CLWYD PENSION FUND COMMITTEE
23 November 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee of Flintshire County Council, held remotely at 9.30am on Wednesday, 23 November 2022.

PRESENT: Councillor Ted Palmer (Chairman)
Councillors: Dave Hughes, Jason Shallcross (left for item 4-8), Antony Wren, Sam Swash, Anthony Wedlake

CO-OPTED MEMBERS: Mr Steve Hibbert (Scheme Member Representative).

ALSO PRESENT (AS OBSERVERS): Elaine Williams (PFB Scheme Member Representative).

APOLOGIES. Councillor Andy Rutherford (Other Scheme Employer Representative), Gwyneth Ellis (Denbighshire County Council),

Advisory Panel comprising: Philip Latham (Head of Clwyd Pension Fund), Karen McWilliam (Independent Adviser – Aon left for item 12), Gary Ferguson (Corporate Finance Manager), Sharon Carney (Corporate Manager, People and Organisational Development), Paul Middleman (Fund Actuary – Mercer – left for item 12) and Kieran Harkin (Fund Investment Consultant – Mercer – left for item 12) and

Officers/Advisers comprising: Debbie Fielder (Deputy Head of the Clwyd Fund), Karen Williams (Pensions Administration Manager), Sandy Dickson (Investment Adviser – Mercer – left for item 12), Nick Page (Investment Adviser – Mercer – left for item 12), Megan Fellowes (Actuarial Analyst – Mercer – taking minutes – left for item 12) and Ieuan Hughes (Graduate Investment Trainee).

Guest speakers presenting comprising:

Sabel Wiliam (Audit Wales – left after item 9), Michelle Phoenix (Audit Wales – left after item 4) and Byron Lloyd-Jones (Aon Cyber Solutions – joined for item 13).

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Wedlake from Wrexham County Borough Council to his first meeting.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (including conflicts of interest)

Mrs McWilliam and Mr Harkin, on behalf of all Mercer attendees, highlighted their declaration of interest in relation to item 12 and left the meeting for item 12.

Cllr Wedlake highlighted his declaration of interest as a member of the Pension Fund and Coedpoeth Community Council. He is also a member of the Socialist Environmental Research Association.

There were no other declarations of interest.

24. **MINUTES 31 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Hibbert commented on the section regarding Michael Lynk's letter and the 17 companies oppressing the Palestine peoples. He stated he wanted to clarify he was suggesting a way to potentially disinvest from those companies and not be accused of partaking in an illegal boycott. This was noted by the Chairman.

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31 August 2022 were agreed.

RESOLVED:

The minutes of 31 August 2022 were received, approved and will be signed by the Chairman.

25. **CLWYD PENSION FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

Mrs Fielder presented this item. She confirmed that, since the draft accounts were considered at the last Committee meeting, there had only been two minor changes to the accounts. She confirmed the following key points:

- Highlighted on paragraph 1.08 was a statement in the accounts that was corrected. This related to the private market valuations at December due to an uplift of c£1.3 million received as a result of the receipt of outstanding March valuations.
- Given the market turmoil in September, a post balance sheet event note was added.
- Page 199 included the letter of representation that confirmed all of the information disclosed was true and accurate. She recommended that the Committee approved this.

Ms Wiliam as audit lead for Clwyd Pension Fund Audit noted the following key points:

- International standards on auditing meant certain matters were required to be brought to the Committees attention before approving the accounts. Audit Wales could not give complete assurance that the accounts were correctly stated but worked to a level of materiality over which the accounts could be misleading. The amount of materiality this year was set to £24.917 million and a lower level of £1,000 was applied to related party disclosures in respect of key management personnel.

- Audit Wales remained independent to the Fund during the audit and intended to issue an unqualified audit opinion once the signed letter of representation was received. The auditor would sign this on 28 November 2022.
- There were no uncorrected misstatements in the accounts, however, there were amendments which were detailed in Appendix 3. After the audit was complete, Audit Wales would meet with the finance team to discuss how the project went.

Ms Wiliam thanked Mrs Fielder and the finance team for all of their help during the audit.

Cllr Hughes asked whether there had been any interest regarding the vacant Fund accountant position. Mrs Fielder confirmed that this was currently with the Council's Human Resources Department as they were evaluating the post before it could be advertised. This was also the situation with the vacant governance administration assistant position.

