

**Report to:** Governance Committee

**Date of meeting:** 18 July 2023

**By:** Chief Finance Officer

**Title:** East Sussex Pension Fund – Appointment of Pension Board Members

**Purpose:** To appoint representatives to the Pension Board, in line with the constitutional requirement

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Governance Committee is recommended to appoint to the East Sussex Pension Board:

- 1) **Zoe O’Sullivan as a Member Representative;**
  - 2) **Councillor Bharti Gajjar as an Employer Representative for Brighton and Hove City Council; and**
  - 3) **Councillor Andrew Wilson as an Employer Representative for the East Sussex District and Borough Councils.**
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### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Local Pension Board (the ‘Pension Board’) of the East Sussex Pension Fund (the ‘Fund’) was set up to meet the requirements of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, requiring Funds in the Local Government Pension Scheme to have a Pension Board whose duties are, amongst other things, to provide advice to the Administering Authority. The Pension Board is not a decision-making body. Under the East Sussex County Council Constitution, appointments to the Pension Board are reserved to the Governance Committee.
- 1.2 The Pension Board consists of three employer representatives, three member representatives and an independent chair. Currently, one of the existing member representatives is drawn from pensioner members of the Fund and the other is appointed through Unison. There is a vacancy that would normally be filled by an active or deferred member who is nominated by the GMB Union; however, they were not in a position to make a nomination at this time. As such, the vacancy was opened to the wider membership.
- 1.3 The Pension Board currently has two vacancies for employer representatives following the representatives nominated by Brighton and Hove City Council (‘BHCC’) and the Borough and District Councils standing down in the run up to the local elections in May 2023. Officers contacted the relevant Councils to seek new nominations for the Pension Board, before meeting with the people put forward to determine who would be most appropriate.

## **2. Appointment of the Member Representative**

2.1 All members of the Fund were contacted about the member representative vacancy on the Pension Board and asked if they wanted to express an interest in the position. Those wishing to apply were asked to provide a copy of their CV and a cover letter to demonstrate what skills they have that would be of benefit to the Pension Board.

2.2 Having considered the responses, Officers and the Chair of the Pension Board interviewed three people and are recommending that Zoe O'Sullivan be appointed as a member representative to the Pension Board. Zoe brings a commitment to learning and believes strongly in engagement with, and education of, members as to the benefits of being a member of the Fund.

## **3. Appointment of Employer Representatives**

3.1 Officers contacted both BHCC and East Sussex Borough and District Councils with a view to obtaining nominations for the vacant employer representative positions.

3.2 BHCC has asked that Cllr. Gajjar be considered for joining the Pension Board. The Chair of the Pension Board and the Pension Manager – Governance and Compliance met with Cllr Gajjar to set out the requirements and responsibilities of the role. Cllr Gajjar is therefore recommended to the Governance Committee to be appointed as the BHCC employer representative on the Pension Board.

3.3 In relation to the position traditionally filled by the East Sussex District and Borough Councils, the Fund received two nominations. Following meetings with the Chair of the Pension Board and the Pension Manager – Governance and Compliance, it is recommended that Cllr Wilson of Wealden District Council be appointed to the Pension Board as an employer representative.

## **4. Conclusion**

4.1 Following an advertising and recruitment process, suitable candidates for the member representative and two employer representative vacancies have been identified. The Governance Committee is recommended to appoint to the East Sussex Pension Board:

4.1.1 Zoe O'Sullivan to the Pension Board as a Member Representative for a term of 4 years.

4.1.2 Councillor Bharti Gajjar to the Pension Board as an Employer Representative for a term of 4 years.

4.1.3 Councillor Andrew Wilson to the Pension Board as an Employer Representative for a term of 4 years.

4.2 Subject to approval of the Governance committee, the appointment will run for each representative identified above from 18 July 2023 until 17 July 2027.

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