

# Staff and Pensions Committee

Date: Monday 10 March 2025  
Time: 2.00 pm  
Venue: Committee Room 2, Shire Hall

## Membership

Councillor Yousef Dahmash (Chair)  
Councillor Bill Gifford (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Brian Hammersley  
Councillor Christopher Kettle  
Councillor Sarah Millar  
Councillor Mandy Tromans

Items on the agenda: -

1. **General**
  - (1) Apologies
  - (2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
  - (3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting 5 - 10
2. **Business Plan 2025/26** 11 - 28
3. **On-Call Retaining Fee - 48-hour Contract** 29 - 34
4. **Pension Fund Regulatory and Policy Update report** 35 - 66
5. **Pension Administration Activity and Performance Update** 67 - 74
6. **Review the minutes of the Fire Local Pension Board 4/11/2024** 75 - 82
7. **Employers Joining and Leaving the Pension Fund** 83 - 86
8. **Reports Containing Exempt or Confidential Information**  
To consider passing the following resolution:

‘That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972’.

**9. Full Governance Review**

87 - 142

**Monica Fogarty**  
Chief Executive  
Warwickshire County Council  
Shire Hall, Warwick

## **Disclaimers**

### **Webcasting and permission to be filmed**

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### **Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Members are required to register their disclosable pecuniary interests within 28 days of their election of appointment to the Council. Any changes to matters registered or new matters that require to be registered must be notified to the Monitoring Officer as soon as practicable after they arise.

A member attending a meeting where a matter arises in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest must (unless they have a dispensation):

- Declare the interest if they have not already registered it
- Not participate in any discussion or vote
- Leave the meeting room until the matter has been dealt with
- Give written notice of any unregistered interest to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting

Non-pecuniary interests relevant to the agenda should be declared at the commencement of the meeting.

The public reports referred to are available on the Warwickshire Web <https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

### **Public Speaking**

Any member of the public who is resident or working in Warwickshire, or who is in receipt of services from the Council, may speak at the meeting for up to three minutes on any matter within the remit of the Committee. This can be in the form of a statement or a question. If you wish to speak please notify Democratic Services in writing at least two working days before the meeting. You should give your name and address and the subject upon which you wish to speak. Full details of the public speaking scheme are set out in the Council's Standing Orders.

### **COVID-19 Pandemic**

Any member or officer of the Council or any person attending this meeting must inform Democratic Services if within a week of the meeting they discover they have COVID-19 or have been in close proximity to anyone found to have COVID-19.

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# Staff and Pensions Committee

Monday 9 December 2024

## Minutes

### Attendance

#### Committee Members

Councillor Yousef Dahmash (Chair)

Councillor Bill Gifford (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Brian Hammersley

Councillor Christopher Kettle

Councillor Mandy Tromans

#### Officers

Lisa Eglesfield, Pensions Administration Service Manager

Chris Norton, Head of Investments, Audit and Risk

Paul Morley, Area Commander

Alistair Wickens, Technical Specialist Pensions Fund Policy and Governance

### 1. General

#### (1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Sarah Millar

#### (2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None

#### (3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on the 9th September 2024 and from the additional meeting held on the 25th November 2024 were both agreed as true and accurate records.

There were no matters arising.

### 2. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service - Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2023-24

Paul Morley, Area Manager – Prevention (WFRS) presented the report to the committee which included performance against several key Health, Safety and Wellbeing indicators and measures to identify any emerging themes.

The committee noted the continuing need for training; the “workplace” can often be somewhere firefighters have never been before. The new training centre in Paynes Lane,

Rugby will make training much more realistic. The centre will be open in January 2025. Training will help to improve operational response by crews with realistic training being carried out by our own instructors.

Other highlights from the report include –

In relation to the Derby Firefighter case, the service is waiting for the results from the National Learning Investigation and how it might relate to Warwickshire.

The subject of post fire contaminants and their control is a subject high on regional and national agendas. Warwickshire has good working practices, awareness, and education in this area. A control of contaminants working group has now been established with stakeholders from across the service. This group meets every 6 weeks to work on improving our culture and practices around the control of contaminants.

WFRS Health, Safety and Wellbeing information is presented at the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee Meeting held every 8 weeks. This is a statutory meeting and allows the sharing of information and good practices.

It was confirmed that there are 8 specialist accident investigators and that a regional peer review was due to have taken place by now, but this has been pushed back to May 2025.

The committee learnt that following the last inspection, two areas highlighted for improvement have now been closed. The backlog of accident investigations has reduced and the management of risk assessments has also been completed.

There has been an increase in the number of operational defects reporting but this is in part due to the wider scope within the category which includes vehicular defects. It was noted that there have been 3 new Volvo fire engines for the service this year, with another 6 ordered for the coming year.

In relation to RIDDOR reportable incidents, it was confirmed that there have been no recorded "Specified Injuries" within the Service that would be required to be reported under RIDDOR. There were 3 reported "over 7-day" injuries reported; all were musculoskeletal and sustained during operational incidents or training. One incident was reported to the HSE under RIDDOR regulations as a non-fatal, non-work injury.

In relation to wellbeing, it was confirmed that there has been a reduction in the number of violent and aggressive incidents against staff. However, 2 of the reported 4 incidents over the last year, were aimed at Fire Control Centre Staff during emergency or hoax calls. All staff involved were officers supported from Wellbeing Ambassadors and managers. Incidents are reported to the Police if deemed necessary. Councillor Bill Gifford expressed concern about the number of incidents, saying it was unexpected given why most people would be calling the service. Paul Morley agreed that it was always a shame to see these incidents and added that these incidents are significantly lower in Warwickshire than other areas. It was confirmed that the service does a lot of work in schools, and with police colleagues to engage with the community to try and prevent future incidents.

It was further confirmed that incidents are regularly monitored for any spikes, and to look at why such things might happen.

There are now 30 Wellbeing Ambassadors across the service: an increase of 11. There are also 5 additional Trauma Support Officers. Following a question from the Chair, it was confirmed that the Wellbeing Ambassadors are officers within the service who support team members who may have recently suffered some trauma in or out of work. They have been trained to recognise if that person may need more external support. This is part of their day-to-day role – they are not paid any additional salary. Ambassadors may be approached out of work hours, but this is very rare. It was confirmed that the training is from Banbury Health Psychotherapists – there are 2 days of initial training followed by annual refreshers.

Councillor Bill Gifford moved that the recommendation be accepted and was seconded by Councillor Chris Kettle. This was supported unanimously by the Committee.

### **Resolved**

That the Committee consider and comment upon the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report.

### **3. Pension Fund Regulatory and Policy Update Report**

Alistair Wickens, Technical Specialist Pensions Fund Policy and Governance presented the report to the committee.

It was confirmed that Aon recently conducted a full review of the fund's governance arrangements, including its compliance with The Pension Regulators new code of Practice. The results will present a check against the new code of practice and how compliant the fund is. The full governance review will be presented at the March 2025 Staff and Pensions Committee meeting.

It was confirmed that section 4.2 of the report shows a summary of the report and that they have been separated into RAG ratings. This is the first time that an analysis has been completed so is the first time that officers have been able to prioritise those areas in red. A progress update will be provided at the next committee meeting.

In relation to conflict of interests it was confirmed that the fund will require all advisers to provide their own respective Conflicts of Interest policy on appointment.

The new code of practice suggests that pension funds carry out their own risk assessments (ORA) for good practice. It was noted that the code is not clear on what the assessment should entail and officers are waiting for further clarification.

It was confirmed that the new training policy was due to be presented at this meeting but following the compliance check completed by Aon, several recommendations were highlighted. It was noted that the new training policy will be presented at the next committee meeting in March 2025.

In relation to the Regulatory Updates the following headline results were presented to the committee –

- Total employer contribution payments of 10.5 billion (an increase of 24.6% from 2022/23)
- Total Employee contribution payments of 3 billion (an increase of 8.3% from 2022/23)
- 99,505 retirements (an increase of 6.3% on the number of retirements from 2022/23)
- Across all Funds total expenditure was 17.1 billion (an increase of 11.9%) and total income was 20.7 billion (an increase of 19.3%)

The full LGPS Statistics for England and Wales 2023/2024 report can be found [here](#).

It was confirmed that the Office of National statistics announced the CPI rate of inflation for September 2024 as 1.7%.

It was confirmed that the LGA conference will be taking place in January 2025 and if members are interested in attending please contact Alistair Wickens.

Councillor Mandy Tromans moved that the recommendation be accepted and was seconded by Councillor Brian Hammersley. This was supported unanimously by the Committee.

### **Resolved**

That the Committee notes and comments on the updates contained within this report.

## **4. Pension Administration Activity and Performance Update**

Lisa Eglesfield, Pension Administration Service Manager presented the report to the committee and started with an update on the member self-service portal. It was confirmed that the fund is working hard on the current update to a new system called Engage; and this includes access to retirement planning. The current switch on date is planned for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. There will be a 2 factor log on to increase security for members.

The committee noted that 98.5% active members have received their statement by the deadline; all outstanding statements will be received by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024

In relation to KPI data collection, it was noted that the system is being updated so officers are currently working on two systems. The new system will improve the ability to meet statutory deadlines which are occasionally missed on the current system.

In relation to McCloud, it was confirmed that it is now drawing to a close with 24 pensioners still owed money; the plan is to have them all paid by the end of 2024.

It was confirmed that the pensions team is currently in the first stage of the implementation of the new Pensions Dashboard Programme, a government project which will enable individuals to access their pension information online, securely and in one place. The aim is that the first stage will finish in January 2025, and the second stage, in summer 2025. The main issue at the moment is deciding on the criteria to use and data quality. Councillor Bill Gifford asked if



the new dashboard was likely to reduce the number of calls made to the pension team. Lisa Eglesfield stated that this seemed unlikely – the more information someone has access to, the more questions they are likely to have. In relation to a question from Councillor Brian Hammersley in relation to the cost of the new dashboard programme, it was confirmed that the ongoing costs will be exactly the same as the current costs, although there is an additional set up cost of around £35k.

Councillor Bill Gifford moved that the recommendation be accepted and was seconded by Councillor Mandy Tromans. This was supported unanimously by the Committee.

### **Resolved**

That the Staff and Pensions Committee notes and comments on the content of the report.

## **5. Review the minutes of the Local Fire Pension Board 23/09/24**

Lisa Eglesfield, Pension Administration Service Manager presented the report to the committee and asked them to note section 2 of the report in relation to the Age Discrimination Remedy (McCloud). It was confirmed that the data collection had been finalised and the first compensation payment has been made. Warwickshire's pay roll team has completed all the data collection needed to meet the deadline in relation to the age discrimination.

In relation to the Matthews Project, it was confirmed that the Warwickshire fund is progressing well with calculations and that 144 firefighters have been identified. Full details can be found in section 3 of the report.

The committee noted that the risk register for the Firefighters Pension Scheme has been updated in line with the updated risk scoring method now used by Warwickshire County Council.

Councillor Chris Kettle moved that the recommendation be accepted and was seconded by Councillor Brian Hammersley. This was supported unanimously by the Committee.

### **Resolved**

That the Staff and Pensions Committee receive, consider and comment on the minutes of the meeting of the Warwickshire Fire Local Pension Board on 23 September 2024.

## **6. Employers Joining and Leaving the Pension Fund**

Lisa Eglesfield, Pension Administration Service Manager presented the report to the committee and confirmed that it was the standard report with details of employees joining and leaving the pension fund.

This will always be an area of constant change and there are regular meetings with legal colleagues to ensure controls are in place.

Councillor Brian Hamersley moved that the recommendation be accepted and was seconded by Councillor Mandy Tromans. This was supported unanimously by the Committee.

**Resolved**

That the Committee delegates authority to the Executive Director for Resources to approve applications to the Pension Fund from the employers listed in Appendix 1, subject to the applications meeting the criteria set out in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013.

The meeting rose at 14:43

.....  
Chair

## Staff and Pensions Committee

10 March 2025

### Business Plan 2025/26

#### Recommendation

That the Staff and Pensions Committee considers and approves the 2025/26 Business Plan for the Warwickshire Pension Fund as set out in Appendix 1

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 It is best practice for local authority pension funds to operate a formal and documented Business Plan for their operations. This report seeks approval of the Warwickshire Pension Fund Business Plan for 2025/26 which is attached in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The recent review of the Fund against the new General Code of Practice highlighted the recommendation that the Business Plan should be prepared on a rolling three-year period basis but updated annually. This approach will help the Fund's ability to support longer-term strategic and business planning. By extending the planning horizon, the Fund can better anticipate future challenges and opportunities.
- 1.3 The Business Plan will be used to guide and direct the Fund, provide clarity and alignment on goals and objectives and establish key initiatives for the forthcoming three financial years. In addition, it is available to all stakeholders to better understand what the Fund is planning to do to provide an efficient service across Warwickshire whilst supporting the overall corporate aims of Warwickshire County Council as the Administering Authority to the Pension Fund.
- 1.4 The Business Plan sits alongside other key documents which govern the Strategy and operations of the Fund, including the Investment Strategy and Funding Strategy.

#### 2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The Pension Fund's Funding Strategy and Investment Strategy provide the framework for the financial management of investments and employer contributions, and budgets for the pension fund teams have been set as part of the Council's budget setting process.

- 2.2 The action plan in respect of meeting good governance and The Pension Regulator’s Code of Practice requirements will include an action to implement a holistic pension fund medium term financial plan into next year’s business planning process and ultimately into the 2026/27 business plan.

### 3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 The Fund has a climate risk policy designed to minimise the Fund’s contribution towards climate change and minimise the Funds exposure to risk driven by climate change.

