

SOUTH YORKSHIRE PENSIONS AUTHORITY

13 OCTOBER 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Martin Lawton (Chair)
Councillors: D Barker, A Sangar, R Wraith (Vice-Chair), D Baker,
T Hussain, E Butler, B Ford, K Goulty, B Johnson, B Perrin and
P Wootton

Officers: Gary Chapman (Head of Pensions Administration), Len
Cooksey (Member Services Manager), John Hattersley (Fund Manager),
Stephanie Barker (Head of HR & Business Support) and Martin
McCarthy (Head of Policy and Performance)

1 APOLOGIES

None.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair informed the meeting that the Government announced last week proposals regarding changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme employee contribution and accrual rates. This was in response to the request from HM Treasury for savings to the tax payer of c£900m. The Chair informed the Authority that a report would be presented to the Authority meeting in November. This would allow the Authority sufficient time to prepare a considered response to CLG.

3 URGENT ITEMS

None.

4 ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS.

RESOLVED –

- i) That the reports entitled “Barnsley MBC – Unpaid Employer Contributions” and “Treasury Management Policy” be considered in the absence of the public and press.
- ii) That the LGPS presentation by Mercers be considered as a training event and be received at the close of the meeting.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

The Authority noted that Councillors Perrin and Wraith would, because of their membership of Barnsley MBC, withdraw from the meeting during consideration of item 22 on the agenda.

6 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Annual and Ordinary meetings held on 9 June 2011 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

7 MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Wraith informed the meeting that there was no facility for Members to be paid a Special Responsibility Allowance. The Chair requested that Members raise this issue with their own Authorities as the Pensions Authority had no powers to pay allowances.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9 SECTION 41 MEMBER FEEDBACK FROM DISTRICT COUNCILS

None.

10 CALL-INS

None.

11 CORPORATE PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE BOARD: AUDIT COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS 2010/11

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted requesting the Authority to consider the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2010/11 as prepared and approved by the Corporate Planning and Governance Board at its last meeting. The Authority noted that the Board had fulfilled its Terms of Reference. The three main areas of work for the Board were monitoring governance arrangements, evaluating and responding to reports from external and internal audit and addressing any issues that arose as a result.

RESOLVED – That the Authority approves the Board's Annual Audit Committee Function Report for 2010/11 and further notes that it will be published on the Authority's website.

12 ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted requesting the Authority to approve revisions to the Authority's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy in light of the introduction of the Bribery Act 2010.

RESOLVED – That the Authority approves the revised Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy attached at Appendix A to the report now considered.

13 HUMAN RESOURCES - POLICY UPDATE

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted informing the Authority of the work currently taking place concerning employment policies. Officers were systematically reviewing each policy.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

14 HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974: COMMERCIAL PROPERTY PORTFOLIO

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted updating the Authority on the outcomes of the health and safety audit of the commercial property investment portfolio.

The Authority had previously appointed its commercial property advisor, Standard Life Investments, to monitor and report upon managing agents' health and safety performance. The Authority had also appointed S2 Partnership to provide the appropriate compliance systems. The Authority noted that 98% of the identified risks were controlled with the remaining 35 uncontrolled risks being addressed. It was also noted that the Authority employed two firms of managing agents; each firm was supplied by the Authority with a handbook which identified the types of risks the Authority wished to see controlled.

RESOLVED – That the Authority notes the annual health and safety report prepared by Standard Life Investments.

15 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000: ANNUAL UPDATE

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted which provided the Authority with an update on the number of Freedom of Information requests received. During the period October 2010 to September 2011 the Authority had received 12 requests for information; all requests were dealt with within the 20 day limit required by the Freedom of Information Act. The Authority spent 21 hours of officer time in completing requests. Members requested that responses be published on the Authority website to reduce multiple requests for the same information.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

16 COMPLIANCE WITH MYNERS PRINCIPLES: SELF ASSESSMENT

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted reminding the Authority that it did not have procedures in place for the assessment of its own performance or that of its advisors, as required by the Myners' Principles, although it did have them in place for its investment managers. The Authority had previously agreed to use the process adopted by the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Pension Fund Committee (SYTPF) and officers have now prepared questionnaires that followed the SYTPF model for consideration by Members. The questionnaires would need to be completed by all Members of the Authority and would be used to measure the performance of the Authority, Chair and Vice-Chair and the Boards. The Clerk and Treasurer would report upon the findings to the Annual Meeting of the Authority.

RESOLVED – That the Authority agrees to adopt the self-assessment forms now considered and requires all Members to complete and return them accordingly.

17 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings of the:

- i) Pensions Advisory Panel held on 14 June 2011
- ii) Corporate Planning and Governance Board held on 23 June 2011
- iii) Corporate Planning and Governance Board held on 28 July 2011

be noted.

18 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That under Section 110A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and Press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and the public interest not to disclose information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

19 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY (EXEMPTION PARAGRAPH 3)

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted requesting that the Authority agrees a temporary relaxation of the lending criteria (increase in individual lending size from £10m to £15m with the option, subject to prior approval from the Chair and Vice-Chair to go to £20m, but no relaxation in rating criteria) as set out in the report now considered.

RESOLVED –

- i) That the temporary relaxation of lending criteria be agreed with immediate effect.
- ii) The temporary relaxation to be reviewed as part of the formal Strategy approval in February 2012.

Councillors Perrin and Wraith left the meeting at this point and took no further part in the discussion or voting thereon.

20 BARNSLEY MBC - UNPAID EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS (EXEMPTION PARAGRAPH 3)

RESOLVED – That the Authority requests the immediate payment of the underpaid contribution plus the appropriate amount of interest for late payment.

CHAIR