

The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 introduced the requirement to have a Local Pensions Board to assist in the good governance of the scheme.

The Board met four times in 2020/21. The Board consists of 4 Employer and 4 Member representatives and all positions were filled during the year. An attendance rate of 94% has been achieved for this year.

All members of the Board have equal voting rights.

On 31 March 2021, the Board members were:

Scheme member representatives

- Peter Dearden
- Steve Mason (Chairman)
- Joe McGovern
- Tina Pearce

Scheme employer representatives

- Bev Black
- Roona Ellis (Vice Chairman)
- Ian Thompson
- Lisa Wheaton

Members of the Board are required to disclose any declarations of interest at the beginning of each Buckinghamshire Pension Board meeting.

In accordance with Section 248a of the Pensions Act 2004, every member of the Buckinghamshire Pension Board must be conversant with the rules of the scheme (the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations), and any document recording policy about the administration of the scheme which is for the time being adopted in relation to the scheme.

Pension Board members must also have knowledge and understanding of the law relating to pensions, and such other matters as may be prescribed.

Accordingly, all members of the Board are encouraged to take advantage of the many training opportunities notified to them by Pensions Officers and to maintain their core knowledge via self-study using the Pension Regulator's Public Services toolkit for online learning. This includes modules on conflicts of interest, managing risk and internal controls, maintaining accurate member data, maintaining member contributions, providing information to members and others, resolving internal disputes and reporting breaches of the law.

Other training opportunities offered to and undertaken by Board Members include:

- Barnett Waddingham Board Member Seminars
- Barnett Waddingham Administration and Investment Training
- LGPC Annual Trustee's Conference
- In-house Actuarial Training
- In-house Employer Training

At the end of its sixth year since inception, the Board looked back at a busy and varied 12 months. The Board undertook annual reviews of:

- their Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct Policy, Conflicts Policy and the Knowledge and Understanding Framework,
- the Pension Fund Pension Administration Strategy, and
- the Pension Fund Risk Register.

At each meeting of the Board, reports were presented and considered regarding:

- Pension Fund Administration Performance Statistics,
- Pension Fund Administration Year-end Updates,
- Pension Fund Committee agenda and minutes, and
- updates from Officers regarding the progress in implementing the Brunel Pension Partnership as part of the Government LGPS Investments reform agenda and pension fund performance.

Ad-hoc reports were presented and considered regarding:

- Breaches of the Law,
- Governance Compliance Statement,
- Guaranteed Minimum Pension Reconciliation/Rectification,
- I-Connect/My Pension Online,
- Internal Administration Benchmarking
- Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure
- Scheme member and employer communications
- Training Opportunities

In addition, the Board Chairman attended meetings of the Pensions Committee in an 'observer' capacity and had regular meetings with senior Officers to review Administration and Investments.

The Board Chairman reported that,

The last 12 months have been unprecedented for Officers and Board Members alike, as we all adapt to working under Covid-19 restrictions. It is to their great credit that Officers have maintained their exceptional level of service whilst largely 'working from home', a huge challenge for all concerned.

Board meetings during the period have also occurred remotely via 'Teams', as have any ad-hoc discussions with Officers. Whilst this has proven to be an effective medium for continuing 'business as usual' I am sure that all concerned, both Board Members and Officers alike, look forward to resuming face to face contact once again as we begin to approach a post-Covid world.