

Investment Committee

Hybrid Meeting – 7 July 2025

Item 3 – Paper A

Actions and Agreements from hybrid meeting of 3 March 2025

Present

Councillor Andrew Thornton
Sandra Stewart

Peter Wallach

Euan Miller

Jeffrey Dong
Colin Cartwright
David Walker
Tony English
Chris Rule

Tommy Bowler
Richard Lane

Andrew Dobbie
Christophor Ward

Bramman Rajkumar

Jeremy Hughes

Becky Clough
Sophia Chivandire

Ona Ehimuan
Sarah Tingey

Chair – West Yorkshire Pension Fund
Greater Manchester Pension Fund
(Chair of Responsible Investment
Advisory Group (RIAG))
Practitioner – Merseyside Pension
Fund
Practitioner – West Yorkshire Pension
Fund
Practitioner – Swansea Pension Fund
Investment Consultant (Aon)
Investment Consultant (Hymans)
Investment Consultant (Mercer)
Asset Pool (Local Pensions
Partnership Investments – LPPI)
Member representative – UNITE
Academies representative – Twyford
Academies
UNISON
Government Actuary's Department
(GAD)
Ministry for Housing, Communities
and Local Government (MHCLG)
Senior Pensions Secretary, Local
Government Association (LGA)
Board Support & Policy Officer, LGA
Pensions Policy and Support Officer,
LGA
Pensions Secretary, LGA
Research and Data Analyst, LGA

Item 1 – Welcome, introductions and declarations of interests

1. Cllr Andrew Thornton (the Chair) welcomed all in attendance.
2. Apologies had been received from Nick Buckland and Oliver Watson from MHCLG; Bramman Rajkumar attended in his place. Apologies

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were also received from Fiona Miller (Border to Coast). George Georgiou (GMB) and Pete Smith (Barnett Waddingham) were absent without apology.

3. There were no declarations of interest.

Item 2 – Meeting protocol

4. The Chair advised members of the virtual meeting protocol.

Item 3 – Actions and agreements from the meeting of 11 November 2024

5. The actions and agreements from the previous meeting were agreed.

Item 4 – MHCLG update

6. Bramman Rajkumar (BR) confirmed that there are 220 responses to the Fit for the Future consultation which closed on 16 January 2025 and eight proposals submitted by each pool. The responses were being worked through however it could not be confirmed when the Government's response would be published.

Item 5 – Code of Transparency (CoT) compliance update

7. Ona Ehimuan (OE) introduced Paper B to the Committee and summarised the compliance figures in the paper which included the figures for private vs public markets late templates. Although only 2.2% of overall templates were late, 54.8% of these belonged to private markets. The Secretariat expressed that these figures supported the known issues with collecting investment cost data within private markets. The Board remains committed to engaging in conversations with asset managers to help resolve these issues, however it is acknowledged that this would take some time.
8. The Committee were updated on the asset managers that had a significant number of late templates. Included in the update was the contextual information from the asset managers on the reasons for the late templates. The Committee noted this but did express that some of the reasons provided by asset managers were inadequate. The Secretariat reassured the Committee that asset managers with a high number of late templates would continue to be chased.

Item 6 – Code of Transparency Project Update

9. OE introduced Paper C to the Committee. The Board agreed on 25 November 2024 to explore collaborating with the National LGPS

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Framework team to provide a framework for funds to procure their own cost monitoring and benchmarking services. Founders for the new framework were being sought and would be selected to represent as many of the LGPS pools as possible and the Board would also be represented via the Secretariat.

10. In response to concerns that the change in delivery of cost information could lead to the view that the Code of Transparency has waned in importance, OE reminded and reassured the Committee that the Code remains of upmost importance and the Board would retain oversight of compliance with the Code under the new model. A robust communication strategy would also be developed and rolled out as the framework launch approaches. The National LGPS Framework team and Byhiras have both agreed to assist the Board with transitional arrangements and communications. The needs of the end users of cost information data were highlighted as a priority.
11. An updated project plan was presented to the Committee with high level information on the expected stages of the new project. The Committee agreed to submit the update and project to the Board for approval.

ACTION – That the Secretariat submits an update with the new project plan to the Board on the CoT data system project

Item 7 – Fit for the Future consultation – next steps post consultation

12. Jeremy Hughes (JH) informed the Committee that the [Board had submitted its response](#) to the Fit for the Future consultation which closed on 16 January 2025.
13. He outlined some of the main points contained in it and reminded the Committee that at the last meeting with Pension Committee Chairs on 26 November 2024, the Local Government Minister, Jim McMahon MP said that the Government would work with pools on a collaborative basis. He also reported that the Board would be seeking practical legal advice for managing conflicts of interest within the Government's preferred model following on the updated advice on fiduciary duty received from Nigel Giffin KC earlier in the year.
14. The Committee noted some of the tensions between the Government's proposals (and the desire to limit the number of different mandates offered by pools) and the desire of administering authorities to retain the right to set their own responsible investment strategy.

