

Subject	Member Learning and Development Strategy 2024/25	Status	For Publication
Report to	Authority	Date	06 June 2024
Report of	Head of Governance and Corporate Services		
Equality Impact Assessment	Not Required	Attached	No
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1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members with a forward look at arrangements for 2024/25 within the Members Learning and Development Strategy. To provide a training plan to address the training needs of members.
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2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are recommended to:
- a. To approve the Members Learning and Development Strategy 2024/25 at Appendix A.**
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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.

Given the nature of the activity undertaken by the Authority it is crucial that elected members undertake appropriate learning and development to enable them to undertake their roles effectively. There are a range of regulatory requirements and accepted governance standards in this area with which the Authority needs to comply.

4 Implications for the Corporate Risk Register

- 4.1 The actions outlined in this report specifically address the identified risk contained within the corporate risk register in relation to the knowledge and skills of elected members.

5 Background and Options

- 5.1 In recent years there has been a marked increase in the scrutiny of LGPS Funds. The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 introduced new governance legislation, including the requirement for Local Pension Boards to be set up and extended the remit of the

Pensions Regulator to public service schemes as set out in its Code of Practice 14. Additionally, the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the Scheme Advisory Board have emphasised the need for the highest standards of governance in the LGPS. For English and Welsh Funds, the Good Governance review includes specific recommendations regarding knowledge and understanding and training. All these measures are aimed at ensuring that all involved in the governance of LGPS Funds can evidence they have the requisite knowledge, skills and commitment to carry out their role effectively.

5.2 The Pensions Regulator's General Code of Practice sets out the standards expected by the Regulator together with the principles, examples and benchmarks to use to assess whether Pensions Authority and LPB Members have sufficient knowledge and understanding for them to effectively carry out their role.

5.3 The Code of Practice states:

"Members of governing bodies required to have knowledge and understanding should invest enough time in their learning and development, alongside their other responsibilities and duties. Governing bodies should provide the necessary training and support".

The governance team have responsibility for ensuring that a suitable and effective framework for this is in place.

5.4 Shortfalls in member capacity and development are likely to attract adverse reports from external auditors and the Government under the new requirements.

5.5 The Authority is required to include details of learning and development activity undertaken by members in the Annual Report and given the range of opportunities available including a complete programme of internally hosted seminars and courses, access to a range of external conferences and other training events, and various free webinars for example, it is increasingly important that members undertake and record their activity.

5.6 The commitment made by Authority and Board Members to participate in learning and development to further develop their knowledge and understanding is appreciated, given their already busy primary roles.

5.7 Appendix A sets out the proposed Learning and Development Strategy for the 2024/25 year. There have been no substantive changes to the strategy itself compared to the previous year, whereas the proposed training plan for 2024/25 included within it has been developed to meet the needs of members informed by a range of factors including member requests and feedback, previous national knowledge assessment results and the known issues that members will be asked to scrutinise and/or make decisions on over the forthcoming year.

5.8 The individual induction plan for any new member of the Authority will be constructed on the basis that they should complete the Hymans Robertson *LGPS Online Academy (LOLA)* mandatory training within their first three months of membership and to complete a national knowledge assessment. New members will also be supported to undertake the LGA's LGPS Fundamentals course during their first year of membership. All Authority and Local Pension Board members will also be asked to participate in the National Knowledge Assessment every two years.

5.9 Members are asked to review the Learning and Development Strategy and approve the 2024/25 training plan within it.

6 Implications

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

Financial	The L&D provision outlined in this report can be resourced within the budgets allocated for member training.
Human Resources	None
ICT	None
Legal	None
Procurement	None

Jo Stone, Head of Governance and Corporate Services

Monitoring Officer

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection