

Subject	Member Learning and Development Strategy	Status	For Publication
Report to	Authority	Date	10 th June 2021
Report of	Director and, Clerk		
Equality Impact Assessment	Not Required	Attached	No
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1 **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To approve the Learning and Development Strategy covering members of the Authority and Local Pension Board for 2021/22

2 **Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are recommended to:
- a. **Note the obligation on members of the Authority to ensure that they maintain a sufficient level of knowledge and understanding of pension matters to enable them to effectively participate in decision making.**
 - b. **Approve the Learning and Development Strategy set out at Appendix A.**

3 **Link to Corporate Objectives**

- 3.1 This report links to the delivery of the following corporate objectives:

Effective and Transparent Governance

To uphold effective governance showing prudence and propriety at all times.

The work of the Pensions Authority is complex and, in some respects, quite different from that of a traditional local authority. It is therefore important that the Authority transparently takes steps to equip those involved in its governance with the knowledge and skills to effectively perform their role.

4 **Implications for the Corporate Risk Register**

The actions outlined in this report address the identified risks associated with the effective operation of the Authority and the Local Pension Board.

5 Background and Options

- 5.1 Members of the Authority and the Local Pension Board have obligations to maintain an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding to allow them to effectively participate in decision making. While the basis of these obligations is different the reality is the same. The existence of these obligations means that the Authority as an organisation needs to put in place arrangements to ensure that members are supported to meet them.
- 5.2 Set out at Appendix A is a Learning and Development Strategy for the coming municipal year which, in response to the review of governance carried out by Hymans Robertson specifically addresses the needs of members of both the Authority and Local Pension Board. There are several changes from previous strategies, including:
- A more structured approach to needs assessment which will be undertaken by officers to ensure consistency.
 - A clearer statement of the level of activity required and how this can be achieved.
 - The removal of the 3 day Fundamentals Course as a mandatory requirement for new members and its replacement with an online resource, recognising the practical difficulties presented by the 3 day course, although this will continue to be supported for new members who wish to attend.
 - A new emphasis on the need for members to record their own learning and development activity, particularly that undertaken informally, to allow members individually and the Authority collectively to demonstrate that the relevant obligations are being met.
 - To address one of the issues raised in the Annual Governance Statement, which appears elsewhere on the agenda a series of hour long “bite size” briefings have been added to the internally organised programme immediately prior to meetings of the Audit Committee. These will focus on specific issues which are relevant to that Committee.
- 5.3 The Local Pension Board considered the draft strategy at their April meeting and endorsed the proposed approach.
- 5.4 It is likely that further codification of members obligations in terms of knowledge and understanding as well as further guidance on what an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding means will be brought forward in the next couple of years. The more robust strategy presented here should put the Authority in a good position to address any new requirements.

6 Implications

6.1 The proposals outlined in this report have the following implications:

Financial	As indicated in the Appendix a material level of resource has been allocated to support learning and development activity. Given the level of spending achieved in previous years it is believed that this level of resource should be sufficient to meet demand. However, this will be reviewed in each budget cycle.
Human Resources	None directly
ICT	None
Legal	None
Procurement	None

George Graham

Director

Sarah Norman

Clerk

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection