

Governance Policy Statement

Updated January 2021

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Introduction

1. This is the Governance Policy Statement of Lancashire County Pension Fund, administered by Lancashire County Council, the administering authority. All Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Funds in England and Wales are required to publish a Statement under regulation 55 of the LGPS Regulations 2013.
2. This statement has been prepared by the administering authority in consultation with appropriate interested persons.

Purpose of the Governance Policy Statement

3. The regulations regarding governance policy statements require an administering authority, after consultation with such persons as they consider appropriate, to prepare, maintain, publish and keep under review a written statement setting out:
 - (a) whether the authority delegates its functions, or part of its functions under these Regulations to a committee, a sub-committee or an officer of the authority;
 - (b) if the authority does so—
 - (i) the terms, structure and operational procedures of the delegation,
 - (ii) the frequency of any committee or sub-committee meetings,
 - (iii) whether such a committee or sub-committee includes representatives of Scheme employers or members, and if so, whether those representatives have voting rights;
 - (c) the extent to which a delegation, or the absence of a delegation, complies with guidance given by the Secretary of State and, to the extent that it does not so comply, the reasons for not complying; and
 - (d) details of the terms, structure and operational procedures relating to the local pension board established under regulation 53(4)

4. Certain functions set out in the statement are not specific to the Pension Fund but are the wider responsibility of the County Council as an employing authority and are included within the statement for completeness.

Governance of the Lancashire County Pension Fund

5. Under the cabinet structure in local government, management of the pension fund is a non-executive function and this is reflected in the council's constitution. The Pension Fund Committee reports directly to Full Council. The Head of Fund is designated as the officer responsible for the management of the Pension Fund.

The Pension Fund Committee (Non-executive committee)

See Link:

<https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/documents/s174966/Part%202%20-%20Article%207%20Other%20Committees%20of%20the%20Council%20-%20Oct%202020.pdf>

Pension Fund Committee – Scheme of Delegation Arrangements

All of the following:

1. Matters reserved to Full Council;
2. Matters reserved to the Employment Committee;

3. Matters reserved to Officers;

Can be found by clicking the following link:

<https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/documents/s174966/Part%202%20-%20Article%207%20Other%20Committees%20of%20the%20Council%20-%20Oct%202020.pdf>

Investment Panel

See Link:

<https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/documents/s174966/Part%202%20-%20Article%207%20Other%20Committees%20of%20the%20Council%20-%20Oct%202020.pdf>

Note – Investment Panel information can be found after the Pension Fund Committee section.

Pension Board of the Lancashire County Pension Fund

See Link:

<https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/documents/s174966/Part%202%20-%20Article%207%20Other%20Committees%20of%20the%20Council%20-%20Oct%202020.pdf>

Compliance with Good Practice in Engagement and Representation

The Myners' first principle states that decisions should only be taken by persons or organisations with the skills, information and resources necessary to take them effectively. Where trustees elect to take investment decisions, they must have sufficient expertise and appropriate training to be able to evaluate critically any advice they take.

A number of training sessions are held for members of the Pension Fund Committee each year, covering all aspects of funding, investments, Scheme management and administration and are facilitated by an appropriate Officer, Investment Manager or Fund Actuary. In addition Committee members are encouraged to attend appropriate external courses and conferences and report back to the Committee on their learning from these events.

Under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, it is for the appointing council to decide upon the number of members of a committee and their terms of office. They may include committee members who are not members of the appointing council and such members may be given voting rights by virtue of section 13 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

On this basis, it is open to pension committees to include representatives from district councils, scheme members and other lay representatives, with or without voting rights, provided that they are eligible to be committee members (eligibility rules are set out in section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989). Membership of the Lancashire Pension Fund Committee is set out on page 2 of this statement DCLG is committed to ensure that all LGPS committees operate consistently at best practice standards. Therefore, in addition to the regulatory requirement to produce this Governance Policy Statement, the LGPS regulations 1997 were further amended on 30 June 2007 to require administering authorities to report the extent of compliance to a set of best practice principles to be published by DCLG, and where an authority has chosen not to comply, to state the reasons why. The Fund's statement is set out at Appendix I.

Lancashire County Council is committed to the widest inclusion of all stakeholders in respect of consultation and communication outside of the formal governance arrangements. The arrangements include;

With Employing Authorities

The ratio of contributors from the various employing authorities in the Lancashire County Pension Fund may be analysed as follows

Scheduled bodies 86%

Admitted Bodies 14%

Lancashire County Council hosts an annual Employer Forum targeted at the Chief Officers of all employing authorities. At this forum Chief Officers are briefed on current funding, fund performance and actuarial matters including the latest valuation. Any other topical pension fund matters are also raised at this forum. In December of actuarial valuation years, a forum is held between the Fund Actuary and the Fund Employers to discuss the outcome of the actuarial valuation and the reasons for proposed contribution changes and how they will be applied.

All employing authorities are kept abreast of events, such as proposed changes in the regulations and their implications, and they are encouraged to get in touch if they have questions.

