

Subject	Update on Decisions Made by the Authority	Status	For Publication
Report to	Local Pension Board	Date	20 February 2025
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 Local Pension Board members with an update on decisions made by the Authority and its Committees, and any decisions taken under the urgency procedure between meetings of the Authority.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Board Members are recommended to:
- a. Note and comment upon the decisions included in this report.**

3 Link to Corporate Objectives

- 3.1 This report links to the delivery of the following corporate objective:
- Effective and Transparent Governance**

To uphold effective governance always showing prudence and propriety.

- 3.2 The contents of this report are part of the arrangements in place to ensure good governance and that the Local Pension Board is enabled to fulfil its duties to scrutinise the decision making of the Authority in relation to the administering of the South Yorkshire Pension Fund.

4 Implications for the Corporate Risk Register

- 4.1 The contents of this report will contribute to addressing risks around regulatory compliance.

5 Background and Options

- 5.1 This report provides an update for the Local Pension Board on decisions taken by the Authority in the period since the last meeting of the Local Pension Board. (Excluding any substantive items already included in reports elsewhere on the Board's agenda).

- 5.2 There has been one meeting of the Full Authority and one meeting of the Authority's Audit & Governance Committee since the Board's last meeting on 08 November 2024.
- 5.3 Note that the February meeting of the Authority will take place in the period between this report being produced and the meeting of the Board taking place – therefore the decisions from that meeting will be included in the next report to the Board for their April meeting. As members may be aware, the February Authority meeting has a different focus as it concentrates on the business of running the corporate organisation and is concerned primarily with the consideration and approval of the corporate planning framework, the budget for the year ahead and the medium term financial strategy. The agenda and papers are published here: [Authority February 2025 meeting](#).
- 5.4 The table below sets out the decisions of the Authority taken at its meeting on 12 December 2024 and the decisions of the Audit & Governance Committee on 05 December 2024. Any reports that the Authority or the Committee simply noted / commented upon are not listed separately in the table but are available to view on the relevant meeting on the website using the links provided.

Decisions Made at Authority Meeting 12 December 2024	
Full agenda and the public reports referred to below are available at: Authority Meeting December 2024	
Item 7: Minutes held on 12 September 2024	Members approved the minutes from the meeting held on 12 September 2024.
Item 9: The Government's Pension Review	<p>The Director presented the report to inform members of the Authority about the initial conclusions of and next stages in the Government's Pensions Review and gain approval for the approach to be taken in framing a response to the consultation exercises launched following the Mansion House Speech.</p> <p>Members noted the Government's proposals in relation to reform of the Local Government Pension Scheme.</p> <p>Members endorsed the headline response and the body of this report as the basis for a formal response to the consultation and further discussion with Border to Coast partners.</p> <p>Agreed the process for finalising the formal consultation response set out in paragraph 5.11 of the report.</p>
Item 11: Approval of the Levy 2025/26	<p>The Head of Finance and Performance presented the report and asked members to approve the Levy for 2025/26 under the Levying Bodies (General) Regulations 1992.</p> <p>Members approved a total levy of £286,847.00 for 2025/26 in accordance with The Levying Bodies (General) Regulations 1992, to be allocated to the District Councils in proportion to their approved council tax base shares.</p>

