

Shropshire County Pension Fund

GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Agreed by Pensions Committee on 26 June 2015



SHROPSHIRE COUNTY
PENSION FUND

INTRODUCTION

1. This Statement has been prepared by Shropshire Council (the Administering Authority) to set out the governance compliance statement for the Shropshire County Pension Fund (the Scheme), in accordance with The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (Regulation 55 refers), and its predecessor, Regulation 31 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2008 (as amended).

2. It has been prepared by the administering authority in consultation with appropriate interested persons.

PURPOSE OF GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

3. The regulations on governance compliance statements require an administering authority, after consultation with such persons as they consider appropriate, to prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out ...

- a) whether it delegates its functions, or part of its functions, in relation to maintaining a pension fund to a committee, sub-committee or officer of the authority;
- b) and, if so, it must state:
 - the terms of reference, structure and operational procedures of the delegation;
 - the frequency of any committee/sub-committee meetings;
 - whether the committee/sub-committee includes representatives of employing authorities (including non-scheme employers) or scheme members and, if there are such representatives, whether they have voting rights.
- c) the extent to which delegation, or the absence of a delegation, complies with guidance given by the Secretary of State and, to the extent that it does not so comply, the reasons for not complying.
- d) details of the terms, structure and operational procedures relating to the local pension board established under regulation 106 (local pension boards: establishment).

4. Thus, the policy statement should include information about all of the administering authority's pension fund governance arrangements. Information

about the representation of employers should cover any arrangements for representing admitted body employers (non-scheme employers).

Governance of Shropshire County Pension Fund

5. Under the cabinet structure in local government, management of the pension fund is a non-executive function and this is reflected in the Shropshire Council governance structure that is set out below.

6. The Pensions Committee was established in 1994 with responsibility for all matters relating to the management and administration of the Shropshire County Pension Fund. The Pensions Committee is a standing committee of the Council and is linked to Full Council by virtue of the Chairman or Vice Chairman being a Shropshire Council member.

7. The Shropshire County Pension Fund local Pension Board was established by Shropshire Council in 2015 under the powers of Section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and in accordance with regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. The local Pension Board operates independently of the Pensions Committee, details of which are set out in its terms of reference (summarised below).

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

Pensions Committee (non-executive committee)

The Pensions Committee reports to Full Council. It meets formally at least quarterly and more frequently if formal decisions are required. In between meetings Chairman's approval may be sought.

Terms of Reference:

- a) To advise the Council on the arrangements for the proper administration of the Shropshire County Pension Fund in accordance with the Local Government Regulations 2013 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2009;
- b) To advise employing organisations and employees within the Fund of their benefits, contributions and the financial performance of the Fund;
- c) To advise and assist the Council on the determination of any matters of general policy relating to the investment of the Pension Fund;

- d) To approve the annual report and accounts of the Fund and hold an Annual Meeting.

8. The Pensions Committee formal terms of reference (above) are interpreted as including:

- Admission of employing organisations to the Fund where discretion is permitted;
- Appointment of external advisors and actuaries to assist with the administration of the Fund, and of external managers for the management of the Fund’s portfolio of assets;
- Approval of the periodic formal valuation of the Fund;
- Consideration of the advice of the Council’s external investment advisers and of the Scheme Administrator;
- Determination of the objectives and general investment approach to be adopted by external fund managers;
- Review and monitoring of investment transactions and the overall investment performance of the Fund;
- To develop and implement shareholder policies on corporate governance issues;
- To review and approve on a regular basis the content of the Statement of Investment Principles and to monitor compliance of the investment arrangements with the Statement;
- To review the Funding Strategy Statement in detail at least every three years ahead of the triennial valuations being carried out, in order to inform the valuation process;
- To review and approve on a regular basis the Communications Policy for the Fund;

REPRESENTATION

9. Representation on the Pensions Committee is as follows:

Organisation	Allocation
Shropshire Council	4
Borough of Telford and Wrekin Council (co-opted)	2
Employees (co-opted)	2 (non-voting)
Pensioners (co-opted)	1 (non-voting)

The Administering Authority (Shropshire Council) always holds either the Chairmanship or Vice

Chairmanship. The position of Chairman and Vice Chairman rotate between Shropshire Council and the Borough of Telford & Wrekin on a one year basis.

