



**Shropshire  
County  
Pension Fund**

# Business Plan 2026-2029



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## Version History

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Version Number	Revision Date	Author(s)	Change
V0.1			First draft

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## Background

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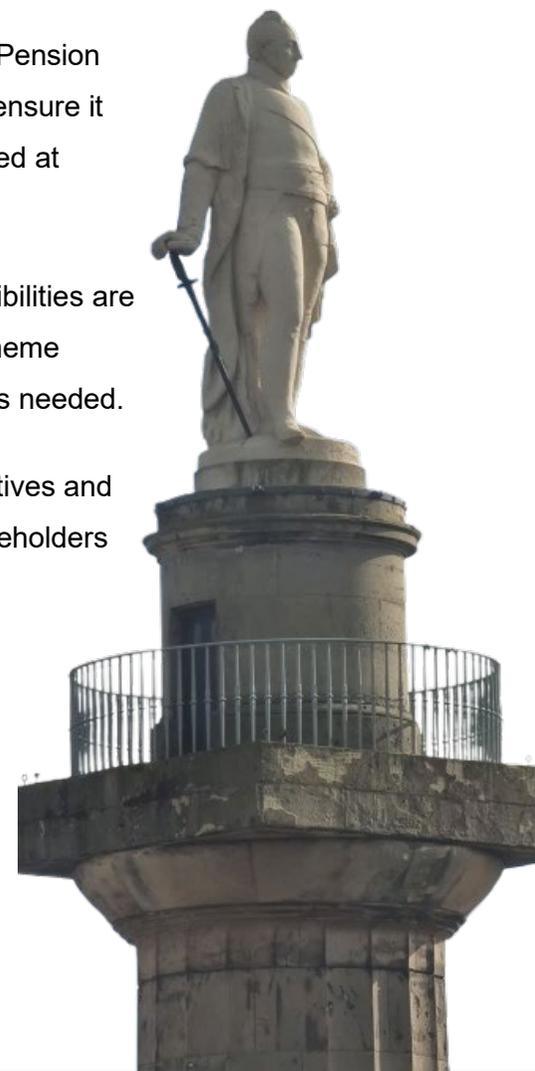
This Business Plan outlines the operations of the Shropshire County Pension Fund, a part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) with over 51,400 members—15,976 of whom are currently receiving pensions. The fund invests to ensure it can provide pension payments when members retire. As of March 31, 2025, the fund's investment portfolio was valued at £2.626 billion.

Shropshire Council serves as the administering authority for the Pension Fund. Oversight and management responsibilities are delegated to the Pensions Committee, which consists of nine members: six councillors, two representatives from scheme members, and one representative for pensioner employers. The Committee convenes quarterly or more frequently as needed.

Supporting the Fund's oversight and governance is the Local Pension Board, made up of three employer representatives and three member representatives. The composition of both the Committee and the Board ensures that all essential stakeholders have representation.

The Section 151 Officer oversees the preparation of the Fund's statement of accounts, adhering to the CIPFA code of practice for local accounting in the UK.

