

Avon Pension Fund

Local Pension Board

Workplan & Training plan 2020/21

Plus

Roles & Responsibilities

Training Requirements

Housekeeping Checklist

Pension Board Workplan

Workplan	24/09/20 Workshop	13/11/20 Formal	01/20 Workshop	09/02/21 Formal	May 21
Board Governance					
Terms of Reference (Governance) review					
Code of Conduct/ Conflicts of Interest policy					
Work Plan		X		X	
Training Plan		X		X	
Annual budget setting and monitoring					X
Annual Report to PC and Council approval		X (email)			
Scheme and Fund Governance					
Legal, policy, regulatory developments		X		X	
McCloud Update					X
Minutes PC, IP, BOB					
Annual Service Plan					X
External advisor appointments review process/controls					
Risk Register review		X		X	
Good Governance Review					
TPR Code 14 Compliance updates		X		X	
Governance Compliance statement					
Internal Audit plan/reports on APF					X
External Audit Governance Report and Accounts					
Benchmarking against other BPP funds				X	
Funding/Investments					
Statutory Investment Strategy Statement consultation/process/report					
2019 Triennial valuation process/controls/report?					
Statutory GAD S13 triennial funding report?					
BPP update (delivery/savings)				X	
Benefits Admin/Comms					
Admin Strategy Statement review	X		X		X
Fund and employers compliance/TPR reporting		X		X	
Employer admission agreement policies					
Breaches policy/register/TPR reporting		X			
GDPR compliance					
Record keeping, data security, business recovery		X		X	
ABS process annual review		X			
GMP reconciliation (one off exercise)					
Discretions policies review					
Admin performance benchmarking		X		X	
Comms policy statement and website review					
Complaints policy, IDRP, PO cases review					
Workforce training & development					X

Pension Board Training Plan

Training Plan	Type of Training	Date planned / delivered
Induction Training for new members	Training Session	1 May 2020
National Knowledge Assessment	Online Assessment	1 May 2020
Investment Strategy Consultation	Training Session	29 July 2020
CIPFA Pension Board Seminar	Online seminar	29 & 30 Sept 2020
Governance & Administration Strategy Overview	Workshop	24 Sept 2020
Trustee Fundamentals	Online seminar	6/7/8 Oct 2020
Brunel Investor Days	Online seminar	18/19 Nov 2020
LGE Governance & Investment Update	Online seminar	26 Jan 2021
New Administration Strategy Development	Workshop	27 Jan 2021
CIPFA Pension Board Seminar	Online seminar	18 Feb 2021

Role of the pension board member

The role of the pension board member is to:

- ④ provide support and assistance to the administering authority
- ④ act as a critical friend, challenging constructively on issues where the board may have a concern
- ④ keep personal knowledge and skills up to date
- ④ identify gaps in their understanding and request training to fill those gaps
- ④ show a particular interest in the administration and governance of the pension scheme, especially KPIs
- ④ regularly monitor the quality of the pension members' experience
- ④ ask whether shortcomings or failures in the scheme's administration constitutes a breach of legislation, and should be reported to TPR
- ④ ask about the strength of employers' covenants
- ④ check whether the main decision making body or officer has taken proper advice and has undertaken adequate due diligence in considering the fund's asset allocation and wider investment matters
- ④ ask whether the investment performance of the fund is being adequately monitored (this applies to assets managed directly, through a direct relationship with an asset manager or via a pooling arrangement)
- ④ monitor the work of the SAB and its sub-committees, and also TPR.

Role of the pension board chair

The role of the pension board chair is to:

- ④ provide support and assistance to the administering authority
- ④ take a lead role in developing the forward plan of the board, working closely with the administering authority's officers
- ④ develop a good and close relationship with the administering authority's officers
- ④ take a lead role in developing a training plan for the board
- ④ prepare an annual report of the board's work in conjunction with the administering authority's officers
- ④ chair the meeting in a proactive way, encouraging board members to question in a constructive and disciplined way while allowing a free and open discussion
- ④ ensure the officers are given the opportunity to respond to the members' views and questions
- ④ seek opportunities to attend the main decision making committee or panel
- ④ work with the officers in regularly reviewing the board's terms of reference and membership
- ④ attain a good understanding of the pressures facing the administering authority, and advocate their case for adequate resources to provide an efficient service, thereby preventing or reducing administrative breaches of the law.