### 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 None

### 5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 None

## Appendices

1. Appendix 1 – Warwickshire Pension Fund Business Plan 2025/26

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Alistair Wickens Pension Fund Governance and Policy Lead	alistairwickens@warwickshire.gov.uk
Director	Purnima Kandula Director of Finance	purnimakandula@warwickshire.gov.uk
Executive Director	Rob Powell Executive Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Peter Butlin Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	peterbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): n/a

Other members:



**WARWICKSHIRE**  
PENSION FUND

# **Business Plan**

## **2025/2026**

## Contents

1	Introduction
2	Structure of the Warwickshire Pension Fund and its governance
3	Review of year to date
4	Long-Term Objectives
5	Key Performance Measures
6	Key Business Plan Items
7	Actions

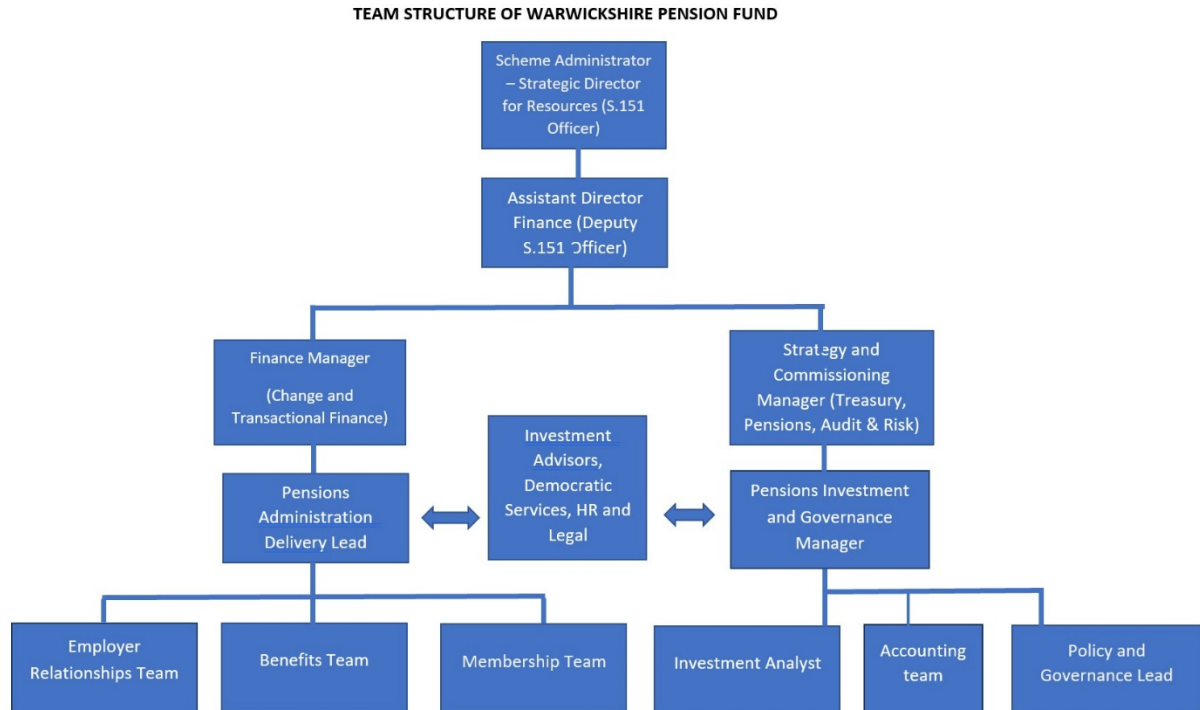
## Appendices

A	Administration Performance Measures
B	Investment Performance Measures
C	Single Action Plan

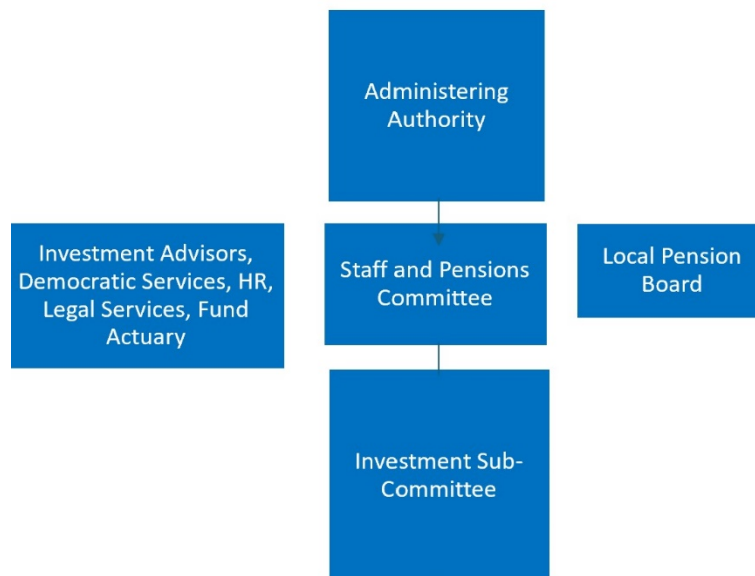
## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the business plan for the Warwickshire Pension Fund for 2025/26, including objectives, strategic priorities, and an action plan to achieve them.
- 1.2 Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is the Administering Authority of the Warwickshire Pension Fund ('the Fund') administering both the Local Government and Firefighter Pension Schemes. This business plan relates to the Local Government Pension Scheme only.
- 1.3 The role of Scheme Manager for the Warwickshire Pension Fund is undertaken by the s151 Officer and Executive Director for Resources for Warwickshire County Council.
- 1.4 The administration of the fund is carried out through Warwickshire County Council's Staff and Pensions Committee, the Pension Fund Investment Sub Committee, and the Local Pension Board and WCC employs a Pensions Administration Team within Finance to undertake the day-to-day operation of the Fund.
- 1.5 The Staff and Pensions Committee and Pension Fund Investment Sub-Committee are comprised of elected county council members whilst the Local Pension Board is an equal mix of representatives of employers and scheme members with an independent chair in accordance with the requirements of the Public Services Pension Act 2013.

## 2 Operations Team Structure of Warwickshire Pension Fund



### Governance Structure





### 3 Review of year to date

- 2.1 At January 2025, the total membership of the fund stood at 60,449. This includes active, deferred and pension members of the Fund. Pension fund membership continues to increase over the long-term. This increase is expected to continue due to automatic enrolment and increased public awareness of pensions.
- 2.2 The number of employers within the scheme has increased to 241 at January 2025 , and this also continues a long-term trend of an increasing number of active employers, driven for example by academisation and the contracting out of services by organisations within the pension fund.
- 2.3 The complexity of the scheme continues to increase over time. In the past year there has been the abolition of the Lifetime Allowance, changes to Further Education employer guarantees, Pension Dashboard ISP procurement, a comprehensive review of the Funds compliance with the TPR General Code of Practice, and the simpler final salary pension activity being gradually replaced by more complex calculations for pensions which have to incorporate different rules and retirement ages for different periods of membership.
- 2.4 The fund value has continued to increase and was at £2.97bn by the end of September 2024
- 2.5 The complexity of investment activity has steadily increased with the introduction of “alternatives” funds.
- 2.6 In the longer term, pooling will reduce, if not remove entirely, the number of fund managers that the Fund commissions directly as LGPS pools are expected to take on full responsibility for investment implementation, however the increased complexity in terms of the number of different mandates invested in is expected to remain.
- 2.7 In November 2024 the Government published its ‘Fit for the Future’ consultation document on LGPS reform. The changes call for funds to transfer all legacy assets to their Pool, set out their approach to local investment and take principal investment advice from their Pool while retaining responsibility for strategic asset allocation. The proposed deadline for implementation of the outcome of the ‘Fit for the Future’ consultation is March 2026. The proposed changes also implement the majority of the

recommendations from the Scheme Advisory Board's Good Governance report. At the time of writing the Fund's consultation response deadline has passed but the Government's response has not yet been published.

### **3. Long term objectives**

3.1 The Fund's fundamental objectives are that:

- i.) Pension benefits are paid to members accurately and on time; and
- ii.) Funds are available to pay benefits when they fall due.

3.2 To do this the Fund will:

- i.) Ensure the governance arrangements of the Pension Fund allow officers, employers, pension fund committee and Pension Board members to discharge their responsibilities efficiently and effectively;
- ii.) Deliver a high-quality pension administration service, working effectively with scheme employers and maintaining a constant focus on data quality and customer service; and
- iii.) iii.) Ensure the financial sustainability of the Fund through effective forecasting of long-term liabilities, determination and collection of appropriate contributions and generation of an appropriate risk adjusted return from the fund's investments.

3.3 The Fund will have regard to other factors as set out in relevant policies, for example in respect of climate change, social impact, and investment in the UK, however those considerations cannot take priority over the above.

### **4. Key Actions and Performance Measures**

4.1 Key actions and performance indicators for the Fund are organised into the categories of administration, investment, and governance / management.

#### ***Administration***

4.2 Administration service performance measures are set out in Appendix A.

4.3 Alongside the key metrics for the administration service a number of key activities will be progressed, these include:

- i.) The implementation of the McCloud remedy;
- ii.) Expanding the number of members using the online member self-service portal; and Preparation for the introduction of the Pensions Dashboard.

### ***Investments***

- 4.4 Ultimately, the Fund needs to focus on ensuring that the rates of return required by the triennial valuation are achieved and that enough income is generated to cover any shortfall between contributions, benefits and expenses.
- 4.5 To support this aim, the Investment Strategy sets out a Strategic Asset Allocation (Appendix B), and within each investment fund a target risk / return profile is delivered over the appropriate timeframe, i.e. performance is usually measured over the medium to long-term.
- 4.6 In addition to business as usual the following key activities will be undertaken:
  - i.) Further development of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) monitoring and climate change actions.  
– Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)
  - ii.) Supporting the further development of the Border to Coast Pension Partnership 2030 strategy and supporting development of additional capabilities including advisory.
  - iii.) Review the implications of the LGPS Fit for the Future Consultation and actions required.

### ***Governance / Management***

- 4.7 In maintaining the good governance of the Fund, the following additional performance measures and key actions will be delivered:
  - i.) Cash flow management will continue to have a high profile to ensure that it is not necessary to sell assets under distress.
  - ii.) The development of an action plan to ensure the Fund complies with Good Governance requirements and with the Pensions Regulator Code of Practice.
  - iii.) The pension fund accounts being prepared and published on time, and without qualification by external audit. Delays in approving the Accounts have been experienced in previous years due to external audit and team capacity.

## **5. Key Business Plan Themes**

### ***Workforce Planning***

- 5.1 Workforce planning will continue to be undertaken to promote staff retention and maintaining resilience within small and specialised services.

- 5.2 Staffing capacity will be kept under review. Resources required for specific projects will be identified and approved through business cases and project management approaches.

***Ensuring Appropriate Governance***

- 5.3 The Fund will review the outcomes of the Scheme Advisory Good Governance Project and Pension Regulators General Code of Practice and take steps to implement any new requirements.

**Climate Change / ESG Policy**

- 5.4 The Fund will continue to mitigate the Fund’s exposure to climate risk and to ensure climate issues are appropriately considered in its decision making.

***Developing Improved Systems***

- 5.5 Member Self Service will be moved to a new platform (“Engage”) and will continue to expand its coverage to a wider proportion of the scheme’s membership.
- 5.6 Implementation of Pensions Dashboard functionality will continue to be an important activity for the Fund but will be driven by externally set timelines.

***Collaboration***

- 5.7 The Fund will collaborate with partner funds and the Border to Coast Pension Partnership (BCCP) to further develop the performance and activities of the Pool and expand the benefits of pooling. This activity will be affected by the direction of the Government’s decisions following the LGPS Fit for the Future consultation.

***Pooling***

- 5.8 The BCCP will continue to develop new products and Warwickshire Pension Fund will work with BCCP and partner funds to help to shape the products being developed.
- 5.9 The Fund will continue to work alongside the pool and partner funds on responsible investment and sustainability, including making more use of metrics to evidence and promote sustainable activity.

***Investing in Employer Liaison***

- 5.10 The Fund will work closely with employers, providing information, support, signposting, and training to help employers to meet their responsibilities.

**6. Actions**

- 6.1 Appendix C sets out a summary of the actions planned for the coming year. The activity plan focuses on significant change activity and activity to do with delivering key functions.
- 6.2 Actions are grouped into the following categories:
  - i.) Ensuring a high-quality administration service
  - ii.) Actuarial activities
  - iii.) Maximising Investment Benefits
  - iv.) Ensuring Good Governance
  - v.) Sustainability

## Appendix A

## Administration Performance Measures

Key Performance Indicator	Fund Target (95%)
Communication issued with acknowledgement of death of active, deferred, pensioner and dependent member	5 days
Communication issued confirming the amount of dependents pension	10 days
Communication issued to deferred member with pension and lump sum options (quotation)	15 days
Communication issued to active member with pension and lump sum options (quotation)	15 days
Communication issued to deferred member with confirmation of pension and lump sum (actual)	15 days
Communication issued to active member with confirmation of pension and lump sum (actual)	15 days
Payment of lump sums (actives and deferred)	15 days
Communication issued with deferred benefits	30 days
Communication issued to scheme member with completion of transfer in	15 days
Communication issued to scheme member with completion of transfer out	15 days
Payment of refund	10 days
Divorce quotation	45 days
Communication issued following actual divorce proceedings i.e. application of a Pension Sharing Order	15 days
Communication issued to new starters	40 days
Member estimates requested by scheme member and employer	15 days

### Strategic Asset Allocation

Asset class	Current Target Asset Allocation (%)	Asset Allocation Range (%)
UK equities	6.0	+/-2.5
Overseas equities	29.5	+/-2.5
Fundamental global equity*	5.0	+/-2.5
Private equity	5.75	n/a
<b>Total Growth</b>	<b>46.25</b>	
Property	10.0	n/a
Infrastructure	9.0	n/a
Private debt	6.25	n/a
Multi asset credit	10.0	n/a
Climate Opportunities	1.0	n/a
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>36.25</b>	
UK corporate bonds	11.5	+/-1.5
UK index linked bonds	6.0	+/-0.5
<b>Total Protection</b>	<b>17.5</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

\* Refers to passive global equities invested in line with the RAFI All World 3000 index, which weights underlying constituents by fundamental factors as opposed to traditional market capitalisation weightings.

## Appendix C

## Single Action Plan

## C1. Ensuring a high-quality administration service

Ref	Action	Timescale 25/26	Position for 26/27	Position for 27/28
1	Annual Pensioners Newsletter issued by 30th June	By 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	By 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2026	By 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2027
2	Annual benefit statements issued by 31st August	By 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025	By 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2026	By 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2027
3	Update member portal from Member Self Service to Engage system	By 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Ongoing use of Engage	Ongoing use of Engage
4	Expand number of users of member portal	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
5	Develop online retirement process within member portal	Not applicable	By 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2026	Ongoing
6	Annual Allowance statements issued	By 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	By 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2026	By 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2027
7	Employer Engagement/Employer Training	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly
8	Administration performance - KPIs reported to the Staff and Pensions Committee and Local Pensions Board,	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly
9	Review of Pension Fund website	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
10	Review of complaints and compliments received, and report to Staff and Pensions committee during the year	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly
11	Prepare scheme for increases to minimum to pension ages to 57	Not applicable	Not applicable	In advance of changes on 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2028
12	Data quality review	Ongoing – To include exercise needed for National Pension Dashboard	Ongoing	Ongoing
13	National Pension Dashboards	Ongoing – Scheme must connect to dashboard framework by 31 <sup>st</sup>	Ongoing – We expect the dashboard to be launched to the	Ongoing



		October 2025	public during this year.	
14	Overseas payment contract procurement	Not applicable	Contract procurement in advance of 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2026	Ongoing use of new contractor
15	Procurement for Fire Pension Scheme administration provider	Not due until 2027	Contract procurement in advance of 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2027	Ongoing administration with new provider
16	Full Internal audit of Pension Administration Service	Expected in 2026/27	During financial year	Not applicable
17	Prepare for tax changes to death benefits payable from the fund	Not Applicable	In advance of changes on 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2027	Ongoing
18	Explore options for moving hosting of pension administration servers	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

## C2. Actuarial Activities

Ref	Action	Timescale 25/26	Position for 26/27	Position for 27/28
19	Monitor employer contribution performance through the year	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
20	Provide Fund Actuary with member and cashflow data for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025 to enable 2025 triennial valuation of the Fund	July 2025	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
21	Issue draft Employer Contribution rates to all active employers prior to fund AGM	November 2025	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
22	Issue final employer contribution rate communication to all active employers by agreed deadline	March 2026	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
23	Publish final Valuation Report including Results and Adjustment certificate	March 2026	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
24	Agree precepting employers' contribution rates	April 2025	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

**C3. Optimising Investment Risk and Return**

Ref	Action	Timescale 25/26	Position for 26/27	Position for 27/28
25	Support the development of new Border to Coast fund products, for example the property fund	As funds launch	As funds launch	As funds launch
26	Continue to move the investment mix towards the long-term Strategic Asset Allocation	Ongoing – reviewed periodically	Ongoing – reviewed periodically	Ongoing – reviewed periodically
27	Appropriate engagement with the governance of Border to Coast via the Joint Committee, Operational Officers Group, and Section 151 Meetings, and through the exercising of shareholder voting rights	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
28	Work with BCPP to meet local UK investment requirements	March 2026	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
29	Work with BCPP to meet new advisory requirements from the Fit For the Future consultation	March 2026	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
30	Review Investment Strategy Statement	By March 2026	By March 2027	March 2028

**C4. Ensuring Good Governance**

Ref	Action	Timescale 25/26	Position for 26/27	Position for 27/28
31	Deliver the Pension Fund Annual General Meeting, aiming for positive feedback from all stakeholders	December 2025	December 2026	December 2027
32	Production of draft statement of accounts	May 2025	May 2026	May 2027
33	Publication of Annual Pension Fund Report	November 2025	November 2026	November 2027
34	Review of Policy Register and schedule for regular review and the timely delivery of policy updates	Ongoing at Intervals as agreed by Fund	Ongoing at Intervals as agreed by Fund	Ongoing at Intervals as agreed by Fund
35	Maintenance of business continuity planning and cyber security arrangements – periodic updating and testing	Ongoing at Intervals as agreed by the Fund	Ongoing at Intervals as agreed by the Fund	Ongoing at Intervals as agreed by the Fund
36	Develop and implement a comprehensive General Code of Practice action plan that incorporates all actions identified in the recent compliance check, as well as the recommendations for good governance outlined in the 'Fit for the Future' consultation	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
37	Develop fund-wide medium term financial planning and monitoring	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

**C5. Sustainability**

Ref	Action	Timescale 25/26	Position for 26/27	Position for 27/28
38	Further develop the Fund's Climate Risk Strategy and the Fund's approach ESG, including the development of goals and milestones and monitoring of metrics	December 2025	December 2026	December 2027
39	Implement and update TCFD disclosure requirements	March 2026	March 2027	March 2028

40	Engage with pooling partner funds and Border to Coast on climate change and RI developments	Quarterly – Update Policies Annually	Quarterly – Update Policies Annually	Quarterly – Update Policies Annually
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## Staff and Pensions Committee

10 March 2025

### On-Call Retaining Fee

#### Recommendation

That the Committee approves the modifications to the NJC pay scales for On-Call Firefighters as set out in the body of this report, subject to local agreement with the relevant Representative Bodies:

#### 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services implemented a new pay structure that amended the retaining fee for on-call firefighters.
- 1.2 Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) adopted the new nationally agreed structure.
- 1.3 In the new national pay structure hours of on-call availability have been grouped into 'bandings', and a percentage of a fulltime salary applied to each band.

Hours of availability (Per week)	Percentage of fulltime salary
Up to and including 30 hours per week	5%
from 31 hours per week and up to and including 60 hours per week	7.5%
from 61 hours per week and up to and including 90 hours per week	10%
from 91 hours per week and up to and including 119 hours	12.5%
Full cover (120 hours a week)	15%

- 1.4 WFRS is moving to a new operational response model that will see five on-call fire stations operate at night only (19:00 – 07:00). The minimum contract offered to an on-call firefighter will be 24-hours, and the maximum will be 60-hours per week.
- 1.5 For operational purposes on-call firefighters will have contracts ranging between 24, 36, 48 and 60-hours to provide on-call cover.

- 1.6 The new national pay structure means a Firefighter contracted to 36-hours per week would receive the same retaining fee as a Firefighter contracted to 48-hours and 60 hours per week – 7.5%.
- 1.7 This means there is no incentive for an on-call Firefighter to contract to a 48-hour or 60-hour contract, over a 36-hour contract.
- 1.8 The service is in the process of consulting with current Firefighters to undertake new contracted hours.
- 1.9 If more Firefighters opt for a 36-hour contract, as there is no incentive to undertake a 48-hour or 60-hour contract, an increased headcount will be required to provide full cover and ensure appliance availability, increasing costs to the Authority.
- 1.10 There is also the question of fairness by asking employees to provide more on-call availability for the same retaining pay.
- 1.11 To overcome this, WFRS recommends making two local changes to the newly agreed pay structure:
  - Implementing an additional pay banding for 48-hour contracts. This additional banding would be paid at 8.75%.
  - Increase the starting threshold for the 10% banding by 1-hour, meaning staff would receive 10% for a 60-hour contract.

<b>Hours of availability (Per week)</b>	<b>WFRS Proposed Contract</b>	<b>Percentage of fulltime salary</b>
Up to and including 30 hours per week	24-hours	5%
from 31 hours per week and up to and including 60 hours per week	36-hours	7.5%
Recommended pay band to be introduced	48-hours	8.75%
from 61 hours per week and up to and including 90 hours per week	60-hours	10%

- 1.12 By introducing these changes, each location will require fewer on-call Firefighters to provide the required cover. Consequently, this will reduce the overall on-costs including, training, personal protective equipment and uniform.
- 1.13 This proposed structure is an improvement to the already agreed national structure and will have several benefits for our people. It will provide greater opportunity for employees to be remunerated fairly for the hours they are contracted.

- 1.14 By having an improved pay structure it will improve the attraction and retention of staff on the on-call duty system. This will create efficiencies when considering the resources required to recruit and train new members of staff.
- 1.15 These changes make the on-call duty system more cost effective as fewer employees will be required to maintain establishment levels at each location.
- 1.16 These changes provide a more sustainable model moving forward that will maximise benefits to the communities of Warwickshire.
- 1.17 The proposed changes are factored into existing operational budgets.

## 2 Financial Implications

### Introduction of a new 48-hour contract:

- 2.1 Within the new operational response model there are 5 on-call fire stations in WFRS. Each station will have 600 hours to appropriately staff the station.
- 2.2 Each fire station will be crewed with staff on a mixture of 24, 36, 48, or 60 hour on-call contracts, based on the availability they are able to give.
- 2.3 The 8.75% banding gives each member of staff an additional £470\* pa over the 7.5% banding
- 2.3 For illustrative purposes, if all staff were to undertake 36-hour contracts, there would be a headcount of 17 required at each station, paid £2825.63\* pa each (7.5%). Across all 5 stations, the cost would be **£240,178** pa.
- 2.4 If all staff were to undertake a proposed 48-hour contract and provide 48-hours of on-call availability per week, there would be a headcount of 13 required at each station paid £3296.56\* pa each (8.75%). Over all 5 stations, the total cost would be **£214,276**.
- 2.5 Based on the information provided in 2.3 and 2.4 - Provided WFRS can attract staff to a 48-hour contract, it will cost **£25,903** less.

\*All financial analysis is indicative of an on-call competent Firefighter.

### Increasing threshold of 60-hour contract to 61-hour banding at 10%

- 2.6 If all staff were to undertake a proposed 60-hour contract at the higher banding of 10%, each on-call location would need 10 Firefighters to establish each location.
- 2.7 The 10% banding gives each member of staff an additional £941\* pa over the 7.5% banding.
- 2.8 This has the potential to cost approximately £47,000\* extra across 5 on-call locations.

- 2.9 Applying the same principle applied in 2.4, each location would only require a head count of 10 to fully establish each location. The combined salary cost of 10 members of staff on the proposed 60-hour contract is **£188,375\***.
- 2.10 If WFRS can attract more staff to a 60-hour contract on the increased pay banding, it will cost **£25,901\*** less than 13 members of staff working a 48-hour contract and **£51,803\*** less than 17 members of staff working a 36-hour contract due to the overall headcount being less.
- \*All financial analysis is indicative of an on-call competent Firefighter
- 2.11 For completeness, the below table provides a variation of potential establishments at the 5 on-call locations using the NJC pay structure. This is compared against the WFRS proposals.
- 2.12 The table also illustrates an optimal establishment of 13 which would be of significantly lower cost, when applying the WFRS proposals, than if all staff were on a 24 36 or 48 contract only.
- 2.13 Until establishing the 5 locations it is difficult to forecast establishments, but the introduction of new bandings incentivises the adoption of increased contracts, reducing the number of staff required.

Potential WFRS Establishments	Establishment Required	NJC Cost	WFRS Proposed Cost	WFRS Proposed Cost 5 Locations	Variance Proposed Cost 5 locations
All staff 24-hour contract	25	47,090	47,090	235,450	0
All staff 36-hour contract	17	48,040	48,040	240,200	0
All staff 48-hour contract	13	36,730	42,860	214,300	30,600
All staff 60-hour contract	10	28,260	37,680	188,400	47,100
Mixture of 2 x 24, 3 x 36, 3 x 48 & 5 x 60	13	34,850	40,970	204,850	30,600



### **3 Environmental Implications**

- 3.1 If WFRS can encourage staff to agree to a 48-hour or 60-hour contracts, fewer staff will be required to fully establish each location. Consequently, there will be a small reduction in commuting for people attending courses and training events.

### **4 Supporting Information**

- 4.1 On-call firefighters must live or work within 5-minutes of their nominated on-call fire station.
- 4.2 On-call firefighters receive an annual retainer for providing cover based on a pre agreed contract.
- 4.3 On-call firefighters are then paid hourly when mobilised to operational incidents or for other purposes such as training.
- 4.4 Retention and recruitment of on call staff has been and still is a challenge for all Fire and Rescue Services in the UK. This is due to several reasons, including pay and commitment challenges.
- 4.5 Prior to the introduction of the new pay bandings, WFRS had a local agreement for a clear pay structure which differentiated between the number of contracted hours. On-call Firefighters were paid incrementally in blocks of 10-hour contracts.
- 4.6 The locally agreed pay structure has had to be changed to accommodate the new NJC pay agreement which is overall more favourable for on-call firefighters.
- 4.7 This recommendation, whilst still operating within the parameters of the nationally agreed pay structure will give each contract its own unique pay scale making the higher contract more attractive than the lower. This will also support attraction and recruitment across the organisation.
- 4.8 This recommendation will provide a sustainable, more economical duty system and will see a reduction in on-costs for all employees.
- 4.9 These changes offer a fairer pay structure, recompensing on-call Firefighters for time they have spent providing availability.
- 4.10 Financial analysis has identified that these changes are low in cost when considered against the benefit which it returns.
- 4.11 There is a risk that recruitment and retention of on-call Firefighters will be more challenging moving forward. These recommendations will support WFRS in ensuring that it has a sustainable on-call model now and into the future.

## 5 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 WFRS is currently consulting with staff over new contracts in the new service model. We would like to be a position to offer a 48-hour and a 60-hour on-call contracts at an agreed enhanced rate, as part of those consultations. This is planned to take effect from 1 July 2025.
- 5.2 We have discussed this proposal with Fire and Rescue trade unions for a local agreement to vary the NJC framework. Early indications are positive that a local agreement would be entered into by representative bodies.

## Appendices

None

## Background Papers

- [Local Government Association \(LGA\) - Guidance](#)

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): not applicable county wide report

Other members:

## Staff and Pensions Committee

10 March 2025

### Pension Fund Regulatory and Policy Update report

#### Recommendation

That the Staff and Pensions Committee notes and comments on the updates contained within this Report.

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Report confirms the findings of the most recent review of Pension Fund policies. Any significant changes recommended to any policy are confirmed in the body of this report.
- 1.2 This Report also provides a regulatory update of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) over the last quarter.

#### 2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this Report.

#### 3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this Report.

#### 4. Warwickshire Pension Fund Policies

- 4.1 Two of the Fund's policies have been reviewed this quarter, the Admissions and Terminations Policy and the Training Policy.
- 4.2 **Training Policy** – An interim review of the training policy has been completed following the Funds compliance check against the new Single Code of Practice. An induction training section has been recommended to make new members of the Committees and Local Pension Board aware of the online training sessions required to demonstrate compliance with the CIPFA Knowledge and Skills requirements. The training policy has also been updated to include the use of a new SharePoint site to share information securely with members of the Staff and Pensions committee, Pension Fund Investment Sub-Committee and Local Pension Board. The revised policy is attached in Appendix 1 with changes highlighted red.

- 4.3 **Admissions and Terminations Policy** – The policy has been updated to reflect the changes made to the cessation methodology in the Funding Strategy Statement. This includes the move to a risk-based cessation approach and the setting of an upper and lower likelihood of success to consider the amount of assets a ceasing contractor is required to leave in the fund. The revised policy is attached in Appendix 2 with changes highlighted as tracked changes.

## 5. Regulatory updates and information relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme

- 5.1 **2025/26 employee contribution bands** - The member contribution bands have been updated and will come into effect on 1 April 2025. These are calculated by increasing the 2024/25 bands by the September 2024 CPI figure of 1.7%. The new rates are:

Band	Actual pensionable pay for an employment	Main section contribution rate for that employment	50/50 section contribution rate for that employment
1	Up to £17,800	5.50%	2.75%
2	£17,801 to £28,000	5.80%	2.90%
3	£28,001 to £45,600	6.50%	3.25%
4	£45,601 to £57,700	6.80%	3.40%
5	£57,701 to £81,000	8.50%	4.25%
6	£81,001 to £114,800	9.90%	4.95%
7	£114,801 to £135,300	10.50%	5.25%
8	£135,301 to £203,000	11.40%	5.70%
9	£203,001 or more	12.50%	6.25%

- 5.2 **New Pensions Minister** – On 14 January 2025, Torsten Bell MP was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Pensions) in the DWP replacing Emma Reynolds who has been appointed Economic Secretary to the Treasury.
- 5.3 **TPR publishes updated dashboards guidance** – In December 2024 the Pensions Regulator published updated dashboard guidance which can be found [here](#).
- 5.4 **Audit Consultation SAB response** – Following the publication of the Government's English Devolution White Paper on 16 December 2024 an [open consultation](#) was launched setting out proposals for overhauling the local audit system in England. The consultation set out a strategy which commits to a series of measures to improve the local audit system. Notably, paragraph 77 contained a proposal to decouple the pension fund accounts from the main accounts of administering authorities, which has been recommended by the Board for some time. The Scheme Advisory Board response is published [here](#).

- 5.5 **Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) annual review** – The SAB chair, Cllr Roger Phillips, published the Board's first [Annual review](#). The review is an overview of the work completed by the Board over the previous 12 months.
- 5.6 **Fit for the Future Consultation response** – Following the conclusion of the 2024 Fit for the Future consultation on LGPS reform, the [Scheme Advisory board and Local Government Pensions Committee](#) have published their respective responses. The Warwickshire Pension Fund submitted a response which was considered and approved by the Pension Fund Investment Sub Committee.
- 5.7 **Updated opinion on the fiduciary duty in the LGPS** - The Board has received Nigel Giffin KC's updated opinion on the fiduciary duty in LGPS and is entitled 'Local Government Pension Scheme: Investments and Non-Financial Considerations'. The opinion can be found on the [legal opinions](#) page of the SAB website. Key points include:
- That administering authorities do have a fiduciary duty to employers and to members.
  - Investment powers have to be exercised for investment purposes and not other purposes, however non financial considerations can be taken into account in investment decisions where they do not risk significant financial detriment to a Fund, and where they do not entail an administering authority preferring its own interests or taking a view that is not widely shared by scheme employers and members.
- 5.8 **Letter to Chief Financial Officers and pension committee chairs** – The Scheme Advisory Board chair has written a letter addressed to CFOs and pension committee chairs at administering authorities. The purpose of the letter is to ensure that administering authorities provide appropriate resources for effective pension service delivery. The letter is published on the [board's website](#). Elsewhere on the agenda, the Full Governance Review report assesses the Fund's compliance with appropriate governance standards and an action plan will be built around this, including having regard to resourcing of change activity. The Fund will keep under review resources to support Fund's activities to ensure they remain sufficient. This is important given the changing demands upon the fund, particularly its increasing size, increasing complexity, and the increasing expectations in respect of governance standards.

## 6. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 6.1 None

### Appendices

1. Appendix 1 – Training Policy
2. Appendix 2 – Admissions and Terminations Policy

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): n/a

Other members:

# Training Policy



**WARWICKSHIRE**  
PENSION FUND

February 2025

TP2025.1

## Training policy

This policy provides details of the training strategy for the Warwickshire Pension Fund (the Fund).

It confirms the Training commitment of the Fund and sets out the arrangements for the training and development of:

- Members of the Warwickshire Staff and Pensions Committee
- Members of the Warwickshire Investment Sub-Committee
- The Local Pensions Board; and
- Officers involved in the day-to-day management of the Warwickshire Pension Fund ('the Fund')

## Legislation

Section 248A of the Pensions Act 2004, as amended by the Public Services Pensions Act 2013, requires that trustees of occupational pension Schemes should be trained and have knowledge and understanding of the law relating to pensions, the role of trustees, the principles of scheme funding and investment and the management and administration of pension scheme benefits.

Whilst previously there was only a legal requirement for a prescribed level of knowledge and understanding for members of a Local Pension Board, this legal requirement will soon apply to members of a Staff and Pensions Committee and Investment Sub-Committee following the new governance principles introduced in the LGPS 'Fit for the Future' consultation.

Accordingly and previous to the new regulations the Staff and Pensions Committee and the Investment Sub-Committee have agreed to adopt the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on LGPS Knowledge and Skills (the Code) and the Knowledge and Skills Framework for LGPS Committee Members and LGPS Officers. (CIPFA KSF).

The CIPFA KSF therefore applies to all Members of the Staff and Pensions Committee, Investment Sub-Committee and the Local Pensions Board. It also applies to Officers of the Fund. Advisors are also expected to meet the objectives of the Fund's policy.



## Code of Practice on LGPS Knowledge and Skills 2024

The Pensions Regulator's General Code of Practice 2024 emphasizes the importance of effective governance for pension schemes. It includes specific expectations regarding the training and competence of those running the schemes.

The code requires governing bodies to establish and maintain a documented training strategy. This strategy should ensure that all trustees and relevant personnel have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their roles effectively. The training strategy should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in the scheme or regulatory requirements

The General Code of Practice can be viewed on The Pensions Regulator Website [here](#)

The Warwickshire Investment Sub-Committee approved this Training Policy at its meeting in XXXX and in doing so adopted the following statements, as recommended by the Code:

1. This LGPS administering authority adopts the key principles of the General Code of Practice on LGPS knowledge and skills.
2. This LGPS administering authority recognises that effective management, governance, decision making and other aspects of the delivery of the LGPS can only be achieved where those involved have the requisite knowledge and skills to discharge the duties and responsibilities allocated to them.
3. This LGPS administering authority has in place formal and comprehensive objectives, policies and practices, strategies and reporting arrangements to effectively acquire and retain LGPS knowledge and skills for those responsible for the management, delivery, governance and decision making of the LGPS
4. These policies and practices will be guided by reference to a comprehensive framework of knowledge and skills requirements such as that set down in the CIPFA LGPS Knowledge and Skills Framework.

5. This LGPS administering authority will ensure that it has adequate resources in place to ensure all staff, members or other persons responsible for the management, decision making, governance and other aspects of the delivery of the LGPS acquire and retain the necessary knowledge and skills.
  
6. This LGPS administering authority will report annually on how their knowledge and skills policy has been put into practice throughout the financial year in the fund's annual report.
  
7. This LGPS administering authority has delegated the responsibility for the implementation of the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice to the appropriate officer, who will act in accordance with the administering authority's knowledge and skills policy statement, and, where they are a CIPFA member, with CIPFA Standards of Professional Practice (where relevant).

### Aims and objectives

Warwickshire County Council recognises its responsibilities as the Administering Authority to the Warwickshire Pension Fund on behalf of its stakeholders which include:

- Over 60,000 current and former Employee Members of the Fund;
- Over 240 Employers in the Fund; and
- Local taxpayers.

The Administering Authority's objectives in relation to this policy are to ensure that:

- Those persons charged with the financial management and decision-making about the Fund are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills required to discharge the duties and responsibilities allocated to them;
  
- Those persons responsible for the day-to-day administration and running of the Fund have the appropriate level of knowledge and skills required to discharge their duties and responsibilities;

- Those persons responsible for providing governance and assurance of the Fund have sufficient expertise to be able to evaluate and challenge the advice they receive, to ensure their decisions are robust and soundly based; and
- Members of the Local Pensions Board have sufficient knowledge and understanding to challenge any failure by the Administering Authority to comply with the Regulations and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the LGPS and/or any failure to meet the standards and expectations set out the Regulators Codes of Practice.

All Members and Officers to whom this Policy applies are expected to continually demonstrate their own personal commitment to training and to ensuring that these objectives are met.

To achieve these objectives, the Fund will have regard to the following publications:

- CIPFA Technical Knowledge and Skills Framework for Local Pension Boards;
- CIPFA Code of Practice on LGPS Knowledge and Skills
- CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework for LGPS Committee Members and LGPS Officers
- Public Service Pensions Act 2013
- The Pensions Regulator's (TPR) General Cod of Practice
- Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Pension Scheme Advisory Board Guidance
- MIFID II
- MHCLG Statutory Guidance

Warwickshire County Council fully supports the use of the CIPFA KSF and the Pension Regulators Codes of Practice. These documents will form the basis of the training strategy using a rolling training plan together with regular monitoring and reporting.

Rob Powell, the Strategic Director of Resources (Scheme Administrator) at Warwickshire County Council is the Fund's designated named individual responsible for ensuring that this Training Policy is implemented. However, the practical arrangements for organising and

ensuring the delivery of timely and appropriate training has been delegated to the Assistant Director for Finance and his Officers.

The Council's approach to training will be supportive in nature with the intention of providing Committee, Panel and Local Pension Board Members with regular sessions that will contribute to their level of skills and knowledge.

### Areas of knowledge and understanding required

There are eight core technical areas identified in the CIPFA KSF where appropriate knowledge and skills should be achieved and maintained. They are:

#### Pensions Legislation and Guidance

A knowledge of the framework of legislation and guidance and the way in which it affects the management and operational aspects of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

#### Pensions Governance

Understanding the requirements of the current and evolving governance framework for the LGPS as well as wider pensions industry frameworks that apply and impact the governance of the LGPS.

#### Funding Strategy and Actuarial Methods

To understand the work of the Actuary and the way in which actuarial information impacts both the finances of the Scheme and the Scheme Employers.

#### Pensions Administration and Communications

To understand the complex nature of administering scheme benefits and contributions and the industry wide requirements of disclosure and data quality, to ensure decisions made are in compliance with the regulations.

## Pensions Financial Strategy, Management, Accounting, Reporting and Audit Standards

To understand the way LGPS pension funds are resourced, budgeted, and accounted for and the role internal and external auditors play in assuring the administering authority complies with statutory requirements.

## Investment Strategy, Asset Allocation, Pooling, Performance and Risk Management

To gain an understanding of investment risks (including emerging risks), asset allocation and its impact on investment performance, investment pooling arrangements (including the transition of assets into the pool).

## Financial Markets and Products

An understanding of the workings of financial markets and the investment vehicles available in relation to the Fund's investment strategy and how these are utilised in investment pools.

## Pension Services Procurement, Contract Management and Relationship Management.

An understanding of procurement requirements, including the availability of LGPS specific frameworks, to enable the appointment of third-party providers that facilitate efficient and effective pensions operations.

## Degree of knowledge and understanding required

The staff and Pension Committee, Investment Sub-Committee, Local Pension Board Members and Fund Officers must have a knowledge and understanding of the law relating to pensions (and any other matters prescribed in legislation) to a level appropriate for them to be able to carry out their individual roles, responsibilities and duties and to exercise properly their delegated responsibility, on behalf of the Warwickshire Pension Fund.

The different degrees of knowledge and understanding are prescribed in the CIPFA KSF as:

For Staff and Pensions Committee, Investment Sub-Committee and Local Pension Board Members:

- an awareness, i.e. recognition that the subject matter exists
- a general understanding, i.e. understanding the basics in relation to the subject matter
- a strong understanding, i.e. a good level of knowledge in relation to the subject matter (but not necessary at a detailed level).

For Fund Officers

- a strong understanding, i.e. a good level of knowledge in relation to the subject matter (but not necessary at a detailed level)
- a detailed level of knowledge in relation to the subject matter
- an expert level of knowledge in relation to the subject matter

Acquiring, reviewing and updating knowledge and understanding

Staff and Pensions Committee, Investment Sub-Committee and Local Pension Board members should invest sufficient time in their learning and development alongside their other responsibilities and duties.

Newly appointed Committee members and Local Pension Board members should be aware that their legal responsibilities and duties as a member of those bodies begin from the date they take up their post. They should immediately start to familiarise themselves with the scheme regulations, documents recording policy about the administration of the scheme and relevant pensions law. The Pension Regulator's |General Code of Practice clearly states these requirements. For the

Staff and Pensions Committee and Investment Sub-Committee (Governing Body) and other guidance covers the Local Pension Board. All members should undertake personal responsibility to attend training provided by the Fund and annually review their skills, using the tools made available. This includes the Knowledge and Skills Progress Assessment provided through Hymans Robertson.

### Training plan

The Hymans Robertson National Knowledge and Skills Assessment will be the primary methods of assessing the knowledge and skills of both the individual Members and more widely, the collective knowledge and skills of the Staff and Pensions Committee, Investment Sub-Committee and Local Pensions Board and this will be used for an annual assessment. The results of both will be used to help develop the training plan for the following year to ensure any knowledge gaps are removed as far as possible, given other areas of general training being provided.

The training plan will be updated and presented at each Staff and Pensions Committee Meeting.

Officers will make regular assessments of the training needs of their Teams.

Training will be delivered through a variety of methods including:

- **Sharing documents through the Warwickshire Pension Fund Governance SharePoint**
- In-house training provided by Officers or external trainers;
- Training as part of a formal meeting;
- External training events;
- Circulation of reading material;
- Shared training with other Funds or frameworks
- Attendance at seminars and conferences
- On-line training toolkit provided by the Pensions Regulator;
- Hymans Robertson LOLA on-line training portal; and
- Self-improvement and familiarisation with regulations and documents.

Where appropriate, training will be provided jointly for the Staff and Pensions Committee, Investment Sub-Committee, Local Pensions Board members and Officers.

A training schedule will be developed by Officers in consultation with the Staff and Pensions Committee, Investment Sub-Committee and Local Pensions Board to achieve the following:

- maintain a general awareness to ensure members have an ongoing understanding and knowledge of developments and current issues in the pensions' arena;
- training is delivered to ensure appropriately timed training is provided in relation to "hot topics"; and
- individual and collective training needs are assessed and delivered.

To identify whether the objectives of this Training Policy are being met, the Administering Authority will maintain a Training Log which records any training delivered, as well as the attendance of Staff and Pensions Committee, Investment Sub-Committee and Local Pensions Board members at training events and learning activities.

### Induction Training

On joining the Staff and Pensions Committee, Pension Fund Investment Sub-Committee or Local Pension Board, all members will be given access to the LGPS Online Learning Academy (LOLA) and the Warwickshire Pension fund Governance SharePoint.

New Local Pension Board, Staff and Pensions Committee and Pension Fund Investment Sub-Committee members must familiarise themselves with the Warwickshire Pension Fund Website.

The following training is mandatory for LPB and PFISC members in the first 12 months in post:

- LGPS Online Learning Academy (LOLA) modules
- Annual National Knowledge Assessment
- Make every effort to attend the Local Government Association Fundamentals residential course

### Key risks

The key risks to the delivery of this Policy are outlined below. Staff and Pensions Committee members, Investment Sub-Committee members with the assistance of the Local Pensions



Board and Officers, will monitor these and other key risks and consider how to respond to them:

- Changes to the Committee, Panel and/or Local Pensions Board membership and/or Officer's potentially diminishing knowledge and understanding.
- Poor attendance and/or a lack of engagement at training and/or formal meetings by Committee and / or Panel and / or Local Pension Board members and/or other Officers resulting in a poor standard of decision making, administration and/or monitoring.
- Insufficient resources being available to deliver or arrange the required training.
- The quality of advice or training provided not being of an acceptable standard.

### Reporting

A report will be presented to the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee (Governance Update) and the Local Pensions Board on a quarterly basis setting out:

- the training being provided;
- commentary on how this compares to the Training Plan if relevant; and
- any actions required, such as a review of the Training Plan or Policy.

The Fund will report attendance at training sessions in the Fund's Annual Report and Accounts.

The Fund's Staff and Pensions Committee, Investment Sub-Committee and Local Pensions Board members will also be provided with details of forthcoming seminars, conferences and other relevant training events.

A summary of the latest Local Government Pension Scheme issues will be provided monthly by email.

Costs

All training costs will be met directly by the Warwickshire Pension Fund.

Review Date

The Training Policy is reviewed annually and will next be reviewed in February 2026.

# Warwickshire Pension Fund

## Admissions and Termination Policy



**WARWICKSHIRE**  
PENSION FUND

**Version:** 3

**Date Issue:** February 2025

**Reference:** WPF-ATP

**Team:** Warwickshire Pension Fund

**Protective Marking:** Public

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Warwickshire County Council is the administering authority for the Warwickshire LGPS Pension Fund (the "Pension Fund").
- 1.2 The administering authority is responsible for determining who may be admitted as a 'scheme employer' in the Pension Fund.
- 1.3 The Pension Fund is governed by legislation, mainly the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, as amended from time to time (the "Regulations"). The Regulations set out criteria for admission to the Local Government Pension Scheme, which also afford the Pension Fund some discretion.
- 1.4 This policy seeks to clarify the basis on which the Pension Fund allows admission and may reject, withdraw, or terminate admission, having regard to the Regulations and the discretion afforded under them.
- 1.5 This policy seeks to clarify where charges will be applied for work undertaken by the Actuary and or Fund for new admissions and terminations

### 2 Scheme Employers

#### 2.1 Scheduled Bodies

- 2.1.1 The Regulations set out certain employers who have an automatic right to participate as 'scheme employers' within the Pension Fund. These bodies will still need to make an application to the administering authority but provided the requirements of the Regulations are met, the body will be admitted, and their employees will have an automatic right to join. The administering authority refers to these as "Scheduled Bodies".
- 2.1.2 Those bodies are listed in Schedule 2 of the Regulations within Parts 1, 2 and the second column of the table in Part 4, which are reproduced at Annex A of this policy.
- 2.1.3 Without prejudice to paragraph 2.1.1, the administering authority may ask a Scheduled Body for evidence of their internal authority to join the Pension Fund, for example, any resolution that has been passed in relation to LGPS membership or minutes of a meeting granting approval (if applicable).

#### 2.2 Admission Bodies

- 2.2.1 In addition to those bodies listed in the Regulations, the administering authority may make an admission agreement with other bodies who meet certain criteria. These criteria are set out in Paragraph 1 of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Regulations and are reproduced in Annex B of this policy.
- 2.2.2 These bodies must make an application for admission to the Pension Fund, which will be determined in accordance with this policy. If the application is accepted, then the body will be admitted to the Pension Fund and must enter into an admission agreement to formalise the terms on which they are entitled to participate within the Pension Fund.
- 2.2.3 Admission bodies are subject to the requirements of the Regulations and must follow them in order to participate in the Pension Fund.

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

### 2.3 Community Bodies

2.3.1 The bodies that meet the criteria as set out in (a), (b), (c) and (e) of Paragraph 1 of Part 3 to Schedule 2 are referred to by the administering authority as “Community Bodies”. The administering authority does not have to accept an application from a Community Body, even if they meet the criteria within the Regulations, although it will normally seek to do so provided that such admission does not pose a risk to the Pension Fund.

2.3.2 In addition to the legislative requirements, the following matters will be considered by the Staff and Pensions Pension Committee, following advice from the Head of Pensions, in relation to whether or not a Community Body will be admitted:

0. How many potential scheme members there will be – the administering authority will normally expect there to be at least 10 potential members
1. Whether the body will receive direct funding from a Scheduled Body and what limitations on that funding there may be
2. Whether there is a Scheduled Body or **other appropriate form of guarantor** that is sponsoring the prospective Community Body – the administering authority would normally expect a Scheduled Body to sponsor the application and to guarantee in writing the pension liabilities of the prospective Community Body should they be admitted, **although the Fund may consider alternative guarantors where it is believed to be appropriate in terms of risk to the Fund and other participating employers.**
3. The financial viability of the prospective Community Body – the administering authority may reject an application if it considers that admitting the body may pose financial risk to the Pension Fund

### 2.4 Transferee Bodies

2.4.1 Those bodies that meet the criteria set out in (d) of Paragraph 1 are referred to by the administering authority as “Transferee Bodies”. These are bodies that are providing or will provide a service or assets in connection with the exercise of a function of a Scheduled Body as a result of the transfer of the service or assets by means of a contract or other arrangement.

2.4.2 For the purposes of this paragraph 2.4.2, the administering authority considers that it will normally be the “relevant administering authority” where the Scheduled Body that the Transferee Body is performing the function on behalf of (the “Letting Employer”) is located within Warwickshire. Where the administering authority is the relevant administering authority it must accept an application from a Transferee Body where that body has undertaken to comply with the Regulations.

2.4.3 There are specific requirements within the Regulations that apply to Transferee Bodies only, including the following:

0. The Letting Employer must be a party to the admission agreement; and
1. If the Transferee Body is performing more than one contract, then the Transferee Body must enter into an admission agreement for each one

2.4.4 It is also a requirement of the Regulations that an admission agreement with a Transferee Body includes the following provisions:

0. That only employees that are employed in connection with the service for the Letting Employer are entitled to be members of the Pension Fund
1. The details of the contract with the Letting Employer

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

2. An agreement that the Letting Employer may set off against any sums due to the Transferee Body, any sums due to the Pension Fund under the Regulations
3. A requirement that the Transferee Body keeps under review, to the satisfaction of the administering authority and the Letting Employer, its assessment of the level of risk
4. A requirement that copies of notifications that are due to be provided to the administering authority are provided to the Letting Employer also
5. That a copy of the admission agreement be available for inspection at the Letting Employer's office

2.4.5 The administering authority expects to be advised of transfers well in advance of the transfer taking place and where possible, be provided with an accurate list of those employees transferring.

### 2.5 Risk assessment for new admission bodies

2.5.1 An admission body must carry out, to the satisfaction of the administering authority and, in the case of transferee admission bodies, the Letting Employer, an assessment of the level of risk arising on premature termination. In practice, the fund actuary assesses this because the assessment must be carried out to the administering authority's satisfaction.

2.5.2 After considering the assessment, the administering authority may decide the admission body must provide security, such as a guarantee from the letting employer, an indemnity or a bond.

2.5.3 This must cover some or all of the:

1. strain costs of any early retirements, if employees are made redundant when a contract ends prematurely
2. allowance for the risk of assets performing less well than expected
3. allowance for the risk of liabilities being greater than expected
4. allowance for the possible non-payment of employer and member contributions
5. admission body's existing deficit.

2.5.4 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the administering authority will always expect there to be a bond or guarantee in place.

## 3 The Application Process

3.1 A body that wishes to be admitted to the Pension Fund must provide all information requested by the administering authority in order for its application to be considered fully.

3.2 Officers on behalf of the administering authority will then prepare a report for consideration by the relevant committee at its next available meeting based on the information provided. It is the responsibility of the applicant body (and/or the Letting Employer in relation to a contract transfer) to ensure that the application is considered prior to the date admission is required and therefore those bodies should liaise with the administering authority in relation to upcoming meeting dates when considering submitting an application.

3.3 The applicant body (and the Letting Employer in the case of a Transferee Body) will be informed of the outcome of the application after the meeting where the decision is made.

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

- 3.4 Where the application is successful, the admission body (and/or the Letting Employer in the case of a Transferee Body) shall be responsible for providing the administering authority with a list of those employees that are to be admitted to the Pension Fund. The administering authority will specify the level of information required for administration of the process. This information will need to be provided within sufficient time for the Pension Fund's actuary to calculate the **opening position**, contribution rate and bond amount prior to admission. The cost of the actuary's report will be charged to the Letting Employer, in the case of a Transferee Body or the admission body/Scheduled Body, as appropriate, in other cases.
- 3.5 The administering authority will expect the admission body to pay the contribution rate and secure any bond amount as determined by the actuary. **In the case of Transferee Bodies, the Fund's policy is to require all such bodies to be set up via a pass-through arrangement (please refer to Appendix H of the Funding Strategy Statement for further details).** The administering authority shall have final determination over the level of any bond or **guarantee required**.
- 3.6 The administering authority may consider proposals to pool employers for actuarial purposes. If an applicant body or existing admission body wishes to join an existing pool or create a new pool with similar employers, then it should notify the administering authority. Prior to agreeing to any proposals, the administering authority will seek actuarial advice. In the event that such proposals are agreed, the contribution rates for those employers will be set at the same level (if expressed as a percentage of pay) based on their aggregated notional fund assets and liabilities. **For information on the fund's pooling arrangements please see section 2.5 of the Funding Strategy Statement.**

## 4 The Admission Agreement

- 4.1 The administering authority has a standard form of admission agreement that it will expect admission bodies to enter into prior to being admitted to the Pension Fund (the current draft agreements are available on the pension fund's website as appropriate). This standard form incorporates the requirements within the Regulations in relation to matters that should be included in admission agreements (including those that specifically relate to Transferee Bodies as referred to at 2.4.4 above where applicable).
- 4.2 Any bond agreement should normally be entered into at the same time as the admission agreement; however, there may be exceptional circumstances whereby the administering authority will permit the bond agreement to be entered into after the transfer date provided that the admission agreement is clear that a bond must be entered into.
- 4.3 In the event that the actuary has been unable to calculate the contribution rate (e.g. as a result of information not being provided in time), the admission agreement will not normally be entered into until the rate has been calculated.
- 4.4 **While the Regulations enable an admission agreement to take effect on a date prior to the date it was actually executed, in such circumstances where the employer contribution rate has not been confirmed by the actuary or where the admission agreement has not been entered into for any other reason, the admission body will not be entitled to participate in the Pension Fund until everything that is required to enable the admission agreement to be signed is in place. Once the admission agreement is in place then a retrospective effective date can be applied, and the admission body required to remit to the fund the necessary arrears of employee and employer pension contributions and provide the necessary membership data required by the administering authority.**

**Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy**

- 4.5 \*Please note, the Admission Agreement templates are available on the pension fund's website



## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

### 5 Participation in the Pension Fund

- 5.1 It is a condition of admission to the Pension Fund that scheme employers operate in a manner that respects their obligations in relation to pension liabilities, including but not limited to, paying contributions in accordance with the Pension Fund's actuary's assessment.
- 5.2 In accordance with the Regulations, the actuary on behalf of the Pension Fund will carry out an assessment every 3 years and will set the level of contributions required by each scheme employer. Those contributions may be set as a percentage of pay or combination of a percentage of pay and a cash sum. Whilst the administering authority may consider representations made by any scheme employer in relation to the amount of their contributions, the administering authority's decision as to the amount (based on actuarial advice) is final.
- 5.3 In the event that a scheme employer disputes the level of contributions required, the administering authority will endeavour to resolve the dispute informally, however, where such resolution is not possible, the administering authority will refer such matters to the relevant regulator (as appropriate), in order to protect the interests of members and other scheme employers within the Pension Fund.
- 5.4 The principles, approach and methodology for setting employer contribution rates is detailed in the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement (FSS). Section 2 of the FSS provides information on the funding strategy adopted for each employer group in the fund and how rates are determined, whilst Section 5 specifically considers how contribution rates are derived for new employers admitted to the Fund. It is important any new employers and Letting Employers read these sections carefully.
- Academies – where an academy school participating in the Pension Fund is part of a Multi-Academy Trust that already has other academy schools in the Pension Fund, all academy schools within that trust will pay the same contribution rate. In the event that the academy is not part of a Multi-Academy Trust or it is part of a Multi-Academy Trust outside of Warwickshire, the contribution rate will be calculated in accordance with the Pension Fund's Funding Strategy Statement (FSS).
  - Free Schools – where a free school is participating in the Pension Fund, its contribution rate will be calculated in accordance with the FSS.
  - Parish and Town Councils – where a parish or town council is participating in the Pension Fund, it may have the option to join a pool of parish and town councils and in which case those pooling arrangements will determine the contribution rate (see paragraph 3.6 above).
  - Community Bodies – contribution rates will be bespoke to the individual employer.
  - Transferee Bodies – these bodies will be encouraged to adopt a pass-through contribution rate, where possible, which shall be equal to the primary rate of the Letting Employer but shall not give rise to either an exit payment or exit credit (see paragraph 3.5 above in relation to risk sharing). This approach provides certainty to the Transferee Body from the outset and simplifies exit arrangements. It is particularly suitable for smaller short-term contracts, for example, a catering contract let by a school. It may not be suitable for larger contracts where the contractor is expected to carry more risk and, in such circumstances, Letting Employers may prefer

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

### 5.5 Actuarial Fees

The assessment of a contribution rate, bond (where applicable) and opening position for a new scheme employer all incur actuarial fees. The Fund is not liable for these fees and will invoice the employer letting the contract for any fees incurred. If the employer has an agreement with the contractor to pay fees this is between the employer and the contractor.

For new academies, parish and town councils and community admission bodies actuarial fees will be invoiced direct to the new scheme employer.

A schedule of fees is available from the administering authority.

## 6 Termination

6.1 The admission agreement will normally specify the circumstances by which an admission body may exit (or be required to exit) the Pension Fund and become an “exiting employer”. Without prejudice to such terms, an administering authority may determine that an admission body has ceased to be a scheme employer within the Pension Fund where it no longer meets the criteria on which it was originally admitted.

6.2 It is advantageous to both the Pension Fund and the exiting employer to be able to plan for any proposed exit in order to prevent a large exit payment or exit credit (or ideally any exit payment or exit credit). If the exiting employer gives advanced notice of its participation in the Pension Fund ceasing, the administering authority will consider (in conjunction with the relevant Letting Employer if it is a Transferee Body or any Scheduled Body or alternative guarantor if it is a Community Body) whether it is appropriate to obtain a revised assessment from its actuary to adjust the exiting employer’s contributions with the aim of there being no surplus or deficit by the point at which the exiting employer exits, where pass through has not been adopted in the case of a Transferee Body.

6.3 Without prejudice to paragraph 6.2, upon exiting the Pension Fund, in accordance with regulation 64 of the Regulations, the scheme employer may be liable to pay an exit payment to the Pension Fund or may be entitled to receive an exit credit.. In determining the level of any funding shortfall or surplus, and therefore the amount of any exit payment or exit credit due, the administering authority will request an actuarial assessment to determine the amount of the exit payment or exit credit and inform the outgoing scheme employer.

6.3.1 The fund will recharge costs of administering cessations including actuary and other cessation expenses as appropriate. Costs will be charged even if the cessation does not go ahead. The Fund Actuary charges a fee for carrying out an employer’s cessation valuation, which the Fund will recharge to the employer. For the purposes of the cessation valuation, this fee will be treated as an expense incurred by the employer and will be deducted from the employer’s cessation surplus or added to the employer’s cessation deficit, as appropriate. This process improves administrative efficiency as it reduces the number of transactions required to be made between the employer and the Fund following an employer’s cessation.

6.4 The principles, approach and methodology for the actuarial assessment is detailed in the Fund’s Funding Strategy Statement (FSS). Section 7 and Appendix J specifically consider how terminations are assessed and managed by the Fund. It is

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

important any new employers and Letting Employers read these sections carefully.

Where the body was admitted prior to 14 May 2018;

Where the admission body has entered into risk sharing arrangements (see paragraph 3.5 above), including pass-through arrangements, and the terms of those arrangements do not permit an exit credit to be paid; and

Where the administering authority has been asked by the Letting Employer to withhold payment of the exit credit under the terms of its contract with the admission body, for the purposes of setting off any amounts due to the Letting Employer.

6.5 If the actuarial assessment identifies a funding shortfall, the administering authority has discretion over the payment of an exit credit. In applying this discretion, the administering authority will consider a number of factors including:

1. the extent of any surplus,
2. the proportion of surplus arising as a result of the Admission Body's employer contributions,
3. any representations (such as risk sharing agreements or guarantees) made by the Admission Body and any employer providing a guarantee or some other form of employer assistance/support and
4. any other factors the Administering Authority deems relevant.

6.6 There are some circumstances, however, in which it may not be appropriate to pay an exit credit, although each case will be considered on its own merits. Circumstances where payment may not be appropriate are as follows:

6.6.1 Where the body was admitted prior to 14 May 2018;

6.6.2 Where the admission body has entered into risk sharing arrangements (see paragraph 3.5 above), including pass-through arrangements, and the terms of those arrangements do not reflect an exit credit being payable to the admission body; and

6.6.3 Where the administering authority has been asked by the Letting Employer to withhold payment of the exit credit under the terms of its contract with the admission body, for the purposes of setting off any amounts due to the Letting Employer.

6.7 In the event that an employer owes any outstanding monies to the Pension Fund upon exit, the administering authority reserves the right to deduct such sums owed from any exit credit due.

6.8 If the actuarial assessment identifies a funding shortfall, where there is a deficit, payment of this amount in full would normally be sought from the Admission Body. The Fund's normal policy is that this cessation debt is paid in full in a single lump sum within 28 days of the employer being notified. The administering authority may agree for this payment to be spread over an agreed period via a Deferred Spreading Arrangement. However, such agreement would only be permitted at the administering authority's discretion, where payment of the debt in a single immediate lump sum could be shown to be materially detrimental to the employer's financial situation. Such discretion would be exercised by the Staff and Pensions Committee, following advice from the Head of Pensions. In cases where payment is spread, the Fund reserves the right to require that:

1. the ceasing employer provides some form of security (such as a charge over assets, bond indemnity or guarantee) relating to the unpaid amount of debt at any given time.
2. the arrangement is covered by a legally-binding agreement.
3. any breach of the arrangement would require any outstanding exit payment to be paid immediately in full.

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

Further detail is set out in Appendix J5.2 of the Funding Strategy Statement.

- 6.9 As an alternative, where the ceasing Admission Body is continuing in business, the Administering Authority may enter into a written agreement with the Admission Body to defer their obligations to make an exit payment and continue to make Secondary contributions (a 'Deferred Debt Agreement' as described in Regulation 64 (7A)). The Admission Body must meet all requirements on Scheme employers and pay the Secondary rate of contributions as determined by the Fund Actuary until the termination of the Deferred Debt Agreement.

The Administering Authority will consider Deferred Debt Agreements in the following circumstances:

- The Admission Body requests the Fund consider a Deferred Debt Agreement;
- The Admission Body is expected to have a deficit when the cessation valuation is carried out;
- The Admission Body is expected to be a going concern; and
- The covenant of the Admission Body is considered sufficient by the Administering Authority.

The Administering Authority will normally require:

- **Relevant financial information for the Admission Body to assist in the covenant assessment;**
- Security be put in place covering the Admission Body's deficit on their cessation basis;
- Regular monitoring of the contribution requirements and security requirements;
- The agreement to be formalised in a legally-binding written document;
- All costs of the arrangement to be met by the Admission Body, such as the cost of advice to the Fund, ongoing monitoring or the arrangement and correspondence on any ongoing contribution and security requirements.

A Deferred Debt Agreement will normally terminate on the first date on which one of the following events occurs:

- the Admission Body enrolls new active Fund members;
- the period specified, or as varied, under the Deferred Debt Agreement elapses;
- the take-over, amalgamation, insolvency, winding up or liquidation of the Admission Body;
- the Administering Authority serves a notice on the Admission Body that the Administering Authority is reasonably satisfied that the Admission Body's ability to meet the contributions payable under the Deferred Debt Arrangement has weakened materially or is likely to weaken materially in the next 12 months;
- the Admission Body defaults on any payment due under the agreement;
- the Fund actuary assesses that the Admission Body has paid sufficient secondary contributions to cover all (or almost all) of the exit payment due if the employer becomes an exiting employer on the calculation date (i.e. the Admission Body is now largely fully funded on their cessation basis); or
- **the Fund actuary assesses that the Admission Body's value of liabilities has fallen below an agreed de minimis level and the employer becomes an exiting employer on the calculation date; or**
- the Admission Body requests early termination of the agreement and settles the exit payment in full as calculated by the Fund actuary on the calculation date (i.e. the Admission Body pays their outstanding cessation debt on their cessation basis).

On the termination of a Deferred Debt Agreement, the Admission Body will become an exiting employer and a cessation valuation will be completed in line with this FSS.

Further detail is set out in Appendix J5.2 of the Funding Strategy Statement.

**Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy**

- 6.10 Scheduled Bodies may exit the Pension Fund in accordance with the circumstances set out in the regulations.

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

### **Annex A – Scheduled Bodies** *(List current as at the date of this policy – check the legislation for updates)*

#### Schedule 2 – Part 1

1. In England, a county council, a district council, a London borough council, the Greater London Authority, the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly.
2. In Wales, a county council, or a county borough council.
3. A joint board, body or committee appointed under any Act or statutory order or statutory scheme, of which all the constituent authorities are councils of a description in paragraph 1 or 2 or a combination of such councils.
4. A Mayoral development corporation within the meaning of section 198 of the Localism Act 2011.
5. A fire and rescue authority within the meaning of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
6. A police and crime commissioner.
7. A chief constable within the meaning of section 2 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
8. The Commission for Local Administration in England.
9. A probation trust established under section 5 of the Offender Management Act 2007 or a National Probation Service local board.
10. The Chichester Harbour Conservancy.
11. The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.
12. An integrated transport authority within the meaning of Part 5 of the Local Transport Act 2008.
13. The Broads Authority.
14. A further education corporation, a sixth form college corporation or a higher education corporation within the meaning of section 90 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.
15. The London Pensions Fund Authority.
16. The South Yorkshire Pensions Authority.
17. The Environment Agency.
18. A National Park Authority established under Part 3 of the Environment Act 1995.
19. An Education Action Forum within the meaning of section 11 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

20. A proprietor of an Academy within the meaning of section 579 (general interpretation) of the Education Act 1996 who has entered into Academy arrangements within the meaning of section 1 (academy arrangements) of the Academies Act 2010.
21. A body set up by a local housing authority as a housing management company to exercise management functions of the authority under an agreement approved by the appropriate minister under section 27 of the Housing Act 1985.
22. The Valuation Tribunal Service established under section 105 of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Valuation Tribunal for Wales established under regulation 4 of the Valuation Tribunal for Wales Regulations 2010.
23. A conservation board established under section 86 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
24. A combined authority established by an order under section 103(1) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
25. The Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Combined Authority established by the Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Combined Authority Order 2014.

### Schedule 2 – Part 2

1. The Board of Governors of the Museum of London.
2. A body (other than a body listed in Part 1 of this Schedule) which is—
  - a. a precepting authority within the meaning of section 69 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (interpretation),
  - b. a levying body within the meaning of section 74 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (levies), or
  - c. a body to which section 75 of that Act (special levies) applies.
3. A passenger transport executive.
4. An institution designated by an order under section 129 of the Education Reform Act 1988.
5. An entity connected with a local authority listed in paragraphs 1 to 5 of Part 1 of this Schedule where “connected with” has the same meaning as in section 212(6) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
6. A company under the control of a body listed in paragraphs 6 to 24 of Part 1 of this Schedule  

where “under the control” has the same meaning as in section 68 or, as the case may be, 73 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (except that any direction given by the Secretary of State must be disregarded, and any references to a local authority treated as references to such a body).
7. The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

**Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy**

8. The Serious Organised Crime Agency.
9. Transport for London.
10. The London Transport Users' Committee.
11. The Cultural Strategy Group for London.
12. The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service.
13. An urban development corporation.
14. The Secretary of State, in respect of persons specified in regulation 3A (1) (civil servants engaged in probation provision).

Schedule 2 – Part 4

15. A local authority that has, with the consent of the governing body, designated an employee or a class of employees of a governing body of a voluntary school as being eligible for membership
16. A local authority that has, with the consent of the governing body, designated an employee or a class of employees of a governing body of a foundation school or foundation special school as being eligible for membership
17. A local authority that has, with the consent of the governing body, designated an employee or a class of employees of a governing body of a technical institute or other similar institution which is for the time being assisted by the local authority under the Education Act 1996 as being eligible for membership
18. A local authority that has, with the consent of the governing body, designated an employee or a class of employees of a federated school as being eligible for membership
19. The London Pension Authority
20. An authority appointing a coroner
21. A police and crime commissioner
22. The Commission for Local Administration in England
23. The passenger transport executive
24. The Housing Ombudsman



## Warwickshire Pension Fund - Admissions and Termination Policy

### **Annex B – Admission Bodies** *(List current as at the date of this policy – check the legislation for updates)*

1. Schedule 2 – Part 3, Paragraph 1The following bodies are admission bodies with whom an administering authority may make an admission agreement—
  - (a) a body which provides a public service in the United Kingdom which operates otherwise than for the purposes of gain and has sufficient links with a Scheme employer for the body and the Scheme employer to be regarded as having a community of interest (whether because the operations of the body are dependent on the operations of the Scheme employer or otherwise);
  - (b) a body, to the funds of which a Scheme employer contributes;
  - (c) a body representative of—
    - (i) any Scheme employers, or
    - (ii) local authorities or officers of local authorities;
  - (d) a body that is providing or will provide a service or assets in connection with the exercise of a function of a Scheme employer as a result of—
    - (i) the transfer of the service or assets by means of a contract or other arrangement,
    - (ii) a direction made under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999 1 (Secretary of State's powers),
    - (iii) directions made under section 497A of the Education Act 1996 2;
  - (e) a body which provides a public service in the United Kingdom and is approved in writing by the Secretary of State for the purpose of admission to the Scheme.