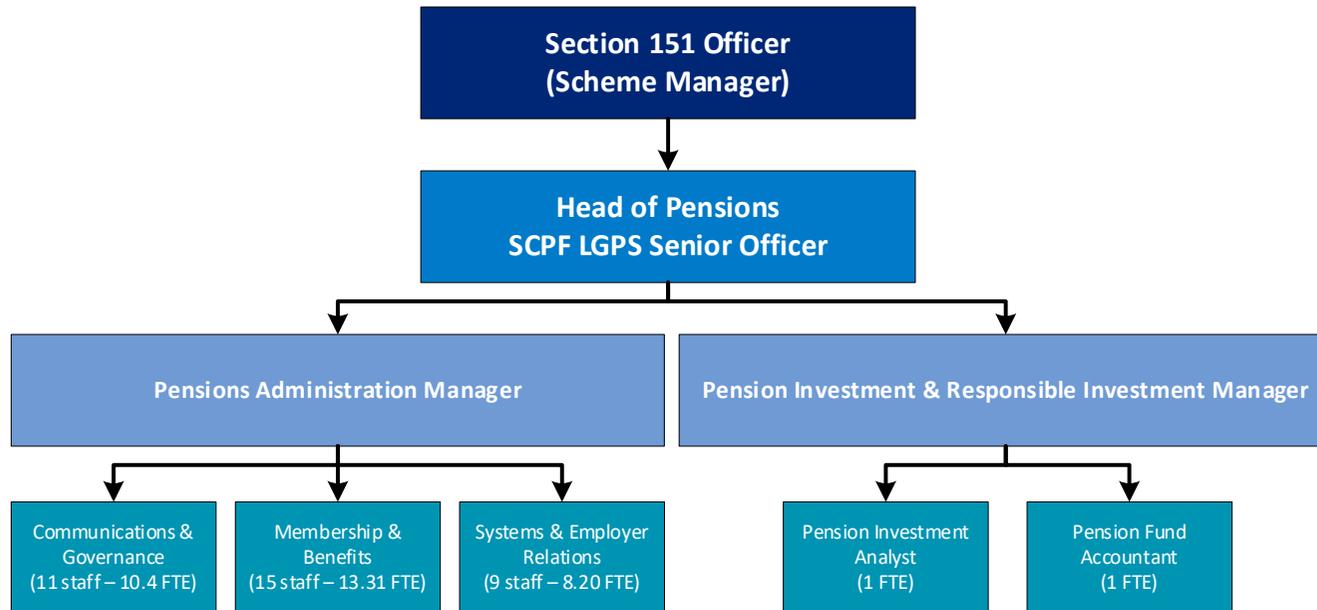
Day-to-day administration is handled by the Shropshire County Pension Fund, with responsibilities delegated by the Section 151 Officer to the Head of Pensions—LGPS Senior Officer. There are 35 full-time equivalent staff dedicated to the Fund's administration and governance.



The Shropshire County Pension Fund is managed in collaboration with key suppliers, including its actuary (Mercers), bank (NatWest), investment custodian (Northern Trust), and administration software provider (Heywood). Further details on suppliers and investment management are available in the [Annual Report](#).

The Fund is one of 15 funds that make up the LGPS Central pool. LGPS Central Ltd is a Financial Conduct Authority regulated manager controlling approximately £100bn of assets as at 1st April 2026. From the 1st April 2026 LGPS Central Ltd are responsible for the oversight of all the Funds' assets.

The Pensions Committee is responsible for setting the Funds objectives and strategic asset allocation. This includes the Funds views on responsible investment and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors. The fund is a signatory to Stewardship Code 2020 and follows the Taskforce for Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) principles, in publishing its annual climate risk reports along with its own climate strategy.



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## Introduction

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The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a national pension scheme administered locally by Shropshire Council, providing current and future benefits for over 51,400 scheme members.

The Fund operates under the governance of the Superannuation Act 1972 and the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

Administration of the Fund adheres to the following secondary legislation:

- The LGPS Regulations 2013 (as amended)
- The LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016
- The Public Services Pensions (Information about Benefits) Directions 2014

As of 31 March 2025, the Fund comprised 265 employer organisations, including Shropshire Council, consisting of 107 scheme employers, 42 scheduled/designated employers, and 116 admitted employers. Membership figures at this date were as follows:



Funded through contributions and investment returns, active member contributions are set in accordance with the LGPS Regulations 2013 and range from 5.5% to 12.5% of pensionable pay.

Employer contributions are determined via triennial actuarial valuations, with the most recent conducted on 31 March 2025. Employer rates range from 0% to 27.2%, and some employers also remit annualised cash payments toward deficit recovery.

The Fund was valued at £2.626 billion as of 31 March 2025. Strategic asset allocation was determined in June 2023 post-actuarial valuation, details of which are available in the Investment Strategy Statement (ISS) on the Fund's website. This allocation will be reviewed for committee approval in June 2026. Actual allocations may vary in response to investment manager decisions and market movements.

The purpose of this plan is to:

- Set out the long-term vision of the Shropshire County Pension Fund, and the context within which it operates.
- Describe the Fund's main objectives.
- Provide a basis for monitoring performance and reviewing progress (RAG RATING).
- Provide stakeholders, partners, and customers with a clear vision of what they can expect from the Fund and a basis on which it can be held to account.

The key objectives of the Fund include:

- **Governance:** To prioritise stakeholder interests, act with integrity, and ensure accountability. This is supported by a robust governance framework addressing risk management, compliance, and resourcing.



