

North Yorkshire Council

Pension Board

26 October 2023

Training

1.0 Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on Pension Board member training.

2.0 Background

The Training Policy was adopted by the Pension Board at its inaugural meeting in July 2015. This set out the knowledge and understanding requirements of members of the Pension Board, routes to obtaining training, and training review arrangements.

It states that the suitability of training events and activities should be based on a self-assessment carried out by each Pension Board member. The regulations place the responsibility for making this assessment, and subsequent action to ensure Pension Board members have an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding, on the individual members. In addition, the Pensions Regulator requires that Pension Board members invest time in learning and development.

3.0 Training Activity

Further to a discussion undertaken at the April 2021 meeting of the Pension Board Members were requested to identify issues relevant to the Pension Board that could be the subject of future training sessions. It was also agreed that, where possible, some training events were provided immediately prior to the commencement of scheduled meetings of the Board. The following issues have been identified by Board Members, further to that discussion:-

- McCloud
- Goodwin
- Administering Authority discretions
- Risk Register and risk management
- GMP
- Investment classes
- Pooling and BCPP
- Valuation of assets by Actuary

Following discussions related to the development of training at both the Board and Pension Fund Committee, the provision of a package of online training sessions has been obtained from a third party provider, with Hymans Robertson. A number of issues highlighted above as issues that may require further consideration for training purposes, are addressed in this on-line package. Module 6 is continually updated and, therefore, should be repeated by Members at regular intervals to ensure the most up to date information and issues are being taken account of. A Version 2 of the package, similar to Version 1 but with updates, is now in place and Members will be given advice as to how to access this.

Members are encouraged to take part in these sessions which are detailed below:-

1: Introduction to the LGPS

Stakeholders; local arrangements for committees, boards officers and advisers; regulatory framework.

2: Governance and oversight

Legislation and guidance; policy documents; roles and responsibilities of committees and board members; Code of Practice 14; pensions administration overview; Government oversight bodies; business plans.

3: Administration and fund management

Pension benefits and contributions; service delivery; administration and communication strategies and policy documents and processes; annual report and accounts; procurements.

4: Funding and actuarial matters

Role of the actuary; the funding strategy; valuations; employer issues; actuarial assumptions.

5: Investments

Investment strategy, asset class characteristics and investment markets; pooling investments; monitoring performance of investments and advisers; responsible investment.

6: Current issues

LGPS reform; McCloud; Goodwin; cost sharing.

Details of training events attended and activities undertaken by Pension Board members are contained in a report that is now published on-line with the documents, but is no longer circulated with the papers. COVID 19 had prevented a number of training events and conferences from taking place, however, training activities had continued to take place via virtual platforms, and Members were encouraged to utilise these, although face-to-face training events are becoming the norm again. Board members are asked to review the training record and advise officers if updates are required.

Pension Board members may wish to discuss the merits of recently undertaken training activity and, where appropriate, the pros and cons, to inform other Board members of its usefulness.

It is recognised that Members of the Board have constraints on their time and may have difficulty in undertaking the necessary training in view of this. Members agreed, therefore, that Board meetings should allow time for Members to undertake training, either individually or collectively.

4.0 Recommendations

- (i) That Members provide an update regarding any Pensions Regulator modules they wish to complete and note the availability and details of the Hymans Robertson online training package;
- (ii) That Members provide details of any training they wish to be included on their training record:

(iii) That Members provide details of any issues relevant to the Pension Board, that could be the subject of future training sessions and note those highlighted in the report.

Barry Khan
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Background Documents: Pensions Regulator on-line training modules
Hymans Online Learning platform