The Committee is supported by the advice from an independent advisor and investment consultant – one advises on strategic issues and overall investment approach and the investment consultant provide analysis and advice of a technical nature in relation to portfolio construction, interpretation of performance measurement and the monitoring of investment managers.

The role of Scheme Administrator is held by the officer who has responsibilities under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and provides financial (non-investment) advice to the Committee, including advice on financial management, issues of compliance with internal regulations and controls, budgeting and accounting and liaison with independent advisers.

Legal advice is provided by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

The remit for the LGPS vests formal statutory responsibility for the LGPS and fund investment with the administering authority which is answerable for the effective and prudent management of the scheme.

10. The power to co-opt rests with the Council in full assembly and not with committees; although in practice the selection of persons to serve as co-opted members is usually left to committees. The co-opted members from the Borough of Telford & Wrekin are voting members.

11. The Pensions Committee can, if so minded, elect a co-opted member as its Chairman but in this instance the Chairman is unable to:

- attend council meetings and pilot Pension Committee proposals through the full assembly;
- answer questions put to him/her there;
- represent the Pensions Committee on other committees

However, a Shropshire Council Vice-Chairman is able to deputise for the co-opted member Chairman.

REASONS FOR CURRENT REPRESENTATION

12. Myners' first principle states that decisions should only be taken by persons or organisations with the skills, information and resources necessary to take them effectively. Where trustees elect to take investment decisions, they must have sufficient expertise and appropriate training to be able to evaluate critically any advice they take. All members of the Pensions Committee are offered the Employers Organisation training.

The Fund holds an annual training day when members of the Committee are exposed to presentations on topical issues, such as hedge funds, private equity, actuarial valuations, infrastructure etc.

13. In the CIPFA Guidelines relating to the governance regulations, it states that...

'As things stand, Section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972 does not permit the Secretary of State to make regulations which impact on the constitution and membership of local authority committees. There are no plans at present to amend local government law to change the provisions regarding the composition of investment or pension committees. This must be a matter for individual fund administering authorities to consider, reflecting local circumstances and choice. But in exercising that choice, it is important that authorities recognise the desirability of achieving an effective and comprehensive level of stakeholder representation within the LGPS nationally.'

'The challenge for pension fund panels is to find ways of engaging those people with an interest in decisions made without undermining the operation of the Panel. The Funding Strategy Statements will encourage greater emphasis on consultation and if local authority employers contributing to a fund do not have representation on the panel or committee, be it voting or non voting, then there would be a need to demonstrate they were being engaged in other ways.'

For example by the holding of

- *bi-lateral discussions, or similar forums, involving employers and other stakeholders;*
- *an annual general meeting for all employers;*
- *a triennial meeting between all employers and the actuary to discuss the results of the actuarial valuation'.*

14. The Myners principle, the CIPFA guidance and the statutory position have led the Council as administering authority to conclude that current representation provides the appropriate balance between accountability and inclusion.

LOCAL PENSION BOARD

Introduction and Role

15. The Shropshire County Pension Fund local Pension Board was established by Shropshire Council in 2015 under the powers of Section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and in accordance with regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013.

16. The role of the local Pension Board as defined by regulation 106 (1) of the LGPS Regulations, is to assist Shropshire Council, the Administering Authority, as Scheme Manager;

- to secure compliance with the LGPS Regulations and any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the LGPS
- to secure compliance with requirements imposed in relation to the LGPS by the Pensions Regulator
- to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the LGPS for the Shropshire County Pension Fund.

The Council considers this to mean that the Pension Board is providing oversight of these matters and, accordingly, the Pension Board is not a decision making body in relation to the management of the Pension Fund but merely makes recommendations to assist in such management.