- **Investments and Funding:** The principal long-term investment objective is to achieve and sustain a funding level approximating 100% of estimated liabilities, whilst maintaining stable employer contribution rates. Employers are consulted on the funding strategy statement underpinning valuations and contribution rates, most recently as part of the 2025 valuation process.
- **Climate Change and Responsible Investment:** The Fund emphasises responsible investment, maintaining a Climate Change Strategy aligned with net zero targets by 2050 in accordance with the Paris Accord. The Shropshire County Pension Fund is a signatory to the UK Stewardship Code and has published annual Climate Risk and TCFD reports since December 2020.
- **Administration and Communication:** The Fund strives for excellence in administration by collaborating with partners, regularly reviewing processes, ensuring accuracy in income and payments, and providing clear communication and reliable reporting.

The Business Plan outlines the Fund's strategic objectives for the coming years and guides Committee and Board activities. Supporting documents include:

- Administration Strategy Statement
- Climate Change Strategy
- Communication Policy
- Funding Strategy Statement
- Governance Compliance Statement
- Investment Strategy Statement
- Reporting Breaches Policy
- Training Policy

These policies are made publicly available on the Fund's website <http://www.shropshirecountypensionfund.co.uk> and are reviewed annually by the Pension Committee and Board.

## Key Stakeholders

Internal	External	Private Sector Partners	Cross Border Partnerships/ Other
Shropshire Council's Section 151 officer	Pension Fund members	Mercer	LGPS Central Ltd
Shropshire Council- Finance team	Prospective Pension Fund members	Grant Thornton	Central Pool Partner Funds
Shropshire Council- Transaction services	Employers	Investment Managers and Independent Advisor	
Pension Fund Committee	Prospective employers	Hymans Robertson	
Local Pension Board	Trade Unions	Northern Trust	
	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government/ Department for Work and Pensions/ Treasury	Heywood Pension Technologies	
	The Pensions Regulator	Unit 4	
	Scheme Advisory Board	Prudential	
	The Pensions Ombudsman	AON and Independent Advisor	
	Pension Fund members' representatives	Barnet Waddingham	
	Pensions Employer Forum		

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## Horizon Scanning

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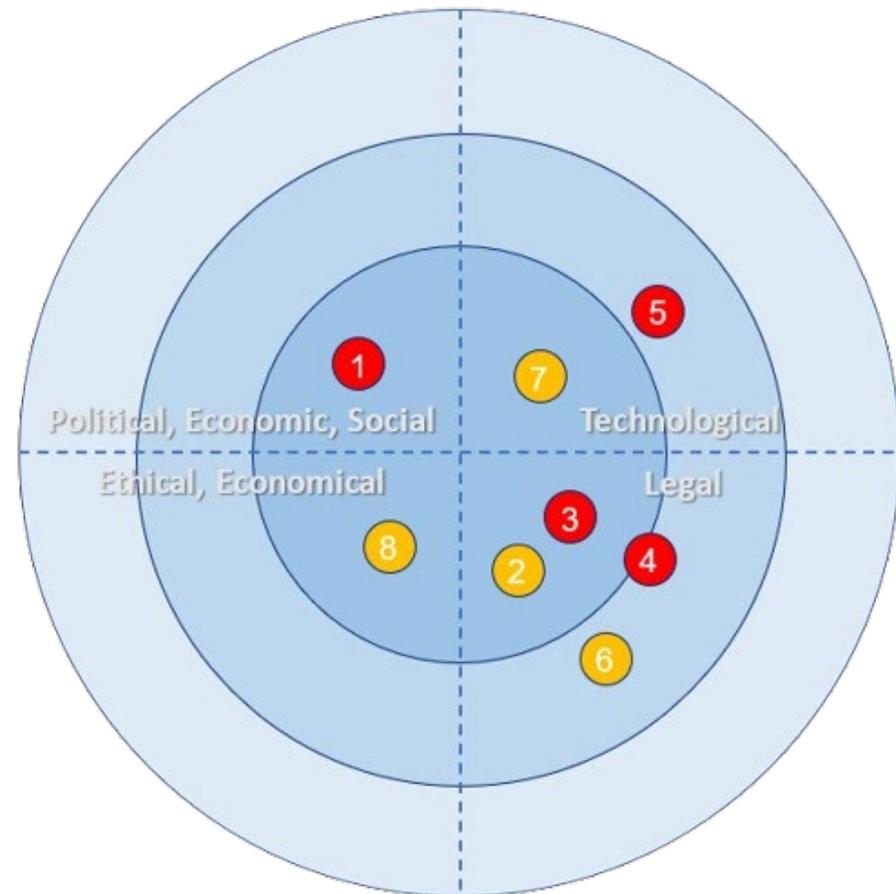
The following are key drivers of change that are likely to have a major impact on our activities in the short to medium term.



