

From: Chairman – Kent Pension Board
Interim Corporate Director of Finance

To: Kent Pension Board – 4 September 2025

Subject: Member Training update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This paper sets out 7 areas designed to support the Fund's new Members of Board and Committee in their training needs. The plans set out are based on the Fund's 2024 Training Strategy and previous successful initiatives to share skills and knowledge.

FOR INFORMATION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Training and knowledge development are essential to ensure that the Fund has robust governance around decision making and its approval process. Whilst no individual Member of the Board or Committee is expected to have expert knowledge of LGPS investments or pension administrative operations, through working with the Fund's senior officers (and the Fund's advisers) Members are expected to undertake informed decision making. Members are also expected to meet the professional standards that come with holding fiduciary duties by undertaking training and utilising learning opportunities when they become available.
- 1.2 After the County Council elections on 1 May 2025 there was significant turnover of elected members. These changes have led to many new Members joining the Fund's Committee and Board and many long-standing Members leaving. This paper has been written to set out the approach to supporting Member training going forward.
- 1.3 The Fund's Training Strategy was updated most recently in 2024 (Appendix 1). The Strategy sets out the approach to Member Training. The plans below are taken from the Strategy and are intended to be the main points of focus.

2. Training plans

- 2.1 A total of 7 areas are outlined below. It is intended that these start in 2025/26, with actions undertaken over the next 2 years.
 - A. Induction Briefing for new Members (*last completed 18 July 2025 – further induction briefings to be undertaken as and when required*).

- B. Knowledge Assessment, development and delivery of a structured training programme based on results *(the latest survey is scheduled to commence 27 August 2025 and close on 24 September 2025)*
- C. Training on Hot Topics, according to agenda items *(first event held on 24 July 2025, further events to be scheduled as and when required)*.
- D. Online access to the training portal 'Enlighten' *(as per invitation sent 31 July 2025)*
- E. Completion of the Pension Regulator's E-Toolkit for Public Service Pensions *(as per information sent 31 July 2025)*
- F. Communications & messaging via the Fund's FileShare Site *(as per monthly messages sent re. LGPC bulletins, etc)*
- G. 'Fundamentals' Training from the Local Government Association (LGA) *(as per invitation sent 31 July 2025)*

2.2. The plans are based upon previous training initiatives which have received positive feedback from former Members. It is expected that personal reading and self-study will also be undertaken depending on subject matter interest. In addition, Members may be interested in attending relevant conferences and external event promoted by officers.

3. A - Induction Briefings

3.1 New Members when they join the Fund's Board or Committee will be invited to an induction briefing. During these sessions, Members will be given information on a wide range of items to introduce them to Kent Pension Fund. The interactive briefings will include information on:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme and Kent Pension Fund.
- The main objectives of the Fund.
- How the Fund is funded, administered and governed.
- The role of Members of Committee and Board
- The role of Officers at Committee and Board

3.2 These briefings will be led by KCC's Head of Pensions and Treasury, with support from the Fund's other senior officers. The sessions will provide an opportunity for questions and answers and an initial introduction to the Fund.

4. B - Knowledge Assessment & Development of Structured Training Programme

4.1 In 2020 and 2022, the Fund's Members participated in a LGPS National Knowledge Assessment. The assessment was online and was hosted by one of the Fund's suppliers, Hyman Robertson.

4.2 Scores were calculated for eight technical areas, as defined in CIPFA's 'Knowledge & Skills Framework for Local Pension Boards':

- Financial Markets & Product Knowledge

- Pensions Governance
- Actuarial Methods, Standards & Practices
- Procurement and Relationship Management
- Committee Role & Pensions legislation
- Investment performance & Risk Management
- Pensions Administration
- Pensions Accounting & Audit Standards

- 4.3 The assessment results were pooled to identify knowledge gaps and to identify which subject areas should be priorities to do first, in the structured training programme. The subject areas that were prioritised were those that scored the lowest. A series of 2-hour workshops were then held to expand and develop knowledge in the subject areas. The events were held as online briefings and were delivered by Pensions specialists from Barnett Waddingham. During the presentations, local context was provided by Kent Pension Fund officers.
- 4.4 It is planned that all Members undertake Hyman's national assessment in 2025, when the survey is launched. Furthermore, that a structured training plan is developed and delivered, based upon the assessment findings. It is proposed that the training is undertaken over the next 2 years, and that the training provides an up-to-date account of the current regulatory framework within which the LGPS is governed.

5. C - Meeting training on Hot Topics, according to agenda items

- 5.1 It is proposed that sessions are held to help Members understand the context and headline issues of key agenda items. During these sessions, Members will be given an opportunity to ask questions to check their understanding and to clarify any uncertainties.

