

AT A MEETING of the Hampshire Pension Fund Panel and Board of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Thursday,
28th March, 2024

Chairman:

* Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee

Vice-Chairman:

* Councillor T. Thacker

Elected members of the Administering Authority (Councillors):

* Councillor Tom Thacker	
Councillor Alex Crawford	Councillor Rob Mocatta
* Councillor Tim Davies	Councillor David Drew
* Councillor Jonathan Glen	Councillor Derek Mellor
* Councillor David Harrison	Councillor Kim Taylor
* Councillor Dominic Hiscock	Councillor Jacky Tustain
Councillor Andrew Joy	Councillor Keith House

Employer Representatives (Co-opted members):

Councillor S. Letts (Southampton City Council)

Councillor P. Taylor (District Councils - Rushmoor Borough Council)

* Councillor J. Smyth (Portsmouth City Council)

Scheme Member Representatives (Co-opted members):

* Mr P. Reynolds (pensioners' representative)

* Mr A. Hedges (scheme members representative)

Mr S. Walker (deferred members' representative)

* Mr P. Barber (substitute scheme members' representative)

Independent Adviser:

* C. Dobson

*Present

181. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Councillors Alex Crawford, Andrew Joy, Simon Letts and Rob Mocatta and Mr Simon Walker. The Chairman welcomed Councillor Judith Smyth, in attendance as the Employer Representative substitute Member and Paul Barber as the Substitute Scheme Member.

182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered

whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations were made.

183. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (PUBLIC)**

It was noted, following discussion at the previous meeting, that officers interviewed all fund managers on a quarterly basis, through a mixture of virtual and in person meetings, with a minimum of one in person meeting per year with each fund manager wherever possible. Whilst it was noted that the current approach was time efficient, the Panel and Board could propose an in person meeting with any of the investment managers at any time.

The Chairman noted that the ACCESS open days, held twice a year, provided an opportunity for Panel and Board Members to meet with a wide range of investment managers face to face and that the use of virtual meetings had increased the opportunity to meet with investment managers and reduce administrative burden, particularly for international investments.

The minutes of the previous meeting on 12 December 2023 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

184. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received.

185. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Arron Hedges and Simon Walker who were appointed to the Panel and Board as Scheme Member Representatives in February.

The Chairman also noted the resignation of Fiona Hnatow, Employer Representative in February. The Chairman made Members aware that a replacement employer representative was being sought and that he had written to Ms Hnatow, following her resignation, to thank her for her time and contributions to the work of the Panel and Board.

The Chairman invited the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Operations to address the Panel and Board regarding training, through which Members heard that the County Council would be setting up a number of training events for Panel and Board Members, with the view to increasing the completion rates of the required Inspire Hymans modules. It was heard that invites would follow shortly and attending these events would evidence completion of the associated online module.

186. **ACCESS JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES 4 DECEMBER 2023 (PUBLIC)**

The Panel and Board received and noted the exempt minutes of the ACCESS Joint Committee on 4 December 2023.

187. **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE - 1 MARCH 2024**

The Panel and Board received and noted the draft minutes of the Responsible Investment Sub-Committee meeting on 1 March 2024.

188. **GOVERNANCE: INTERNAL AUDIT 2023/24 REPORT AND OPINION**

The Panel and Board received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Operations providing the Pension Fund Panel and Board with the Chief Internal Auditor's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of Hampshire Pension Services' and Hampshire Pension Fund's frameworks of governance, risk management and control for the year ending 31 March 2024.

It was heard that three days remained in the financial year, but it was not expected that there would be any changes to the information presented. It was noted that four reviews had been completed, with three resulting in substantial assurance opinions and one with reasonable assurance.

The work which had already been completed was sufficient to form an opinion that the framework for governance and control were substantial and mechanisms were in place to ensure that any issues identified would be addressed promptly.

In response to Members questions it was heard that:

- The audit which received the reasonable assurance opinion was on cusp of being substantial. It was noted that there were very good controls already in place, with the audit identifying opportunities to further improve them and actions were expected to be completed by the end of April.
- Post the Covid-19 pandemic, , internal audit conducted the vast majority of their work remotely, with the use of screen share data for evidence. This approach enabled auditors to successfully and robustly complete their work, whilst reducing travel time and increasing efficiency. It was further heard that where a face to face visit was required or beneficial then this would be arranged.

RESOLVED:

That the Pension Fund Panel and Board note the Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Internal Audit Report and Opinion for 2023-24.

189. **GOVERNANCE: INTERNAL AUDIT 2024/25 PLAN**

The Panel and Board received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Operations providing the Internal Audit Plan for 2024-25, together with an indicative plan for 2025-26 to 2026-27 for Hampshire Pension Services and Hampshire Pension Fund.

Members heard that the report outlined how the plan was developed, taking consideration of risk registers and both officer and member views. It was further noted that the plan provided an illustration of what was anticipated to be covered in future years, although this would be reviewed annually, before the commencement of the next audit, to ensure that the proposed actions were still appropriate and to incorporate any emerging risks.

RESOLVED

That the Pension Fund Panel and Board approve the Internal Audit Plan for 2024-25.

190. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the following items of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the reports.

191. **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (EXEMPT)**

The exempt minutes of the Pension Fund Panel and Board held on 12 December 2024 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

192. **ACCESS JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES (EXEMPT) 4 DECEMBER 2023**

The Panel and Board received the exempt minutes of the ACCESS Joint Committee on 4 December 2023.

193. **INVESTMENT - CUSTODIAN REPORT**

The Panel and Board received an exempt report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Operations providing a review of custody services since the last report, as well as an update on the Pension Fund's tax claims and class actions. [SUMMARY OF AN EXEMPT MINUTE]

194. **INVESTMENT - INVESTMENT UPDATE**

The Panel and Board received an exempt report from the Director of Corporate Resources updating the Panel and Board on the Fund's investments since the previous meeting. [SUMMARY OF A MINUTE WHICH CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION].

195. **INVESTMENTS - ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS UPDATE**

The Panel and Board considered an exempt report of the Director of Corporate Resources - Corporate Services updating the Pension Fund Panel and Board on the progress of the alternative investments portfolio. [SUMMARY OF AN EXEMPT MINUTE]

Chairman, 30 May 2024