

Appendix 6 – Draft Annual Report of the Pension Board

Report to: Pension Committee

Date of meeting: 19 June 2025

By: Chair of the East Sussex Pension Board

Title: Report of Pension Board to Pension Committee

Purpose: Report to Pension Committee, to understand work completed by the Pension Board

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Pension Committee is recommended to note the report covering the work completed in year by the Pension Board.

1. Background

1.1 This document outlines the actions taken by the Pension Board of the East Sussex Pension Fund (the Fund). It also details training undertaken by individual Pension Board members in the past 12 months to develop and maintain the required level of knowledge and understanding needed to fulfil their function of supporting the Administering Authority (also known as the Scheme Manager).

1.2 This document allows the Pension Committee to understand the work being done by the Pension Board to improve the operation of the Fund.

2. Membership and attendance

2.1 The membership of the Pension Board over the past year has been:

Employer Representatives:

- Councillor Andrew Wilson – Borough and District Councils (From July 2023)
- Nigel Manvell – Brighton and Hove City Council (Until March 2025)
- Linda Hughes – The Southfield Trust (From June 2024)

Member Representatives:

- Trevor Redmond – UNISON (From September 2023)
- Zoe O’Sullivan – Active/Deferred representative (From July 2023)
- Neil Simpson – Pensioners’ representative

Independent Chair

- Ray Martin

2.2 There have been some changes to the membership. Tim Oliver left his role at Brighton University and was replaced on the Pension Board by Linda Hughes from the Southfield trust in June 2024. Nigel Manvell left employment in March 2025 and subsequently left the Pension Board (replacement to be advised). Sian Kunnert resigned as Head of Pensions in December 2024 and has been replaced by Susan Greenwood. George Norval was appointed as interim deputy Head of Pensions in September 2024.

Attendance at Pension Board meetings:

	5 June 2024	11 September 2024	7 November 2024	13 February 2025
N. Manvell	N	Y	Y	Y
R. Martin	Y	Y	Y	Y
Z. O'Sullivan	Y	Y	Y	N
T. Redmond	N	Y	Y	Y
N. Simpson	Y	Y	Y	Y
A Wilson	Y	Y	Y	Y
L. Hughes		Y	Y	N
Cllr A. Wilson	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cllr G. Fox	Y			
Cllr P. Redstone			Y	
Cllr I. Hollidge	Y			
Cllr N. Bennett		Y		
	1 employer vacancy			

(Y = attended, N = did not attend)

3. Work of the Pension Board

3.1 Meetings are scheduled to be held prior to each Pension Committee meeting (no less than 2 weeks). Papers relating to administration, governance, policy, audit and communications are considered by the Board prior to final versions being presented at Committee for approval. This allows the Board to feed in on matters of governance and represent the views of Scheme members and Scheme employers prior to Committee approval.

3.2 Members of the Pension Board also act as observers at Joint Committee meetings of the ACCESS Investment Pool. The role of observer is on a rotating basis with each of the 11 Administering Authorities providing Pension Board observers in turn. This process is designed to support governance standards within the ACCESS Pool.

3.3 The Pension Board considers its work programme at each meeting:

- taking into account regular items
- what is planned for upcoming Pension Committee meetings, and
- are able to request areas of focus be added to the Board work plan.

4. Actions

4.1 The Board supported updates to the Fund's risk register and requested further detail and review time to enhance scrutiny. A Risk Register workshop was held in March 2025.

4.2 The Board reviewed governance changes resulting from national pensions reform. They engaged with officers around any potential impact on the Fund's operations, including pooling and local investment strategies.

4.3 Board members reviewed and endorsed key policy changes, including revised Privacy Notices, Exit Credit Policy wording, and participated in the Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) review process to improve member outcomes.

5. Training

5.1 In the past year the Pension Board, along with members of the Pension Committee, have been offered a range of training opportunities. In addition, reading material and relevant podcasts are provided.

5.2 Since the last report, Pension Board members have attended training events covering:

- Internal Audit and transfers in/out of the Pension Fund
- The role of the internal audit and measuring governance standards
- Additional pension contributions (APC) and additional voluntary contributions (AVC)

6. Year ahead

6.1 It is anticipated that the year ahead will see a consistent membership of the Pension Board (barring the vacancy detailed in 2.2 above).

6.2 The Fund will undergo a triennial valuation as of March 2025. Training and analysis will be a major focus of Pension Board activity.

6.3 The Pension Board will continue to provide oversight on regulatory change implementation, risk management, the valuation process, and administrative performance.

Ray Martin

Chair of East Sussex Pension Board

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