Cronfa Bensiynau Clwyd Clwyd Pension Fund



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Administering Authority for CLWYD PENSION FUND

GOVERNANCE POLICY and COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

GOVERNANCE POLICY

Introduction and Legal Requirements

Flintshire County Council is the Administering Authority responsible for maintaining and managing the Clwyd Pension Fund on behalf of its stakeholders; the scheme members and employers participating in the Fund. These responsibilities are primarily set out in Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations.

Flexibility is provided for each Administering Authority to determine their own governance arrangements. However the LGPS Regulations require each Administering Authority to prepare, publish and maintain a governance policy and compliance statement setting out whether the Administering Authority delegates its functions, or part of its functions to a committee, a sub-committee or an officer of the authority, and if so:

- a) the terms, structure and operational procedures of the delegation,
- b) the frequency of any committee or sub-committee meetings,
- whether such a committee or sub-committee includes representatives of Scheme employers or members, and if so, whether those representatives have voting rights
- d) the extent to which a delegation, or the absence of a delegation, complies with guidance given by the Secretary of State and, to the extent that it does not so comply, the reasons for not complying, and
- e) details of the terms, structure and operational procedures relating to the local pension board.

The regulations require Administering Authorities to consult such persons as it considers appropriate when preparing the policy and compliance statement.

This document is the Governance Policy and Compliance Statement for Clwyd Pension Fund that has been prepared to meet the requirement of the LGPS Regulations. The compliance statement required by point (d) is included as Appendix A.

Aims and Objectives

Flintshire County Council recognises the significance of its role as Administering Authority to the Clwyd Pension Fund on behalf of its stakeholders which include:

- around 40,000 current and former members of the Fund, and their dependants
- around 29 employers within the Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham Council areas
- the local taxpayers within those areas.

Our Fund's Mission Statement is:

- We will be known as forward thinking, responsive, proactive and professional providing excellent customer focused, reputable and credible service to all our customers.
- We will have instilled a corporate culture of risk awareness, financial governance, and will be providing the highest quality, distinctive services within our resources.
- We will work effectively with partners, being solution focused with a can do approach.

In relation to the governance of the Fund we will aim to:

- Act in the best interests of the Fund's members and employers
- Have robust governance arrangements in place, to facilitate informed decision making, supported by appropriate advice, policies and strategies
- Ensure the Pension Fund is managed and its services delivered by people who have the appropriate knowledge and expertise
- Act with integrity and be accountable to our stakeholders for our decisions, ensuring they are robust and well based
- Understand and monitor risk
- Strive to ensure compliance with the appropriate legislation and statutory guidance, and to act in the spirit of other relevant guidelines and best practice guidance
- Clearly articulate our objectives and how we intend to achieve those objectives through business planning, and continually measure and monitor success

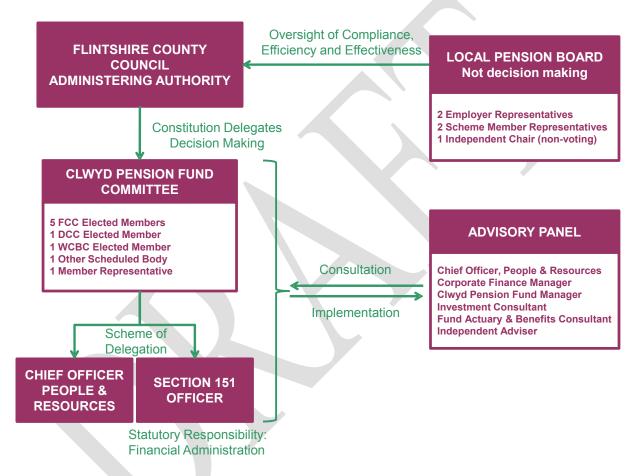
Background to Governance Arrangements

Flintshire County Council reviewed its Governance arrangements for the Clwyd Pension Fund in 2014. Prior to this date, the responsibility for the Clwyd Pension Fund rested with the Head of Finance who reported to the Clwyd Pension Fund Panel made up of elected members from Flintshire County Council, Denbighshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council. In addition the panel had non voting members including an independent adviser and a scheme member representative.