Decisions Made at Authority Meeting 12 December 2024

<p>Item 15: Annual Review of Border to Coast Responsible Investment Policy</p>	<p>The Assistant Director – Investment Strategy presented the report secure the Authority’s endorsement of the revised Border to Coast Responsible Investment (RI) policies prior to the next voting season.</p> <p>It was explained that the Head of RI at Border to Coast, Tim Manuel was new in post and therefore this was a lighter touch review at this time. The Director explained that there would be a further opportunity to reflect on the Border to Coast RI Policies when the Authority considers our own RI policy in March 2025, and that members would be able to raise issues to feedback to Border to Coast then – when Tim Manuel would have had more time and experience in the post.</p> <p>Members endorsed the various Border to Coast policies at Appendices A to C. Councillor Dimond requested that the record reflect that he did not endorse the resolution.</p>
<p>Item 18: Independent Governance Review Action Plan</p>	<p>The Assistant Director – Resources presented for approval the proposed action plan developed by the working group to address findings arising from the independent governance review undertaken by Aon. It was explained that the action plan had been developed through a working group consisting of Authority and LPB members working together with officers. The plan had been considered by the Local Pension Board who recommended it for approval to the Authority.</p> <p>Members approved the Independent Governance Review Action Plan.</p>
<p>Item 19: Clerk Arrangements</p>	<p>The Assistant Director – Resources presented the report to consider bringing the role of Clerk in-house to the South Yorkshire Pensions Authority, from the current arrangement of this role being fulfilled by the Chief Executive of Barnsley MBC. This change was being proposed following a suggestion from Barnsley MBC and discussion thereafter between the statutory officers and the Service Director for Law & Governance at Barnsley MBC. It would involve the formal duties of Clerk being added to the Director’s role as Head of Paid Service. The report outlined that changes to the Scheme of Delegation within the Constitution would be required and this would be brought to the Authority’s March meeting.</p> <p>The Assistant Director – Resources noted that the proposed change represented a logical culmination of the process that had been ongoing since the abolition of the Joint Secretariat in 2014 of the Authority becoming more self-sufficient in relation to corporate and governance functions.</p> <p>Members approved the changes to the arrangements for the position of Clerk to South Yorkshire Pensions Authority set out in the body of the report.</p> <p>Members agreed to absorb the role of Clerk within the duties of the Director with effect from 1 April 2025.</p>

Decisions Made at Authority Meeting 12 December 2024

<p>Item 20: Government Consultation on Remote Attendance at Local Authority Meetings</p>	<p>The Assistant Director – Resources presented the report to seek Authority Members’ views and approval for a response to the Government’s consultation “Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings”.</p> <p>Members expressed support for the response and commented that they would welcome the possibility of some remote meeting attendance as this would facilitate a broader range of people joining the Authority encouraging diversity and aiding inclusivity. Members also noted the value of in-person meetings and that remote attendance should be reserved only for certain circumstances.</p> <p>The Assistant Director – Resources explained that detailed attendance rules and ongoing monitoring would be necessary to ensure any agreed changes did not negatively impact meetings of the Authority.</p> <p>Members approved the submission of the response, incorporating any changes agreed at this meeting, on behalf of the Authority.</p>
<p>Item 21: Data Protection Policy Statement</p>	<p>The Head of Governance and Corporate Services presented the Data Protection Policy Statement for approval. She explained that this forms part of the Information Governance Framework and will be supported by a number of policies and procedures, including privacy notices, data retention policy, data breach procedures, and data protection impact assessment procedure etc. Work to review and enhance these is in progress.</p> <p>It was noted that this policy statement had been considered by the Audit & Governance Committee who had recommended it to the Authority for approval.</p> <p>Members approved the Data Protection Policy Statement and delegated authority to the Director to approve the detailed policies and procedures that form the rest of the information governance framework.</p>
<p>Item 22: Anti-Fraud Policy and Whistleblowing Policy</p>	<p>The Head of Governance and Corporate Services presented the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy for approval.</p> <p>She explained that these policies are part of how the Authority meets the principles of good governance. The policies were identified for review in the Annual Governance Statement action plan as they were last reviewed in 2019. The Head of Governance and Corporate Services noted that they will now be reviewed every two years going forward. Both had been considered by the Audit & Governance Committee who had recommended them to the Authority for approval.</p> <p>Members approved the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy.</p>

Decisions Made at Authority Meeting 12 December 2024

<p>Item 23: Governance Meetings Calendar 2025/26</p>	<p>The Head of Governance and Corporate Services presented Members with the proposed 2025-26 Governance Meetings Calendar for review and approval.</p> <p>Members were asked to note that the meeting calendars of the district councils had not yet all been confirmed as finalised, therefore the dates of meetings proposed remain provisional at this stage and should any clashes arise with council meetings, members will be consulted regarding any date changes required at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Members approved the 2025/26 Governance Meetings calendar and outline work programme.</p>
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Decisions Made at Audit & Governance Committee 5 December 2024

