

SOUTH YORKSHIRE PENSIONS AUTHORITY

21 MARCH 2013

PRESENT: Councillor M Lawton (Chair)
Councillor R Wraith (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: E Butler, B Ford, K Goulty, B Lodge, B Perrin,
L Rooney, A Sangar and P Wootton

Trade Unions: G Boyington (Unison) and G Warwick (GMB)

Officers: S Pick (Clerk and Treasurer), G Chapman (Head of Pensions Administration), J Hattersley (Fund Director), M McCarthy (Deputy Clerk), R Bywater (Principal Policy Officer) and M McCoolle (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Baker and C McGuinness

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted as above.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

3 URGENT ITEMS

None.

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

RESOLVED – That agenda item 18 entitled ‘Release of Preserved Benefits – Compassionate Grounds’ be considered in the absence of the public and press.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

6 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2013

Councillor Lawton re-iterated that new Member induction training would be held at the conclusion of the Authority’s AGM, and would become a standing item after every AGM in future. Any new Members onto the Authority would be made aware of the training event prior to the day.

A schedule of meeting dates had been sent to the UCATT Senior Officer in relation to non-attendance at Authority meetings; UCATT had indicated they were looking into the matter further.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 17 January 2013 be signed as a correct record.

7 MINUTES OF THE PENSIONS ADVISORY PANEL HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2013

Councillor Lawton commented that any expressions of interest from pensioners and deferred members wanting to become Member representatives on the Panel would be welcomed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Pensions Advisory Panel held on 22 January 2013 be noted.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

The Authority considered its Work Programme to 13 June 2013. It was agreed that a report on potential changes to the existing SLAs with the district councils be brought to a future Authority meeting.

Members requested that the future meeting schedule, once agreed, be sent onto the district councils to limit as much as possible any potential clashes. S Pick added this would be sent via email and Authority Members would be copied into it.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the Work Programme be noted.

9 SECTION 41 FEEDBACK FROM DISTRICT COUNCILS

None.

10 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT REPORT

The Head of Pensions Administration gave an update on the Quarter 3 Performance Snapshot Report 2012/13.

During the quarter the Authority had processed 13,835 cases, of which 99.8% were on target; performance was down 0.1% on the previous quarter, but 1831 more cases had been processed. There had been 1 new starter and 1 leaver during the quarter; the running total for 2012/13 was 3 leavers and 1 new starter. Staff training was up to date on all aspects of the training plan. There had been 12 new employers registered for EPIC, and 408 new members had registered for MyPension. It was disappointing during the quarter that 65% of registered employers who submitted information did so via EPIC; work was underway to establish why and to attempt to change the trend. Members agreed a deadline of 6 months be set, for forms to then be completed online.

Attendance at the Employers Forum was up 6% compared to 2011; but attendance at the Scheme Members Annual Meeting in Barnsley, was down 43% compared to 2011. Historically, Barnsley was the least well attended Members' meeting but this year it was particularly disappointing. Concerns had been raised about aspects of the venue

and an alternative location would be sought next time the event was held in Barnsley. This year the venue was Sheffield.

There were 275 participating employers at the end of 2012 of which 214 had active members; due to the number of upcoming academies this was expected to rise to over 250 within the next few months.

11 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2013/14

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted to seek Members' approval of the treasury management procedures and strategy to be followed by the Authority during the forthcoming year.

The customised benchmark allocation for cash had changed from 0% to 1.5% during the current year, but the tactical range of 0% to 10% had not changed. The decision stemmed from the Investment Board having agreed to introduce currency hedging, which required considerable cash sums to meet rollover obligations.

Members noted that should some of the circumstances affecting the other South Yorkshire joint authorities' usage of the Co-operative Bank plc for retailing bank purposes change then it was likely that this Authority would need to review its own usage of those services.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed to:-

- i) Adopt the Annual Investment Strategy and recommendations, including limits regarding credit ratings and deposit sizes, set out in Appendix I to the report.
- ii) Approve an Affordable Borrowing Limit in accordance with Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003, on a rolling basis for the forthcoming year and two successive years as outlined in Appendix II of the report, of £250,000 being the maximum amount the Authority could afford to borrow.
- iii) Keep the above under review.

