AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	Pension Fund Investment Board				
Date of Committee	17 February 2006				
Report Title Summary	Pension Fund Investment Board Member Training Assessment Report setting out the requirement for an assessment of member training needs.				
For further information please contact: Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	Phil Triggs Group Accountant Tel: 01926 412227 philtriggs@warwickshire.gov.uk No.				
Background papers	None				
CONSULTATION ALREADY U	INDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified				
Other Committees					
Local Member(s)					
Other Elected Members	X Cllr Davis - Chair of Pension Board				
Cabinet Member					
Chief Executive					
Legal	X Jane Pollard, Assistant County Solicitor				
Finance	David Clarke, Strategic Director of Resources				
Other Chief Officers					
District Councils					
Health Authority					
Police					
Other Bodies/Individuals					



FINAL DECISION YES

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:	Details to be specified
Further consideration by this Committee	
To Council	
To Cabinet	
To an O & S Committee	
To an Area Committee	
Further Consultation	



Agenda No

Pension Fund Investment Board - 17 February 2006

Pension Fund Investment Board Member Training Assessment

Report of the Strategic Director of Resources

Recommendation

That the Board consider the recommended training questionnaire as set out in **Appendix A** with a view to each completing the document in order to provide material for analysis for the Board's training requirements.

1. Introduction

1.1 In line with the corporate governance requirements of the Pension Fund, the Council's consultant has drafted a questionnaire for PFIB Members to complete.

2. Questionnaire

- 2.1 The questionnaire covers the key areas of knowledge of LGPS pension funds as outlined in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997, the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 1998 (both made under the Superannuation Act 1972).
- 2.2 The draft questionnaire is shown in **Appendix A.**

3. Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to consider the questionnaire in **Appendix A** and to approve the document with a view to each member completing it for the Council's consultant to compile an analysis of the Board's training needs.

DAVID CLARKE Strategic Director of Resources

Shire Hall, Warwick 27 January 2006



Member Training Questionnaire

Local Government Pension Scheme

Member knowledge, understanding and conversance

Introduction

As a result of the Myners Report and the subsequent CIPFA Principles (backed up by statutory regulation), local authority pension board members should have sufficient knowledge and understanding of pensions and investment management to run their LGPS schemes properly.

How do I get started?

Mercer has designed this questionnaire as the first stage in a process to support you in identifying where your knowledge and understanding as a board member currently lies, where there may be gaps and what individual training needs might be.

Completing the questionnaire

It's not a test!

When completing the questionnaire it is important that you assess your own level as accurately and honestly as possible so your specific development needs can be identified.

The following is aimed at helping you to choose the most suitable response to each of the questions:

Not confident	Limited exposure to the issues
Partially confident	Some exposure to the issues
Mostly confident	Reasonable level of exposure to the issues
Completely confident	Full exposure to the issues to a high level of detail

Board Member Training Questionnaire

Defined benefit scheme

About you

Please enter your details below:

Your name

Pension Scheme to which you are a Board member

Length of time as a Board member of the Scheme (years & months)

Warwickshire County Council Pension Fund

Board members should have knowledge and understanding about the law relating to pension schemes.

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
Q1. I am confident that I understand my duties and responsibilities as a Board member.				
This includes:				
- the requirement that I be `fit and proper´ for the role;				
 the implications of the individual and personal nature of the Board member role with regard to duties and responsibilities; and 				
 the length of time over which I am responsible for actions I take and decisions I make while a Board member. 				
Q2. I am confident that I understand the background of the Local Government Pensions Scheme.				
This includes:				
 the legal nature of the LGPS and the relationship of the Board members, the administering authority, the employers and the scheme members; 				
- the fiduciary duties imposed on the Board members and the standard of care required for fulfilment of those duties; and				
- ways to recognise and manage conflicts of interest.				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
Q3. I am confident that I understand the responsibility as a Board member to act prudently when agreeing on investment policy on behalf of scheme members.				
Q4. I am confident that I understand how to operate the scheme in line with the Pension Fund Investment Board Member Charter, and how to delegate powers or functions whilst remaining responsible.				
Q5. I am confident that I understand the role of both the internal auditor (where applicable) and external auditor.				
Q6. I am confident that I understand how Investment Board members are protected.				
Q7. I am confident that I understand the need for good service delivery, in particular, regarding administration,				
and the need to identify risks, controls and implement contingency plans.				
Q8. I am confident that I understand the overall structure for managing the fund and the scheme.				

Thi	s includes:	Confident	Confident	Confident	Completely
-	the Board members' ability to use advisers and delegates to assist them in managing the scheme;				
-	the roles of all advisors to the fund;				
-	the requirements and implications of an employer ceasing to participate in the fund; and				
-	the process and structures in place to ensure the proper management and administration of the scheme.				
	I am confident that I understand the regulatory framework to ch schemes are subject.				
Thi	s includes:				
-	the roles and powers of The Pensions Regulator,				
-	the key provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 1998, which are made under the 1972 Superannuation Act;				
-	the tax privileges and requirements applicable to the LGPS; and				
-	other legislation which might impact on the management of the scheme (for example, data protection and freedom of information legislation).	е			

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	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
Q10. I am confident that I understand how benefits offered by the State fit with the benefits offered by the scheme.				
This includes:				
- any connections between State benefits and scheme benefits.				
Q11. I am confident that I understand the procedures for resolving disputes (for example from fund members or between the Board members and the employers).				
This includes:				
- the role of Board members in resolving disputes; and				
- the role and powers of outside parties in resolving disputes (fo example The Pensions Regulator, the Pensions Ombudsman and the Pension Advisory Service).	r			

Board members are required to have knowledge and understanding about the principles relating to the funding of occupational pension schemes and the investment of the scheme's assets.

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
Q12. I am confident that I understand the basic workings of capital markets.				
This includes:				
- the effect of economic cycles and capital markets; and				
- the effect of changes in interest rates on capital markets.				
Q13. I am confident that I understand the implications of overseas investment, for example in terms of diversification and foreign exchange risk.				
Q14. I am confident that I understand the major investment asset classes and their characteristics.				
This includes:				
 how the level of risk associated with the major asset classes (e.g. equities, bonds, property, cash etc.) is measured and the risk and reward profile of each asset class; 				
 the differences between domestic and foreign investments (an the differences in risk and reward); 	d			

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
 specialised asset classes (e.g. hedge funds, private equity etc.) and their distinguishing characteristics;)			
 the specialised instruments and techniques available (e.g., derivatives, currency hedging, etc) and their distinguishing characteristics; and 				
- with profit investments, how they work and their advantages and disadvantages.				
Q15. I am confident that I understand the method for valuing the scheme's assets.				
This includes:				
- the method in the actuarial valuation for valuing the scheme's assets; and				
- the method used to record the scheme's assets in the employer's financial statements.				
216. I am confident that I understand how a defined benefit (DB) scheme is funded.				
This includes:				
- the nature of the employer's funding obligation; Appendix A Member Training Needs A9 of 20				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
- the relationship with the Board members;				
- the effect of the liabilities on the sponsoring employers;				
- how the liabilities of the scheme are valued;				
 and how the funding targets are set and the relationship of those targets to the scheme's liabilities. 				
Q17. I am confident that I understand the roles of the administering authority, the employers and the Board members in funding the scheme.				
This includes:				
 the nature and strength of the employer covenant to fund the scheme; 				
 the impact on the scheme of a change in the employer's financial position; 				
 the powers of the Board members in relation to funding, including powers related to the setting of funding targets and contribution rates; and 				
- the impact of funding.				
Appendix A Member Training Needs A10 of 20				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
Q18. I am confident that I understand the potential risks to the scheme.				
This includes:				
 financial (e.g. instability of employer, organisational restructuring); 				
- reputation (e.g. bad publicity of the pension scheme);				
- operational (e.g. benefits mispaid);				
- strategic (e.g. investment strategy does not match liabilities); and				
- hazard (e.g. all records destroyed in fire).				
Q19. I am confident that I understand the impact that transfers in and out of the scheme have on the scheme's funding.				
This includes:				
- how transfers arise; and				
- the different impact of individual and bulk transfers.				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
Q20. I am confident that I understand additional pension funding options available to employees.				
This includes:				
 additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) and added years arrangements; 				
- free standing additional voluntary contributions (FSAVCs)				
- stakeholder pensions; and				
- personal pension arrangements.				
Q21. I am confident that I understand the underlying contribution calculations for the scheme.				
This includes:				
- the process for setting contribution rates and the relationship between these contributions and the scheme's liabilities; and				
- the effect of the assumptions on the valuation of the liabilities o the fund.	of			