Full agenda and the public reports referred to below are available at: [A&G Committee December Meeting](#)

<p>Item 6: Minutes of the meeting held on 19/09/2024</p>	<p>Members approved the minutes from the meeting held on 19/09/2024.</p>
<p>Item 8: Internal Audit Plan Consultation Paper 2025/26</p>	<p>The Head of Corporate Assurance presented the report to set out the annual internal audit planning process and to consult with the Audit and Governance Committee with regard to potential projects for inclusion in the draft internal audit plan for 2025/26.</p> <p>The Audit and Governance Committee is therefore requested to consider key risk and areas of concern where they feel internal audit coverage may be appropriate. In view of the timetable for meetings and eventual agreement of the Annual Plan, members were asked to provide the Chair with suggestions for collation and notification to the Head of Corporate Assurance by 31st January 2025.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Assurance noted that the planning process, whilst focussed during January and February, is a continual process and reviews are undertaken throughout the year to ensure the plan remains appropriate and targeted at the priority areas.</p> <p>Members were asked to consider potential projects for consideration in the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2025/26, and to make any nominations through the Chair for notification to the Head of Corporate Assurance.</p> <p>Members acknowledged the professional responsibility of the Head of Corporate Assurance to ultimately determine the plan of internal audit work.</p>
<p>Item 10: External Auditor Year End Report Authority</p>	<p>KPMG, presented their year-end report, providing a summary of the findings and any key issues arising from the external auditor's work on the Authority's 2023/24 statement of accounts and value for money assessment.</p> <p>Members received and noted the External Auditor's Year End Report for the Authority.</p>

Decisions Made at Audit & Governance Committee 5 December 2024	
Item 11: External Auditors Year End Report Fund	<p>KPMG presented the external auditor's year-end report on the key findings from the audit work carried out in relation to the financial statements of the Pension Fund for 2023/24.</p> <p>Members received and noted the External Auditor's Year End Report for the Pension Fund.</p>
Item 12: Annual Review of the Risk Management Framework	<p>The Assistant Director - Resources presented the annual review of the Risk Management Framework for the Committee to consider. It was noted that the framework was subject to a comprehensive review and revision in the previous year and that this year's review had not resulted in any significant changes. The Framework document had been updated to include the detail that the risk register is presented to each meeting of the Local Pension Board.</p> <p>Members approved the updated Risk Management Framework for publication.</p>
Item 13: Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing Policy	<p>The Assistant Director - Resources presented the report to the Committee and asked them to consider and comment on the Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy and to recommend them for approval to the Authority.</p> <p>Members considered and recommended the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy for approval to the Authority.</p>
Item 14: Progress on Agreed Management Actions	<p>The Team Leader – Governance presented the report to update Members on the actions being taken in response to audit review findings during the current financial year and in previous financial years.</p> <p>Members noted the progress being made on implementing agreed management actions; and considered if any further information or explanation was required from officers.</p>

Decisions Taken Between Meetings Under the Urgency Procedure

- 5.5 It is often necessary for decisions to be taken between meetings of the Authority due to the time sensitive nature of the matters involved. These decisions are taken by the Chair in consultation with the s41 members and the Director, then published on the Authority's website and reported to the next Authority meeting for transparency. A report is also provided to update the Local Pension Board on such decisions.
- 5.6 The Government issued a consultation on the future arrangements for the pooling of investments and governance within the LGPS. An initial outline of the Authority's response was discussed at the Authority meeting on 12th December 2024. The deadline for final responses to be submitted was 16th January 2025. This did not provide the time for consideration of a final response by a full meeting of the Authority. An informal meeting of members of the Authority was therefore held on 10th January 2025 to consider a draft of the final response. Following the discussion, this was further amended to reflect the views of Authority members and the s41 members were consulted for their agreement to the final version in line with the procedure for urgent decisions before submission.

Implications

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

Financial	No direct implications.
Human Resources	No direct implications.
ICT	No direct implications.
Legal	No direct implications.
Procurement	No direct implications.

6.2 Implications of each of the items on which a decision was made are listed in the relevant reports for those items.

Jo Stone

Head of Governance and Corporate Services & Monitoring Officer

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection