October 2021, and comments made had been taken on board in updating the Register (attached at Appendix 1 to the Report). The Register highlighted the key risks in relation to the Pension Fund, the current processes in place to mitigate the risk, and the planned improvements in place to provide further assurance. It incorporated the risk register of both the Investments Team and Peninsula Pensions and the Committee was the ultimate risk owner for the Fund.

Members' discussion points with Officers included:

- as requested by the Board the Auditor would review the range, number and reliability of the 'green' mitigations against the risks identified in the Register; and
- PP3: the need for explicit reference of the risks associated with the McCloud case and impending changes in regulations which were still outstanding and which would impact on Peninsula Pensions administration, which Officers agreed would be discussed with the Auditor as part of the above process.

\* **32**      **Investment and Pension Fund Committee**

(Councillor J Hodgson attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 and spoke to this item and referred to Minute 35 and the Notice of Motion in relation to divestment and fossil fuels requesting that further consideration be given to a poll of fund members in this regard).

The Board noted the Minutes of the Investment and Pension Fund Committee held on 26 November 2022.

\* **33**      **Actuarial Valuation and Section 13 report**

The Board received and noted the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/09) on the actuarial valuation of the Pension Fund as part of the three yearly cycle. The next valuation date was on 31 March 2022, and the results would be published by 31 March 2023. The 2022 valuation would set employer contribution levels for the financial years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 (the contribution levels for 2022/23 had been set at the previous valuation in 2019).

The Report summarised the plan for the valuation which had been discussed with the scheme actuary, Barnett Waddingham and the outcome of the "Section 13" review of the last Triennial Valuation which had been conducted by the Government Actuary's Department and published in December. The results of the review were detailed in section 3 of the report which related to compliance, consistency, solvency and long-term cost efficiency.

Officers confirmed that there had been no update on past proposals to standardise all public sector pension fund actuarial reviews to 4 years.

\* **34**      **Peninsula Pensions Administration - Performance Statistics**

The Board considered the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/10) on Peninsula Pensions' internal service standard targets and monitoring performance against the Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations 2013, which set out the minimum requirements regarding the disclosure of pension information.

Performance targets were monitored on a monthly basis via a task management system and reporting tool within the pension database and the Report outlined Team performance.

Member discussion points with Officers included:

- the high and improving performance within the high priority areas;
- meeting the targets with regard to retirements (which was lower than expected performance as detailed in 2.1 and 2.2 of the Report) was largely dependent on timeliness of Employer information, and as previously requested by Members future reports would include information in this area for review by the Board;
- additional training was being provided in regard to deferred pensions where performance was relatively low; and new software was being introduced to monitor team performance; and
- Officers would also investigate with the software provider the possibility of developing a mobile phone 'App' to assist member self-service in addition to the website.

The Chair and Board Members thanked the Lead Officer and the Team for the overall excellent performance.

\* **35**      **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Update**

The Board noted the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/11) on an update on the latest developments affecting the LGPS. The Report outlined details of new legislation in place designed to discourage transfers to scam schemes. The Officers outlined the additional training for Peninsula Pensions staff in this area, the safeguards in place, and their due diligence and duty of care. Officers also confirmed that Peninsula Pensions had successfully completed the self-certification process in respect of The Pensions Regulator's Pledge to Combat Pension Scams. Further communication about the Pledge would be published shortly.

\* **36**      **Actions and recommendations Tracker Reports**

The Board considered the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/12) on progress made on completing actions arising from internal audits and Pension Board recommendations and requests.

As part of an agreed actions from previous board meetings an Audit action log has been created to track progress and completion of audit actions and recommendations. In addition, officers had also produced a log of actions and requests raised by the Pension Board.

The lead Auditor from the Devon Audit Partnership reported on the progress of the current audit across the various areas and updates to the Audit Plan. This included review of the 'green' mitigations within the Risk Register; update of the FINEST system and needs of Peninsula Pensions in this regard; and review of the Communications Strategy.

\* **37**      **Future Work Programme**

The Board noted the Report of the Director of Finance (DF/22/13) on the proposed Future Work programme and current Standing Items.

\* **38**      **Dates of Future Meetings**

4th May 2022, 19 July 2022 (in-person meeting), 18 October 2022, 07 February 2023, and 18 April 2023 (all at 10.30 am and to be held remotely, except where otherwise stated).

Confirmation of up to date dates and timings of meetings were available on the County Council's website at:

[Browse meetings - Devon Pension Board - Democracy in Devon](#)

**NOTES:**

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

\* **DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 11.18 am