RESOLVED:

(a) The Committee approved the Fund's Annual Report for 2021/22 including the Statement of Accounts.
(b) The Committee considered the Audit of Accounts Report
(c) The Committee approved the final Letter of Representation

26. DRAFT FUNDING STRATEGY STATEMENT

Mr Middleman explained that the purpose of the Funding Strategy Statement ("FSS") was to balance the affordability of employer contributions against long-term sustainability of contributions and the financial health of the Fund. He noted the following key points regarding the draft FSS:

- The draft FSS will be included in the consultation with employers over their employer contribution rates effective from 1 April 2023.
- He emphasised that whilst the FSS was a structure to support sustainable contributions, it is also the responsibility of employers to consider this in the context of their own budgets, now and in the future. The importance of communication with employers is therefore paramount on this issue as taking materially reduced contributions now, due to the improved funding positions, makes sustainable contributions in the future more difficult to achieve. Written communication and discussions would take place including at the AJCM in December 2022 and feedback from employers on various factors would be brought to the next Committee for final sign off of the FSS in February 2023.
- A minimum contribution requirement for employers is set via the FSS parameters to target sustainability in the future, and the flexibility within

these parameters exists for employers to pay more than the minimum depending on their circumstances.

Regarding the key parameters for assumptions from paragraph 1.05 onwards, Mr Middleman noted the following:

- Benefit payments are related to inflation and therefore liabilities are driven by inflation. This was a key assumption as part of the 2022 valuation.
- There were many viewpoints regarding the current high level of inflation and how long it would persist, and it is important that the Fund makes reasonable allowance for it over the next few years. It was proposed to increase the long-term average level of inflation from 2.4% p.a. to 3.1% p.a., which was a reflection of the expectation that inflation would stay high for the next few years and then tail off.
- The other aspect regarding inflation is the fact that the pension increase awarded was based on inflation in the 12 months to September each year. So it is now expected that the 2023 pension increase is going to be 10.1%. Therefore, allowance for known inflation was built in to refine the Fund's cashflows i.e. the liabilities.
- Employer contributions are essentially driven by the relationship between the expected return on the assets (the discount rate) and the rate of inflation, as this determines the proportion of benefits paid for by asset returns in the long-term versus those paid for by employer contributions.
- At the valuation date, Mr Middleman had a picture of what might be a reasonable assumption for the discount rate and inflation but from March 2022 onwards, there was a drastic change in interest rates, expectations and the global economic outlook. This was considered and it was concluded that the assumptions were still reasonable as they had anticipated the increased inflation/lower growth scenarios to a reasonable extent.
- Mr Middleman proposed to reduce the discount rate above inflation from the previous valuation by 0.25% (from CPI +1.75% to CPI +1.50%). A similar reduction was proposed in relation to future service liabilities i.e. from CPI + 2.25% to CPI+ 2.0%.
- The pre 2014 liabilities relating to McCloud costs were based on the member's final salary at date of retirement or leaving the Fund and therefore from paragraph 1.08, Mr Middleman proposed to retain the same long-term assumptions (i.e. CPI +1.25%). An option was also built in for employers to adjust their own pay-growth assumption based on their own pay expectations in the short-term.
- The demographic analysis outlined in paragraph 1.09 reflected that the improvement in life expectancy was slowing down. Compared to 2019, the 2022 analysis showed that pensioners currently aged 65 were expected to live for less time in retirement and therefore, this reduced the liabilities at the 2022 valuation. The other demographic factors considered had less of a financial impact e.g. ill-health and cash commutation. The analysis

showed that less members on average were opting for cash, so this has been reflected in the assumptions.

- Recovery periods depended on whether an employer was in deficit or surplus as highlighted from paragraph 1.10. Mr Middleman proposed that if an employer was in deficit at the 2022 valuation, they would be reduced by 3 years to achieve a funding level target of 100% as quick as possible. For those employers in surplus, they would aim to keep the same recovery period as the 2019 valuation, which slowed down the payback of surplus to the employer. Both of these proposals were trying to achieve sustainability of contributions and intergenerational fairness to tax payers.
- McCloud costs were now included in the liabilities and therefore within the balance sheet, as instructed by the Government. It was noted McCloud costs ceased at 31 March 2022 so do not affect the future service rate.

Paragraph 1.16 highlighted the provisional valuation results at 31 March 2022. Therefore, Mr Middleman summarised that the Fund is in a positive position with an average funding level of 105% compared to a funding level of 91% at the 2019 valuation. This was driven mainly by the strong investment performance between 2019 and 2022 plus the deficit contributions paid. However, this was offset by some of the actuarial assumptions i.e. the discount rate change and the rate of inflation, but the demographic assumptions slightly improved the position.

Future service rates were more sensitive to the reduction in discount rate versus inflation as there was no positive asset performance to offset these costs. The future service rate increased on average from 17.3% to 18.7%.

Generally, when looking at individual employers, there were stronger funding levels across the Fund but higher future service costs, therefore overall for a number of employers, the proposed FSS results in a reduction in contributions to reflect this improvement. As noted earlier, the consultation with employers will focus on some of the risks for employers around inflation and the global economic outlook in the context of contribution sustainability, to encourage those employers who could afford it to pay more than the minimum contributions.

Mr Ferguson mentioned that the climate had changed for employers and their budgets, citing the difference in pay awards compared to nine months ago and was pleased that the Fund was in surplus given the current financial climate. He believed it was reasonable to allow employers to take some flexibility around future contributions and welcomed the flexibility proposed in the draft FSS.

Regarding the climate change funding level scenario analysis, Cllr Swash highlighted from page 207 that a section of the FSS was not finalised as the Actuary had not completed the analysis of the physical and climate transition risks. He noted that this was an important factor in considering the draft FSS. Mr Middleman confirmed the analysis was expected to be completed by the next Committee. Mr Middleman also explained that the long-term assumptions proposed in the FSS incorporated implicit allowance for these climate change risks even though the scenarios were not currently populated. It was noted these scenarios would be a snapshot of what could happen in specific circumstances around the transition.

RESOLVED:

(a) The Committee approved the proposed key actuarial assumptions and funding parameters, in paragraphs 1.05 to 1.10 of the report, which will be incorporated into the Funding Strategy Statement.
(b) The Committee approved the draft Funding Strategy Statement for consultation with employers (noting some information can only be included when the actuarial valuation is complete) and note the provisional results in paragraph 1.16.
(c) The Committee delegated the refinement and finalisation of the draft FSS to the Head of Clwyd Pension Fund, before formal consultation with employers, having regard to the advice of the Fund Actuary.

27. FUNDING, FLIGHT-PATH AND RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Mr Page noted the following key points:

- The funding position as at 30 September 2022 had fallen to 102%, from 105% at 31 March 2022. Since then, there had been an increase in funding level which was good news for the Fund despite the volatility in the markets in Q3 2022.
- The risk management framework had been put through its paces, particularly during September and October 2022 but nevertheless, the framework had served the Fund well. The report highlighted the performance of each different strand of the risk management framework.
- Equities fell but were protected by the synthetic equity portfolio and so the protection on that portion of the portfolio added value over the quarter.
- Sterling weakened significantly over the quarter, and losses were made on the FX hedging strategy. However, due to the 100% hedge, the FX losses made had been offset by gains made on the physical assets that are invested in overseas.
- The LDI strategy was the main focus given the recent gilt market volatility. The level of interest rate hedging had been increased within the market trigger framework from approximately 20% to 50%. The inflation hedging remained at 40% at 30 September 2022, providing valuable protection from rising inflation over the year.
- There was extreme market volatility in gilts to a point where it was almost dysfunctional and the chart on page 282 demonstrated the tracking throughout September and October 2022 and how fast moving this period was. Despite the volatility, this had been managed well by the robust collateral framework in place.

- After the mini-budget was announced, there had been a rapid rise in gilt yields and rapid fall in the value of gilts. In the space of a few days, gilt yields fluctuated, increasing by 2.5% and then decreasing by 2.5%, which was unprecedented. The Bank of England then stepped in and stabilised the market for a 2 week period and gilt yields fell back down but then started to steadily increase. During the two week period, the pension scheme industry sold a large amount of assets to de-leverage the LDI portfolios. However, there were still concerns regarding gilt yields spiking again but due to the support by the Bank of England and the new Chancellor who rolled back the policies, the market was stabilised.
- Mr Page was pleased with the Fund's very strong governance framework, with the Fund not only in a position to withstand this type of market volatility, but to also take opportunities. The Fund had a framework in place where it would take the opportunity to invest in gilts as they became cheap, with those yield levels being pre-defined. Furthermore, the officers had already completed a review of the yield levels in September and these yield levels were increased. This meant that the Fund bought gilts at cheaper levels, which was a benefit. Over the course of September, the exposure to interest rates had been increased from 20% to 50% of assets, and then the framework had been paused to take stock given the volatility, which again was a positive move.
- However, like most pension funds, due to the value of the collateral within the flightpath strategy, action was taken quickly to bolster this to support the framework. There was £200 million in terms of physical equities sold for cash and moved over into the risk management framework to increase the collateral position. The reduction in the £200 million exposure was then replicated using equity derivatives to ensure the strategic allocation to equities remained the same and therefore, the expected return on the Fund was unaffected. This move improved the collateral position without impacting the Fund's overall strategic asset allocation.