12 REVIEW OF FUNDING STRATEGY STATEMENT

A report of the Head of Pensions Administration was submitted to seek confirmation of changes to the Funding Strategy Statement (FSS).

Following a recent review of the FSS one amendment to the customised benchmark was required, to be implemented from 1 January 2013. A major review would be carried out later in the year, to take into account the results of the 2013 valuation and implementation of the LGPS 2014 scheme.

RESOLVED – That Members approved the Funding Strategy Statement.

13 BOARD CHAIRS' REPORT

Councillor Lawton had recently attended a LAPFF meeting on infrastructure funding, which had been attended by a number of authorities. Councillor Lawton would circulate the minutes onto Members once they became available.

14 LGPS 2014: UPDATE

The Head of Pensions Administration gave a verbal update to the Authority on the LGPS Reform Proposals.

Members recalled that a statutory consultation on draft regulations for the new LGPS had been issued by The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) prior to the 2012 Christmas break; a further draft had now been promised before the Easter break. In addition the first draft of transitional regulations, government issues and regulations, and councillors consulted on their exclusion from the Scheme were also expected. G Chapman had been informed at a recent CLG meeting that there would be shorter consultation for the second draft, and the actual regulations would not be in place until summer. Discussions had been on-going between trades unions, the Employers Organisation and CLG regarding the content of the regulations. Members felt new Councillors should be made aware of the pension scheme and its benefits.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

15 REPORT ON THE CURRENT POSITION OF THE ADDITIONAL VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION FACILITY OFFERED BY THE AUTHORITY

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted to provide Members with updated information on the AVC facility(s) offered to Fund members.

The Authority had last received a report in March 2012. Over the twelve month period there had been no regulatory changes affecting AVCs.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the contents of the report.
- ii) Agreed to continue to receive a regular annual update in future.

16 MEETINGS OF THE AUTHORITY AND BOARDS 2013/14

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted to consider the Authority and Board Meetings during 2013/14.

RESOLVED – That the Authority approved the following meeting cycle for 2013/14:-

Pensions Authority	Corporate Planning and Governance Board	Investment Board	Pensions Advisory Panel
<u>2013</u>			
20 June (AGM)	27 June		11 June*
	29 July		
		19 September	
10 October			1 October

21 November	14 November		
		12 December	
<u>2014</u>			
16 January			21 January
20 March	20 March	13 March	
			15 April
		22 May	
12 June (AGM)	19 June		
			8 July

* Meeting date already approved

17 **MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: EXTERNAL CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS**

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted to alert Members to the forthcoming LGPS Annual Trustees Conference 'Looking Ahead to 2014 and What That May Bring' on 27 and 28 June 2013 at the Hilton Hotel, Sheffield. The conference would consist of its usual lunchtime to lunchtime format, and day delegate rates had been agreed. The programme would be circulated onto Members as soon as it became available. Members were advised to contact Gill Garrety or Rhona Bywater if they were interested in attending.

New Member induction training would take place shortly after the AGM depending on Member availability.

Discussions were underway with Investec regarding the preparation of a bespoke one day refresher training course, based upon the LGE Fundamentals three day programme for Members and Advisory Panel Members. This was planned for September 2013. Members from other districts and further afield would also be invited. A report would be brought to the 20 June 2013 Authority meeting.

RESOLVED – That:-

- i) Councillor Lawton expressed an interest in attending the LGPS Annual Trustees Conference on 27 and 28 June 2013.
- ii) A report would be brought to the 20 June 2013 Authority meeting, regarding the one day refresher training course.

18 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED – That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public 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 3 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 **RELEASE OF PRESERVED BENEFITS - COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS**

Pensions Authority: Thursday 21 March 2013

A report of the Head of Pensions Administration was submitted to seek a decision from Members in relation to a request from an ex-South Yorkshire County Council employee for the release of preserved benefits on compassionate grounds.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed to the release of preserved benefits on compassionate grounds.

CHAIR