In undertaking its role, the Pension Board will ensure it:

- is done effectively and efficiently
- complies with relevant legislation and
- is done by having due regard and in the spirit of the Code of Practice on the governance and

administration of public service pension schemes issued by the Pension Regulator and any other relevant statutory or non-statutory guidance.

Composition and Appointment

17. The Pension Board shall consist of 4 voting members and be constituted as follows:

- i) 2 employer representatives
- ii) 2 scheme member representatives.

Employer representatives shall be office holders or senior employees of employers of the Fund or have experience of representing scheme employers in a similar capacity. Subject to restrictions as set out in the LGPS Regulations, Employer representatives can also include elected members. Member representatives shall be scheme members of the Shropshire County Pension Fund and have the capacity to represent scheme members of the Fund.

18. An independent member and substitute members may also be included in the composition of the Pension Board at the discretion of the Appointment Panel. Substitute members for employer and scheme member representatives will have voting rights but an independent member or any other members appointed to the Pension Board by the Appointment Panel will not.

19. The Appointment Panel, made up of the Legal Monitoring Officer and the Head of Finance, Governance & Assurance at Shropshire Council (or their deputies) will determine any eligibility and/or selection criteria that will apply to Pension Board members having due regard to the LGPS Regulations and any other relevant Code of Practice and guidance (statutory or otherwise). The selection process for representative members will be:

- Employer representatives – each employer will be invited to nominate one representative to represent employers on the Pension Board.
- Scheme member representatives – all active, deferred and pensioner scheme members will be invited to submit applications to join the Pension Board.

The applications and nominations will then be subject to a selection process determined and carried out by the Appointment Panel. The Chair and Deputy Chair will be determined by the Appointment Panel.

The term of office will be for 4 years with a possible extension for up to 2 years.

Former or existing members of the Pension Board can be reappointed (under the appointment procedures) with no limit on the number of terms they may have.

Operational Procedures

20. Full details of the operational procedures are set out in the local Pension Board's Terms of Reference.

This includes:

- circumstances where membership may be terminated prior to the end of the member's term of office
- Duties and role of the chair insofar as they:
 - i. will ensure all meetings are productive and effective
 - ii. ensure opportunity for all views to be heard, and
 - iii. seek to reach consensus and that decisions are properly put to vote where necessary.
- A quorum constituting as 2 members, made up of 1 employer and 1 member representative.
- The reporting of any concerns over a decision made by the Pension Committee to the Pension Committee subject to the agreement of at least 50% of voting Pension Board members if all voting members are present. If not all voting members are present then the agreement should be of all voting members who are present, where the meeting remains quorate.
- Escalation route and procedures if necessary, regarding a breach of regulation / the regulator's code previously reported to the Pensions Committee but not rectified in a reasonable time period.
- Meetings will normally be held at the offices of Shropshire Council and will be a minimum of twice in each calendar year.
- Compliance with Shropshire Council's Conflict of Interest Policy including

declarations of interest of members which may lead to a conflict.

- The ability to access advice and information, either from Fund officers, or other professional advisers as appropriate.
- The requirement of members to be able to demonstrate their appropriate knowledge and understanding and to refresh and keep their knowledge up to date. In addition to the requirements under the Public Service Pensions Act, it includes compliance with the Pension Fund's Training Policy insofar as it relates to Pension Board members.
- A requirement for members to have the highest standards of conduct in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
- The right for members of the Pensions Committee to attend in an observer capacity.
- The publication of information relating to the local Pensions Board in accordance with the Public Service Pensions Act requirements.
- Details of reimbursement, remuneration and allowances.

DELEGATION TO OFFICERS

21. Under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 the Shropshire Fund was required to formulate a policy on local discretions. These discretions were originally approved by Pensions Committee in March 1998 and have been updated following subsequent regulation changes. The latest version taking into account LGPS Regulations 2013 is listed in Appendix A.

22. In addition to these local fund-wide discretions there are certain employer discretions, which under regulations, employers have the authority to determine. These discretions are employer specific.

ARRANGEMENTS OUTSIDE OF FORMAL GOVERNANCE

The Council is committed to the widest inclusion of all stakeholders in consultation and communication

outside of the formal governance arrangements. The arrangements include:

WITH EMPLOYING AUTHORITIES

23. The Fund's primary long term investment objective is to achieve and maintain a funding level at, or close to, 100% of the Fund's estimated liabilities; and within this to endeavour to maintain stable employers' contribution rates. Employing Authorities are pro-actively consulted on the Funding Strategy Statement on which the valuation and employer contribution rates are based.

24. The ratio of membership from the various employing authorities in the Shropshire County Pension Fund is:

Organisation	Contributors %
Shropshire Council	48
Borough of Telford and Wrekin Council (co-opted)	27
Parish / Town Councils	1
Other Scheme Employers	14
Admitted Bodies	10
Total	100

The Shropshire County Pension Fund involves all employers, irrespective of size, in consultations and communications.

The information to be supplied by employers to enable the Administering authority to discharge its functions is outlined in the Pensions Administration Strategy Statement and can be found on the fund's website.

25. Over the last decade, consultation with employing authorities on pension fund investment, actuarial matters and proposed central government changes to the regulations has evolved. A large step forward was afforded by the introduction of Statements of Investment Principles and Funding Strategy Statements, the consultation process surrounding them, and their accessibility to the Council's web site.

26. All employers are invited to regular employer meetings which provide information on changes in regulations, investment matters and actuarial valuations. All employing authorities are also kept abreast of events, by e-mail, and they are encouraged to get in touch if they have questions.

27. The Fund undertakes annual monitoring of its actuarial valuation position. Employer organisations are kept up to date of the latest position and its likely impact on employer contributions at the next formal valuation. At triennial valuations the Scheme Actuary presents to the employers meeting to explain changes in the funding level and implications on employer contribution rates. Employers meetings are also used to discuss the Funding Strategy Statements and data requirements for FRS17.

28. An annual meeting is held each year to which all employers are invited. The meeting outlines investment performance and any changes to the Fund's investment strategy as well as regulation changes and administration issues. A Fund Manager also presents at the meeting and allows employers and scheme members the opportunity to ask questions.

WITH SCHEME MEMBERS

29. Employees are represented on the Pensions Committee by two non-voting members (both Union members) who have an active role in the selection of managers, performance monitoring, investment strategy and responses to consultations on regulation changes. Pensioners are represented by a non-voting pensioner member.

30. All employees, as well as representatives from employer organisations, are invited to the Annual Meeting each year. All pensioners and deferred members also receive an invite to the Annual Meeting which is usually held in November in the county. The meeting is filmed and made available online to enable members unable to attend in person to watch. The meeting is well attended and provides a useful opportunity for members to meet their Employee or Pensioner Representative, learn about the fund and ask questions.

31. Where possible every member of the scheme receives Pensions Newsletters. The fund's annual report and a financial summary of the scheme are published on The Pension Fund's web site and in September an email notifications (where an email address is held) is issued notifying the website update. The full communication policy can be found on the website. This outlines the fund approach on communicating with members, representatives of members, prospective members and employing authorities including the format, frequency and method of communications.

The Pension Fund's website includes further information on:

- Full annual report and financial summary
- Statement of Investment Principles
- Myners Compliance
- Funding Strategy Statement
- Communication Policy
- Actuarial Valuation
- Investments
- Pensioner meetings

32. The Pensions Section has a very good informal working relationship with the unions, and is always there to assist with any problems in understanding the regulations.

33. In light of the requirements following the LGPS Governance changes emerging from the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, Fund Officers are currently reviewing the Training Policies in order to ensure that all stakeholders are well equipped to carry out their duties as effectively and efficiently as possible. The Training Plan includes:

- Pension Fund Officers and Managers
- Pensions Committee Members
- Local Pensions Board Members.