The Funding and Risk Management Group were continuing discussions around further opportunities the Fund could take.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted and considered the contents of the report and the increase in the level of hedging and the various actions taken.

28. ECONOMIC AND MARKET UPDATE, AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND MANAGER SUMMARY

Mr Harkin noted the following key points relating to the general economy and markets:

- The market position detailed in the report covered 1 July to 30 September 2022, which had been a challenging period for the markets. For the UK, as with many other regions, the most difficult position remained the ongoing persistence of high inflation.
- Over the three months to 30 September 2022, the Fund's total market value decreased by £64.2 million to £2,216 million.
- Major developed economies continued to deal with the difficult position around inflation through additional monetary policy tightening. While during the quarter there was some relief for the short-term inflation, nevertheless, this dissipated at the end of the period and therefore risk assets rose and most major asset classes ended the quarter with negative returns.
- This was one of the worst quarters for equity and bond portfolios in the history of holding these assets together in combination and this highlights how difficult 2022 has been for investors.
- There was no clear path forward but whilst there are indications that the US inflation rate could be levelling off, this was not the case for the UK inflation rate.

Mr Dickson updated the Committee on some key points regarding the Funds investment strategy:

- Page 314 outlined that the Fund achieved an investment return of -2.5% over Q3 2022, this being an extremely challenging period.
- Over the last 12 months, the Fund achieved an investment return of -6.5% and over 3 years the Fund had a positive performance with an investment return of 4.1%.
- The outperformance vs the strategic benchmark added value over all of the periods as shown in the table on page 314.
- On page 317, it could be seen that the Fund's significant allocation to private markets, had a strong beneficial effect, with returns over a 12 month period of 24.6%. This was a strong driver of the total investment return, given the high weighting allocated to private markets.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the performance of the Fund over periods to the end of September 2022 along with the Economic and Market update which effectively sets the scene.

29. INVESTMENT AND FUNDING UPDATE

Mrs Fielder noted the following key points:

- Regarding the business plan, the investment strategy review had been delayed due to the difficult economic environment. This would be brought to the next Committee in February 2023.

- The climate change report and TCFD requirements were also slightly delayed. Work was continuing and a training session was due to be held for Committee members on 1 February 2023.
- The Stewardship Code was submitted by the 31 October 2022 deadline after a draft submission was presented at the August Committee meeting. The Fund will not know the outcome until March 2023. If any members wished to see the final submission, they could contact Mrs Fielder.
- The Fund had expected various consultations regarding LGPS investment related developments but only the one relating to governance and reporting on climate risk has been issued.
- As outlined in paragraph 1.02, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities ("DLUHC") published a consultation, which closed on 24 November 2022, on proposals to require LGPS administering authorities to report on climate change risks. The consultation was in line with recommendations made by the Taskforce on Climate Related Financial Disclosures ("TCFD"). Mrs Fielder explained that in 2017, a set of recommendations were published with the aim of improving financial related risks. In November 2020 it was announced that TCFD disclosures would become mandatory in the UK by 2025. DLUHC's view is that the requirement for LGPS should be set as high a standard as for private pension schemes. The private pension schemes were the starting point for the proposals but did not take into account the unique features of the LGPS including local administration and democratic accountability. Mrs Fielder highlighted the draft Fund's consultation response in Appendix 2. Overall, the Fund was supportive of DLUHC's proposals in the consultation. A significant amount of the proposals surround scenario analysis and metrics, and the Fund had already undertaken modelling and would be doing so again as part of the Fund's investment strategy review. The Fund's response to the consultation summarises how climate change was already embedded into the Fund's governance, investment and funding strategies. This provided further evidence of the Fund being committed to best practice in this area, and the Fund intended to carry out their own TCFD reporting early in 2023, before the Government deadline. This adhered to the principles laid out in the consultation document. Mrs Fielder highlighted that the Committee were being asked to approve the draft consultation response.
- Paragraph 1.04 outlined the Additional Voluntary Contribution ("AVC") review that the Fund were currently undergoing with AVC providers, Prudential and Utmost through Mercer. Under the LGPS regulations, all administering authorities were required to provide members with details and access to an AVC provider. Mercer had not raised any specific issues as part of the review but made a recommendation that the Fund should communicate with members to remind them to regularly review their AVC investments and also to confirm their retirement ages.