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
Q22. I am confident that I understand why professional advice is needed on funding, its nature and status, and how it is provided.				
Q23. I am confident that I understand funding deficits. This includes:				
- the difference between contributions for future benefit costs and for past service costs (i.e. contributions to fund the scheme's deficit).				
Q24. I am confident that I understand the requirements for managing funding deficits.				
This includes:				
- requirement for increased contribution rates; and				
- use of varying deficit recovery periods.				
Q25. I am confident that I understand the principles of strategic asset allocation.				
This includes:				
 the process behind deciding upon a particular strategic asset allocation; 				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
 the concept of asset/ liability matching and the appropriate selection of asset allocation; 				
 how asset allocations are chosen to reflect objectives for a scheme's funding strategy; and 				
- what particular events would trigger a review of the strategic asset allocation.				
Q26. I am confident that I understand how defined contribution (DC)/AVC schemes are funded.				
This includes:				
- the risks borne by the members; and				
- how expenses are levied, including on transfer.				
Q27. I am confident that I understand the investment choices available under a DC/AVC scheme.				
This includes:				
- the principles behind deciding upon the appropriate investmen strategies;	t			

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
- the rationale for the investment choices available to members	s;			
- the administration procedures specific to a DC/AVC scheme;				
- responsibilities of the Board members in respect of effective administration; and				
- the risks to member benefits.				
Q28. I am confident that I understand the principles of fund management and how performance can be measured.				
This includes:				
 investment considerations needed to meet the requirements the scheme's Statement of Investment Principles (SIP); 	of			
 the way in which performance is measured (e.g. the use of market indices as a benchmark); 				
 ownership of a pension scheme's assets (including implication for Board members in relation to corporate governance); 	ns			
- the structure of investment portfolios;				
- the process for selecting fund managers; and				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
 how the investment arrangements are monitored on an ongoin basis. 	g			
Board members need to be conversant with the documents the they are able to make use of those documents in carrying out			r own schem	e so that
Q29. I am confident that I understand the broad principles contained in the scheme's rules.				
This includes:				
 the duties, powers and discretions set out in the scheme's rules; 				
 the balance of powers between the Council and Investment Board members; 				
- the classes of members in the scheme; and				
- the circumstances when benefits are payable and their amount				
Q30. I am confident that I understand the strategy included in the SIP.				

This includes:	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
- who is responsible for the scheme's investment policy;				
- what the investment objectives are and how these were der	ived;			
- what the asset allocation strategy is and how this was derive	ed;			
- the benefits offered within the final salary scheme arrangements;				
- the types of investment undertaken;				
- issues of socially responsible investment and corporate governance; and				
 an understanding of the investment mandates currently in place. 				
231. I am confident that I understand the investment charges evied.				
This includes:				
- the fee structure for the DB assets of the scheme;				
- the use of performance related charges; and				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
- the reason the charging structures were agreed.				
Q32. I am confident that I understand the Funding Strategy Statement (FSS).				
This includes:				
 who is responsible for producing the FSS and when it should be reviewed; 	e			
- the scheme's statutory funding objective; and				
- the content of the FSS.				
Q33. I am confident that I understand the principles contained in the other scheme documentation.				
This includes:				
 the scheme's booklet, announcements and other member communications; 				
 the key elements of the most recent actuarial valuation and subsequent advice; 				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
 meeting minutes, their importance and policy decisions recorded in them; 				
- annual report and accounts;				
- insurance policies in place and the level of cover;				
 agreements and contracts with, for example, professional advisers; 				
- Board member approval procedures, the appointment of I members and the appointment of the Chairman;	Board			
- compliance with the Myners/CIPFA principles;				
- inclusion of the level of the Myners compliance in the SIP				
- the Council's constitution;				
- the scheme's business plan;				
- training plans; and				

	Not Confident	Partially Confident	Mostly Confident	Completely Confident
 an understanding of who has custody of all original documents of the scheme and arrangements for their custody, safekeepin and access. 				
234. Please use the space below to indicate any other developmen not be covered above.	t areas you v	vould like to a	iddress that m	nay