

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	AVON PENSION FUND COMMITTEE	
MEETING DATE:	6 DECEMBER 2019	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
TITLE:	INVESTMENT PANEL ACTIVITY	
WARD:	ALL	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1 – Minutes from Investment Panel meeting held 19 November 2019 – TO FOLLOW EXEMPT Appendix 2 – Exempt Minutes from Investment Panel meeting held 19 November 2019 – TO FOLLOW		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The Investment Panel is responsible for addressing investment issues including the investment management arrangements and the performance of the investment managers. The Panel has delegated responsibilities from the Committee and may also make recommendations to Committee. This report informs Committee of decisions made by the Panel and any recommendations.
- 1.2 The Panel has held one formal meeting since the September 2019 Committee meeting, on 19 November 2019. The draft minutes of this meeting provide a record of the Panel's debate before reaching any decisions or recommendations.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Notes the minutes of the Investment Panel meeting on 19 November at Appendix 1 and Exempt Appendix 2.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 In general the financial impact of decisions made by the Panel will have been provided for in the budget or separately approved by the Committee when authorising the Panel to make the decision.
- 3.2 There are transactional costs involved in appointing and terminating managers. Where these arise from a strategic review allowance will be made in the budget. Unplanned changes in the investment manager structure may give rise to transition costs which will not be allowed for in the budget.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS

- 4.1 **Equity Protection Strategy:** Under delegated authority from Committee, Panel came to a decision on how to implement an interim equity protection strategy. The interim equity protection strategy is designed to protect the value of the Fund's equity assets on maturity of the existing structure whilst work continues regarding the suitability of alternative protection strategies. Panel further delegated the implementation process to Officers and Mercer. If market pricing should deviate significantly from what was agreed by Panel at the meeting, Officers will revert to Panel offline before proceeding. Details of the decisions made can be found at Exempt Appendix 2.
- 4.2 **Liability Driven Investment Strategy:** Following the breach of three inflation triggers over the quarter, Panel have requested that the Consultant and Officers review the extent to which inflation hedging is permitted to outstrip interest rate hedging on the premise that too much of a gap between the two could result in an increase in unwanted risk. As part of the routine Risk Monitoring Paper, Mercer will review and make a recommendation to Panel at its next meeting as to whether the current permitted hedge differential remains appropriate.

5 INVESTMENT PANEL DELEGATION

- 5.1 The activity was undertaken under the delegation set out in the Fund's Terms of Reference approved in May 2015:

The Investment Panel will:

1. *Review strategic and emerging opportunities outside the strategic asset allocation and make recommendations to the Committee.*
2. *Review the Statement of Investment Principles and submit to Committee for approval.*
3. *Report regularly to Committee on the performance of investments and matters of strategic importance*
and have delegated authority to:
4. *Approve and monitor tactical positions within strategic allocation ranges.*
5. *Approve investments in emerging opportunities within strategic allocations.*
6. *Implement investment management arrangements in line with strategic policy, including the setting of mandate parameters and the appointment of managers.*
7. *Approve amendments to investment mandates within existing return and risk parameters.*
8. *Monitor investment managers' investment performance and make decision to terminate mandates on performance grounds.*

9. *Delegate specific decisions to Officers as appropriate.*

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The Avon Pension Fund Committee is the formal decision-making body for the Fund. As such it has responsibility to ensure adequate risk management processes are in place. An Investment Panel has been established to consider in greater detail investment performance and related matters, and to carry out responsibilities delegated by the Committee.

6.2 A key risk to the Fund is that the investments fail to generate the returns required to meet the Fund's future liabilities. This risk is managed via the Asset Liability Study which determines the appropriate risk adjusted return profile (or strategic benchmark) for the Fund.

7 CLIMATE CHANGE

7.1 The Fund is implementing a digital strategy across all its operations and communications with stakeholders to reduce its internal carbon footprint. The Fund acknowledges the financial risk to its assets from climate change and is in the process of addressing this through its strategic asset allocation to Low Carbon Equities and renewable energy opportunities. The strategy is monitored and reviewed by the Committee.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 None.

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

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Background papers	none
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