

Business Plan 2023/24 Summary Update

The Pensions Committee agreed a Business Plan for 2023/24 at their April 2023 meeting. The Business Plan has been published. Updates on the priorities are below by theme.

Governance Priorities

Priority	Status Q2	Expected Q3 Work
Review current LGPS arrangements informed by expected changes (e.g. Good Governance guidance) to determine key actions for compliance.	External advice received based on best practice.	Further consideration of the advice received. Formal consultation on Good Governance expected later this year.
Review fund-specific policies and strategies.	The Discretions Policy has been prepared for the Pension Committee's review. Officers have reviewed the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure. and the Breaches process.	The Communication Strategy and Administration Strategy will be reviewed.
Complete review against TPR Single Code.	Work ongoing to review practice against Single Code.	Final Single Code and guidance expected.
Review Training Strategy.	Circulation of training seminars and events.	Consideration of training seminars and events and completion of LGPS Knowledge Progress Assessment.
Identify and manage cyber and data risks and impacts.	Work carried forward to Q3	Engage with third parties to map arrangements and risk.
Create cyber incident response plan / walk-through scenarios.	Work carried forward to Q3	Commission advice (assessment, monitoring, training).
Open tender for property manager.	Tender documents prepared for publication following advice from legal, procurement and investment advisers.	Management of procurement through to the Award Report in April 2024 with contract commencement (June 2024).
Call off for Fund Actuary	Completed. Hymans Robertson appointed for a period of a maximum of nine years (6+3).	N/A
Timetabled procurement for Operator Services.	Specification and procurement documents subject to peer review.	Joint Committee consideration of procurement arrangements (December 2023). Continued engagement through local governance arrangements.
Analyse costs, risk and performance of portfolios.	Asset management data company ClearGlass provided analysis on current fees v market benchmark.	Consider local arrangements for expanding meaningful reporting on cost, risk and performance analysis.

Investment and Funding Priorities

Priority	Status Q2	Expected Q3 Work
Review Investment Strategy Statement (ISS).	Consultation prepared for feedback on ISS following April Pensions Committee.	Collate feedback on ISS for consideration by the Committee (January 2024).
Consider interim objectives on climate change.	Engagement with fund managers and asset pool to understand approaches.	Collate feedback for consideration by the Committee (January 2024).
Consider the impact of environmental, social and governance risk and opportunities.	Initial feedback received from Committee (April 2023). Membership of Pensions For Purpose has been announced.	
Strengthen engagement with managers (and portfolio companies).	Continued discussions with sub-fund managers on consideration of investments in line with the Investment Strategy.	
Understand data coverage and quality of information to support financial disclosures.	Information collated relating to Taskforce for Climate Related Financial Disclosures and other metrics.	Work with fund managers, LGPS colleagues and others on climate risk reporting.
Actively consider Government response to "Governance and reporting of climate change risks".	N/A	Government response not expected until 2024.
Support ACCESS Joint Committee in undertaking its functions.	Joint Committee (September 2023), attended by Pensions Committee Chairman and officer input via groups.	Joint Committee scheduled (December 2023) and officers will continue to input through appropriate groups.
Consider the pooled asset solutions for management of illiquid assets.	N/A	Continue to engage with colleagues within the ACCESS Support Unit on local requirements.
Consider Government's LGPS Pooling consultation.	Response submitted on 2 October 2023.	Response from consultation pending.
Review funding position of employers (key funding risks and opportunities).	Initial engagement with Actuarial advisers to engage with employers on actuarial updates, covenant, data quality and administration.	Roll out engagement with employers and implement system to monitor employer metrics.
Support employers on statutory responsibilities.	Documentation and training developed for employers by the administration team and Pensions Team.	Continue to develop documentation and set up employer focused sessions covering relevant key topics.

Administration and Communications Priorities

Priority	Status Q2	Expected Q3 Work
Work with employers to ensure data provided for the McCloud remedy.	The regulations take effect from 1 October 2023. For the West Sussex LGPS, 7,340 members identified as being in scope for remedy. However, this figure is impacted by data issues preventing some individual records from being assessed for eligibility. Missing returns or queries being managed by the team.	
Consider communications to members on Regulatory changes.	Letters have been updated to explain that benefits have been tested against the underpin calculation for active members, leaving with deferred or retirement benefits and website for has been updated with information about McCloud.	
Review guidance and resources available to support compliance and best practice with Regulatory changes.	Attendance at national LGPS forums by Pensions Team and administration partners.	Continued participation in national LGPS forums.
Monitor implementation of Pensions Dashboards against the Pension Regulators (tPR) checklist	Updates to National Insurance Numbers held to facilitate matching within Dashboard. tPR checklist completed providing assurance of actions and preparedness.	Consider training with employers on Pensions Dashboards and continue to monitor against tPR's checklist.
Consider data improvement work	Issues with employer data identified as part of the End of Year process.	Ongoing data improvement plan to be prepared with administration team.
Consider training and guidance to employers to help fulfil their obligations.	Employer guidance documents for admissions and cessation processes developed.	Develop targeted training sessions on key themes.
Develop communication material on LGPS benefits with external specialists	Work carried forward to Q3	Evaluation of proposals and award.
Consider future website delivery opportunities.	N/A	N/A