6 D – Online access to 'Enlighten'

- 6.1 Enlighten is a web-based learning tool that is hosted by Barnett Waddingham. It is accessed via a weblink, whereby users have their own username and password. Enlighten currently has 6 modules, with several chapter within each. Each chapter has a short learning video (around 6-8 minutes in duration) which can be paused and restarted to allow the taking of notes, etc. Each module has a quiz (with multiple choice answers) at the end. Enlighten gives a good overview and also acts as a handy refresher.
- 6.2 The 6 modules currently available in Enlighten are as follows. Barnett Waddingham regularly adds new training material to this portal.
- Background to the LGPS
 - Actuarial Information
 - Information about Employers
 - LGPS Governance
 - Triennial Valuations
 - Introduction to Investments (recently added)

- 6.3 Enlighten is offered as a training option to all Members of our Board and Committee that may be interested. The modules are focussed on the Local Government Pension Scheme. Enlighten complements the more in-depth, interactive training that will be in the Fund's structured training programme.
- 6.4 Members interested in having an Enlighten training account should email the Fund's Business Management Officers with their name and email address. Officers will ask Barnett Waddingham to set up accounts for interested Members.

7 E - The Pension Regulator's E-Toolkit for Public Service Pensions

- 7.1 The Pension Regulator provides a free online E-Toolkit for public service pension schemes. The toolkit is an easy-to-use resource and covers short modules. These are:
- a) Conflicts of Interests;
 - b) Managing Risk and Internal Controls;
 - c) Maintaining Accurate Member Data;
 - d) Maintaining Member Contributions;
 - e) Providing Information to Members and Others;
 - f) Resolving Internal Disputes;
 - g) Reporting Breaches of the Law.
 - h) Pension Scams
- 7.2 It is proposed that all members complete the tPR's E-Toolkit for public service pensions within 6 months of joining the Pensions Board or Pension Fund Committee, unless they have already completed the E-Toolkit. Members will be asked to confirm when they complete this E-Toolkit training. Members are asked to note that that tPR provides two E-toolkits, one for public service pensions and another. Only the E-toolkit for public service pensions requires completion by the Fund's Members. This is because different types of pensions schemes have different governance provisions.

8 F – Communications & Messaging via the Fund's FileShare Site

- 8.1 A FileShare site has been created by officers to provide a safe, secure portal for sharing information with Members. The site is successful because all Members are able to access it, including Members without a KCC email address. It acts as a reference portal, meaning that Members do not need to retrieve information from emails. Access to the portal can be removed when Members leave Board or Committee.
- 8.2 The site contains information such as Pension Board and Pension Fund Committee agenda packs, past training sessions and the LGPC bulletin (monthly) highlights.
- 8.3 All current Members have been given access to the FileShare site. Any additional new Members will be given a link to access. When new content is added by officers, an email alert is sent to Members. Members can then click on the link to access the portal.

9 G – ‘Fundamentals’ Training from the Local Government Association (LGA)

- 9.1 The Local Government Association run ‘Fundamentals’ training courses over three-day sessions (or six sessions if undertaken online as each session is half-a-day). The course ties in with the aims and objectives of the Fund’s Training Strategy and introduces the subject areas in the CIPFA knowledge and skills framework. The course can be undertaken in person at London (Westminster), Manchester or online. Trainers are leaders in the field of pensions and are carefully selected by the LGA. It is expected that training sessions will be planned for October, November and December 2025.
- 9.2 This training option is available to all Members, Officers and representatives who attend Pension Board and/or Pension Fund Committee. The Fund’s Business Management Officers are able to assist with training and train ticket bookings.

10 Record Keeping

- 10.1 The Fund’s Training Strategy confirms that the Fund will maintain a record of all training undertaken. Committee and Board members will be asked to confirm this record via survey on a regular basis.
- 10.2 Information on training completed by individual Members will be included in the Kent Pension Fund Annual Report and Accounts. Information will be recorded on training session attendance.
- 10.3 Members will be contacted on a regular basis to check that the information held by officers is correct. Information is collected in the form of an online survey so that all results are kept together. In the survey, Members are asked to check training dates and attendance records against an excel sheet provided.

11. Further Updates

- 11.1 Information on the Fund’s training strategy will be provided to the Board and Committee on a regular basis.
- 11.2 Further regulation on Member training is expected later this financial year. The Fund’s strategy will be reviewed and if necessary updated at this time to ensure the Fund remains compliant.

Appendix 1: KPF Training Strategy (approved 2024)

Emma Green – Senior Pensions Programme Manager (Kent Pension Fund)
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