- **Regulatory changes:** Whether resulting from court cases (McCloud) or government initiatives (boycotts and divestment legislation, Access and Fairness and Access and Protection changes) such changes will require the Fund to change its policies and processes accordingly to ensure compliance.
- **Membership:** Both the number of employers and members continues to increase year on year. Employers are increasingly diverse with a wide range of requirements.
- **Investment pooling:** The revised national pooling guidance expected to enforce these outcomes from 2026, which will alter the pace and the original aims of asset pooling within the LGPS.
- **Responsible investment:** Increased expectations for all LGPS funds to effectively demonstrate they are managing all environmental, social and governance risks attached to investments effectively. There is a particular focus on climate change risks, driven by member expectations and changing national guidance and regulation, and an increasing focus on biodiversity risk.
- **Data quality:** The nationally driven Pensions Dashboard and the Fund's own online member portal (My Pension Online) allows members to review information on their individual pension position whenever they chose. Accurate data is also a must for the Fund actuary to set employer contribution rates and for the statutory issuing of Annual Benefit Statements by the Fund each year. This means all data held by the Fund needs to be accurate and up to date, which in turn requires all employers to provide the Fund with high quality payroll data every month on all members.

- **Digital channels / customer service:** Fund members and employers increasingly expect to be able to interact with the Fund online, and for services to be accessible remotely and outside normal business hours. The Fund needs to respond to facilitate these changing expectations and respond to members enquiries promptly and accurately.
- **Governance scrutiny:** Ongoing national and local oversight continues to raise governance and compliance standards, including the introduction of the Pensions Regulator’s General Code, the Scheme Advisory Board’s Good Governance review, and new Cyber Security Principles.

Event	
1	Fit for the Future Pooling changes
2	Good Governance
3	Access & Fairness Regulation changes
4	Access & Protections Regulations
5	Dashboard Go-live
6	Change to Inheritance Tax Regulations
7	System change and developments
8	Climate Change compliance
Impact Assessment	
 Low	 Medium  High
Time Horizon	
 5+ years	 Within 5 years
 Already here	



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## Delivering the Action Plan

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### Monitoring and Reporting

To assess whether we are achieving our business plan aims, we will:

- Continually track progress on key priorities and budget adherence within the Pension Fund Management Team.
- Give quarterly updates on these priorities to the Pension Fund Committee, which will also be communicated to the Pension Board.
- In each quarterly update, we will:
  - Point out any areas where targets are surpassed or not met, explain the reasons, and show if planned priorities need to change as a result.
  - Report any major instances of additional spending or underspending compared to the set budget as soon as they are identified.

### Business as Usual

The business plan outlines the main priorities for the next three years, focusing on areas of change and special projects that go beyond regular “business as usual” responsibilities.

Day-to-day management of the fund requires a broad range of processes and procedures, some of which are listed below. Each supports the Fund’s objectives. Managing the Fund is a significant, complex, and highly regulated task, demanding expertise from both internal officers and external advisors.

The following are key examples of routine daily duties.

## Governance

- Set agendas and report to the Pensions Board and Committee.
- Implement and monitor governance policies, including training, conflict of interest, risk registers, and compliance with The Pensions Regulator's updated Code of Practice.
- Ensure compliance with procurement, health & safety, and data protection laws.
- Respond to Freedom of Information requests.
- Support internal and external audits.
- Prepare and publish the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts.
- Complete statutory and non-statutory returns.
- Organise annual employer meetings
- Record and report breaches to the Board/ Committee
- Maintain a cyber security policy

## Investments

- Produce annual accounts and reports.
- Provide quarterly investment updates for the Board and Committee.
- Reconcile private market investments quarterly.
- Review investment costs per the Cost Transparency Initiative.
- Complete statutory returns.
- Monitor fund cashflow and manage invoicing.
- Perform monthly bank reconciliation and management account preparation.
- Collaborate with LGPS Central and other funds on investment initiatives.
- Prepare IAS 19 disclosure data for employers.
- Oversee strategic asset allocation.

