

From: Chairman Kent Pension Board
Corporate Director of Finance

To: Pension Fund Committee – 12 December 2023

Subject: Pension Board update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report summarises the Board meeting that took place on 28 November 2023.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to note the update from the Pension Board.

FOR INFORMATION

1. Background

1.1 This briefing note has been prepared as a summary of the discussions at the meeting of the Pension Board on 28 November 2023.

2. Pension Board – 28 November 2023

2.1 At its meeting on 28 November 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. The Pensions Administration manager highlighted the work that the team were doing across all aspects of administration, including communications, working with employers, embedding the “digital by default” approach. She commented on substantial progress that had been made, and the Board asked a number of questions on this. The Board was grateful for the detailed responses received and commended the team for the great work that had been undertaken in the last year. A member of the Board asked whether the Fund had considered working with the Unions to promote Member self-service. It was agreed that this could be a productive approach and officers agreed to progress.

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 the ongoing review of the Fund's Investment strategy which is being considered by the Committee on today's agenda. He also advised the Board on the work the Committee and Responsible Investment Working group had been progressing in this area. He noted developments within ACCESS and commented on the overall strong performance of the Kent Fund in recent years.

5. Business Plan, Budget and Governance and Policy updates

- 5.1. The Head of Pensions and Treasury updated the Board on progress made in this area and provided an update on the Fund's budget as at 30 September 2023.

6. Investment Strategy review and Responsible Investment update

- 6.1 The Board were provided with a review of the process followed by the Committee, officers and advisers in reviewing the Fund's investment strategy. The Board were assured that the process followed was robust and appropriate and the Officers were thanks for the diligence in concluding the strategy review in a timely manner.
- 6.2 The Board was also pleased with progress being made in Responsible Investment, and the Vice Chairman was grateful with being continued to be allowed to sit on the Responsible Investment Working group. The Board asked whether any Board members could join the meetings of this group and Officers advised that they would respond ahead of the next meeting of the group in January 2024.

7. Risk-Register

- 7.1 The Head of Pensions and Treasury updated the Board on the work that officers were doing to revise and refresh the Fund's Risk Register. The Board were assured that officers had been working with KCC's risk team and will be reviewing and refreshing the detailed risk register ahead of the next set of meetings. It has been agreed that the Fund will be using the KCC software to present in the future.

8. Cyber Security

- 8.1. The Board considered a paper on Cyber Security and the approach that the Fund was taking to manage the risks. The training session was highlighted with support from Mercer. Board members were pleased to see that this key area was being taken seriously and commended the workplan.

9. LGPS Investment Consultation

- 9.1 The Board received a briefing on officer's initial thoughts on the DLUHC response to the consultation on LGPS investment, which was published in line with the Chancellor's Autumn Statement.

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