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## Staff and Pensions Committee

10 March 2025

### Pensions Administration Activity and Performance Update

#### Recommendation

That the Staff and Pensions Committee notes and comments on the content of the report.

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Committee on the key developments affecting pensions administration and the performance of the Pensions Administration Service (PAS).

#### 2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 All financial implications are dealt with in the body of this report.

#### 3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 None arising directly from the content of this report.

#### 4. Member Self Service (MSS)

- 4.1 The take up of MSS, split by our different types of members, is as follows:

Active	7,853	40.67% of active members	0.91% Increase
Deferred	6,490	29.85% of deferred members	0.65% Increase
Pensioner	5,859	33.92% of pensioners	0.90% Increase
Dependants	197	9.05% of dependants	0.07 % Decrease

- 4.2 The PAS continues to advertise the MSS system in their email signatures and promote the system during interactions with members.
- 4.3 The PAS is proceeding with preparations for the switch from the current MSS system to Engage. The new system will be available for training and testing within the PAS from 17<sup>th</sup> February with the aim to go live around the beginning of April 2025.

- 4.4 Communications with members to advertise the new system will be staggered, firstly targeting members who have already registered for MSS. These users will have their login transferred over to the new system, with minimum effort required on their part.
- 4.5 Communications will then be issued to members that do not currently use our portal, to advertise the new system and updated functionality.

## 5. Pensions Administration Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- 5.1 Appendix 1 shows the KPI performance for the period 1 April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025.
- 5.2 For the period to end of January 2025, nine of the sixteen KPIs are meeting the 95% target. Of the remaining seven KPIs that are not hitting the 95% target, five of these are higher than 90%.
- 5.3 For context, the table below includes the volume of cases per KPI and the value for the previous year. In all but three cases where the KPI data is available for both current and previous years, performance to date in 2024/25 is equal to or better than 2023/24.

	Key Performance Indicator	Fund Target	Total Year Cases	Apr-Jan KPI	Last Year Average
	<b>Target performance</b>	95%		95%	
B1	Communication issued with acknowledgement of death of active, deferred, pensioner and dependent member	5 days	363	96.0%	92%
B2	Communication issued confirming the amount of dependents pension	10 days	111	92%	88%
B3	Communication issued to deferred member with pension and lump sum options (quotation )	15 days	1177	83%	N/A
B4	Communication issued to active member with pension and lump sum options (quotation)	15 days	286	92%	90%
B5	Communication issued to deferred member with confirmation of pension and lump sum (actual)	15 days	697	98%	98%
B6	Communication issued to active member with confirmation of pension and lump sum (actual)	15 days	305	98%	99%

	Key Performance Indicator	Fund Target	Total Year Cases	Apr-Jan KPI	Last Year Average
B7	Payment of lump sums (actives and deferred)	15 days	998	98%	97%
B8	Communication issued with deferred benefits	30 days	1427	94%	96%
B9	Communication issued to scheme member with completion of transfer in	15 days	395	71%	N/A
B10	Communication issued to scheme member with completion of transfer out	15 days	389	97%	N/A
B11	Payment of refund	10 days	334	94%	91%
B12	Divorce quotation	45 days	88	100%	98%
B13	Communication issued following actual divorce proceedings i.e. application of a Pension Sharing Order	15 days	3	100%	33%
B14	Communication issued to new starters	40 days	300	92%	98%
B15	Member estimates requested by scheme member and employer	15 days	390	97.47%	N/A
B16	Process and pay death grant	10 days	137	100%	96%

## 6. Pensioner Payroll Key Performance Indicators

- 6.1 The pensioner payroll for Warwickshire Pension Fund is administered by Warwickshire County Council's payroll team.
- 6.2 The table below provides information on the pensioner payroll service KPIs. Priority is given to ensuring payments are made by the agreed payment dates. Please note the customer care indicator is only recorded for formal complaints. Nil indicates no complaints have been received.

### *Performance of the payroll team in managing the Pensioner payrolls*

Indicator	Description	Measure	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25
Customer Care	We will respond to any queries about service delivery within 5 days. (Formal complaints)	95% of queries will be responded to within 5 days.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Accuracy	Paying people accurately	99% of all requested staff payments will be paid accurately.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Assurance	Paying people on time	100% of input submitted onto Your	100%	100%	100%	100%

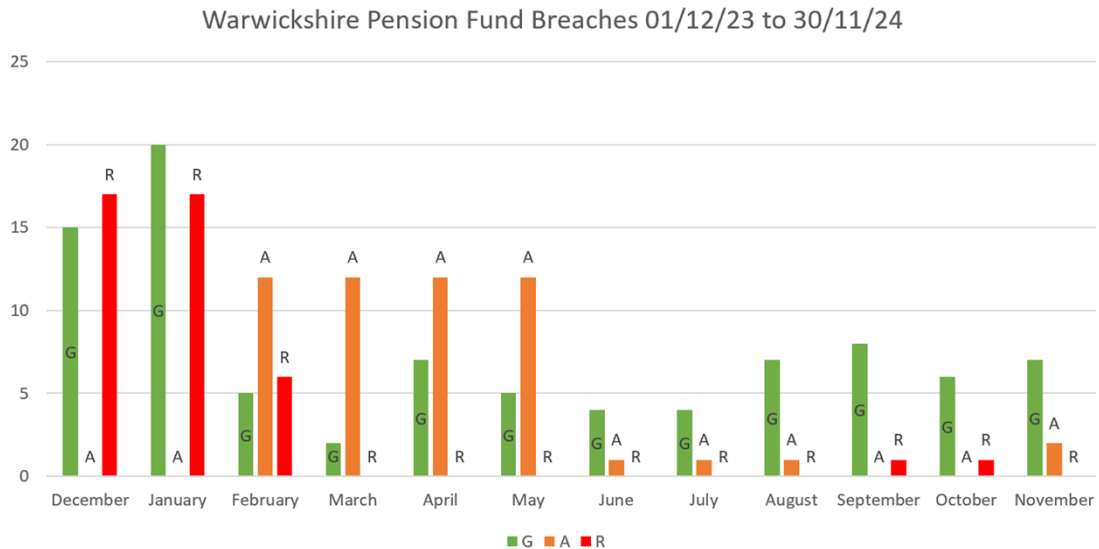
		HR before deadline will be paid on the relevant scheduled pay day.				
Statutory returns	We will make all statutory returns by the required deadlines	100% of third-party payments and statutory returns will be submitted on or before the deadline.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Satisfaction with service	We will achieve constantly high levels of customer satisfaction	Traded wide net promoter score will be 8.8 or more.	10	7.4	9	8.7

## 7. Workloads

- 7.1 The PAS continues to monitor work being received by the team to ensure we have the resources to manage the workload.
- 7.2 From 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 there have been 34,412 cases created and 34,793 completed. This compares to 37,394 created and 38,368 completed in the same period last year. The reduction in activity from the previous year is due to the success of the i-connect system, which reduces the need for manual intervention of our data. There are currently 3,294 open cases which is a reduction from 3,704 open cases from the preceding period.

## 8. Breaches

- 8.1 In accordance with the Fund's Breaches Policy, any Amber breach results in direct contact with the employer responsible to resolve the issue. If this does not result in the necessary action required, further escalation can be used. Where a breach is escalated to Red, this must be reported to The Pensions Regulator, along with a plan for remedying the situation.
- 8.2 The table below indicates the number of breaches the Fund has recorded for the period 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024:



8.3 The amber breach previously reported was upgraded to Red during September and October. This breach has now been resolved with all legal paperwork for the admission completed.

8.4 There are currently two amber cases, one in relation to frequent late iconnect submissions. We have been communicating with this employer to resolve this issue. The main issue can be around size of employer where a small employer may not run a payroll every month. The second breach relates to an employer not paying contributions for October and November. The PAS are working with this employer to agree a payment plan that will ensure that they are up to date with contributions by the end of the financial year.

## 9. Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)

9.1 The Fund currently has one IDRP case outstanding at the second stage. The Fund also has an open investigation with the pension ombudsman.

9.2 The Fund closed two IDRP stage one cases in the last quarter.

## 10. McCloud Project

10.1 This project now draws to a close, as the PAS has completed the processing of active, deferred and pensioner members. Pensioners identified as being owed arrears have now received payment.

10.2 The Annual Benefit Statement data issued for 2024/2025 will also include McCloud underpin information for active and deferred members.

## 11. Pensions Dashboard Programme

- 11.1 The Pensions Dashboard Programme is a government project which will enable individuals to access their pensions information online, securely, and all in one place, thereby supporting better planning for retirement. Dashboards will provide clear and simple information about an individual's multiple pension savings, including their State Pension.
- 11.2 The Local Government Pension Scheme has a staging date by which it must connect to the dashboard, which is 31 October 2025. The Digital Access Point (DAP), when pension dashboards will be available for use by members of the public, is yet to be announced but is expected to be in 2026.
- 11.3 The PAS has now completed stage one of the implementation of the Integrated Service Pathway (ISP) which will connect our administration data to the national dashboard. Stage two of the implementation will be completed in August. Upon completion of stage 2, the PAS will have a connection to the national dashboard.
- 11.4 The PAS is looking at the return of data for members who hold an additional voluntary contribution (AVC). Options are around return of data from the AVC provider or data being returned to the PAS to be linked with the LGPS data.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Key Performance chart

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
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Executive Director	Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Peter Butlin, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	peterbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk



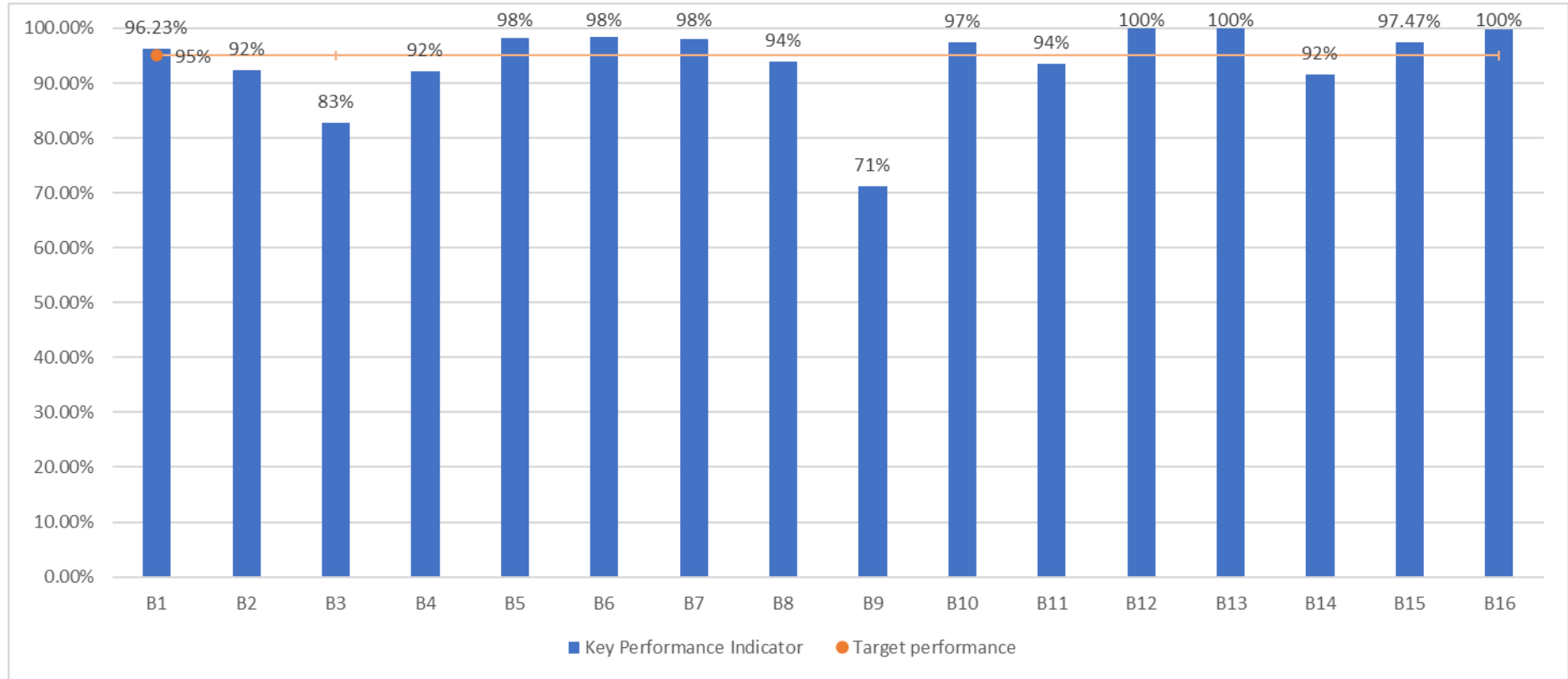
The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s):

Other members: Cllrs Dahmash, Gifford

Appendix 1

Pension Fund Administration Key Performance Indicators  
2024/2025



## Staff and Pensions Committee

10 March 2025

### Review of the Minutes of the Fire Local Pension Board Meeting, 4 November 2024

#### Recommendation

That the Staff and Pensions Committee receive, consider and comment on the minutes of the meeting of the Warwickshire Fire Local Pension Board on 4 November 2024.

