

# Pensions Board Minutes

Wednesday 9 February 2022

## **PRESENT**

Committee members: Councillor Rory Vaughan

Co-opted members: William O'Connell

Officers: Dawn Aunger (Assistant Director Transformation, Talent and Inclusion), David Hughes (Director of Audit, Fraud, Risk and Insurance), Eleanor Dennis (Head of Pensions), Mathew Dawson (Treasury and Pensions), Phil Triggs (Director of Treasury and Pensions), Patrick Rowe (Pension Fund Manager)

***Note:** This informal meeting was held remotely. The following notes are brief discussions held by the Committee.*

A recording of the meeting can be found at: <https://youtu.be/1qRFwgCON7Q>

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bora Kwon.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 were noted. As this was an informal meeting, minutes will be formally agreed at the next meeting.

### **4. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PENSION FUND COMMITTEES (FOR INFORMATION)**

The draft minutes of the Pension Fund Committee meetings held on the 21st July, 20th September, 25th October and 23rd November 2021 were noted.

### **5. UPDATE ON THE LGPS PENSIONS ADMINISTRATION SERVICE**

David Hughes (Director of Audit, Fraud, Risk and Insurance) presented the report and gave a summary of the key points. It was noted that the data migration from Surrey County Council (SCC) to Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA)

had been successfully completed and the new service being provided by LPPA went live on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022. SCC worked closely with Officers and had been cooperative and supportive throughout the exit process.

Fund Members received communications in December 2021 and January 2022 from LPPA regarding the new service. Employer and Member communications had also been sent out recently to enable registration for the relevant portals so that both Employers and Members could view and provide information online.

Progress reports would continue to be provided to the Pensions Board and Pension Fund Committee on all the key milestones achieved over the coming months on the new pensions administration service.

David Hughes thanked Eleanor Dennis (Head of Pensions), and her Team for their contributions and hard work towards the project coordination, enabling a successful transfer to LPPA within the timescales set out

William O'Connell (Co-opted Member) enquired if any issues with regards to accessing the member portal had been resolved. In response Eleanor Dennis explained that members had experienced some difficulties registering to the portal on the day of launch. However, LPPA had immediately reviewed the process and all issues were resolved and rectified within a few days. In addition, the log in process had been further improved by LPPA by ensuring that a more efficient and streamlined experience was being provided to members.

The Chair enquired how the Pensions team were currently structured to ensure the smooth running of the day-to-day activities with LPPA. Eleanor Dennis provided a summary of the key responsibilities of the Team. It was noted that a constructive structure was in place to manage, queries from members, including all activities as part of the project to support LPPA.

In response to a question asked by the Chair in relation to the Key Performance Indicators, Eleanor Dennis explained that the targets set out for LPPA were more detailed and challenging than the Council previously had in place with SCC. This would also be reflected in the reporting.

The Chair thanked Officers for all their hard work and efforts in ensuring a smooth transition to the new pension administration service.

*Members noted the report*

## **6. PENSION ADMINISTRATION KPI PERFORMANCE**

Eleanor Dennis (Head of Pensions) presented the report and gave a summary of the performance for Surrey County Council (SCC) in providing a pension administration service to the Fund. SCC had continued to provide a satisfactory pension administration service to the Fund in most areas with some improvement in performance for this last full quarter of work processed. Overall SCC had remained committed to providing a satisfactory service in the months prior to the Fund's exit from their services in January 2022.

*Members noted the report.*

## **7. QUARTERLY UPDATE PACK**

Patrick Rowe (Pension Fund Manager) presented the report and gave a summary of the key points. A brief overview of the Pension Fund's performance was provided and included in Appendix 1 of the agenda pack. This included administrative, investment, and cash management performance for the quarter. Over the year to 30 September 2021, the total Fund delivered a positive absolute return of 14.1% on a net of fees basis, outperforming its fixed weight benchmark by 2.2%.

The Chair noted that he was pleased to hear that the performance for the Fund delivered a positive return, and the funding level remained consistent at 94% this quarter.

*Members noted the report.*

## **8. GOVERNANCE LOG OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Patrick Rowe (Pension Fund Manager) presented the report and gave a summary of the key points. The report made 32 recommendations, which had been recorded in a progress log to demonstrate the various stages of completion of the recommendations. The log showed that good progress had been made, with 19 recommendations implemented, and seven commenced.

David Hughes explained that he acknowledged the urgency of completing the pension administration recommendations. However, managing the exit from SCC and the onboarding with LPPA and associated activities remained a key priority and the most urgent tasks for completion at this stage. Any outstanding recommendations would be progressed as a priority within the coming months.

*Members noted the report.*

## **9. PENSION FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

Patrick Rowe presented the report and gave a summary of the key points. The deadline for submitting the annual report was 30 September 2021. The statement of accounts was completed and presented to external audit in June 2021. However, due to resourcing issues, there had been delays in commencing the external audit process. The audit was, however, now underway.

The Chair thanked all Officers and Co-opted Members for their participation in providing support to the Pensions Board meetings.

*Members noted the report.*

Meeting started: 6:30pm  
Meeting ended: 7:15pm

**Chair** .....

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