

MINUTES OF THE Pensions Committee and Board HELD ON Thursday, 22nd January, 2026, 7:00 - 8:30pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Anna Lawton, George Dunstall (Chair), John Bevan (Vice-Chair), Thayahlan Iyngkaran, Matt White, Keith Brown, Raisin (Advisor) and Eamonn Kenny

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Da Costa, Randy Plowright and Craig Pattinson.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5. BREACHES OF THE LAW

There were none.

6. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / QUESTIONS

There were none.

7. RECORD OF TRAINING UNDERTAKEN SINCE LAST MEETING

Cllr Lawton was in the process of completing all training courses.

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st December were approved as a correct record.

9. RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT POLICY

Jamie Abbott introduced the report for this item. The Fund had finalised the draft Responsible Investment Policy to ensure that it remained aligned with best practice, regulatory requirements, and the long-term interests of members and stakeholders. Responsible investment had become an increasingly important aspect of pension fund governance, reflecting the need to integrate environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations into investment decision-making.

The following was noted in response to questions from the committee:

- John Raisin noted the background of extensive activity that had taken place and stated that this was a positive reflection on the Members of the Committee and Board, as well as the officers of the Fund.
- Cllr White stated that they were happy to see the policy brought forward and were pleased with the section on conflict zones. They asked for more clarity on how this would work in practice. Jamie explained that if an area was identified as a conflict zone that the Pension Committee Board (PCB) felt strongly about investigating, or where there was exposure to that area, a report would be commissioned to monitor the Fund's holdings and assess the exposure to that particular conflict. Following this, decisions would be made. If the exposure was above an agreed threshold, the Fund would engage with LCIV regarding the holdings, and LCIV would advise on suitable alternative options.
- Cllr Iyngkaran and Cllr Dunstall expressed that the document reflected the views and values of the Committee and thanked officers for their work on the policy.
- Cllr Bevan raised a point regarding the United Nations declarations of responsible investment. Jamie confirmed that this would be looked into.
- It was noted that the policy would be reviewed on a periodic basis, annually, but that it could also be reviewed on an ad hoc basis should anything material occur. Jamie confirmed that this would be double-checked to ensure it was clearly stated within the policy.

RESOLVED

The Pensions Committee and Board is recommended:

- 3.1. To note and provide any comments regarding the draft responsible investment policy (Appendix 1)
- 3.2. Approve the draft Responsible Investment Policy to be issued for consultation with the Fund's stakeholders

10. PENSION FUND ACCOUNTS

Jamie Abbott introduced the report for this item. For the Pensions Committee and Board (PCB) to consider the statutory Annual Report from KPMG, which highlights their findings from the audit of the Pension Funds statutory accounts.

The following was noted in response to questions from the committee:

- Cllr Bevan raised the issue of declarations of interest, noting that the current declaration of interest did not cover interests relating to dependent relatives and therefore did not cover dependency interests in the Fund.
- It was explained that journals were accounting entries posted into the ledger, which then made up the balances in the financial statements. Currently, any journal entry below £40,000 could be posted without secondary approval. This was identified as a control deficiency and had been highlighted as such.
- It was explained that every pension scheme was valued using a standard set of assumptions, including the discount rate, RPI inflation, and CPI inflation. However, these assumptions were not consistent across all schemes. Depending on the nature of the scheme, actuaries derived a scheme-specific discount rate to match the duration of the scheme's liabilities. Similarly, inflation assumptions were determined based on external market forces.

RESOLVED

The Pensions Committee and Board was recommended to:

3.1. Consider the contents of this report and any further oral updates given at the meeting by KPMG.

3.2. Note the Statement of Accounts 2024/25 will be presented to Audit Committee on the 29 January 2026

3.3. Note the contents, recommendations and management responses to the IAS 260.

3.4. Agree that the Committee delegates the sign off for the Pension Fund Accounts 2024/25, subject to any final changes required by the conclusion of the audit, to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair.

11. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To be confirmed.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Items 13-16 are likely to be subject to a motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting as they contain exempt information as defined in Section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Section 12A of the Local Government

Act 1985); para 3 – namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and para 5 – information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

14. EXEMPT - FIT FOR THE FUTURE UPDATE

The exempt information was considered.

15. EXEMPT - DRAFT INVESTMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

The exempt information was considered.

16. EXEMPT MINUTES

RESOLVED

To confirm and sign the exempt minutes of the Pensions Committee and Board meeting on 1/12/25 as a correct record.

17. NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

CHAIR: Councillor George Dunstall

Signed by Chair

Date