An independent review by CIPFA in 2010 found the governance of the Fund to be very good but recognised that this governance structure did not meet best practice, in particular they recommended:

- Responsibility for the management of the Clwyd Pension Fund should be transferred from the Head of Finance to a newly constituted Committee
- There should be wider representation of stakeholders on the newly constituted committee with voting rights extended to all committee members.

As a result, in May 2014, the Fund's governance arrangements were reviewed and the Council established a formal Pension Fund Committee, supported by a Pensions Advisory Panel. The Corporate Finance Manager is the Section 151 Officer and has a statutory responsibility for the proper financial affairs of Flintshire County Council which include Clwyd Pension Fund matters. In addition, the Council has delegated specific responsibilities to the Chief Officer – People and Resources. This governance structure was expanded in early 2015 as a result of the requirement by the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 to introduce a local pension board to assist in compliance of pension fund matters. The Council's governance structure for pension fund matters is as shown below:



Clwyd Pension Fund Committee

The Pension Fund Committee's principal aim is to carry out the functions of Flintshire County Council as the Scheme Manager and Administering Authority for the Clwyd Pension Fund in accordance with LGPS legislation.

The members on the Clwyd Pension Fund Panel are not Trustees of the Fund, however, they do have a duty of care which is analogous to the responsibilities of Trustees in the private sector and they could be more accurately described as 'Quasi Trustees'. The management of the Clwyd Pension Fund is Non-Political.

The Committee's specific roles as outlined in the Council's Constitution are shown in Appendix B. The Committee may also delegate a limited range of its functions to one or more officers of Flintshire County Council.

No matters relating to Flintshire County Council's responsibilities as an employer participating within the Clwyd Pension Fund are delegated to the Pension Fund Committee.

The Pension Fund Committee meets at least quarterly and is composed of nine members as follows:

- Five Councillors of Flintshire County Council, determined by the Council.
- Four co-opted members comprising:-
 - One Councillor of Wrexham County Borough Council, determined by that Council.
 - One Councillor of Denbighshire County Council, determined by that Council.
 - One Representative of the other Scheme Employers (not admission bodies) in the Clwyd Pension Fund as defined by Schedule 2 of the Local Government Pension Scheme 2013, as amended from time to time, appointed in accordance with procedures agreed by the Chief Officer, People and Resources in consultation with the members of the Pension Fund Advisory Panel.
 - One Representative of the scheme members of the Clwyd Pension Fund, appointed in accordance with procedures agreed by the Chief Officer, People and Resources in consultation with the members of the Pension Fund Advisory Panel.

The Council's Constitution permits named substitutes for Flintshire County Council members only, providing they satisfy the knowledge and skills policy of the pension fund. The terms of reference for the members range from four to six years, and members may be reappointed for further terms.

All members have equal voting rights.

Chief Officer, People and Resources

Under the Council's Constitution, the Chief Officer, People and Resources is responsible for the following matters:

- The day to day management of Clwyd Pension Fund matters including ensuring arrangements for investment of assets and administration of contributions and benefits, excluding matters delegated to the Pensions Fund Committee.
- Establish and Chair a Clwyd Pension Fund Advisory Panel consisting of officers of the Council and advisers to the Clwyd Pension Fund, to provide advice and propose recommendations to the Pension Fund Committee, and to carry out such matters as delegated to it from time to time by the Pension Fund Committee.

Section 151 Officer – Corporate Finance Manager

Under the Council's current operating model, the Chief Finance Officer (S151) role is designated to the Corporate Finance Manager. The Corporate Finance manager therefore has a statutory responsibility for the proper financial administration of the Clwyd Pension Fund, in addition to that of Flintshire County Council.

Clwyd Pension Fund Advisory Panel

The Clwyd Pension Fund Advisory Panel has been established by the Chief Officer, People and Resources to provide advice and propose recommendations to the Pension Fund Committee, and to carry out such matters as delegated to it from time to time by the Pension Fund Committee.

Its membership consists of:

- The Corporate Finance Manager of Flintshire County Council
- The Chief Officer, People and Resources
- The Clwyd Pension Fund Manager
- Investment Consultant
- Fund Actuary
- Independent Adviser

Pension Board

Each LGPS Administering Authority is required to establish a local Pension Board to assist them with:

- securing compliance with the LGPS Regulations and any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme, and requirements imposed in relation to the LGPS by the Pensions Regulator
- ensuring the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Pension Fund

Such Pension Boards are not local authority committees; as such the Constitution of Flintshire County Council does not apply to the Pension Board unless it is expressly referred to in the Board's Protocol. The Clwyd Pension Board was established by Flintshire County Council in March2015 and the full Protocol of the Board can be found within the Council's Constitution. The key points are summarised below.