## **Administration**

- Maintain accurate member records.
- Calculate and notify members about pension and death benefits.
- Provide retirement benefit estimates and cost details to employers.
- Process monthly pensions for retirees and beneficiaries.
- Produce and distribute annual benefit statements, payslips, and P60s via 'My Pension Online'.
- Carry out a 'Year End' check, all records to be checked from postings and employer forms to be reconciled to total of monthly postings.
- Data cleansing to be undertaken following last i-Connect submission of each year.
- Address Tracing for members of the Fund
- Communicate with members throughout their fund lifecycle.
- Respond to ad-hoc inquiries by various channels.
- Maintain the fund website and member portal.
- Inform new employers of responsibilities and offer ongoing training.
- Track Officer, Committee, and Board training.
- Administer the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure.
- Provide information to the Actuary and manage employer entries/exits.
- Fulfil statutory reporting and stakeholder information needs, including KPIs.
- Update pensions software and provide legislative updates to employers and members.



## Action Plan

Project	Actions	26/27	27/28	28/29
<p><b>McCloud Remedy:</b></p> <p>To implement the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 McCloud legislation and to ensure any guaranteed amounts are paid to protected members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the system is configured to allow all calculations to perform the underpin calculation.</li> <li>• Rectification cases of past cases during the remedy period to be undertaken. This is only possible following the passing of relevant legislation to allow these calculations to be run.</li> <li>• This should take place before Summer 2026.</li> </ul>	X		
<p><b>Implementation of new regulations expected to be passed in Spring 2026 and beyond:</b></p> <p>The following consultations were launched in 2025;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme improvements (access and protections)</li> <li>• Access and fairness</li> </ul> <p>Both will result in possible scheme changes and need for rectification of members benefits.</p>	<p>A project plan will be created as soon as the relevant legislation is passed, and the Fund will deal with any cases that need attention within the specified timescales.</p>	X	X	

Project	Actions	26/27	27/28	28/29
<b>Implement a Workforce Plan:</b>  Following work carried out by Hymans Robertson about the structure and role make up within the Team.	This Plan is designed to ensure that there is resilience within the Team to cope with staff leaving their positions and difficulties faced nationally with recruitment.	X		
<b>Internal Audit of Cyber Resilience:</b>  Specific Audit check as requested by the Fund.	Ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation by the Fund and Shropshire Council.	X	X	X
<b>External Audit of Pension Fund (annual requirement)</b>	Providing information required within the agreed timescales.	X	X	X
<b>Production of Pension Savings Statements (annual requirement):</b>  Comply with HMRC regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the members who have breached the annual allowance.</li> <li>Provide a pension saving statement by the 5<sup>th</sup> October deadline, each year.</li> </ul>	X	X	X
<b>Pensions Increase (annual requirement):</b>  To ensure pensioners and deferred members are updated with annual increase amount.	Bulk process to update the system with the confirmed CPI increasing April each year.	X	X	X
<b>Pensions Dashboard:</b>  Implement in line with national guidelines by October 2026.	To comply with the Pensions Dashboard Programme, allowing all relevant data from the Fund to be published and responses provided to individuals within specified time scales.	X	X	
<b>Bulk Revaluation (annual requirement):</b>  Annual CARE uprating to be applied to active records.	Bulk process to be run after year end postings are complete in May/June each year.	X	X	X



Project	Actions	26/27	27/28	28/29
<p><b>P60 to Pensioners (annual requirement):</b></p> <p>To produce a P60 for pensioner members by 31<sup>st</sup> May.</p>	<p>Following year end payroll processes run P60 production in end March/April each year.</p>	X	X	X
<p><b>Promotion campaign for My Pension Online:</b></p> <p>Promotion campaign will be run along with target mailing and segmented communications for different member types.</p>		X	X	X
<p><b>Member and employer satisfaction:</b></p> <p>Member and employer satisfaction surveys to be developed (2025/2026) and implemented with regular feedback to Management Team and other key stakeholders to inform service delivery priorities and improvements (from 2026/2027).</p>		X	X	X
<p><b>Data Quality:</b></p> <p>Work with employers to implement the new employer rates from 1 April 2026- 2029.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of employers to ensure correct employer rates are implemented from 1 April 2026.</li> <li>Data Quality Workplan in place to maintain data in preparation for the next valuation in 2030.</li> </ul>	X	X	X

