



Purpose: For Information

Committee report

Committee	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE
Date	23 NOVEMBER 2022
Title	ACCESS POOLING UPDATE
Report of	PENSION FUND MANAGER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report updates the committee on activity in respect of the ACCESS pool since the last committee meeting on 27 July 2022.
2. Members are asked to note the content of this report, for information only.

RECOMMENDATION

- | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. That the committee note:<ol style="list-style-type: none">(a) the agenda and summary updates from the informal joint committee briefing on 6 October 2022;(b) the attendance of two Isle of Wight Local Pension Board representatives at joint committee meeting in December 2022. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

CONFIDENTIAL / EXEMPT ITEMS

4. This main body of this report and its appendices are not considered exempt from disclosure, but discussion around some of matters contained therein is deemed to be exempt from disclosure by virtue of paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it “relates to financial or business affairs of any particular person”, (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining confidentiality outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. Disclosing the information could place the council at risk of legal challenge from individuals or other bodies identified in the report.

JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING 6 OCTOBER 2022

5. The ACCESS Joint Committee (JC) meeting was originally scheduled to be held in London on 12 September 2022, but this was postponed following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

6. The meeting was rescheduled for 6 October 2022. Due to the lack of planned attendance by councillors from other authorities, the formal meeting was abandoned, and an informal virtual briefing was held instead. This was attended by Councillor Churchman and the Pension Fund Manager.
7. The agenda for this informal meeting is attached as appendix 1 to this report, and appendix 2 contains a summary of the discussions at the meeting. Updates on significant matters discussed at the meeting or subsequently arising will be provided at the committee meeting.

SCHEME MEMBER REPRESENTATION ON JOINT COMMITTEE

8. While formal agreement to the amendments to the IAA has been delayed, feedback from all monitoring officers to Squire Patton Boggs, the ACCESS legal advisers, is clear that there are no objections to the proposals that relate to scheme member representation (via local pension boards (LPB)) as observers at JC meetings.
9. The March 2022 JC meeting agreed the following protocol for the selection of observers from Local Pension Boards:

It will be for each Local Pension Board to agree the observers from their Local Pension Board who will attend a Joint Committee meeting. Whilst the observers can be drawn from the scheme member representatives, the employer representatives, and independent members of a Local Pension Board, it is desirable that at least one of the observers from a Local Pension Board is a scheme member representative.

10. As the October meeting was informal, no decisions could be made, so there has been no change in the position in respect of the agreement to changes to the IAA. However, the informal arrangements for the attendance of scheme member representatives at JC meetings continues, with Isle of Wight being one of the three funds to attend the December JC meeting.
11. At its meeting on 26 October 2022, the Local Pension Board agreed that the independent chairman and one of the scheme member representatives would attend this meeting. A report will be presented to the board at their next meeting.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Corporate Aims

12. There is nothing contained in this report which directly contributes to the priorities contained in the [Corporate Plan 2021 - 2025](#).

Pension Fund Strategic Aims

13. The primary objective of the fund is to provide pension and lump sum benefits for members on their retirement and/or benefits on death, before or after retirement, for their dependents, in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) regulations and statutory provisions. The committee aims to operate the fund in such a manner that, in normal market conditions, all accrued benefits are fully covered by the value of the fund's assets and that an appropriate level of contributions is agreed by the employer to meet the cost of future benefits accruing.

14. Providing information to the committee on the work of the ACCESS pool and ensuring that the committee is informed of key strategic and operational decisions considered by the Joint Committee fulfils the fund's Investment Governance belief that "the Committee aim to have a good working relationship with the ACCESS pool."

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

15. The Isle of Wight Council Pension Fund pays an equal (1/11th) share of the ACCESS budget. The net contribution for 2021-22 was approximately £95,148; the contribution for 2022-23, which was paid on 1 July 2022, is £124,182.
16. Costs associated with the investment sub funds, including investment manager and Link fees, are allocated between the investing authorities based on the value of the assets invested in the sub-fund.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. The Isle of Wight Council is the administering authority for the Isle of Wight Council Pension Fund. An administering authority is defined in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 as "a [local authority] required to maintain a pension fund under the local government pension scheme regulations".
18. The Pension Fund Committee is a committee under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, with delegated authority to discharge the council's statutory duties in respect of the LGPS.
19. Throughout the ACCESS project, the 11 participating funds have been advised by Squire Patton Boggs, to ensure that appropriate legislative requirements are followed.
20. The council's monitoring officer and section 151 officer have also been engaged in the project as required.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

21. The council, as a public body, is required to meet its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities between people from different groups and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
22. There are no implications for any of the protected characteristics arising from items covered in the report.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

23. Appendix 1: ACCESS Joint Committee agenda 6 October 2022.

24. Appendix 2: ACCESS Joint Committee 6 October 2022 summary update.

Contact Point: Joanna Thistlewood, Pension Fund Manager, ☎ 821000
e-mail jo.thistlewood@iow.gov.uk

CHRIS WARD
*Director of Finance
and s151 officer*

COUNCILLOR CHRIS JARMAN
Chairman of Pension Fund Committee