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15. The Government's response to the consultation has not yet been published and the Pensions Bill is expected in the summer. In adjusting to the new model, there is still a need for clarity from the Government in many areas.

Item 8 – RIAG Report

16. Sandra Stewart (SS) introduced Paper D to the Committee. The Group last met on 3 February 2025 and a report on the topics discussed were contained in the paper. Topics included a presentation on the new Climate Risk Reporting principles which were published alongside the new Funding Strategy Statement Guidance, an update provided by MHCLG representatives on the Fit for the Future consultation and an updated Terms of Reference for the Group which extended the Chair's term of office to match that of the members.
17. The Group also discussed the updated legal advice which had been received from Nigel Giffin KC on fiduciary duty in the LGPS. Of particular interest was Nigel Giffin's suggestion that administering authorities needed to have regard to employers' views on investment returns but not responsible investment principles. Many members of the Group including the Chair said that in their experience employers, especially other council employers, were frequently interested in considering RI principles. The Committee agreed that in their experience there is strong interest in RI principles by employers. Richard Lane (RL) added that though there is a commitment to RI principles, there is also a strong interest in financial performance and academics were not necessarily in favour of keeping decision making as local as possible and instead supported a model that would promote consolidation and consistency.
18. It was also generally agreed that scheme members (although in varying degrees) were interested in responsible investment, with many elected members frequently receiving communication on these issues. The Committee agreed that guidance on how best to consult members and employers in setting an RI policy would be helpful.

Item 9 – Update on Fiduciary Duty Advice

19. Jeremy Hughes (JH) introduced Paper E to the Committee. The Board had received updated advice on fiduciary duty in the LGPS which had been published on the [Board's Legal Opinions and Summaries](#) page. A summary of the 36-page advice had been drafted by the Secretariat and it was agreed for this be circulated with the Committee

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confidentially for comment before Board approval; the summary is intended to be the Board's understanding of the advice.

20. RC welcomed the legal advice saying that it provided clear answers to the question set out and commended the work of the Board and the Secretariat. He added that there is no simple solution to some of the issues laid out in the advice but commented on its usefulness nonetheless. AD suggested that a statutory definition of the fiduciary duty would be helpful, although it was acknowledged this would be far from straightforward.

ACTION – that the Secretariat shares the draft Board summary of Nigel Giffin KC's legal advice with the Committee confidentially for comment before submitting to the Board for approval.

Item 10 – Committee Workplan

21. OE introduced Paper F to the Committee which detailed the key workstreams expected for 2025. These are the Code of Transparency data system project, seeking further advice on fiduciary duty, responsible investment and inputting into the Fit for the Future consultation outcomes.
22. Chris Rule queried the timetable for working with MHCLG on the Fit for the Future consultation, adding that there would need to be realistic expectations and agreed dates in advance on the Committee input given the expected timing of the Pensions Bill. JH responded that the requested input from the Board and the Committee by MHCLG is still unknown but the Secretariat would continue to push MHCLG for a clear workplan to plan alongside Board and Committee meeting dates.
23. Tony English (TE) added that although the Pensions Bill is expected in the Summer, there will be subsequent workstreams and outputs such as revising existing guidance which could possibly include the input of the Committee. Becky Clough (BC) added that the Pensions team at MHCLG had recruited a new member who is developing a MHCLG and SAB workplan with discussions being held to encourage the aligning of key decisions with the Board and Committee cycles.
24. Andrew Dobbie (AD) said that local investment should be included on the workplan as there are a number of potential pitfalls that could arise if not handled correctly by the Government. This area usually falls under the discussions held by the RIAG and it was said that any issues

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for further consideration or discussion would be referred to the Committee at the earliest available opportunity.

25. It was agreed that an ad hoc meeting could be arranged to discuss issues as they arise, if needed, and the Secretariat noted the comments on the Committee Workplan for consideration before submitting the plan to the Board for approval. JH concluded that the ongoing work on the Fit for the Future consultation would likely have become clearer by the time of the next meeting and reminded the Committee that the Secretariat would be stretched for resource at least until the new Head of Pensions at the Local Government Association (LGA) was in post.

ACTION – that the Secretariat submits the committee workplan to the Board for approval

Item 11 – AOB and date of next meeting

26. There were no AOB items raised.
27. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 7 July 2025 at 11:00am.

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