



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL RCT PENSION BOARD

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the RCT Pension Board held on 17th October at 10.00 am

RCT Pension Board Members in attendance:-

Professor Hugh Coombs – Employer Representative (University of South Wales) and Chairman of the RCT Pension Board.

Ms Sindy Absalom – Member Representative (Actives/Deferred)

Rob Whiles – Member Representative (Pensioners)

David Francis – Pension Board Employer Representative (Coleg y Cymoedd)

Officers in attendance:-

Mr I Traylor, Service Director – Pensions, Procurement & Transactional Services

Ms Y Keitch, Senior Accountant Pensions & Treasury Management

Mrs S Handy – Members Researcher & Scrutiny Officer

25 Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked one Member for attending via Microsoft Teams.

26 DECLARATION OF INTEREST / CONFLICTS / CONFIDENTIALITY

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations of interest pertaining to the agenda.

27 MINUTES OF THE PENSION BOARD AND MINUTES OF PENSION FUND COMMITTEE

The minutes of the RCT Pension Board meeting on the 11th July 2022 were **APPROVED** as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

28 Matters Arising

The Service Director – Pensions, Procurement & Transactional Services provided Board Members with the following updates resulting from the July 2022 minutes:

Matters arising –

- Page 4: The McCloud presentation, IT is to re send to Board Members;
- Page 4: IT reassured the Board once again that RCT does not

- invest in weapons companies;
- A Member referred to the HMRC Website around wider financial support to our scheme members and queried if we could consider similar signposting on the Pension Fund website.

The Chair thanked Rob Whiles for Chairing the last meeting in his absence.

Pension Fund Committee Minutes

The Service Director, Pensions & Procurement Services advised Board Members that the 10th October Pension Committee meeting was postponed due to quoracy. The Board was also informed that Councillor R. Evans is to be stepping down from the Committee and a replacement sought. Board were informed that the Committee meeting had been promptly rearranged for the 28th October.

29 INVESTMENT & ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY PANEL

The Board was provided with an update in respect of the minutes of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Pension Fund Investment & Advisory Panel held on the 28th September 2022.

The Senior Accountant Pensions & Treasury Management reported that the overall value of the Fund decreased from £4,510 million (31st March 2022) to £4,108 million (30th June 2022). The overall return of the Pension Fund for the year ending 30th June 2022 was -13.2% against a scheme benchmark of -5.3%.

Despite the wider economic uncertainty and market volatility impacting since March 2022, Board members were reminded of positive three year performance figures of Active managers. Members were also referred to the CRBE and Baillie Gifford Performance figures.

Discussions ensued regarding paragraph 3.6 and rebalancing and alteration and Board Members wanted to note that the RCT Pension Board supports a more active approach.

The Service Director updated the Board in respect of two late Employer contribution payments received. Board considered the circumstance and agreed with Panel's conclusion, that these did not constitute a material breach reportable to the Pension Regulator and were satisfied that the action taken was appropriate in this instance.

Board were updated against progress made towards finalising the Fund's Annual Report and were thanked for their contribution to the report which had been included.

Board acknowledged the successful publication of scheme member 'Annual Benefit Statements' prior to the statutory deadline and extended their thanks to the Team for once again meeting this critical annual milestone.

The Service Director confirmed that the Triennial 2022 Valuation exercise was progressing inline with the agreed schedule and indicative results were anticipated during October.

Board Members were then referred to and discussed the performance against the Fund's key service standards and the internal dispute resolution procedure. Board acknowledged the workload volumes received by the Fund and provided their support to the continued focus on staff development and a resource review, particularly given the anticipated broader delivery challenges in the near future, McCloud, etc.

The performance of all fund managers was discussed as well as the WPP Progress Report.

Following discussion, Board members **AGREED** to acknowledge the updated information.

30 RISK MONITORING

Board Members were provided with an assessment of the risks associated with the RCT Pension Fund and to outline the control measures in place.

Following discussion, the Board **RESOLVED** to note the current risks associated with the RCT Pension Fund and the control measures in place.

31 ALL WALES 'POOLING'

The Senior Accountant Pensions & Treasury Management provided the Board with an update on progress of the Wales Pension Partnership.

Board Members were referred to the WPP Link and referred to a leaflet which was read out to the Board. The Chair provided the Board with background information. It was agreed that the risk paper would be circulated to members when it was received. The Chair advised that there is a meeting on the 26th with the WPP and the risk paper will have been received by then. It was noted that the Chair of Pension Committee has been fully briefed of the risks involved.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to note the current update in respect of the Wales Pensions Partnership

32 KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING FRAMEWORK

The Service Director, Pensions, Procurement & Transactional Services referred Board Members to the training undertaken to date by the Board.

The Board agreed to send the Service Director, a list of any training requirements to add to the list on an ongoing basis.

33 COVID GOVERNANCE UPDATE

Members were provide verbal reassurance to the Board around the Governance arrangements and any lessons learned as a result of the Covid Circumstances.

Board members were informed that the RCT Pension Service has adapted a hybrid approach and that staff members are currently in the office two days a week. It was noted that all training is also face to face.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED** to note the update.

34 LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- Service update, including McCloud

Board Members were advised that McCloud updates will be ongoing and were advised that next Municipal Year more formal updates will be requested.

- Pension Transfer and Scams

Board Members were advised that the guidance had been released on Pension Scams and were reminded that as a Pension Board we all have a responsibility to understand our obligations in this regard. Members were provided with a presentation showing the new regulations.

35 ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

There were no updates to report.

36 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Service Director updated the Board with regards to the dashboard developments and advised that good progress was being made. The Chair also reminded the Board about upcoming training events.

This meeting closed at 13.18pm

**Professor H. COOMBS
CHAIR.**