Project	Actions	26/27	27/28	28/29
<p><b>UK Stewardship Code:</b></p> <p>Stewardship is the responsible allocation, management, and oversight of capital to create long-term value for clients and beneficiaries leading to sustainable benefits for the economy, the environment and society. The UK Stewardship Code 2020 comprises a set of 12 ‘apply and explain’ Principles for asset owners. As part of the Fund’s desire to demonstrate its good governance and stewardship of its assets, the Fund submitted its first report in October 2022 and has been a full signatory every year since.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESG monitoring is in place as part of business as usual.</li> <li>Resources have been allocated to review the new reporting regulations in place for 2026.</li> </ul>	X	X	X
<p><b>Covenant Review:</b></p> <p>Work with Actuary to review Employer covenants on an annual basis to monitor risk to fund.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A full review of employer covenants was undertaken as part of the 2025 valuation exercise.</li> <li>Ongoing checks completed each year.</li> </ul>	X	X	X
<p><b>Climate Change Risk:</b></p> <p>The Fund issues an annual climate risk TCFD report as part of its commitment to net zero. In addition, the Fund supports these reports by undertaking Climate scenario analysis as part of the valuation process to ensure that developments in this field are fed into ongoing analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate Risk reports and TCFD reports have been commissioned with LGPS Central.</li> <li>Alternative Investment managers, ESG policies, and progress on Climate Risk monitoring are reviewed periodically with a view to establishing full portfolio monitoring.</li> </ul>	X	X	X

Project	Actions	26/27	27/28	28/29
<p><b>Biodiversity Risk:</b></p> <p><i>(awaiting agreement)</i></p> <p>The Government is currently consulting on TNFD (Taskforce for Nature related Financial Disclosures). The Fund is monitoring the position and discussing potential data sources with investment managers and other Funds with a view to be able to report in a similar context to TCFD on climate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the format of TNFD reports with LGPS Central to establish what can be accurately reported.</li> <li>• Consider integration of Biodiversity risk into climate change strategy as whilst different risks there is an underlying fundamental link.</li> <li>• Liaise with Investment Managers with a view to establishing full portfolio monitoring.</li> </ul>		X	X
<p><b>Investment Strategy Statement:</b></p> <p>The Fund sets a triannual investment strategy which was last reviewed in June 2023.</p> <p>The Fund is currently working with the Pensions Committee and Board following the 2025 valuation results to agree the revised strategic asset allocation.</p> <p>Draft proposal will be presented at the March 2026 Pensions Committee with the revised Investment Strategy Statement (ISS) to be delivered to the June 2026 Pensions Committee meeting.</p>	<p>Training and Investment Strategy workshops have been held with both Committee and Board Members.</p>	X		



Project	Actions	26/27	27/28	28/29
<p><b>Pooling:</b></p> <p>The Fund works directly with LGPS Central to ensure that appropriate products are available to meet future investment requirements and allow transition from legacy managers as investments mature.</p> <p>Under the Fit for the Future Proposal within the Pensions Bill responsibility for the implementation of strategic assets allocations and control of Fund assets passes to LGPS Central from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.</p>	<p>The Fund will work directly with LGPS Central Ltd to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for oversight of assets and that all legacy assets outside the pool that come under pooled oversight are only transferred to pooled products, when there is a clear and robust economic argument for change.</p>	X	X	X

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## Key Performance Indicators

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KPI REF.	Pension Fund	26/27 Target
KPI 1	All administration KPI's as reported to Committee and Board	95%
KPI 2	Issue Annual Benefit Statements to 100% of eligible members	100%
KPI 3	Members signed up for the online portal (My Pension Online)	60%
KPI 4	Employers submitting monthly payroll and membership information via online portal	100%
KPI 5	TPR Data Scores- Common Data	100%
KPI 6	TPR Data Scores- Scheme Specific Targets	100%
KPI 7	Making publicly available Committee and Board agendas and reports one week before each meeting	100%
KPI 8	Exit/ cessation of employers concluded and agreed plan for funding deficit/ surplus- within 6 months of notification of exit	100%
KPI 9	Pension Fund Climate Change Targets delivered in full each year	100%

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## Budget

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The pension fund organises its spending for managing the Pensions Fund based on CIPFA's guidelines:

- **Investment management:** covers expenses related to handling the Fund's assets, including payments made to investment managers and custodians.
- **Administration:** includes all tasks the Administering Authority is required to carry out to manage entitlements and provide scheme and benefits information to members.
- **Oversight and Governance:** refers to the costs associated with monitoring and accounting for the Pension Fund, as well as any professional advice or support needed by the Fund.

The Budget is reviewed every year and is designed to cover the costs of managing the Pension Fund's legal responsibilities, including administering the scheme and overseeing investments. At the time of writing, the budget resources fully meet the Fund's regulatory requirements. The forward budget also incorporates new projects and initiatives outlined in the Fund's Business Plan.



