

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Pension Committee 19 September 2023</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Review of Committee Training</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Matthew Hallett, Acting Head of Pensions and Treasury</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:</b> Sound Financial Management: This report forms an important component of the governance arrangements for the stewardship of the Pension Fund (“the Fund”).	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b> Financial risks relating to the Fund are substantial and can impact on the General Fund of the Council.	
<b>1. RECOMMENDATION</b>  1.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of the Pension Committee Training Log. 1.2 The Committee is asked to note the mandatory training items.	

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 This report advises the Committee of training undertaken by the Pension Committee members in Year 2023/24 to 31 August 2023 and asks them note the contents of the Log attached to this report as Appendix A, the Hymans online training Log to 31 August 2023 attached to this report as Appendix B and the mandatory training items required to be completed attached to this report as Appendix C.

### **3 DETAIL**

- 3.1 In their 2019 governance review Aon recommended that the scope of the Knowledge and Skills Policy be extended to the Pensions Committee and Officers, as well as the Pensions Board. They further recommended that the policy should incorporate knowledge of the work of the London Collective Investment Vehicle (London CIV) and have regard to CIPFA guidance. The policy was agreed on 17 March 2020 (Minute 26/20). This policy has since been reviewed and the revised version was agreed by the Committee in their meeting of 14 June 2022.
- 3.2 Following the introduction of Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II) in January 2018, in order to be treated as a professional client (rather than a retail investor) a Fund, as a collective, must be able to demonstrate sufficient expertise, experience and knowledge to satisfy financial institutions that it is capable of making investment decisions and understanding the nature of potential risks by ensuring that levels of expertise, experience and knowledge are maintained to satisfy the MiFID II requirements.
- 3.3 All officers and Pension Committee Members charged with management operations and decision-making with regard to the Fund must have the knowledge and skills to discharge the duties and responsibilities allocated to them. All members and officers are expected continually to demonstrate their personal commitment to training and to ensuring that the knowledge and skills objective is met.
- 3.4 The CIPFA Knowledge and Skills Framework was updated in 2021 eight areas of knowledge and skills identified as the core requirements:
- pensions legislation;
  - pensions governance;
  - pension accounting and auditing standards;
  - pensions administration;
  - pension services procurement and relationship management;
  - investment performance and risk management;
  - financial markets and products knowledge; and
  - actuarial methods, standards and practice.
- 3.5 This report provides the Committee with a summary of the training undertaken by the Pension Committee in Year 2023/24 to 31 August 2023 and asks them note the contents of the Log attached to this report as Appendix A, the Hymans online training Log to 31 August 2023 attached to this report as Appendix B and the mandatory training items required to be completed attached to this report as Appendix C.

3.6 In line with the SAB Good Governance Review recommendations, the training log will now show training hours completed and the knowledge area covered by the training.

3.7 There have been 3 training events offered to the Committee in the current year to 31 August, Mercers ESG session, SAB Code of Transparency and the PLSA LGPS Conference.

The first two of these sessions were offered to all committee and reserve committee members and were concerned with investments. A total of 19 hours (45%) were attended by committee members and 2 hours (6%) were attended by reserve committee members.

The third event was offered to two members of the committee only and covered a variety of knowledge areas. We have classified this as 'mixed' knowledge. A total of 28 hours (100%) were completed.

3.8 The latest report on the Hymans on-line training uptake shows that no Committee members or Reserve Committee members have completed or started any of the modules. Login details were resent by Hymans and reminder emails were sent by officers to all members encouraging them to engage with the learning platform.

The platform is accessible at any time that is convenient and for as little or as long as required. Progress will be saved so that whole modules do not have to be completed at once. Hymans have provided details of the time each module takes to be completed as follows:

Introduction module – 2 mins
Current issues – 1 hr and 11 mins (total)
Module 1 – 27mins (total)
Module 2 – 50 mins (total)
Module 3 – 51 mins (total)
Module 4 – 11 mins (total)
Module 5 – 11 mins (total)
Module 6 – 50 mins (total)
Module 7 – 31 mins (total)
Module 8 – 53 mins (total)

3.9 Details of the mandatory training members are expected to complete is attached as Appendix C.

The Hymans modules should be completed annually as they will be updated regularly.

The LGE Fundamentals training should be completed once every 3 to 4 years.

3.10 Officers are currently working with AON to develop a training plan for the remainder of the year and working towards creating a 3 year rolling plan. Members will be advised of any upcoming training opportunities by email,

3.11 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 The Knowledge and Skills Training Policy has been agreed by Committee. This is reviewed every 3 years by the Pension Committee. The Aon governance review recommendations and CIPFA knowledge and skills requirements as well as action points from Board and Committee minutes have been incorporated into the plan.

#### **5. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial considerations arising from this report.

Approved by: Allister Bannin on behalf of Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)

#### **6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that the Pension Committee's Terms of Reference (London Borough of Croydon's Constitution Part 4.N) Paragraph 7. **Knowledge and Understanding** provides that: *Members of the Committee are expected to continually demonstrate their own personal commitment to training and to ensure that governance objectives are met. To assist in achieving these objectives training sessions will be organised to ensure Committee members are familiar with the rules of the Fund with relevant legislation.*

6.2 In addition, similar training and knowledge obligations are placed on the Local Pension Board members ("LPB Members") both under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 Schedule 4 Clause 19 amendment of the Pensions Act 2004 and as detailed in Part 4 M of the Constitution which provides, among other matters, that both Employer and Employee representatives participate in training as and when required. In addition, section 12 of Part 4M specifically deals with training requirements and provides as follows:

"12.1. Employer and Member Representatives (including substitutes) of the LPB must be conversant with – a. The legislation, Scheme Regulations and associated

guidance of the LGPS; b. Any document recording policy about the administration of the LGPS (which is for the time being adopted by the Fund).

12.2. All members of the LPB must have a working knowledge and understanding of:

- a. The law relating to pensions, and
- b. Any other matters which are prescribed in Scheme Regulations.

12.3. It is for the Scheme Manager (this is the Administering Authority) to be satisfied that those appointed have the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to properly exercise their functions as a member of the LPB or Committee.

12.4. In line with the duties under their role, the LPB and Committee members are required to be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and to refresh and keep their knowledge up to date on anything that would fall within the remit of their role. Members are therefore required to maintain a written record of all relevant training and development (whether internal or external) they have undertaken. In the event that members wish to attend an external course/training event prior approval must be sought from the Scheme Manager. All information in relation to training and development of all members shall be made available to the Board and Committee as part of the Review Process. In addition, the Scheme Manager may, at any time request to inspect such records upon providing the relevant member with a written request which must be adhered to within 7 days of receipt of such a request.

12.5. All members will undertake an annual personal training needs analysis and regularly review their skills, competencies and knowledge to identify gaps or weaknesses as well as mandatory training that the Board or Scheme Manager considers is required to ensure the Board and Committee operates as effectively as possible. Members will comply with the Scheme Manager's training policy, details of which are found in the separate document titled "London Borough of Croydon Pension Fund Knowledge and Skills / Training Policy".

Burges Salmon LLP (a law firm appointed by the Fund) note that there are no other legal implications arising from this report.

## **7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 7.1 There are no direct workforce implications arising from the recommendations within this report. If any should arise these will be managed under the Council's policies and procedures.

**Approved by:** Gillian Bevan, Head of HR, Resources and Assistant Chief Executives directorates on behalf of the Chief People Officer. Date:6.9.23

## **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.1 The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 Equality Act 2010. The Council must therefore have due regard to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2 There are no equality implications arising from this report. Any training developed will be accessible to support committee members.

**Approved by:** Naseer Ahmad for Equality Programme Manager, (08/09/2023)

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 9.1 There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

## **10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

- 10.1 There are no crime and disorder impacts arising from this report.

## **11. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Will the subject of the report involve the processing of 'personal data'?

No.

Has a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) been completed?

No. This report relates to matters relating to the administration of the LGPS and the Croydon Pension Fund.

**Approved by:** Allister Bannin on behalf of Jane West, Corporate Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)

---

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Matthew Hallett, Acting Head of Pensions and Treasury

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

None

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A: Training Log

Appendix B: Hymans On-line Training Log

Appendix C: Mandatory Training