The Pension Board provides oversight of the matters outlined above. The Pension Board, however, is not a decision making body in relation to the management of the Pension Fund and the Pension Fund's management powers and responsibilities which have been delegated by the Council to the Pension Fund Committee or otherwise remain solely the powers and responsibilities of them, including but not limited to the setting and delivery of the Fund's strategies, the allocation of the Fund's assets and the appointment of contractors, advisors and fund managers. The Pension Board operates independently of the Pension Fund Committee.

The Pension Board consists of 5 members as follows:

- Two Employer Representatives
- Two Scheme Member Representatives, one of whom is nominated by the joint trade unions, and one who is a member of the Clwyd Pension Fund
- One Independent Member who acts as chair of the Pension Board.

All Pension Board members, excluding the Independent Member, have individual voting rights but it is expected the Pension Board will as far as possible reach a consensus.

A meeting of the Pension Board is only considered quorate when at least three of the five members are present, including at least one Employer Representative, one Scheme Member Representative and the Independent Member.

Members of the Pension Board are required to declare, on appointment and at each meeting, any interests that may lead to conflicts of interest in relation to Pension Fund matters or agenda items..

The Pension Board meets a minimum of twice and a maximum of four times in each calendar year in the ordinary course of business. Additional meetings may be arranged, subject to approval by the Chief Officer, People and Resources, to facilitate its work.

Training

Flintshire County Council recognises that effective financial administration and decision making can only be achieved where those involved have the requisite knowledge and skills. Accordingly, in relation to the management of the Clwyd Pension Fund, we adopt the key recommendations of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Public Sector Pensions Finance Knowledge and Skills.

This means we will ensure that we have formal and comprehensive objectives, policies and practices, strategies and reporting arrangements for the effective acquisition and retention of the relevant LGPS and related knowledge and skills for those responsible for financial administration and decision-making relating to the Fund. These policies and practices will be guided by reference to the framework of knowledge and skills defined within the CIPFA Pensions Finance Knowledge and Skills Frameworks.

The Clwyd Pension Fund's Training Policy can be found on the Fund's website – www.clwydpensionfund.org.uk.

We will report on an annual basis how well this Policy has been adhered to throughout the financial year as part of the Fund's Annual Report and Accounts.

The Council has delegated the responsibility for the implementation of the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice to the Chief Officer, People and Resources, who will act in accordance with the Fund's Policy.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest have always existed for those with LGPS administering authority responsibilities as well as for advisers to LGPS funds. This simply reflects the fact that many of those managing or advising LGPS funds will have a variety of other roles and responsibilities, for example as a member of the scheme, as an elected member of an employer participating in the LGPS or as an adviser to more than one LGPS administering authority. Further any of those persons may have an individual personal, business or other interest which might conflict, or be perceived to conflict, with their role managing or advising LGPS funds.

It is generally accepted that LGPS administering authorities have both fiduciary and public law duties to act in the best interest of both the scheme beneficiaries and participating employers. This, however, does not preclude those involved in the management of the Fund from having other roles or responsibilities which may result in an actual or potential conflict of interest. Accordingly, it is good practice to document within a policy how any such conflicts or potential conflicts are to be managed.

Clwyd Pension Fund's Conflict of Interest Policy details how actual and potential conflicts of interest are identified and managed by those involved in the management and governance of the Fund whether directly or in an advisory capacity. The Policy is established to guide the Pension Fund Committee members, Pension Board members, officers and advisers. It aims to ensure that those individuals do not act improperly or create a perception that they may have acted improperly. It is an aid to good governance, encouraging transparency and minimising the risk of any matter prejudicing decision making or management of the Fund otherwise.

The Policy can be found on the Fund's website – www.clwydpensionfund.org.uk.