- The Fund conducted a transition of assets in October and November 2022 as noted in paragraph 1.15. There was a redemption of £125 million from the Blackrock Global ESG Equity Fund and £90 million from the Wales Pension Partnership Emerging Market Equity Fund. This reduced the Fund's physical equity exposure from 20% to 10%.
- For the private market allocation a further two commitments to investments within the private equity portfolio were made, including £20 million to ECI12 (which the Fund had invested with since 1998) and £11 million to Activate Capital II.
- There were a number of changes to the risk register including the update regarding the valuation to risk F4 and the funding level reducing to risk F2, both of which reduced from significant likelihood to low.

RESOLVED:

(a) The Committee considered and noted the update.
(b) The Committee approved the "Governance and reporting of climate change risks" draft consultation response.

30. GOVERNANCE UPDATE

Mr Latham congratulated Mrs Fielder and Mrs K Williams who were both nominated and shortlisted for the Women in Pensions Award. He also highlighted Mrs K Williams had received a highly commended award. The Committee congratulated Mrs Fielder and Mrs William.

Mr Latham noted the following key points:

- Paragraph 1.01 outlined the business plan update, on which Mr Latham confirmed good progress was being made. He reminded the newer Committee members who were unable to attend sessions of the induction training to confirm when they had watched the relevant recordings.
- The TPR Single Code of Practice and the Good Governance Review consultation were still outstanding and so had been moved forward in the business plan.
- Mrs E Williams, wo had been originally appointed as the non-trade union scheme member representative of the Pension Board for the three years to February 2023, had been reappointed in this role for a further two years.
- National issues that the Committee were required to be aware of were listed in paragraphs 1.06 to 1.11.
- The Governance Policy and Compliance Statement had been reviewed and proposed changes were highlighted in Appendix 3. This includes incorporating the changes relating to the Head of Clwyd Pension Fund taking over responsibilities from the Chief Executive. Mr Latham asked the Committee to approve the updates to the Policy and Statement.

- The annual review of the objectives measures for governance related policies and strategies was included in Appendix 4. Most areas were on target, but some areas still require some work to be completed.
- As outlined in paragraph 1.14, it was good to see a high percentage of members attending the training. There was a list of future training events and Mr Latham asked Committee members to note these dates and attend if possible.
- There were currently recruitment and retention issues which was causing additional strain due to the amount of additional work due to factors outside of the Fund's control, such as the Pensions Dashboard and the McCloud remedy. Further work was also being carried out to understand whether increases in administration workflow from a membership perspective would continue.

Mrs Fielder mentioned that an email had been sent out regarding the upcoming LGC investment seminar at Carden Park. She asked if members could let her know as soon as possible if they wished to attend so the Fund could take advantage of the early bird discount, noting it was always a valuable event to attend and was local.

RESOLVED:

(a) The Committee considered the update.
(b) The Committee noted the changes to timescales in the business plan for items G3 and G5, due to Government delays in taking forward The Pension Regulator's Single Code and the SAB Good Governance review outcomes.
(c) The Committee approved the changes to the Fund's Governance Policy and Compliance Statement as shown in Appendix 3.

31. ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Mrs K Williams noted the following key points from the report:

- A6 and A7 in the business plan 2022/23 update in paragraph 1.01 outlined the review of the policies and strategies and also the pensioner existence checking. It was highlighted that both of these actions were underway but were running slightly behind schedule due to conflicting priorities and increased workloads.
- The refresh of the Communication Strategy had been behind schedule due to the vacant Communications Officer position. However, this position was now filled and good progress was now being made.
- Two key areas causing large increases in workloads were the backdated pay award for 2021/22 and number of eligible deferred members taking their benefits. Both of these issues are impacting the Fund's ability to complete business as usual work within regulatory deadlines and internally agreed service standards.