Once this review has been completed, the updated Training Policy will be adopted and steps taken to ensure all parties meet their requirements.

COMPLIANCE AGAINST BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

34. The current governance arrangements which were established in 1994 and updated since to take account of the latest regulatory change, adhere to the best practice guidance given by the Secretary of State.

The extent to which delegation complies with the best practice guidance is shown in Appendix B.

APPENDIX A: SHROPSHIRE COUNTY PENSION FUND POLICY ON LOCAL DISCRETIONS

- **The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 [prefix R]**
- **The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations 2015**
- **The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 [prefix TP]**
- **The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 [prefix A]**
- **The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 (as amended) [prefix B]**
- **The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 [prefix T]**
- **The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended) [prefix L]**

Regulation	Discretion	Guideline	Delegated To
A52 (2) TP17 (5) TO (8) R40 (2) R43 (2) R46 (2) R82 (2) LGPS 1997 38 (1) & 155 (4) R17 (12)	Payment of death grant	The death grant will normally be paid to or amongst nominated beneficiaries. Where no nomination has been made, we would normally pay a death grant to the deceased’s personal representatives (in that capacity). Where both of these options are seen to be inappropriate or impossible perhaps because nominees have died, circumstances appear to have changed since the nomination was made or other persons claiming some or all of the death grant or would seem to have a claim, we may pay the grant as we see fit to or between surviving nominees or personal representatives or any person appearing to us to have been a relative or dependant of the deceased at any time.	Scheme Administrator
R17 (12)	Decide to whom any AVC/SCAVC monies (including life assurance monies) are to be paid on death of the member	The approach for this discretion will be the same as stated above in ‘Payment of death grant’	Scheme Administrator
Rsch1 & TP 17 (9)	Decide to treat child as being in continuous education or vocational training despite a break	To be reinstated where break does not exceed one academic year	Scheme Administrator
B27 (5)	Split of children’s	To be paid in equal proportions to the children	Scheme

	pensions		Administrator
A52 (A) B27 (5)	Payment of children's pensions to parent or guardian	To be paid to child and only paid to parent or guardian in exceptional circumstances.	Scheme Administrator
R30(8) TP3 (1), TPSch2, paras 2 (1) and 2 (2) B30 (5) and B30A (5)	Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits which a member voluntarily draws before normal pension age including any actuarial reduction on pre and/or post April 2014 benefits	Due to the potential costs of waiving actuarial reduction it is recommended that it be applied only on strong compassionate grounds e.g. where evidence shows that long-term care is being given to a dependent relative (solely dependent on the employee) and that this is likely to continue for many years. However, the cost of pension strain will be given significant relevance in reaching a decision.	Scheme administrator (where Employer has become defunct)
TPSch 2, paras 1 (2) and 2 (2)	Whether to 'switch on' the 85 year rule for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60	The Fund will not agree to apply the 85 year rule where members choose to voluntarily draw their benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 except in circumstances where the interests of the employer has been considered and it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case - will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward, and - will require the approval of the Scheme Administrator.	Scheme administrator (where Employer has become defunct)
R30 (8)	Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement	The Fund will not agree to flexible retirement except in circumstances where the interests of the employer considers and it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case - will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward, - will set out whether, in addition to any pre 1 April 2008 benefits, the member will be permitted, as part of the flexible retirement agreement, to take a) all, some or none of their 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2014 benefits, and /or b) all, some or none of their post 31 March 2014 benefits, and - will require the approval of the scheme administrator	Scheme administrator (where Employer has become defunct)