In addition to the briefings outlined above, Lancashire County Council holds an annual Practitioners Conference. The opportunity is taken at these meetings to brief attendees on the investment side of the scheme as well as practical administration issues.

Communication is covered in detail in the Fund's Communication Strategy Statement. Lancashire County Council also provides an employer training service to ensure that Fund employers, particularly payroll and HR staff are aware and conversant with their obligations as employing authorities and have a sound understanding of LGPS regulation and administration.

With Employees

Lancashire County Council provides all members of the scheme with an annual Pensions Newsletter, which includes a summary of the annual report and financial summary of the

scheme. Lancashire County Council's intranet and internet web site includes the following fund documents;

- Full annual report
- Statement of Investment Principles
- Funding Strategy Statement

In addition various documents are available on Lancashire County Council's intranet and internet site including, the LGPS Guide, latest news updates, and other information relating to the Scheme and Fund. Lancashire County Council maintains a working relationship with the unions. The County Council's Joint Negotiating and Consultative Forum may discuss pension issues at its meetings, and invites Pensions and/or HR representatives to discuss current issues. Trades Unions are consultees of the Government in their own right in the same way as employers and LGPS Administering Authorities. In addition to the above the LGPS Administration Regulations 2008 includes regulation 65, which sets out the provision for Administering Authorities to prepare a written statement of 'its Pensions Administration Strategy'.

Appendix 'A'

Appendix 'A' - Lancashire County Pension Fund Governance Compliance Statement

Principle		Compliance
A. Structure	<p>(a) the Management of the administration of benefits and strategic management of fund assets clearly rests with the main committee established by the appointing Council</p> <p>(b) that representatives of participating LGPS employers, admitted bodies and scheme members (including pensioner and deferred members) are members of either the main or secondary committee established to underpin the work of the main committee (1)</p> <p>(c) that where a secondary committee or panel has been established, the structure ensures effective communication across both levels.</p> <p>(d) that where a secondary committee or panel has been established, at least one seat on the main committee is allocated for a member from the secondary committee or panel.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Partial (see Note 1)</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
B. Representation	<p>(a) that all key stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to be represented within the main or secondary committee structure. (1)</p> <p>These include:</p> <p>(i) employing authorities (including non-scheme employers, e.g. admitted bodies)</p> <p>(ii) scheme members (including deferred and pensioner scheme members)</p> <p>(iii) independent professional observers (2)</p> <p>(iv) expert advisers (on an ad hoc basis)</p>	<p>Partial (see Notes 1 and 2)</p>

C. Selection and Role of Lay Members	(a) that committee or panel members are made fully aware of the status, role and function they are required to perform on either a main or secondary committee. (It is the role of the administering authority to make places available for lay members and for the groups to nominate the representatives. The lay members are not there to represent their own local, political or private interest but owe a duty of care to their beneficiaries and are required to act in their best interests at all time.)	✓
D. Voting	(a) the policy of individual administering authorities on voting rights is clear and transparent, including the justification for not extending voting rights to each body or group represented on main LGPS committees.	✓
E. Training/Facility time/expenses	<p>(a) That in relation to the way in which statutory and related decisions are taken by the administering authority, there is a clear policy on training, facility time and reimbursement of expenses in respect of members involved in the decision-making process.</p> <p>(b) That where such a policy exists, it applies equally to all members of committees, sub-committees, advisory panels or any other form of secondary forum.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
F. Meetings – Frequency	<p>(a) that an administering authority's main committee or committees meet at least quarterly.</p> <p>(b) that an administering authority's secondary committee or panel meet at least twice a year and is synchronised with the dates when the main committee sits.</p> <p>(c) that administering authorities who do not include lay members in their formal governance arrangements, provide a forum outside of those arrangements by which the interests of key stakeholders can be represented.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>

G. Access	(a) that subject to any rules in the council's constitution, all members of main and secondary committees or panels have equal access to committee papers, documents and advice that falls to be considered at meetings of the main committee.	✓
H. Scope	(a) that administering authorities have taken steps to bring wider scheme issues within the scope of their governance arrangements.	✓
I. Publicity	(a) that administering authorities have published details of their governance arrangements in such a way that stakeholders with an interest in the way in which the scheme is governed can express an interest in wanting to be part of those arrangements.	✓

Notes – Reasons for partial compliance

1) Unitary Councils, District Councils and Further and Higher Education employers, are represented. Other admitted bodies only represent 9% of contributors to the Fund and are therefore not represented. However, all employers receive a full annual report and are alerted to important events. Although employee representatives, i.e. Trade Unions, do not formally represent deferred and pensioner scheme members, it is accepted that representation is available to deferred and pensioners members via this route where necessary and/or appropriate. In addition the interests of all scheme members and employers are specifically represented in the composition of the Local Pension Board.

2) Guidance envisaged that an independent professional observer could be invited to participate in governance arrangements to enhance the experience, continuity, knowledge, impartiality and performance of committees or panels which would improve the public perception that high standards of governance are a reality and not just an aspiration. This role is currently performed by the Fund's independent advisers and officers and it is not apparent what added value such an appointment would bring.