

SOUTH YORKSHIRE PENSIONS AUTHORITY

20 JUNE 2013

PRESENT: Councillor K Goulty (Chair)
Councillor R Wraith (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: M Lawton, D Baker, E Butler, J Campbell, B Ford,
K Richardson, K Rodgers, L Rooney, A Sangar and P Wootton

Trade Unions: G Warwick (GMB)

Officers: G Chapman (Head of Pensions Administration),
J Hattersley (Fund Director), M McCoolle (Senior Democratic
Services Officer), M Oades (Deputy Clerk & Monitoring Officer)
and R Bywater (Principal Policy and External Relations Officer)

Apologies for absence were received from G Boyington and
S Pick

1 LOYAL SERVICE AWARD SCHEME - PRESENTATION

The Chair presented an award to Debbie Wilcox, on behalf of the Authority, for 25 years loyal and dedicated service.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted as above.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Fund Director provided Members with a copy of the joint press release by LGA, GMB and Unison, regarding the Pensions Bill Second Reading Briefing.

Members noted the key messages within the briefing paper, and the concern regarding the impact the provisions could have on the Local Government Pension Scheme.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed:-

- i) To lobby their MP's with a view to getting the Pensions Bill altered.
- ii) To raise the matter at their district councils.

4 URGENT ITEMS

None.

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

RESOLVED – That the following agenda items be considered in the absence of the public and press:-

Item 24 Release of Preserved Benefit – Compassionate Grounds

Item 25 Release of Preserved Benefit – Compassionate Grounds

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

7 MINUTES OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 21 March 2013 be signed as a correct record.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

The Authority considered its Work Programme to 10 October 2013.

Councillor Lawton enquired whether any additional meetings would be held, regarding the actuarial valuation. The Fund Director commented that further draft Regulations regarding the proposed 2014/15 Scheme were still awaited. Data from the main employers was being processed and it was hoped that as previously reported, the actuary would have produced preliminary data by July/August 2013. It was anticipated an Authority meeting would be called before the October 2013 scheduled meeting.

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

9 SECTION 41 FEEDBACK FROM DISTRICT COUNCILS

Councillor Rodgers reported that DMBC were in the process of setting their 3 year budget. The Authority was taking into consideration the potential consequences for pension provision if further redundancies proved necessary. Councillor Rodgers would report back further during the year.

Councillor Lawton had emailed Members with the minutes of recent infrastructure meetings he had attended, together with minutes of a meeting involving investment companies interested in setting up a fund.

10 BOARD CHAIRS' REPORTS

None.

11 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT REPORT

The Head of Pensions Administration gave an update on the Quarter 4 Performance Snapshot Report 2012/13.

During the quarter the Authority had processed 15,207 cases, of which 99.9% were on target; performance was up 0.1% on the previous quarter, with 1372 more cases

processed. There had been 1 leaver during the quarter; the annual total was 7 leavers and 1 new starter. Staff training was up to date on all aspects of the training plan. There had been 10 new employers registered for EPIC; 183 employers had now registered for EPIC, which was 3% up on the last quarter. Members noted the difficulty in trying to get employers to use online forms, the cut-off date for paper forms was targeted for the end of the year.

There had been 704 advisory sessions held during the quarter, mainly from people reaching retirement; no complaints had been received during the period. There had been 4 new employers (all academies), and no employer terminations. There were 289 participating employers at the end of March 2013, 227 of which had active members.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12 CORPORATE PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE BOARD - AUDIT COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted regarding the work of the Corporate Planning and Governance Board during 2012/13, for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED – That Members noted:-

- i) The Annual report for 2012/13.
- ii) This had been published on the Authority's website.

13 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND THE CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted to review the Authority's Risk Management Policy and the Corporate Risk Register.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Approved the proposed revisions within the Risk Management Policy attached at Appendix A to the report.
- ii) Noted the Corporate Risk Register attached at Appendix B to the report.

14 LGPS 2014 UPDATE

A report of the Head of Pensions Administration was submitted to update Members on the responses to consultation on draft regulations in respect of LGPS 2014.