B39 & T14 (13) R34 (1)	Commutation of small pensions	To be commuted in all cases where annual value is below Inland Revenue limits other than in exceptional circumstances. The member must make a formal request including the exceptional circumstance they wish to be taken into account. Each formal request to not commute benefits will be assessed on its circumstances and merits	Scheme Administrator
A56 (2) R 36 (3)	Medical requirements	To be based on advice from the Council's Occupational Health Physician or one of the doctors on the list as approved by the pensions committee for the giving of certificates regarding permanent incapacity.	Scheme Administrator
LGPS97 - 60 (5)	Minimum level of Additional Voluntary Contribution	NONE	Scheme Administrator
R71 (1)	Employer's Contributions	To be paid with employees contribution by the 19 th of month following the month to which they relate. If contributions are overdue by a month or more than interest may be charged depending on the individual circumstances.	Scheme Administrator
A28 (2) TP15 (1) (d) A28 (2)	Charge for estimate of transfer of AVC to main scheme	First calculation free thereafter £25 per estimate	Scheme Administrator
LGPS97 - 92	Recovery of Contribution Equivalent Premium	To be recovered in all cases permitted by the regulations	Scheme Administrator
A83 (9) R100 (7)	Acceptance of transfer value	To be refused if insufficient to meet Guaranteed Minimum Pension liability	Scheme Administrator
R100(68)	Extend normal time limit for acceptance of a transfer value beyond 12 months from joining the LGPS	The Fund will only extend the 12 month time limit within which a scheme member must make an election to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS after joining the LGPS: - where the member asked for transfer investigations to be commenced within 12 months of joining the LGPS but a quotation of what the transfer value will purchase in the LGPS has not been provided to the member within 11 months of joining the LGPS. The time limit for such a member to	T

		<p>make a formal election to transfer pension rights into the LGPS will be extended to one month beyond the date of the letter issued by the Pension Fund administering authority notifying the Scheme member of the benefits the transfer will buy in the LGPS;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where the available evidence indicates the member made an election within 12 months of joining the LGPS, but the election was not received by the Pension Fund administering authority (e.g. the election form was lost in the post); - where the available evidence indicates the member had not been informed of the 12 month time limit due to maladministration. - The Funds decision would also be to support employers decision where is reasonable 	
Financial Rules of the Administering Authority, Shropshire Council.	Overpayment of pension	Overpayments of less than £100 not to be recovered where they occur during the month of death and recovery is likely to cause hardship or be impractical.	Scheme Administrator
R69 (1)	Decide frequency of payments to be made over to Fund by employers and decide form and frequency of information to accompany payments	All payments must be made by the 19 th of the month following the month they were deducted. The formal procedure employers must adhere to is set out in the Administration Strategy Statement.	Scheme Administrator
A60 (8) R76 (4)	Procedure to be followed by Admin Authority when exercising its stage two IDRP functions	Full procedure can be found on: www.shropshirecountypensionfund.co.uk	Scheme Administrator
R100 (68)	Extend normal time limit for acceptance of a transfer value beyond 12 months from joining the LGPS	The fund will generally support employers who wish to allow an employee to transfer in pension rights outside of the standard 12 month election period. However, where the Fund considers that such a transfer would have a significantly adverse effect on an individual employers funding position and/or there is a possibility that the additional liability will fall to a sponsoring employer or some	Scheme Administrator

		other employing authority a late transfer will not be permitted.	
LGPS97 - 109 & 110 (4) (b) TP3 (13) A70 (1) A71 (4) (c) T12	Abatement of pensions following re-employment	From the 1 June 2006 the abatement and suspension of pension policy operated by the Council changed and since this date no adjustments are required to funded pensions in respect of re-employment, regardless of the level of earnings. This policy applies to the funded element of the pension only and not the added year's compensation. This will still be subject to adjustment as per the regulations.	Scheme Administrator
B10 (2) TP3 (6) TP4 (6)(c) TP8 (4) TP10 (2) a TP17 (2)(b) Tsch1 L23(9)	Where a member dies before making an election of average of 3 years pay for final pay purposes.	Election to be made by the Fund on behalf of the deceased member.	Scheme Administrator
A52 A B27 (5) R83	Payments for persons (other than an eligible child) incapable of managing their affairs	If it appears that a person (other than an eligible child as defined in the appropriate regulations is entitled to the payment of benefits under the Scheme but is, by reason of mental disorder or otherwise, incapable of managing his or her affairs, taking regard to the circumstances of the case and medical guidance where appropriate the following will be considered; (a) paying benefits or any part of them to a person having care of the person entitled, or such other person as the Scheme Administrator may determine, to be applied for the benefit of the person entitled as the Scheme Administrator may direct, or (b) applying the benefits in such manner as the Scheme Administrator may determine for the benefit of the person entitled, or his/her beneficiaries and is authorised to implement the Regulation subject to any third parties who are not the legal partner of the pension benefit recipient being required to provide Power of Attorney where the annual pension payable exceeds £1000 (linked to CPI from 2014); in cases where the annual pension benefit is below £1000, medical and documentary evidence as applied for legal partners would be deemed acceptable.	Scheme Administrator
B25	Evidence required to	A signed declaration form is required confirming	Scheme