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board on 4 November 2024 are attached as an appendix. Notable points are outlined below with updates included where matters have progressed since the Pension Board meeting.
- 1.2 Administration of the firefighter pension schemes is outsourced to West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF).

#### 2. Age Discrimination Remedy (“McCloud”)

- 2.1 The regulations have now been revised so affected members can have their contributions calculated using a net amount. The previous method of using gross amount was ruled to be unfair to active members of the scheme.
- 2.2 New guidance has been issued by HMRC’s Governance Actuary Department regarding red cases and how some of them should be processed. However, guidance does not make it clear how all red cases should proceed. The Pension Advisory Service (PAS) has written to Local Government Association (LGA) to request guidance on how these cases should be processed and is awaiting a response.
- 2.3 The deadline for processing cases is 31 March 2025; those that are not processed by the deadline will need to be reported to the Pensions Regulator. The PAS is receiving monthly updates from WYPF on numbers of cases progressed.

### **3. Second Modified Retained Exercise (“Matthews”)**

- 3.1 Following the legal case of Matthews, this project allows firefighters who worked as retained officers between 1 April 2000 and 30 June 2000 to purchase pension service from their start date up to 31 March 2015.
- 3.2 HMRC has confirmed further details around the calculations that are being used. Additional lump sums had been confirmed as being authorised payments, so the previous unauthorised payment charge payable by the pension holder and the scheme sanction charge payable by the employer no longer applies. Any arrears will be charged using the current tax rates, which means some people may be in the higher bracket due to the arrears.
- 3.3 A consultation around the deadline for the project being extended from 31/03/25 to 31/03/26 is underway, closing mid-February. The consultation also details queries around death benefits and conversion of service.
- 3.4 The PAS continues to calculate cases for members who have returned an expression of wish, with members now also returning positive elections to purchase service.

### **4. Risk Register**

- 4.1 The risk register for the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme has been updated in line with the updated risk scoring method used by the Council, which is now based upon likelihood score multiplied by impact scores.
- 4.2 Scoring in relation to a pandemic risk has been reviewed and reduced. The highest risk rating in the register relates to cyber security.

### **5. National Pension Dashboard**

- 5.1 All pension funds with over 100 members must connect to the national pensions dashboard, a project that will allow members to log in and see all their pension information, including state pension, in one place, securely, and online. Connection of the firefighters’ pension scheme to the national dashboard must be achieved by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.
- 5.2 A ‘nudge’ campaign has recently taken place as a reminder to schemes to have the necessary infrastructure ready for the full launch of the dashboard in October 2025. WYPF have completed purchase of the service provider and tested this during 2024.
- 5.3 WYPF is updating the PAS with a monthly newsletter detailing actions that have been undertaken, upcoming activities and responsibilities of the FRA.

## 6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Any additional lump sums or pensions payable as a result of the Second Modified Retained Exercise or the Age Discrimination Remedy will be funded by the government via the Fire Pensions Top-Up Grant. Associated internal project costs are funded from the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service revenue budget.

## 7. Environmental Implications

- 7.1 None.

## 8. Supporting Information

- 8.1 None

## 9. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 9.1 None.

## Appendices

1. Minutes of the meeting of the Local Fire Pension Board held on 4 November 2024

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Lisa Eglesfield, Pension Administration Service Manager	<a href="mailto:lisaeglesfield@warwickshire.gov.uk">lisaeglesfield@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
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Executive Director	Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources	<a href="mailto:robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk">robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Peter Butlin, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	<a href="mailto:peterbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk">peterbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): n/a

Other members: Cllrs Butlin, Dahmash, and Gifford

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# Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme

Monday 4 November 2024

## Minutes

### Attendance

#### Committee Members

Martin Reohorn (Chair)  
Caroline Jones  
Paul Morley

#### Officers

Nichola Vine, Head of Legal and Governance  
Andy Carswell, Democratic Services Officer  
Lisa Eglesfield, Pensions Administration Service Manager  
Steve Robbins, Head of Finance Transformation and Transactions

#### Others Present

Helen Scargill (Client Relationship Manager, West Yorkshire Pension Fund)

### 1. General

#### (1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Andy Jenns, Sian Marsh and David Vazquez.

#### (2) Board Members' Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

#### (3) Public Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2024 were approved as an accurate record.

### 2. Risk Review

Lisa Eglesfield (Pensions Administration Service Manager) advised members that the risk register had been updated to have the same risk scoring system as the main Pension Fund, in that risks

would be calculated by multiplying likelihood by potential impact. The update later in the meeting would be the first to use the revised scoring matrix.

The risk rating for pandemic had been reduced from a rating of five to three as the likelihood had decreased. The only risk that had been given a red level related to cyber security. A risk map had also been created and would be used going forward.

Members noted the content of the update.

### **3. Governance and Policy Update**

Lisa Eglesfield said that, since the report had been published, the 2024 Scheme Return had been requested by the Pensions Regulator. Governance data was being collected and its quality assessed before being sent on to the West Yorkshire Pension Fund. This process needed to be completed by the deadline of 18 November.

A review of the Fund's compliance with the Pensions Regulator's Code of Compliance was taking place, which looked at the governance arrangements of the Fire and Rescue Pension Fund alongside the main Warwickshire Fund. This was being conducted by AON and would help to generate an action log that would help to ensure future compliance. Responding to a question from the Chair, Lisa Eglesfield explained the Code of Compliance had brought together different codes into a single document and the Fund had already identified areas the Code of Compliance would look at. For example, protections relating to pension transfers had now been brought in. No areas of concern had therefore been raised. Further updates on this would be raised at future meetings.

The Age Discrimination Remedy had now been revised so affected members could have their contribution amounts calculated using the net amount, as the previous method of using gross was ruled to be unfair. Work was now taking place to update remediable service statements accordingly. Helen Scargill said she did not believe this would unduly affect the required timescales for the RSSs to be submitted.

New guidance had been issued by HMRC's Governance Actuary Department regarding red cases and how some of them should be processed. Lisa Eglesfield said however that the guidance did not make it clear how all red cases should be processed. The Warwickshire Fund had written to the LGA to request advice on how to proceed. This had been acknowledged but the advice had yet to be received. The deadline for processing cases was 31 March 2025; those that were not would need to be reported to the Pensions Regulator. However there were only a small number of red cases that needed to be dealt with.

Regarding the Second Retained Exercise, a number of outstanding points had been clarified by HMRC since the last Board meeting. Additional lump sums had been confirmed as being authorised payments so the previous unauthorised payment charge payable by the pension holder and the scheme sanction charge payable by the employer no longer applied. Any arrears would be charged using the current tax rates, which meant some people may be in the higher bracket. Lisa Eglesfield said for now Funds had to follow the guidance, but it was anticipated there may be further legal challenges in future.

Information relating to the 2024 Firefighter Pension Scheme valuation needed to be returned no later than 1 December. A slightly different set of data had been requested compared to previous



years. This exercise would be completed on the Warwickshire Fund's behalf by the West Yorkshire Pension Fund. Lisa Eglesfield said employer contributions increased by around eight per cent at the last valuation, which was a significant amount.

Regarding the Pensions Dashboard, a 'nudge' campaign had recently taken place as a reminder to Schemes to have the necessary infrastructure ready for the full launch of the dashboard in October 2025. The West Yorkshire Fund had already purchased its service provider. It had been confirmed that people's existing gov.uk login details would work on the pensions dashboard. Lisa Eglesfield said the amount and quality of data needed would determine how much resource would be provided. A data reconciliation had started. Lisa Eglesfield said a tracing company may be used for this as Warwickshire did not have its own tracing contract to reconcile missing address and contact information.

Members' attention was drawn to the training that was available to members. There was a log of training that members had taken part in.

Members noted the contents of the report.

#### **4. Forward Plan**

Members were told the results of the governance review would be discussed at a future meeting. It would identify if any new policies needed to be implemented.

Members noted the contents of the Forward Plan.

#### **5. Fire Pensions Administration Update**

Lisa Eglesfield said there had been 57 expressions of interest from people who wanted a calculation relating to the Second Retained Exercise. Around a third of these calculations had now taken place, and conversations with those who had requested one had been positive. Details of positive elections were being passed on to the West Yorkshire Pension Fund.

A tracing exercise had recently been undertaken of members who had been identified as being in scope for the Second Retained Exercise. Of those, 36 were confirmed as being at the address that were on the records held by the Pension Fund; 38 had new addresses and had been written to; and three had passed away. A further 31 could not be identified and two could not be traced. A report needed to be sent to the Pensions Regulator regarding those who could not be identified or traced as this amounted to a breach. Some responses had started to be received from those members who had been written to.

Two DELTA returns had been completed with the help of the West Yorkshire Pension Fund and returned to the Home Office.

Helen Scargill said there were two unmet KPIs, relating to pension estimates and death in retirement cases. This was mainly due to staff resources, with staff concentrating on work relating to the age discrimination case, and work associated with creating pension estimates being particularly labour intensive. Additionally, in some cases information from personal records was missing that would enable staff to make the calculations that led to a pension estimate being created. The number of requests for an estimate had also increased. Death in retirement cases

had increased, and they needed to be given priority in instances where there was a beneficiary and the work needed to be processed as a matter of urgency.

Helen Scargill said steps were being undertaken to give teams more specialised work to do; rather than having staff that knew something about all aspects of pensions work, they would be trained into a field of specialism and given the remit to focus on that aspect. It was hoped this would speed up dealing with pension estimates and transfers in particular, although it was anticipated in the meantime the KPI may continue to not be met.

It was confirmed the data requested by the National Fraud Initiative had been submitted by the deadline, and had been sent on 4 October. Feedback from the auditor report had been positive.

Representatives from the West Yorkshire Pension Fund had recently attended an administrators' forum. Members there had said there was confusion regarding guidance issued by HMRC about processing red FRA cases, and little confidence that staff were certain they knew what they were doing. Helen Scargill said the Local Government Association would contact the Government Actuary Department for clarification on this issue, and if template examples could be given on how to use the calculations.

There were 33 members of the Warwickshire Fire Pension Fund where home address details were not known. Attempts would be made to contact these members, all of whom were deferred members.

Paul Morley said a recent training course he had been on had been very helpful. Regarding age discrimination cases needing to update their tax return due to updated annual allowance information, he said there was only a small number of serving firefighters in Warwickshire who would be affected by this.

Members said they were concerned about the HMRC guidance, and agreed to convene a meeting to discuss this matter further.

Members noted the contents of the report.

## **6. Future Meeting Dates**

Members were informed of the dates of future meetings, and invites were in the process of being sent out.

## **7. Any Other Business**

There were no additional items to be discussed.

The meeting rose at 3.06pm

.....  
Chair

## Staff and Pensions Committee

10 March 2025

### Employers Joining and Leaving the Pension Fund

#### Recommendation

That the Committee delegates authority to the Executive Director for Resources to approve applications to the Pension Fund from the employers listed in Appendix 1, subject to the applications meeting the criteria set out in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013.

#### 1. Executive Summary

##### *Applications*

- 1.1 The Pension Fund must accept applications from scheduled bodies where the requirements of the regulations are met.
- 1.2 An academy is automatically a Scheme Employer on the basis that it meets the criteria of paragraph 20 of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 i.e., it is a 'scheduled body'.
- 1.3 When applying for membership each academy will be required to confirm:
  - that it had internal authority to be admitted to the Pension Fund;
  - the number of members to join the Pension Fund; and
  - that the academy will comply with the relevant LGPS Regulations.
- 1.4 The Pension Fund must accept an application from an applicant body made under paragraph 1(d) of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 where that body has undertaken to comply with the Regulations.
- 1.5 The Applicant Bodies have a contract with another Scheme Employer within the Pension Fund and have applied for admission into the Fund in respect of this contract.
- 1.6 The Applicant Bodies will be carrying out a function or service on behalf of the Scheme Employer under a contract.
- 1.7 The Applicant Bodies have confirmed that the Scheme Employer will be party to the admission agreement.

- 1.8 The Applicant Bodies have undertaken to comply with the relevant LGPS Regulations.

## 2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 New entrants to the scheme will be required to cover their own costs and the actuarial process will ensure that employer contributions are appropriate.
- 2.2 Where there is a surplus for a departing employer, the Pension Fund has a discretion, taking into account the relevant factors set out in Regulation 64 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, to pay out exit credits on cessation of that employer’s membership of the Fund.

## 3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 None

## 4. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 4.1 If an application is accepted, arrangements will be made for the Applicant Body to enter into an admission agreement with the Pension Fund. Should admission commence prior to any admission agreement being completed, the Applicant Body had agreed to be bound by the terms of the standard form admission agreement appended to the Pensions Fund’s Admissions and Termination Policy from the initial admission date.

## Appendices

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Employers Proposed to Join and Leave the Fund

## Background Papers

Warwickshire Pension Fund Admissions and Terminations Policy 2023

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
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Executive Director	Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources	<a href="mailto:robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk">robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Peter Butlin, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	<a href="mailto:peterbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk">peterbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): n/a

Other members: Cllrs Butlin, Dahmash, and Gifford

## Appendix 1

### Employers Proposed to Join and Leave the Fund

New Employers, including Academies proposed to join the fund:

#### ***New Academies***

Our Lady of the Magnificat(St Marys Southam) 01/12/2024

#### ***New Employers***

Dolce (Castle Phoenix Trust)	12/12/2024
Taylor Shaw Ltd (Keresley Newland)	05/12/2024
Caterlink (Ash Green Academy)	12/12/2024
Aspens (OLAAS MAC)	10/12/2024

#### ***Ceasing Employers***

Alliance in Partnership (St Edwards RC)	31/07/2024 (completed in November)
Aspens (Ash Green)	31/07/2024 (completed in November)
Alliance in Partnership (Castle Phoenix)	31/07/2024 (completed in November)
Chartwell (Queen Elizabeth)	31/07/2024 (completed in November)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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