

Essex Pension Fund Board	EPB/15/11
Date: 29 June 2011	

Pension Fund Board Knowledge and Skills

Report by the Independent Governance and Administration Adviser

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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the training plan for 2011/12, consider attendance at conferences and events, and provide instructions to Board members on how to undertake the Training Needs Analysis.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the updated training plan.
- 2.2 To provide expressions of interest for attendance at future conferences and events.
- 2.3 To note the arrangements for completing the Training Needs Analysis.

3. Background

- 3.1 At the March 2010 Board meeting it was agreed that the Board would work towards compliance with the CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework and that a training plan would be developed with this in mind.
- 3.2 The 2011/12 training plan was presented to the March 2011 Board and at that meeting it was agreed that a Training Needs Analysis would be carried out by Board members to identify any gaps in knowledge, which will also feed into the training plan.

4. Training Plan 2011/12

- 4.1 Training was scheduled to be delivered immediately before this Pension Fund Board meeting covering the following areas:
- A general awareness of the pensions legislative framework in the UK.
 - An awareness of the LGPS Regulations and their main features.
 - An understanding of how the roles and powers of the Pensions Regulator, the Pensions Advisory Service and the Pensions Ombudsman relate to the workings of the scheme.
 - Awareness of the role and statutory responsibilities of the treasurer and monitoring officer.
 - An awareness of some of the LGPS features
 - Pensions accounting and auditing standards
- 4.2 Due to low attendance by Board members, it is proposed that this is instead delivered prior to the 28 September 2011 Pension Fund Board. The training plan (shown in Annex A) has been updated appropriately.
- 4.3 The Board also has a number of new members who will require full induction training. A date will be arranged for this to be undertaken in the near future.
- 4.4 The training plan also includes a small range of conferences and events. Board members were invited to attend the recent NAPF Local Authority conference. No members expressed interest in attending this event. So as to ensure training plans suit the needs of Board members, members are asked to provide feedback as to why this was the case.
- 4.5 Information has still to be released by organisers of the next events on this year's training plan i.e. :
- The LGC Investment Summit to be held on 8/9 September 2011 near Cardiff is mainly focussed on investment matters so might best attended by ISC members though non-ISC members will be considered depending on total numbers wishing to attend.
 - The LGPC/LGE Trustee Fundamentals Training is usually held over 3 separate days spread over October, November and December. This is a bespoke LGPS training course specifically for elected members/pension

committee representatives and is expected to be relevant for all Pension Fund Board members.

- 4.6 Board members are asked to provide expressions of interest in relation to these events. Further information will be provided to those expressing interest as soon as it become available.

5. Training Needs Analysis

- 5.1 So as to determine the effectiveness of the training plans to date, each Board member is being asked to complete a Training Needs Analysis. It is stressed that the Analysis is to identify areas for future training; it is fully expected that there will be areas where most Board members will be found to have training needs.
- 5.2 A copy of the Training Needs Analysis will be posted and separately e-mailed to all Board members. It can be completed either electronically or in writing. Board members are asked to complete all sections to the best of their ability and return them to the Governance Officer by 31 August 2011. New Board members are asked to defer completing this until after their induction training.
- 5.3 An analysis of results will be provided to each member individually. Individual results will remain confidential though the collective results will be fed back to the Board in September and will feed into the future training plan.

6. Link to Essex Pension Fund Objectives

- 6.1 The training already undertaken and the proposal to aim for compliance with the CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework will assist Board members and officers in achieving the following EPF Governance Objectives:
 - 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

7. Risk Implications

- 7.1 Maintaining a high level of knowledge is a key objective for the Board. Insufficient knowledge could result in inappropriate decisions being made and/or lack of awareness of issues and opportunities. Given the size of the assets and liabilities being managed, this would be an unacceptably high level of risk for the Fund.

8. Communication Implications

- 8.1 There are no communications requirements beyond ensuring the Board are kept abreast of progress against the training plan.

9. Finance and Resources Implications

- 9.1 Monitoring progress against the training plan and delivering the necessary training will require additional resources for both officers and Board members but these are not considered to be excessive.

- 9.2 Officers will be used to deliver some of the training at minimal cost to the Fund. There may be other costs resulting in preparation of training and attending conferences/training sessions. To ensure value for money, officers will continue to consider all requests for training or conference attendance and any not considered to fit with the Fund's objectives will be declined.

10. Background Papers

- 10.1 EPFB previous reports on EPFB training plans:
- 9 March 2011 – EPB0411
 - 15 December 2010 – EPB1910
 - 31 March 2010 - EPB0110
 - 18 December 2009 – EPB2409

Annex A

Essex Pension Fund Board - Training Plan 2011/12

Amendments shown in bold

What	Training Provider	When/Where	Overview
Conference	NAPF Local Authority Pension Conference	May 2011	Focussed at officers and Board members - various speakers and workshops over a wide range of pension topics (no attendees)
Conference	LGPC/LGE Annual LGPS Trustees' Conference	8/9 June 2011	Focussed at Board members – various speakers covering a wide range of LGPS topics (clash with ISC so no attendance)
Training Needs Analysis	All Board members	Own time during July/August	New members should refrain from completing this until after their induction training.
Conference	LGC Investment Summit	8/9 September 2011	Focussed at officers and Board members – various speakers, mainly focussed on investment matters [Details still to be released by organiser]
Pre-Board Training	Karen McWilliam and Kevin McDonald	28 September 2011	<p>Moved from 29 June meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general awareness of the pensions legislative framework in the UK. • An awareness of the LGPS Regulations and their main features. • An understanding of how the roles and powers of the Pensions Regulator, the Pensions Advisory Service and the Pensions Ombudsman relate to the workings of the scheme. • Awareness of the role and statutory responsibilities of the treasurer and monitoring officer. • An awareness of some of the LGPS features • Pensions accounting and auditing standards <p>Further items dependant on outcome of Training Needs Analysis/items on this and future agendas.</p>
Training	LGPC/LGE Trustee Fundamentals Training	3 separate days – likely to be spread over October,	Bespoke LGPS training course specifically for elected members. Designed to provide an insight into the LGPS “trusteeship”. [Details still to be released by organiser]

		November and December 2011	
Pre-Board Training	Dependant on needs/agenda	14 December 2011	Dependant on needs/agenda
Pre-Board Training	Dependant on needs/agenda	7 March 2012	Dependant on needs/agenda
Induction Training	As Required	To be confirmed	To be provided to any new members as soon as possible after joining.

Investment Steering Committee - Training Plan 2011/12

New Members	Induction training on investment matters will be provided to any new members as soon as possible after joining using either an off-the-shelf course for LGPS investment matters, if one is readily available, or a customised training course delivered by officers, advisers and external resources.
All Members	Any required training on proposals in regard to new investment areas, approaches or changes in current practices will be delivered before any decisions are required to be made, at scheduled ISC meetings by officers, advisers and if required external resources.