RSch1 TP17 (9)(b)	determine financial dependence of co-habiting partner	the conditions which have been met and supported by the appropriate evidence.	Administrator
TSch 1 & L23 (9) B42 (1) (c) R49 (1) (c)	In the absence of an election from the member, which benefit is to be paid where the member would be entitled to a benefit under 2 or more regulations in respect of the same period of Scheme membership	Benefit which is more beneficial to member to be used.	Scheme Administrator
31 (2)	Recharging payments to employers for annual compensation	A 1% handling fee of the total recharge of compensation being paid on behalf of the Employer, will be levied.	Scheme Administrator
R36 (3)	Approve medical advisors used by employers (for ill health benefits)	The medical advisors used by the employers for opinion on ill health benefits must meet the requirements set out in the LGPS regulations and have been approved by the Pensions Committee.	Scheme Administrator
TPSch 2, para 2 (3)	Whether to require any strain on Fund costs to be paid 'up front' by employing authority following flexible retirement or release of benefits before age 60	All strain is required to be paid up front. The process is outlined in 'Administration Strategy Statement'. The Fund may agree, on request from an Employer, to an alternative repayment period if exceptional circumstances are shown.	Scheme Administrator
R16 (1)	Whether to turn down a request to pay an APC/SCAPC over a period of time where it would be impractical to allow such a request (e.g where the sum being paid is very small and could be paid as a single payment)	Requests to pay an APC/SCAPC via a lump sum will be refused if cost is less than £50.	Scheme Administrator

APPENDIX B: GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE

STATEMENT

The best practice guidelines on pension fund governance that has been issued by Communities and Local Government and the extent of the Council's compliance with each of the guidelines is set out below.

1. STRUCTURE

a) The management of the administration of benefits and strategic management of fund assets clearly rests with the main committee established by the appointing council.

Fully compliant

The Council delegates the management of the Shropshire County Pension Fund to the Pensions Committee.

b) That representatives of participating LGPS employers, admitted bodies and scheme members (including pensioner and deferred members) are members of either the main or secondary committee established to underpin the work of the main committee.

Fully compliant

The Pensions Committee includes a representative from Shropshire Council and Borough of Telford and Wrekin Council. Representatives of employees and pensioners are also members of the Pension Committee.

c) That where a secondary committee or panel has been established, the structure ensures effective communication across both levels.

Not applicable.

The Shropshire County Pension Fund does not have any secondary committee or panel. It is felt that including all members including employee and pensioner representatives on the main Pensions Committee is more inclusive.

d) That where a secondary committee or panel has been established, at least one seat on the main committee is allocated for a member from the secondary committee or panel.

Not applicable

The Shropshire County Pension Fund does not have any secondary committee or panel. It is felt that including all members including employee and pensioner representatives on the main Pensions Committee is more inclusive.

