

What are the key factors that you would consider when determining the optimal structure for the Isle of Wight Council Pension Fund taking into account its size and complexity?

Key factors

In developing options for the optimal structure of the Isle of Wight Council Pension Fund (the Fund), which ensure that both current and anticipated requirements are met, we would look to the following key considerations:

- 1. Setting a realistic baseline
- 2. Size of the Fund relative to existing LGPS comparator funds
- 3. Views of the Isle of Wight Council (the Council) on the externalisation of any of the service
- 4. Relationship between the administering authority and the Council
- 5. Challenges to recruitment and retention of suitably experienced staffing resources
- 6. Governance challenge now and the future
- 7. Future administration challenges
- 8. Future investment challenges

Please set out how you would undertake this review, including a project plan and timetable for the work.

Project plan

Timescale	Project step
By 14 October 2022 - Initial planning meeting (virtual)	By the end of the week following the contract award, we will meet to discuss and agree the project plan and timetable with your team/main contact. This will include agreeing the arrangements for our team to make site visits, assign appropriate resources and to attend the meetings detailed below.
By 20 October 2022 - Initial research	Within two weeks of the contract award, we will ensure that we have all the information required to do the review. We will look for policy documents, agendas, minutes and information we expect to be publicly available. We will request documents from the Fund where these are not available.
By 3 November 2022 - Desk Top review	Within four weeks, we will carry out a desk top review of the relevant documents: meeting agendas and minutes, other relevant reports including any recent audit reports, results of other internal reviews, registers in use, any training needs analysis/records available – comparing them to best practice, including the requirements and expectations of the Pensions Regulator, identifying any missing documents, meetings and events we would have expected to be in

place. We will establish any specific areas for further review, investigation or evidencing at our subsequent site visits, or via virtual meetings/calls.

By 23 November 2022 - Face to Face meetings

Within six weeks, we will carry out site visits to your offices and meeting venues to engage with the Section 151 Officer and fund officers and meet the chairs of committees/boards. We would suggest attending the meeting of the Pension Fund Committee on 23 November 2022. Ideally we would also attend the Local Pension Board meeting on 26 October 2022 or alternatively we would be happy to arrange a meeting with either the Chair or the whole Board to have a collective conversation.

By 1 December 2022 – Immediate feedback

Within eight weeks, we will review the findings of each site visit/meeting attendance and use this to review the plans for the next and to adapt them as necessary. At the end of any site visit, Jeff would be available to meet with the nominated contact to provide an update on progress, to test and give a high level review of findings if required and dependant on what has been agreed initially regarding confidentiality, and to discuss next steps and if any adaptation to the approach is required. We will bring any significant concerns arising to the immediate attention of your nominated contact.

By 22 December 2022 – Analysis and Report to Officers

Within eleven weeks, we will analyse the information gathered, review and consider our findings against best practice and arrangements in place elsewhere, raising any further questions emerging by telephone. We will draft our report outlining our findings and conclusions and will make recommendations for improvements and actions, together with suggested timescales for their implementation, and provide it to you for your review and comment.

By 10 January 2023 - Finalisation of Recommendations and Report and Presentation to Key Stakeholders – within 12 weeks

Within twelve weeks of contract award, we will consider your comments and finalise our recommendations. We propose that our findings are set out in a formal report, supplemented by slides for Jeff to present to the Council's corporate management team. Jeff would be happy to attend a meeting at your offices to present our key findings and recommendations and suggested timescales contained within our report. We anticipate this meeting to last approximately 2 hours.

Any findings could also be presented to the Pension Fund Committee and we propose this would take a similar format in order to increase efficiencies but we can be flexible with our approach to restrict the presentation to recommendations agreed with the corporate management team.