



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Pension Fund Committee

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Wednesday, 20 March 2024 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor M B Lewis (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P N Bentu
M W Locke

Councillor(s)

J P Curtice
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

P Downing

Neath Port Talbot Council Co-opted Member

Philip Rogers

Advisors

Philip Pearson
Andre Ranchin
Mike Johnson

Advisor - Hymans Robertson
Advisor - Hymans Robertson
Advisor – Hymans Robertson

Officer(s)

Karen Cobb
Jeffrey Dong

Carolyn Isaac
Jeremy Parkhouse

Investment & Accounting Manager
Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy Section 151
Officer
Lawyer
Democratic Services Officer

Also present

Leanne Malough Audit Wales

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): None.

41 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea, the following interests were disclosed:

Councillors P N Bentu, J C Curtice, P Downing, M B Lewis, P Rogers and W G Thomas declared personal interests in the agenda as a whole.

I Guy declared a personal interest in the agenda as a whole.

Officers:

K Cobb, J Dong, J Parkhouse and C Isaac declared personal interests in the agenda as a whole.

42 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Pension Fund Committee meeting held on 15 November 2024 be signed and approved as a correct record.

43 Internal Audit Reports - Pension Fund Investments and Pension Fund Administration.

Jeff Dong, Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy S151 Officer provided a report which presented the findings of the Internal Audit Reports on Pension Fund Investments and Pension Fund Administration.

It was outlined that as part of the cyclical internal controls assurance and reporting, Swansea Council Internal Audit Section undertook an internal control systems audit covering Pension Fund Investments and Pensions Administration. Their work entailed undertaking routine testing of the systems of financial and management control in these areas of work of the Pension Fund.

The levels of assurance arising from the work from both audits was 'High'. The Internal Audit Report- Pension Fund Investments was provided at Appendix 1 and The Internal Audit Report – Pension Administration provided at Appendix 2.

Resolved that the findings of the Internal Audit Reports in relation to Pension Fund Investments (Appendix 1) and Pension Fund Administration (Appendix 2), be noted.

44 Wales Pension Partnership Business Plan 2024-27.

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy S151 Officer provided a report which sought approval on the progress and work of the Wales Pension Partnership (WPP). Appendix 1 provided the WPP Business Plan 2024-27.

Resolved that the WPP Business Plan 2024-27, be approved.

45 Breaches Report.

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy S151 Officer presented a 'for information' report which presented any breaches which had occurred in the period in accordance with the Reporting Breaches Policy.

Appendix A provided the details of breaches that had occurred since the previous Pension Fund Committee in November 2023. The details of the breaches and the actions taken by Management were noted.

46 City & County of Swansea Pension Fund Business Plan 2024/25.

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy S151 Officer presented a report which sought approval of the working framework for the Pension Fund's programme of work for 2024/25.

It was outlined that in line with best practice, the Pension Fund produced a business plan, risk register, budget and asset allocation to inform its work programme for the forthcoming 12-month period. The business plan, budget, risk register, asset allocation for 2024/25 were provided at Appendices 1,2,3 and 4.

Resolved that the items below be approved and noted:

- 1) The City & County of Swansea Pension Fund Annual Business Plan 2024/25.
- 2) Risk Register 2024/25.
- 3) Asset Allocation.
- 4) Budget 2024/25.

47 Exclusion of the Public.

The Committee was requested to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the item(s) of business identified in the recommendation(s) to the report on the grounds that it / they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the exclusion paragraph of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007 relevant to the item(s) of business set out in the report.

The Committee considered the Public Interest Test in deciding whether to exclude the public from the meeting for the items of business where the Public Interest Test was relevant as set out in the report.

Resolved that the public be excluded for the following items of business.

(Closed Session)

48 Investment Strategy Structuring Implementation.

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy S151 Officer presented a report which sought approval for delegated authority to be agreed to implement the investment structuring of the approved investment strategy.

Resolved that delegated approval to the Deputy Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee to implement the required investment structuring (Appendix 1) as dictated by the approved investment strategy (Appendix 2), be approved.

49 Wales Pension Partnership Update.

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy S151 Officer presented a report to update the Pension Fund Committee on the progress and work of the Wales Pension Partnership (WPP).

Resolved that the JGC Quarterly Update and Raid Log be noted.

50 Wales Pension Partnership Operator Procurement.

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy S151 Officer presented a report which sought approval of the Wales Pension Partnership (WPP) Operator Procurement Recommendation Report provided at Appendix 1.

Resolved that the WPP Operator Procurement Recommendation Report at Appendix 1, be approved.

51 Investment Summary.

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer / Deputy S151 Officer presented a 'for information' report which presented the asset valuation and investment performance for the quarter, year and 3 years ended 31 December 2023.

52 Quarterly Investment Monitoring Report.

Philip Pearson and Andre Ranchin, Hymans Robertson presented the 'for information' quarterly investment and market update to the fund.

Questions in relation to the content of the presentation were asked by the Committee and responses were provided accordingly.

53 Responsible Investment Policy.

Philip Pearson, Hymans Robertson presented 'for information' the Responsible Investment (RI) Policy which outlined the underlying objectives of the RI Policy, beliefs of the Committee on behalf of the Fund and what was expected from having the Policy in place. It also provided details of the actions that would be taken to achieve these objectives and the means by which these actions would be assessed in order to judge whether the expected outcomes were achieved.

54 Fund Manager's Presentation(s):

A presentation was made by Julian Brown and Per Dohnal of Russell Investments.

Questions in relation to the content of the presentation were asked by the Committee and responses were provided accordingly.

The content of the presentation was noted and the Chair thanked the Fund Managers for attending the meeting.

Minutes of the Pension Fund Committee (20.03.2024)
Cont'd

The meeting ended at 12.08 pm

Chair