Shropshire Council

Committee and Date

Pensions Board

23 January 2026

PENSIONS BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2025
In the Council Chamber, Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury SY3 8HQ
10am -

Responsible Officer: Michelle Dulson
Email: michelle.dulson@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257719

Present
Member representatives: John Hall (Vice-Chair), Rebecca Summerlin (remote)
Employer representatives: Liz Furey (remote), Paul Partridge

Following the retirement of the Chair, the Vice-Chair chaired the meeting.

13 **Apologies**

An apology had been received from Madeline Murphy (Employer representative)

14 **Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

15 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

16 **Public Question Time**

A public question had been received from Mrs Helen Sargeant. The Pensions Administration Manager read the question, and the Pensions Investment and Responsible Investment Manager read the response.

A copy of the question and response is available on the webpage for the meeting.

17 **Administration and Regulatory Updates**

The Board received the report of the Pensions Administration Manager – copy attached to the signed Minutes – which provided Members with the latest administration and regulatory updates affecting the Local Government Pensions Scheme.

The Pensions Administration Manager introduced and amplified her report which updated Members on the work undertaken by the pensions administration team including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the successful delivery of annual benefit statements, progress on pensions dashboard connectivity, regulatory changes, and upcoming access to the Local Government Pension Scheme for councillors.

The Pensions Administration Manager informed the meeting that the administration team successfully distributed annual benefit statements to all active and deferred members by the statutory deadline of 31 August, ensuring compliance and member engagement. She went on to explain that work was ongoing to connect to the pensions dashboard, involving technical collaboration with software suppliers and continuous data cleansing to ensure readiness for the dashboard's go-live, with anticipated increased member engagement and queries. Although no official start date had been given, all funds needed to be connected to the dashboard by October 2026.

The Pensions Administration Manager provided updates in relation to the response to the inheritance tax consultation, which now excluded most death benefits from inheritance tax, the revival of the Pensions Commission, along with a review of state pension age, and the announcement that councillors would regain access to the LGPS, pending further consultation and implementation.

In response to a query about KPIs, the Pensions Administration Manager explained that the team were reviewing customer KPI targets to make them more realistic, and also reorganising workflow by splitting tasks based on skill sets and capacity rather than a multifunctional alpha-split in order to manage workflows more effectively.

In terms of regulatory breaches, it was confirmed that instances of late deficit contribution payments were typically due to timing issues with payroll providers, with reminders issued to employers to ensure compliance with payment deadlines and they were aware that if the deadline date fell on a weekend, then payment should be received by the Friday before.

Clarification was provided that it was lump sum death grants, not spouses' pensions, that were considered for inheritance tax, although most members were unlikely to be affected due to the typical values involved.

In response to a further query, the Pensions Administration Manager reported that the fund was implementing an address tracing tool integrated with the Altair system to update member records, focusing on deferred members who had lost contact, with plans for an annual refresh.

In response to concerns around the significant drop in reported website visits, the Pensions Administration Manager attributed this to changes in cookie settings whereby visits were only recorded if users accept cookies, and she discussed ongoing efforts to increase online portal registrations and along with plans to send more information via the portal to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

18 **Pensions Committee Reports and Feedback**

The reports considered by the Pensions Committee at its meeting on 20 June 2025 and 19 September 2025 had been received by the Board.

The Pensions Administration Manager reported that Committee members had expressed concerns about the length of reports and agendas, Officers explained that the reports aimed to provide sufficient detail to allow the Committee to make informed decisions. Board Members felt the length of Board reports were ideal and gave enough of an understanding to allow them to ask questions.

19 **Date of Next Meeting**

The Chairman reported that the next meeting would be held on Friday 23 January 2026 at 10.00am.

20 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with the provision of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations and Paragraphs 3 of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following items.

21 **Exempt Minutes (Exempted by Category 3)**

RESOLVED:

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

22 **Economic Update (Exempted by Category 3)**

The Board received the exempt report of the Pensions Investment and Responsible Investment Manager which provided an update on the general economic conditions since the last update, along with the impact on the pension fund investments in the first five months of 2025/26.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report and Appendix A be noted.

23 **Pensions Committee Exempt Reports and Feedback (Exempted by Category 3)**

The exempt reports considered by the Pensions Committee at its meetings on 20 June 2025 and 19 September 2025 had been received by the Board.

24 **Governance Update (Exempted by Category 3)**

The Board received the report of the Pensions Administration Manager which provided an update on the Breaches of LGPS regulations recorded between April 2025 and June 2025 affecting the Shropshire County Pension Fund. Updates on all other governance issues were also included within the report along with an update on the number of stage 1 and 2 appeals which had been received under the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) and also included the updated version of the Terms of Reference for the Board.

RESOLVED:

To note the contents of the report, along with the contents of Appendices A – C.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....