



Minutes

Name of meeting	ISLE OF WIGHT PENSION BOARD
Date and time	WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2020, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM
Venue	VIRTUAL (MICROSOFT TEAMS)
Board Members	Tracy Bull (Chair), Cllr Reg Barry, Barbara Milton, Trevor Ould
Present	Leo Atkinson-Goffe, Matthew Collier, Jo Cooke, Lottie Sadler, Jo Thistlewood, Megan Tuckwell

1. Minutes

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020 be confirmed.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were received at this stage.

3. Update since the last meeting

The Technical Finance Manager presented the report which provided an update on pension fund activity since the last meeting, with regards to funding, investment, governance and administration. It was advised that the market value of the fund's investments had bounced back following the market crash at the end of February 2020, and movement in investment values was being monitored with no proposed changes to the existing investment strategy.

Questions were raised on whether the bounce back could be attributed to any particular asset class. It was clarified that the drop (and subsequent increase) in valuation was due to the equities market. Questions were raised regarding the property portfolio and it was clarified that trading had been suspended until at least September 2020, due to pricing uncertainties due to the valuation of future income streams. As a small part of the portfolio, this would not have a significant impact on the fund.

RESOLVED:

THAT the update on pension fund activity since the last meeting be noted.

4. KPIs

The Pensions Manager presented the administration statistics for the year ended 31 March 2020, highlighting that the team had successfully maintained business as usual

while working remotely. The Board acknowledged the work of the team but stated that future KPI reporting should include data on all employers and that statistics should reflect the scheme members' experiences, not just the performance of the administration team. It was confirmed that the Technical Finance Manager and Pensions Manager would include this as part of the ongoing development activities around workflow.

The Pensions Manager presented the administration statistics for the period since 1 April 2020, noting that service changes as a result of Covid-19 activities had not been as significant as expected. Activity on the Member Self-Service portal during this period showed an increase of those seeking retirement quotes and viewing their deferred benefits. It was agreed that details on this would be circulated to the board.

Concerns were raised regarding suspended pensions which were categorised as unresolved after 12 months. It was clarified that these instances were due to a need for updated information from the pensioner where a response had not yet been received, hence the pension payment had been suspended to reduce the risk of fraud.

The Relationship and Data Quality Officer provided an update on the progress with the i-connect project. To date, 21% of employers were actively submitting data through i-connect, which equated to 63% of active membership. Engagement with employers was ongoing, including the delivery of virtual training sessions, and it was confirmed that this project would ensure data quality scores were maintained and improved, as well as reducing the amount of additional work for employers and administration team at year end.

RESOLVED:

- i) THAT the administration statistics for the year ended 31 March 2020, and for the period since 1 April 2020, be noted.
- ii) THAT details on Member Self-Service activity for the period April-May 2020 be circulated to the Board by the Pensions Manager.

5. Employer Compliance with Administration Strategy

The Technical Finance Manager presented the report on employer compliance with end of month reporting and payment deadlines for the year ended 31 March 2020. There had been significant improvements in compliance compared to the previous year, however it was noted that one parish council continued to demonstrate repeated non-compliance due to submitting payments via cheque, which clear after the deadline.

RESOLVED:

THAT the update on employer compliance with administration strategy be noted.

6. Annual Report and Accounts – Year Ended 31 March 2020

The Pension Fund and Treasury Management Accountant presented the draft financial results for the year ended 31 March 2020 and advised that the main impact on the results would be the downturn in investments in Quarter 4 due to Covid-19. No concerns were raised at this stage, and it was agreed that the Board would review the results in detail once the outcomes are published.

The board received an update on external audit work to date. At the request of the auditors, Hymans would draft an explanatory note to address why value investments had fallen, and to provide information on post-balance sheet events. The auditors had also requested greater reassurance around the going concern status of the fund and reliance on investment income to support cashflow.

The Technical Finance Manager provided an update on the extended timetable for the completion of the accounts, external audit, and annual report, as a result of the Covid-19. The deadline for the council's draft accounts (including those of the pension fund) to be signed had been extended from 31 May 2020 to 31 August 2020, and the deadline for publication and finalisation was extended from 31 July 2020 to 30 November 2020. It was advised that the Isle of Wight Council was trying to work to the original timetable where possible, and it was likely that the accounts would be signed off by the Audit Committee by the end of September 2020.

RESOLVED:

- i) THAT the update be noted.
- ii) THAT the extended timetable for the completion of the accounts, external audit, and the annual report as a result of the Covid-19 be noted.

7. Pension Board Annual Report

The Board considered the process by which the annual report for 2019-20 would be completed in readiness for its inclusion in the fund's annual report and accounts. It was agreed that Board Members would meet informally to discuss the annual report.

RESOLVED:

THAT Board Members meet informally to discuss the annual report.

8. Other Annual Report and Accounts Disclosures, and Workplan

The Technical Finance Manager provided an update on the progress with the key documents which were due to be completed in June 2020. The Board determined the process by which the knowledge and skills compliance statements, the governance policy and the governance compliance statement would be completed for adoption and inclusion in the pension fund's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020. It was agreed that the relevant documentation would be re-circulated, and the board would meet informally to discuss before providing feedback as one group.

RESOLVED:

THAT Board Members meet informally to discuss the knowledge and skills compliance statements, the governance policy and the governance compliance statement.

9. Members' Question Time

Barbara Milton advised that she would be virtually attending the CIPFA Annual Conference next week and would be facilitating a group discussion on the relationship

between the Pension Board and Pension Fund Committee. Board Members were invited to feedback any thoughts or comments prior to this.

CHAIRMAN

DRAFT