

REPORT FOR: Pension Board

Date of Meeting: 20 June 2017

Subject: Local Pension Board Survey

Responsible Officer: Dawn Calvert, Director of Finance

Exempt: No

Wards Affected: All

Enclosure: Local Pension Board Survey

Section 1 – Summary

This report advises the Board of the receipt of a survey being conducted by the Local Government Association and invites the Board to comment on the suggested responses.

Section 2 – Report

1. On 29 May 2017 the Pension Secretary, Local Government Association (LGA) wrote to the Chair of the Board in the following terms:

Dear Local Pension Board Chair - Regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 required LGPS administering authorities to establish local pension boards by 1st April 2015 to assist them in the effective administration and governance of the scheme.

Given the passage of time since the establishment of local pension boards, the Scheme Advisory Board considers that it would be appropriate and timely to test the effectiveness and operational efficiency of the new governance arrangements with particular emphasis on the role and function of local pension boards and interaction with their administering authority.

The web based survey at <http://lgpsboard.org/survey.php> is intended to enable the Scheme Advisory Board to identify any areas of the legislation or related guidance affecting local pension boards that may need to be reviewed to ensure that the statutory requirements of the 2013 Regulations and [code of practice](#) issued by the Pensions Regulator are being met. Where appropriate, the Board may make recommendations to DCLG for any regulatory changes that are considered necessary.

To ensure impartiality, the link to the survey is being sent separately to both the administering authority on behalf of their section 101 pension's committee and their local pension board who are invited to complete the same survey independently. However, this is not to exclude any administering authority and their local pension board from collaborating on their respective responses where this is agreed locally. The closing date for survey responses is the 28th July 2017, though this could be extended if that closing date precludes consideration of the survey by a meeting of the pensions committee or local pension board.

In cases where either a combined board or joint local pension board has been agreed by the Secretary of State, the survey should be completed by the Chair of the combined board or joint board with the agreement of the majority of board members. In the case of a joint board, the respective administering authorities will also be invited to complete the survey. To ensure that all relevant scheme stakeholders have an opportunity to participate, the website link to the survey is also being circulated to a wide range of bodies including the main local government trade unions.

Administering authorities have also been invited to publicise the survey locally on their web site.

It is appreciated that administering authorities and their local pension board have only recently completed the Pension Regulator's Public Service Governance Survey 2016. The Regulator will not be disclosing individual data to third parties whereas, unless you confirm otherwise, the Scheme Advisory Board will be able to make greater use of individual responses to their survey in assessing whether any changes to regulations or guidance need to be made.

2. On 31 May 2017 the Pensions Adviser, Workforce Team, LGA wrote to an officer of the Council, copying the Pension Secretary's email and introducing it in the following terms:

The Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) recently invited the chairs of LGPS pension committees and local pension boards to participate in a [survey](#) to assess the effectiveness and operational efficiency of the new governance arrangements with particular emphasis on the role and function of the local pension board. SAB agreed that the survey should also be extended to scheme stakeholders, in particular, the main local government trade unions.

Because of the recent local elections the SAB do not have contact details for all the chairs of LGPS pension committees and administering authorities are therefore asked to forward the message below onto their respective pension committee chairs and, for completeness, the chair of their local pension board.

3. In summary, it would appear that the LGA are seeking responses from the Chair of the Pension Fund Committee on behalf of the administering authority (LB Harrow) and the Chair of the Pension Board. It is assumed that, in preparing their responses, the two Chairs would wish to take into account the views of their members. The Committee will be invited to consider their response at their meeting on 28 June 2017 and the Board are now invited to consider their reply.
4. The opportunity for collaboration between the Committee and the Board is available and the Board's views on this are invited. However, at this stage they are asked just to consider their own response.
5. Attached is a copy of the partially completed survey on which the Board are invited to comment. Notes which the Board might find helpful are as follows:

Questions 1- 10

Basic factual information completed by officers

Question 11

Basic factual information which could be separately annotated "No, but it operates in accordance with the Council's Constitution"

Question 12

Basic factual information completed by officers

Question 13

Basic factual information which could be separately annotated "Yes, declarations of interest are requested at the start of each meeting"

Questions 14 and 15

Basic factual information completed by officers

Question 16

Basic factual information which could be separately annotated “Yes, but tends to involve general guidance on facilities available rather than a structured programme”

Question 17

To be completed by Board

Questions 18 and 19

Basic factual information completed by officers

Question 20

No comment required

Questions 21-23

To be completed by Board

Question 24

Basic factual information which could be separately annotated “Yes, officers attend all meetings and, on one occasion, the Vice-Chair of the Pension Fund Committee attended”

Questions 25-31

Basic factual information completed by officers

Questions 32 - 34

Basic factual information completed by officers

Question 35

Basic factual information which could be separately annotated “Yes, independent external advice is available to the Board eg the Actuary has attended on occasions”

Question 36

Basic factual information completed by officers

Questions 37 and 38

To be completed by Board

Questions 39 and 40

Basic factual information completed by officers

Risk Management Implications

6. All risks are included within the Pension Fund Risk Register.

Equalities implications

7. There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

Council Priorities

8. The financial health of the Pension Fund directly affects the resources available for the Council's priorities.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Dawn Calvert

Chief Financial Officer

Date: 6 June 2017

Ward Councillors notified:

Not applicable

Section 4 - Contact Details

Contact: Ian Talbot, Treasury and Pension Fund Manager
0208 424 1450

Background Papers - None