

## Minutes

### PENSION BOARD Meeting

17 July 2024

Meeting held in Committee Room 4, Civic Centre, Uxbridge



HILLINGDON  
LONDON

#### **Employer Representatives:**

Shane Woodhatch (SW)  
Jack Francis-Kent (JF)  
Anna Beattie (AB)

#### **Scheme Member Representatives:**

Roger Hackett (RH) – Chair  
Tony Noakes (TN)

#### **Also Present:**

Marian George, Governance Advisor (MG)  
Andrew Lowe, Hampshire County Council (HCC) Pensions Administration (AL) – agenda item 5  
Jo Palmer, Schools Administration and Schools Business Managers Lead (JP) – Part 1 only

#### **LBH Officers Present:**

James Lake, Director – Pensions, Treasury & Statutory Accounts (JL)  
Tunde Adekoya, Finance Manager, Pensions & Governance (TA)  
Seby Carvalho, Pensions Technical Officer (SC)  
Ann-Marie Pereira, Executive Assistant – Minutes (AP)

#### **Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr Reeta Chamdal – Chair, Pensions Committee

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Minutes/Action</b>	<b>Action Lead</b>
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>  The meeting started with a round of introductions for the benefit of the new attendees in the meeting, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Jack Francis-Kent, Principal Internal Auditor - new Employer Representative</li><li>- Jo Palmer, Schools Administration and Schools Business Managers Lead – attending as an observer.</li><li>-</li></ul>	
2.	<b>Welcome New Employer Representative – Jack Francis-Kent</b>	

	RH formally welcomed JF to the Board as the new Employer Representative. JF is appointed on a 4-year term.	
3.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest and any Conflict of Interest</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
4.	<p><b>To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 08 May 2024</b></p> <p>The Minutes were approved as a true record of discussions. Page 4 Schools Administration</p> <p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>Page 4:</b> RH sought MG's view on Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion (ED&amp;I) guidance and suggestions to address this matter.</p> <p>MG stated that not everyone's characteristics are observable to the eye (a survey would be useful, to be considered in the near future). and that what is important, is diversity of thought, skills and experience. She suggested some areas to focus on, such as communications, policies and systems. For general communications, focus on how the board works, highlight the value of the scheme and how to get involved; ensure there are no biases in the policies and processes eg for mental diversity, do not use red on green print on meeting papers. The Board can learn from other funds that have done a lot in this area eg Wiltshire, South Yorkshire, and we can also learn from the private sector. This is a multi-period task, and resources need to be considered; currently, the General Code of Practice is the biggest priority. There are some issues/limits with local government pension schemes when compared to private schemes. When appointing to the Pensions Committee, the Board could provide Councillors with some guidance.</p> <p>The Work programme for 2025 provides for a refresh of the Board Effectiveness exercise. This will focus on many of the areas covered by the ED&amp;I guidance and would be a good opportunity to address both areas. Achieving compliance with the new single code of practice over the next 12 – 18 months will also involve addressing ED&amp;I issues. In order to maintain good working relationships with the Pensions Committee, RH reported that he had met with the new Chair of the Committee, Cllr Reeta Chamdal, who is looking forward to working with the Board</p> <p>MG added that this will benefit the Board, and it is not just a tick-box exercise. There should also be a culture of</p>	

inclusiveness and that everyone's skills and experience is important.

JL pointed out that a diversity of skills had been evidenced through the knowledge and skills assessment, hence we are not starting from scratch.

**Backlog of Surrey Cases**

The Board had a lengthy discussion on the issue of data quality and communication with the schools, particularly those using Dataplan as their payroll provider. JP suggested that a process plan for data submission and validation would be useful. The Board agreed that there was a need for more collaboration and support between the fund, HPS, Dataplan, and the schools to ensure accurate and timely information for the pension scheme members and agreed to involve JP in future communications with the schools. JL advised there was already lots of collaboration and support taking place.

RH reiterated that, from the Board's view, the fund officers and HPS are providing a lot of support, and things are improving but there appears to be a small core of employers who do not comply. The Board's priority is to ensure the protection of the fund and introduce appropriate arrangements to safeguard its members as the fund is accountable to external Regulators who have powers to impose sanctions.

Another issue is that Dataplan require schools to pay for the extra work of providing the information for the two years in question (backlog) where they had not signed up to the pension service initially. AL asked whether there had been any progress following JL's meeting with Dataplan; SW also asked whether a data sharing agreement was in place, which JL affirmed. Data Plan are expected to upload the information to HPS' system. The point was made that schools must understand that the delayed reaction is impacting members' pay/pension, hence the need to report to governing bodies and Ofsted, if necessary. AL added that the data sharing issue lies with schools and Data Plan, who hold the data, and that HPS cannot populate records if data is missing. At this point, SW cited the possibility of a member deciding to take legal action; the fund would reference the employer in question but would ultimately be held responsible.

JL advised that results of the benchmarking for the annual returns will be sent to all employers, and this will be used to highlight where performance is lagging and act as a catalyst to improve data submission.

TA highlighted another issue that has just been discovered. An employer has recently changed payroll provider, but the current

	<p>provider does not have access to the previous incumbent's payroll data. The team are liaising with the employer on what actions to take.</p> <p>RH made reference to Macleod new guidance, in particular the category of unknown members and how big an exercise this was likely to be. AL advised that there would be a fair amount of work and that he is liaising with JL on this.</p>	
5.	<p><b>TO CONFIRM THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE</b></p> <p>Confirmed that agenda items in Part 2 will be considered in private.</p>	
	<b>PART 1</b>	
6.	<p><b>Pension Administration &amp; Performance</b></p> <p>May Update highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 100% delivery against key performance targets.</li> <li>- Acceptable telephone call handling performance.</li> <li>- Continued increase in portal sign-up, 44.23% overall with 52.27% active members signed up.</li> <li>- 66.4% of pensioners have either signed up to the portal or made an election for paper correspondence.</li> <li>- High vulnerability resolution implemented.</li> <li>- 113 of 116 annual returns received by deadline.</li> <li>- 75.5 % annual returns processed by end of May.</li> <li>- 143 further backlog cases resolved; 618 cases remain of the original 4,158.</li> </ul> <p>MG asked if HPS carry out customer satisfaction surveys. AL advised that members are invited to give feedback with complaints and compliments reflected in the monthly report.</p> <p>There is nothing in the May report relating to software development being undertaken by UPM, however, AL noted that this is a continual programme of enhancement, with improvements being delivered throughout the year. JL highlighted the roadmap of enhancements and the priority of making sure McCloud is implemented in line with guidance.</p> <p>JF asked about cyber security penetration testing – covered in the June report where one high vulnerability was raised. AL advised that HPS run a 6-monthly penetration test cycle and work closely with Civica and HPS' IT department to apply relevant protection which uses a sliding scale of CRITICAL, URGENT, HIGH, LOW. The regular penetration testing has indicated that vulnerabilities are coming down.</p>	

