

From: Chairman Kent Pension Board
Corporate Director of Finance

To: Pension Fund Committee – 29 March 2023

Subject: Pension Board Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report summarises the Pension Board meeting that took place on 14 March 2023.

Recommendation:

The Pension Fund Committee is recommended to note this update from the Board.

FOR INFORMATION

1. Background

1.1 It has been the practice for the Chairman of the Kent Pension Board to give a verbal update on the work of the Board to the Pension Fund Committee, and this will continue. However, a written briefing note was requested at the previous meeting of the Committee, and this is the first of such updates.

2. Pension Board – 14 March 2023

2.1 At its meeting on 14 March 2023 the Kent Pension Board considered a varied agenda, and a number of the key items are considered below.

3. Detailed update on Pensions administration including a review of the Key Performance Indicators.

3.1. The Pensions Administration manager updated the Board on the key issues that were impacting the Administration team, and the plans for the future development of the service.

3.2. A number of the issues are included on the Committee's agenda today, although an area that was discussed in some detail was the efforts the Fund makes to contact deferred members of the scheme. A number of members have left the Fund and subsequently changed contact details. The Pensions Administration Manager addressed this and gave the Board assurance over the process in place to trace these members. She noted that there were specialist tracing companies that supported Funds in finding such members. It was also thought that the introduction of the Pensions dashboard should alleviate a number of these issues.

3.3. The Pensions Administration would update the Board at future meetings of progress in tracing these “missing” members.

4. Update on the work of the Pension Fund Committee

4.1. The Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee updated the Board on the work of the Committee in recent meetings. He specifically covered the well-attended Committee Strategy away day that was held on 2 March 2023. He advised the Board that the Committee had looked at potential asset class changes and considered presentations from Mercer and DTZ. The Committee had also looked at Responsible Investment and the approaches that could be taken when considering implementation of the Investment Strategy.

5. Governance and Policy updates

5.1. The Head of Pensions and Treasury updated the Board on developments in governance of the Fund since they last met. It was pleasing to note that the Board now had no vacancies and new members of the Board were welcomed to the meeting. This included Alison Mings who retired as an officer of the Fund in December, and has now taken up a role as scheme member representative on the Board.

5.2. The Head of Pensions and Treasury also update the Board on the Administration Strategy and Funding Strategy Statements. Fund Employers had been consulted on both documents, and this feedback had been fed into the final versions of the documents which will be presented to the Committee for approval at this meeting.

6. Business Plan and Budget

6.1. The Board considered the updated Business Plan of the Fund which now included a comprehensive budget. The Board was advised that the budget was at the development stage ahead of presentation to the Committee today. All comments and feedback was received and noted by officers. This feedback has enabled officer to further develop the budget to support the Business Plan and it is now contained in final form on today’s agenda.

7. The Board also considered other items such as the Funding Position Statement and Risk Register that are also considered on today’s Committee agenda, and as such these are not repeated here.

8. ACCESS Joint Committee

8.1. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman represented the Board as observers at the meeting of the ACCESS Joint Committee on 6 March 2023. They joined representatives of the Suffolk and Norfolk Pension Boards at the meeting.

8.2. The meeting had a full agenda and all observers commented on the level of debate that had taken place, and expressed assurance that the Joint Committee was fully considering all of the matters under discussion in a thorough way.

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