The Pension Regulator's Code of Practice

Knowledge and understanding required by pension board members

Legal requirements

A member of the pension board of a public service pension scheme must be conversant with:

- the rules of the scheme, and
- any document recording policy about the administration of the scheme which is for the time being adopted in relation to the scheme.

A member of a pension board must have knowledge and understanding of:

- the law relating to pensions, and
- any other matters which are prescribed in regulations.

The degree of knowledge and understanding required is that appropriate for the purposes of enabling the individual to properly exercise the functions of a member of the pension board.

It is recommended that LPB members complete TPR's Trustee Toolkit for the public sector, which covers:

Conflicts of interest

Managing risk and internal controls

Maintaining accurate member data

Maintaining member contributions

Providing information to members and others

Resolving internal disputes

Reporting breaches of the law

There are supplementary modules available to reflect the fact that the LGPS is the only large funded public sector scheme, including:

An introduction to investment

Investing in a defined benefit scheme

CIPFA's Housekeeping Checklist

1. Have the board's terms of reference recently been reviewed in the light of experience?
2. Are the terms of service of board members staggered to avoid the cliff-face scenario to which a pensions committee is unavoidably exposed?
3. Is the process for appointing new board members practical and speedy, or too time consuming? Are opportunities taken to identify potential future board members?
4. Is there a documented plan to bring new board members up to speed within an acceptable timescale? Is the training plan comprehensive and regularly reviewed?
5. Is there appropriate and regular contact between the chairs of the board and the committee?
6. Does the committee commission any work from the board, such as risk reviews, breaches log etc? If not, could this be considered?
7. Are the feedback mechanisms from board to committee in place, appropriate and effective?
8. Do investment issues have too high a profile on the agenda of the board?
9. Is there a timely process for identifying new risks?
10. Is TPR's Code of Practice 14 kept under regular review?
11. Has the pension fund failed to return any surveys issued by either TPR or the SAB? If so, are steps in place to ensure future surveys are completed? If not, non-completion itself could be flagging up issues to both bodies.
12. Does your fund have an outsourced or shared services arrangement for scheme administration? If so, have you seen and followed TPR's *Managing Service Providers* guidance?
13. If scheme administration is in-house, is there a reluctance to record, or perhaps more importantly, report any breaches caused either by the pensions team or by other departments of the administering authority, eg HR department?
14. Is there a similar reluctance to record and where appropriate report any breaches caused by other councils in the fund?
15. If you have reported any breaches, have you included plans and timescales for rectifying the situation and preventing its recurrence? Should future breaches require reporting, it's advisable simultaneously to include rectification plans.
16. Do you have a data improvement plan? Or currently planning to implement one? Are the desired outcomes, with appropriate resources, clearly identified (see TPR guidance)?
17. When cleansing data, is priority given to the records of those approaching retirement?
18. Is the information on your website regarding the board easily accessible, complete and up to date?
19. Has the board had oversight of the responsible investment policy of the fund? If not, is it in the work programme?
20. Does the fund have an administration strategy? If not, would it be helpful to introduce one?
21. Has the administering authority fully considered and concluded the issue of insurance cover for board members?

CIPFA's Recommended Annual Workplan

OPERATIONAL

- ④ Administration update (including KPI monitoring).
- ④ Pension fund statement of accounts.
- ④ Pension fund annual report.
- ④ Pension fund audit report.
- ④ Local pension board annual report.
- ④ Terms of reference and membership of the board.
- ④ Monitoring of investment performance and funding ratios.
- ④ Triennial and interim actuarial valuations and GAD reports.
- ④ Appointment of advisors.
- ④ Progress report on the arrangements for pooling.
- ④ Risk register.
- ④ Board's training plan.
- ④ Review of the fund's business plan and forward plan.
- ④ Board's work plan.
- ④ Update on the work of the SAB.
- ④ Changes to the scheme's regulations.

STRATEGIC

- ④ Investment strategy: oversight.
- ④ Administration strategy.
- ④ Risk management strategy.
- ④ ESG strategy: oversight.
- ④ Breaches of law policy.
- ④ Review of the fund's governance.
- ④ Administering authority's discretions policy.
- ④ Member communication's strategy.
- ④ Conflicts of interest policy.
- ④ Annual review of the board's terms of reference.