Operational Expenses	2025-26 Budget £m	2026-27 Budget £m	2027-28 Budget £m
<b>Administrative Costs</b>			
Employee costs	1.450	1.500	1.550
IT costs	0.420	0.430	0.445
Office accommodation	0.040	0.040	0.040
Consultants	0.085	0.090	0.090
Printing, postage and design	0.062	0.064	0.066
Subscriptions	0.020	0.022	0.022
Other costs	0.035	0.035	0.035
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.112</b>	<b>2.181</b>	<b>2.248</b>
<b>Investment Management Expenses</b>			
Management fees	12.400	12.900	13.500
Performance fees	0.670	0.700	0.730
Other fees	4.500	4.600	4.800
Transaction costs	3.400	3.500	3.600
Custody fees	0.20	0.022	0.022
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.990</b>	<b>21.722</b>	<b>22.652</b>
<b>Oversight and Governance Costs</b>			
Investment advice	0.280	0.290	0.300
Employee costs (pensions investment)	0.410	0.420	0.430
Actuarial advice	0.270	0.100	0.110
Responsible engagement overlay	0.053	0.054	0.056
LGPS Central pooling costs	0.730	0.750	0.770
External audit	0.105	0.108	0.11
Performance analysis	0.028	0.029	0.030
Internal audit	0.026	0.027	0.028
Legal and Committee	0.024	0.025	0.026
Other costs	0.048	0.050	0.051
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.974</b>	<b>1.853</b>	<b>1.912</b>
<b>Total Management expenses</b>	<b>25.076</b>	<b>25.756</b>	<b>26.812</b>

## **Risk Register**

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Risk management is the process of identifying risks, evaluating their likelihood and potential impact and determining the most effective methods of controlling or responding to them. Shropshire Council has a formal risk management strategy and risk registers for Pension Fund Investment, Investment Pooling and Pension Administration are included within this overall Strategy. The risks listed below highlight the most likely risks that will cause this biggest impact. This is not the full risk register.



Description of risk	Responsible officer	Current controls in place	Risk status
Vulnerable to loss of or over-reliance of key staff due to long term sickness or staff turnover resulting in reduction of service to scheme employers	Vicky Jenks Peter Chadderton Justin Bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures notes provided and reviewed annually.</li> <li>• Team structure reviewed taking into account current workload, new requirements and capacity.</li> <li>• Training Policy in place and training requirements assessed.</li> <li>• Monthly 1:1 and Annual Appraisals monitor staff performance, and requirements.</li> <li>• Qualifications available.</li> <li>• Workforce Strategy being created.</li> </ul>	High
Cyber Incident resulting in loss of data leading to fines by the ICO and reputational damage	Vicky Jenks Peter Chadderton Justin Bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular reviews in place with software providers to assess.</li> <li>• Fund Cyber Policy in place.</li> <li>• Service impact Assessment and Business improvement plan in place reviewed annually and tested.</li> </ul>	Medium
Failure of Administration Team to perform their tasks, lack of resource, capability, or conduct	Vicky Jenks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Audits, internal &amp; external carried out.</li> <li>• Take part in the National Fraud initiative.</li> <li>• Data and payment reconciliation completed monthly</li> <li>• Administration Strategy in place.</li> <li>• Regular monitoring resources and workloads.</li> <li>• Line management 1:1s with all staff held monthly, poor performance managed with support from HR.</li> </ul>	Medium
Data Quality	Vicky Jenks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer training and team training provided.</li> <li>• Administration Strategy in place.</li> <li>• Internal controls with documented procedure notes.</li> <li>• Employers' data collected monthly</li> <li>• Breaches recording, monitoring &amp; reporting to committee and Board.</li> </ul>	Medium

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## Governance

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**Governance Strategy:** This document has been prepared by Shropshire Council, as the administering authority, to outline the governance arrangements of the Shropshire County Pension Fund in accordance with Regulation 55 of The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013.

**Pension Administration Strategy Report:** Administering authorities of pension funds have the discretion to produce a pensions administration strategy statement. Shropshire Council, as the administering authority, prepares this report pursuant to Regulation 59 of The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013.

This report details the fund's administrative procedures and sets out the policies and performance standards aimed at delivering an efficient, inclusive, and high-quality administration service.



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## Funding and Investments

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**Funding Strategy Statement:** Under Regulation 58 of The Local Government Pension Scheme 2013, administering authorities must publish a funding strategy statement (FSS). The FSS outlines the fund's prudent approach to pension liabilities and stable employer contribution rates, informing actuarial valuations every three years. It details actuarial methods, deficit recovery plans, ill health insurance, and employer participation. Developed alongside the Investment Strategy Statement (ISS), the FSS takes account of financial and demographic risks.