G Chapman reported that the Minister had spoken at a recent NAPF Conference of the desire to merge pension funds. This had now started to gain momentum and a paper was expected by the end of the year.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

15 REPORT ON GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS AND CONSULTATION FOR CONTINUING COUNCILLOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE LGPS

A report of the Head of Pensions Administration was submitted which provided Members with information relating to Government proposals on continuing LGPS membership for Councillors from 1 April 2014, to allow Members the opportunity to discuss the proposals, and to consider their response should they wish to make one.

Members agreed to Option 3 'No change. Access to the taxpayer-funded Local Government Pension Scheme remains for all Councillors and elected local office holders on the same basis as at present'. Councillor Goulty urged Members to consult with other councillors on the matter.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed:-

- i) To Option 3.
- ii) G Chapman to keep Councillor Goulty apprised of any developments to merge Councillors benefits with LGPS 2014 should the decision be taken to allow the continuation of membership after April 2014.

16 SOUTH YORKSHIRE PENSION FUND ANNUAL MEETING 2013

A report of the Communications Manager was submitted which provided information on the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Fund.

The 2013 Annual Fund Meeting was scheduled to be held at The Source Skills Academy, Sheffield at 5.30 pm on 10 October 2013. At this stage it was intended to follow last year's format but that might need to be changed if LGPS consultations dictated. It was noted that attendance last year had been disappointing but there were no obvious means of attracting more participants. On the whole, though, Sheffield had been a well supported venue in the past.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the report.

17 WEBCASTING

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted to review the use of Webcasting to promote the Authority's decision-making. The report included costs to date and referred to the usage by the other South Yorkshire joint authorities, Members considered how this might change if the structure of the authorities altered over the forthcoming year.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed to renew Webcasting for a further year.

18 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted to update the Scheme of Delegation to Officers section of the Constitution to reflect the changes of job titles of senior officers of the Authority and to amend certain discretionary limits.

RESOLVED – That Members approved the revised Scheme of Delegation and, in principle, the accompanying Memorandum. It was agreed that a final version of the Memorandum be submitted to a future meeting for approval.

19 MEMBERS' LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: PENSIONS FUNDAMENTALS IN-HOUSE TRAINING SESSION

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer was submitted to inform Members about the development of a bespoke Pension Fundamentals Refresher training session.

R Bywater commented that all elected Members were required to attend the 3 day LGPS Trustee Training Fundamentals Course, and she would shortly be canvassing dates for the new Members.

Following discussions with Members and officers it was agreed that a one day in-house refresher training session would be held at the Joint Secretariat, in early September 2013. Trade Unions Representatives and Advisory Panel Members would also be invited to attend; Members requested this be provided annually. Councillor Goultly gave thanks to R Bywater and other officers involved, for arranging an external provider to attend the session.

RESOLVED – That subject to Members' availability, the one day in-house refresher training session be held on 12 September 2013.

20 MINUTES OF THE INVESTMENT BOARD HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Investment Board held on 28 February 2013 be noted.

21 MINUTES OF THE PENSIONS ADVISORY PANEL HELD ON 16 APRIL 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Pensions Advisory Panel held on 16 April 2013 be noted.

22 MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE BOARD HELD ON 16 MAY 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Corporate Planning and Governance Board held on 16 May 2013 be noted.

23 EXCLUSION OF 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.

24 RELEASE OF PRESERVED BENEFIT - COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS

A report of the Head of Pensions Administration was submitted to seek a decision from Members in relation to a request from a former employee of a Community

Admission Body which is no longer an employer within the Scheme. Because the employer is no longer in existence the responsibility for exercising the discretionary decision regarding early release of benefits now rests with the administering authority.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed the benefit be released.

25 RELEASE OF PRESERVED BENEFIT - COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS

A report of the Head of Pensions Administration was submitted to seek a decision from Members in relation to a request from a former employee for the release of preserved benefits on compassionate grounds.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed that benefits should be released with effect from 27th April 2013.

CHAIR