Monitoring Governance of the Clwyd Pension Fund

The Fund's governance objectives will be monitored as follows:

Objective	Monitoring Arrangements
Have robust governance arrangements in place, to facilitate informed decision making, supported by appropriate advice, policies and strategies.	 The Independent Adviser undertakes an annual review of the effectiveness of the Clwyd Pension Fund's governance arrangements, the findings of which are reported to the Committee and published. The Pension Board prepares and publishes an annual report. In line with the Regulations this document will be filed with the DCLG.
Ensure the Pension Fund is managed and its services delivered by people who have the appropriate knowledge and expertise	A Training Policy in place together with annual monitoring of all training by Pension Committee members and key officers.

Objective	Monitoring Arrangements
Act with integrity and be accountable to our stakeholders for our decisions, ensuring they are robust and well based	 The employers within the Fund, together with union representatives, are invited to an Annual Joint Consultative Meeting. Attendees receive presentations and have the opportunity to ask questions on the governance of the Fund. The Pension Fund Committee includes representatives from scheme members and most employers in the Fund. The Pension Board includes representatives from scheme members and employers in the Fund. The Pension Board prepares and publishes an annual report which may include comment on decision making.
Understand and monitor risk	 A Risk Policy and register in place. Ongoing consideration of key risks at Pension Fund Committee meetings.
Strive to ensure compliance with the appropriate legislation and statutory guidance and to act in the spirit of other relevant guidelines and best practice guidance	 The Governance of the Fund is considered by both the External and Internal Auditors. All External and Internal Audit Reports are reported to Committee. The Fund has an Independent Adviser and their annual report includes reference to compliance with key requirements. The Pension Board prepares and publishes an annual report which may include comment on compliance matters.
Clearly articulate our objectives and how we intend to achieve those objectives through business planning, and continually measure and monitor success	 All strategies and policies include reference to how objectives will be monitored. Ongoing monitoring against key objectives at Pension Fund Committee meetings. Ongoing monitoring of business plan targets at Pension Fund Committee meetings.

Key Risks

The key risks to the delivery of this Strategy are outlined below. The Pension Fund Committee members, with the assistance of the Clwyd Pension Fund Advisory Panel, will monitor these and other key risks and consider how to respond to them.

- Changes in Pension Fund Committee membership, Pension Board membership and/or key officers resulting in loss of continuity and potentially diminishing knowledge and understanding
- Changes in government / legislative requirements meaning insufficient time allocated to ongoing management, either at Pension Fund Committee meetings or as part of key officers' duties
- Ineffective delegation of duties and/or presentation of Pension Fund Committee items resulting in insufficient time spent on key matters
- Poor attendance and/or a lack of engagement at training and/or formal meetings by Committee members, Board members, Advisory Panel members and/or other key officers resulting in a poor standard of decision making and/or monitoring
- Conflicts of interest not being appropriately managed by Committee members,
 Board members and/or key officers.

Best Practice Compliance Statement

As required by Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations the statement below compares Clwyd Pension Fund's current governance arrangements with the best practice guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The statement provides an explanation where the Fund is not fully compliant.

Approval, Review and Consultation

The governance structure of the Clwyd Pension Fund was reviewed in 2014. The employers of the Fund were consulted prior to that review.

This Governance Policy and Statement was approved at the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee on 21 May 2015. It will be formally reviewed and updated at least every three years or sooner if the governance arrangements or other matters included within it merit reconsideration.

Further Information

If you require further information about anything in or related to this Governance Policy and Statement, please contact:

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Appendix A - Clwyd Pension Fund Governance Compliance Statement

Best Practice	Compliant or not?	Explanatory Note
A. STRUCTURE		
a. The management of the administration of	COMPLIANT	The administration of benefits and
benefits and strategic management of fund		strategic management of fund assets is
assets clearly rests with the main committee established by the appointing council.		delegated by the Council to Pension Fund Committee.
b. That representatives of participating	COMPLIANT	Representatives covering most
LGPS employers, admitted bodies and		employers and scheme members are
scheme members (including pensioner and		Co-opted Members of the Pension
deferred members) are members of either		Fund Committee.
the main or secondary committee established to underpin the work of the main		
committee.		
c. That where a secondary committee or	NOT APPLICABLE	
panel has been established, the structure		
ensures effective communication across		
both levels. d. That where a secondary committee or	NOT APPLICABLE	
panel has been established, at least one	NOT AFFEIGABLE	
seat on the main committee is allocated for		
a member from the secondary committee or		
panel.		
B. REPRESENTATION		