2. REPRESENTATION

a) That all key stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to be represented within the main committee or advisory panel. These include:

- i. employing authorities (including non-scheme employers, eg admitted bodies)*
- ii. scheme members (including deferred and pensioner scheme members),*
- iii. independent professional advisors*
- iv. expert advisors (on an ad-hoc basis)*

Fully compliant

The Pension Committee includes representatives from its main employers which represent 75% of active members. The Committee includes two co-opted employee representatives and a pensioner representative. The Committee is supported by the advice of an independent advisor and investment consultant.

b) That where lay members sit on a main or secondary committee, they are treated equally in terms of access to papers and meetings, training and are given full opportunity to contribute to the decision making process, with or without voting rights.

Fully compliant

All Pension Committee members have equal access to all papers and meetings, and are able to participate in training, and contribute to the Committee's decision-making process.

3. SELECTION AND ROLE OF LAY MEMBERS

a) That committee or panel members are made fully aware of the status, role and function they are required to perform on either a main or secondary committee.

Fully compliant

All Pension Committee members are given training on their responsibilities and are aware of the terms of reference and remit of the Pensions Committee.

- b) That at the start of any meeting, committee members are invited to declare any financial or pecuniary interest related to specific matters on the agenda

Fully compliant

All Pension Committee members are invited to declare any financial or pecuniary interest related to specific matters on the agenda at the start of each committee meeting.

4. Voting

- a) The policy of individual administering authorities on voting rights is clear and transparent, including the justification for not extending voting rights to each body or group represented on main LGPS committees.

Fully compliant

The elected councillor representatives, from Shropshire Council and Borough of Telford and Wrekin Council representative all have voting rights. The Constitution of the Administering Authority requires voting members to be democratically elected. The employee and pensioner representatives are therefore co-opted non-voting members of the Committee.

5. TRAINING/ FACILITY TIME/ EXPENSES

- a) That in relation to the way in which statutory and related decisions are taken by the administering authority, there is a clear policy on training, facility time and reimbursement of expenses for members involved in the decision-making process.

Fully compliant

The Pensions Committee hold an Annual Training day to which all Committee members and substitute members are invited. Training is also provided to new members and on an ad hoc basis as required. All Pensions Committee members are covered by their

respective Council's scheme for reimbursement of expenses for committee members.

- b) That where such a policy exists, it applies equally to all members of committees, sub-committees, advisory panels or any other form of secondary forum.

Fully Compliant

All Pensions Committee members have equal access to training and reimbursement of expenses.

6. MEETINGS (FREQUENCY/QUORUM)

- a) That an administering authority's main committee or committees meet at least quarterly.

Fully compliant

The Pensions Committee meets quarterly. Additional meetings are arranged for specific items of business as required.

- b) That an administering authority's secondary committee or panel meet at least twice a year and is synchronised with the dates when the main committee sits.

Not applicable

The Shropshire County Pension Fund does not have any secondary committee or panel. It is felt that having all members including employee and pensioner representatives on the main Pensions Committee is more inclusive.

- c) That administering authorities who do not include lay members in their formal governance arrangements, provide a forum outside of those arrangements by which the interests of key stakeholders can be represented

Fully compliant

The Fund includes employee and pensioner representatives on its main Committee. The Fund also hold an Annual Meeting to which all employers, employees, deferred members and pensioners are invited.

7. ACCESS TO INFORMATION, DOCUMENTS AND ADVICE

- a) That subject to any rules in the Councils constitution, all members of main and secondary committees or panels have equal access to committee papers, documents and advice that fails to be considered at meetings of the main committee.

Fully compliant

All Pensions Committee members have equal access to all papers and meetings.

8. SCOPE

- a) That administering authorities have taken steps to bring wider scheme issues within the scope of their governance arrangements

Fully compliant

The Pensions Committee terms of reference are multi-disciplined and include the monitoring of investments, scheme administration and general scheme issues.

9. PUBLICITY

- a) That administering authorities have published details of their governance arrangements in such a way that stakeholders with an interest in the way in which the scheme is governed, can express an interest in wanting to be part of those arrangements.

Fully compliant

The Pension Fund Governance Policy Statement is published on the Administering Authority's web-site and hard copies are available on request.