- The backdated pay award for 2021/22 was agreed and paid in March 2022. However, it resulted in a full recalculation of benefits for many members who had left the scheme during 2021/22. For 2022/23, due to the value of the pay award the impact was much more significant and resulted in a high volume of requested recalculations. There were already over 1,100 requests for the 2022/23 award which was a lot of additional work compared to 2021/22. The team are unable to do the recalculations in bulk due to the individual circumstances of each member. Therefore, all recalculations are done on an individual basis.
- The team run a monthly report to identify the number of eligible deferred members approaching age 60 that may wish to take their pension benefits. The figures are increasing each month, both those on the report who all need to be written to, and those then choosing to take their benefits following that initial correspondence. The Administration Manager is investigating any possible trends to ensure the team is resourced appropriately going forward. The outstanding cases chart in appendix 3 showed outstanding cases had decreased from over 10,000 in 2018 to 5,000 at current date. The team were continuing to look for efficiencies through more automated processes. Mrs K Williams is also considering the future team structure including a potential project team to ensure business as usual services do not deteriorate
- Despite the current vacancies, the number of cases completed for the last quarter was 8,552 compared to 7,731 in the same reporting period last year.
- The number of incoming cases was 9,171 compared to 9,210 for the same period last year. However the 9,210 cases included a backlog of new starters from a particular employer and also a significant TUPE transfer) and therefore, these numbers were not a true reflection of the team's normal workload last year.
- Appendix 4 outlined the performance of the team against the target key performance indicators. Team members responsible for processing retirement cases were also responsible for the estimate calculations and the surviving partner benefit calculations, and therefore the two points relating to pay awards and increases in deferred retirements will impact those key performance indicators.
- There was a positive response following the recent adverts for vacancies. The team were in the process of interviewing fourteen candidates and hoped to fill the five vacant positions. Mrs K Williams confirmed she would identify whether any suitable candidates not appointed to the five vacant positions could potentially provide support for the extra work the team had, subject to a business case being approved. Mrs McWilliam suggested that the Fund's urgency delegations could be used if necessary to approve additional temporary positions.
- The longer term plan was to potentially create a project team to protect the team members dealing with core business as usual tasks, so that the

everyday work would not be affected by areas such as pay awards or the pensions dashboard. She also noted that a lot of the team were above the age of 55 and this was a key risk which is noted in the risk register.

- The team had lost key members of staff in recent months and therefore Mrs K Williams wanted to be very open with the team about resource planning, progression and opportunities.

  Mrs K Williams highlighted the new logo and branding shown on page 553. She explained that website and accessibility regulations had been taken into account in the new design. The intention is to go live with the new branding in April 2023. This would be shared at the AJCM with employers on 13 December 2022. Cllr Swash commented that the new logo looked professional.

Cllr Wedlake recognised the difficulty with recruitment and retention, and thanked the team for their hard work despite these staffing issues.

Mrs McWilliam said that all of the branding work had been completed internally and involved the recently recruited Communications Officer. This showed the value of having additional expertise within the team.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the update

32. ASSET POOLING

The Chairman stated that this item was for noting and more details were covered in the next agenda item.

During the item Mr Hibbert noted generally that the virtual format of Committee meetings made it extremely difficult given that he did not have an easily accessible copy of the meeting papers and was working with one screen. Therefore he was unable to follow his documents and therefore raise points at the meeting. Cllr Hughes agreed with Mr Hibbert and wondered if the Committee meetings could move to hybrid meetings going forward. Officers agreed to take this forward with Democratic Services.

RESOLVED:
The Committee noted the update

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 – TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items by virtue of exempt information under paragraph(s)14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

33. <u>**SUPPLIER CONTRACTS - CONFIDENTIAL**</u>

Due to conflicts of interest, representatives of Mercer and Aon left the meeting and re-joined from paragraph 1.09. This item of the agenda was presented and discussed.

<u>**RESOLVED**</u>

(a) The Committee extended the contract with Aon until 31 March 2025.
(b) The Committee extended the contract with Mercer until 31 March 2025.
(c) The Committee agreed to continue the contract with Heywood on a 12 month rolling basis until February 2028.
(d) The Committee noted and discussed the update on Link Fund Solutions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 – TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items by virtue of exempt information under paragraph(s) 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

34. <u>**CYBER STRATEGY WORK PROGRAMME - CONFIDENTIAL**</u>

This presentation was received from Byron Lloyd-Jones (Aon Cyber Solutions)

<u>**RESOLVED**</u>:

The Committee noted the contents of the report and the presentation from Aon's cyber security experts.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and participation. He also mentioned the forthcoming training sessions including the WPP session on 5 December, the essential training sessions on 18 January 2023 and 1 February 2023 and the AJCM on 13 December 2022. The next formal Committee meeting is on 15 February 2023.

The meeting finished at 12:30pm.

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Chairman