Best Practice	Compliant or not?	Explanatory Note
a. That all key stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to be represented within the main or secondary committee structure. These include:- i) employing authorities (including non-scheme employers, e.g. admitted bodies); ii) scheme members (including deferred and pensioner scheme members), iii) where appropriate, independent professional observers, and iv) expert advisors (on an ad-hoc basis).	PARTIALLY COMPLIANT	The Pension Fund Committee includes the following Co-opted Members: • employer representatives covering all employers with the exception of admission bodies (as admission bodies make up just a small proportion of the liabilities of the Fund) • a scheme member representative covering all categories of scheme member. In addition, an independent adviser attends all Pension Fund Committee meetings and the Fund's actuary and investment consultant regularly attend
b. That where lay members sit on a main or	COMPLIANT	meetings on an ad-hoc basis. All Pension Fund Committee members.
secondary committee, they are treated equally in terms of access to papers and meetings, training and are given full opportunity to contribute to the decision making process, with or without voting rights. C. SELECTION AND ROLE OF LAY	OUNT LIAIVI	including Co-opted Members, are treated equally with full opportunity to contribute to the decision making process and with unrestricted access to papers and training, and with full voting rights.
MEMBERS		

Best Practice	Compliant or not?	Explanatory Note
a. That committee or panel members are made fully aware of the status, role and function they are required to perform on either a main or secondary committee.	·	This is highlighted via regular training and also when presenting the Governance Strategy Statement for approval.
b. That at the start of any meeting committee members are invited to declare any financial or pecuniary interest related to specific matters on the agenda.	COMPLIANT	This is no longer a legal requirement but we recognise that potential conflicts of interest can arise between existing roles (e.g. as employer representatives or scheme members) and accordingly we still carry out this practice. The Fund has a Conflicts of Interest Policy outlining the process for identifying and managing actual and potential conflicts of interest.
D. VOTING		
a. The policy of individual administering authorities on voting rights is clear and transparent, including the justification for not extending voting rights to each body or group represented on main LGPS committees.	COMPLIANT	The Council's Constitution and the Fund's Governance Strategy Statement make it clear that all Pension Fund Committee members have equal voting rights.
E. TRAINING / FACILITY TIME / EXPENSES		

Best Practice	Compliant or not?	Explanatory Note
a. That in relation to the way in which		The Fund has a Training Policy that
statutory and related decisions are taken by		applies to all Pension Fund Committee
the administering authority, there is a clear		members, Pension Board members
policy on training, facility time and		and officers. Training is delivered
reimbursement of expenses in respect of		through several avenues including:
members involved in the decision-making		An initial induction for new Pension
process.		Fund Committee and Pension Board
		Members
		On going training through written
		reports or presentations at
		Committee meetings
		 Conferences and seminars.
		The actual costs and expenses relating
		to approved training are met directly or
		can be reimbursed from the Clwyd
		Pension Fund. The co-opted members
		of the Pension Fund Committee and
		members of the Pension Board receive
		payments for attendance at meetings
		(including training events) as detailed within the Flintshire County Council
		Members' Remuneration Scheme and
		the Pension Board Protocol.
b. That where such a policy exists, it applies	COMPLIANT	and i shelish Board i rotoson
equally to all members of committees, sub-		
committees, advisory panels or any other		
form of secondary forum.		

Best Practice	Compliant or not?	Explanatory Note
c. That the administering authority considers the adoption of annual training plans for committee members and maintains a log of all such training undertaken.	COMPLIANT	A log of individual Member training is maintained. In addition, the Fund has adopted the CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework and has a Fund specific Training Policy.
F. MEETINGS (FREQUENCY/QUORUM)		
a. That an administering authority's main committee or committees meet at least quarterly.		
b. That an administering authority's secondary committee or panel meet at least twice a year and is synchronised with the dates when the main committee sits.		
c. That an administering authority who do not include lay members in their formal governance arrangements, must provide a forum outside of those arrangements by which the interests of key stakeholders can be represented	NOT APPLICABLE	Even though we do have lay members on our Pension Committee, we also have an Annual Joint Consultative Meeting (AJCM) for employing bodies and scheme members. The Pension Board also provides a forum for stakeholders to be represented.
G. ACCESS		
a. That subject to any rules in the council's constitution, all members of main and secondary committees or panels have equal access to committee papers, documents and advice that falls to be considered at meetings of the main committee.	COMPLIANT	All Members of the Pension Fund Committee have equal access to papers.
H. SCOPE		