The FSS aims to:

- Set a transparent, fund-specific strategy for meeting pension liabilities.
- Establish contributions that secure solvency and cost efficiency.
- Maintain stable primary contribution rates.

**Investment Strategy Statement:** Required under regulation 7 of LGPS (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016, the ISS explains investment objectives, asset allocation, targeted performance, and responsible investment approaches. The committee prioritises safeguarding beneficiaries' financial interests, mainly fund members and local council taxpayers.

The fund invests assets through the LGPS Central Pool when suitable options arise, aiming for full funding of liabilities and stable employer contributions. The strategy considers diversification, suitability, and risk management across various asset types including equities, bonds, property, alternatives, derivatives, and more.

Investment beliefs include:

- Long-term investing delivers better results.
- Asset allocation drives long-term returns.
- Risk premiums and market inefficiencies offer opportunities.
- Diversification is essential but should not be excessive.
- Flexibility in asset allocation protects against risks.
- Responsible investment enhances performance; selection criteria reflect this.
- Cost minimisation is important, but net return matters most.

**Climate Change:** Climate change is a significant risk; the Fund commits to net zero by 2050 with a Climate Strategy under review. Actions taken include carbon benchmarks, shifting equity portfolio to sustainable funds, and improved climate data collection.

The Fund publishes TCFD reports and supports early adoption for transparency. TNFD aims to guide capital towards nature-positive outcomes, and the Fund will integrate TNFD as information develops.



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## Training Policy

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Shropshire Council, as the Administering Authority for the Shropshire County Pension Fund, aims to ensure that:

- Individuals responsible for financial management and decision-making of the LGPS Fund have the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their duties.
- Staff handling daily fund administration are suitably equipped to manage their responsibilities.
- Those overseeing fund governance possess sufficient expertise to assess advice, make sound decisions, and manage conflicts of interest.

Everyone covered by this policy is expected to commit to ongoing training and help achieve these objectives.

To meet these goals, the fund follows seven key principles in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA) Code of Practice 2021:

- Adopts the main principles of the LGPS Knowledge and Skills Code.
- Recognises effective LGPS management requires relevant knowledge and skills.
- Maintains formal objectives, policies, strategies, and reporting for knowledge and skills acquisition and retention.
- Uses the CIPFA LGPS Knowledge and Skills Framework as guidance.
- Allocates adequate resources so staff and members can acquire and retain required LGPS knowledge and skills.
- Reports annually on knowledge and skills policy implementation in the fund's annual report.
- Delegates responsibility for applying the CIPFA Code of Practice to an appropriate officer, who will follow the authority's policy and CIPFA Standards where applicable.

## **Workforce Planning**

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Effective workforce planning is critical to achieving the objectives outlined above. Ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining staff, combined with a dynamic work environment that includes complex pension legislation and rapidly evolving technology, have made meeting service demands increasingly complex.

The departure of experienced personnel can significantly affect the delivery of efficient and effective services.

To address these concerns, the Fund will be working with external advisors to create a workforce plan.

Additionally, the workforce plan will emphasise the importance of defined career pathways, including clear training programmes and opportunities for professional qualifications.

Leveraging automated processes to manage high-volume tasks will also be prioritised, enabling team members to concentrate on higher-value activities and consistently deliver excellent service to all stakeholders.



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## Contact details

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The Shropshire County Pension Fund is a data controller under data-protection law. This means we store, hold and manage your personal information in line with statutory requirements to enable us to provide you with pension administration services. To enable us to carry out our statutory duty, we must share your information with certain bodies, but will only do so in limited circumstances. For more information about how we hold your information, who we share it with and what rights you have, you can ask for this information from the fund, please visit [www.shropshirecountypensionfund.co.uk](http://www.shropshirecountypensionfund.co.uk).

If you can read this but know someone who cannot, please contact us on 01743 252130 so we can provide this information in a more suitable format.

**Office hours:** Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.00pm

Friday 8.45am to 4.00pm

Website: [www.shropshirecountypensionfund.co.uk](http://www.shropshirecountypensionfund.co.uk)

Have a query? Get in touch via our [contact form](#)

Tel: 01743 252130

Write: Pensions, PO Box 4826, Shrewsbury, SY1 9LJ

Administered by Shropshire Council.





**Shropshire  
County  
Pension Fund**