Best Practice	Compliant or not?	Explanatory Note
a. That administering authorities have taken	COMPLIANT	The remit of the Pension Fund
steps to bring wider scheme issues within		Committee covers all Fund matters,
the scope of their governance arrangements		including administration,
		communications, funding, investments
		and governance. The Pension Board
		provides further opportunity for these
		matters to be considered.
I. PUBLICITY		
a. That administering authorities have	COMPLIANT	The Fund publishes a detailed Annual
published details of their governance		Report, newsletters for active and
arrangements in such a way that		pensioner members, road shows, drop
stakeholders with an interest in the way in		in sessions and an Annual Meeting for
which the scheme is governed, can express		Employers and representatives of
an interest in wanting to be part of those		stakeholders (AJCM). In addition all
arrangements.		Pension Fund Committee reports are
		available to view on the Flintshire
		County Council website (other than
		exempt items).

Appendix B – Delegated Roles and Functions of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee

The Pension Fund Committee will have the following specific roles and functions, taking account of advice from the Chief Officer, People and Resources and the Fund's professional advisers:

- a) Ensuring the Clwyd Pension Fund is managed and pension payments are made in compliance with the extant Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations, Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs requirements for UK registered pension schemes and all other relevant statutory provisions.
- b) Ensuring robust risk management arrangements are in place.
- c) Ensuring the Council operates with due regard and in the spirit of all relevant statutory and non statutory best practice guidance in relation to its management of the Clwyd Pension Fund.
- d) Determining the Pension Fund's aims and objectives, strategies, statutory compliance statements, policies and procedures for the overall management of the Fund, including in relation to the following areas:
 - Governance approving the Fund's Governance Policy and Compliance Statement for the Fund within the framework as determined by Flintshire County Council and making recommendations to Flintshire County Council about any changes to that framework.
 - ii) Funding Strategy approving the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement including ongoing monitoring and management of the liabilities, ensuring appropriate funding plans are in place for all employers in the Fund, overseeing the triennial valuation and interim valuations, and working with the actuary in determining the appropriate level of employer contributions for each employer.
 - iii) Investment strategy approving the Fund's investment strategy, Statement of Investment Principles and Myners Compliance Statement including setting investment targets and ensuring these are aligned with the Fund's specific liability profile and risk appetite.
 - iv) Administration Strategy approving the Fund's Administration Strategy determining how the Council will the administer the Fund including collecting payments due, calculating and paying benefits, gathering information from and providing information to scheme members and employers.
 - v) Communications Strategy approving the Fund's Communication Strategy, determining the methods of communications with the various stakeholders including scheme members and employers.
 - vi) Discretions determining how the various administering authority discretions are operated for the Fund.

- e) Monitoring the implementation of these policies and strategies on an ongoing basis.
- f) Considering the Fund's financial statements prior to approval by the Council and agreeing the Fund's annual report.
- g) Selection, appointment and dismissal of the Fund's advisers, including actuary, benefits consultants, investment consultants, global custodian, fund managers, lawyers, pension funds administrator, and independent professional advisers.
- h) Making decisions relating to employers joining and leaving the Fund. This includes which employers are entitled to join the Fund, any requirements relating to their entry, ongoing monitoring and the basis for leaving the Fund.
- i) Agreeing the terms and payment of bulk transfers into and out of the Fund.
- j) Agreeing Pension Fund business plans and monitoring progress against them.
- k) Agreeing the Fund's Knowledge and Skills Policy for all Pension Fund Committee members and for all officers of the Fund, including determining the Fund's knowledge and skills framework, identifying training requirements, developing training plans and monitoring compliance with the policy.
- Agreeing the Administering Authority responses to consultations on LGPS matters and other matters where they may impact on the Fund or its stakeholders.
- m) Receiving ongoing reports from the Chief Officer, People and Resources and Pensions Advisory Panel in relation to delegated functions.