

TEESSIDE PENSION FUND

Administered by Middlesbrough Council

TEESSIDE PENSION BOARD REPORT

17 NOVEMBER 2025

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION – ANDREW HUMBLE

Pension Board Membership

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is

- to ask the Chair to appoint a Deputy Chair from the scheme-member representatives;
- to update the Members of the Teesside Pension Board (the Board) on progress and proposals to fill vacancies on the Board;
- to remind the Board Members of their terms of office and that that the Deputy Chair will become the Chair (by rotation).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Board notes the report.

2.2 That the Chair appoints a Deputy Chair from the Board's member representatives.

2.3 That Board discuss the proposed change in Board composition.

2.4 That the Board agrees to extend the term of office by two years for scheme-member Representative Mr Jeff Bell.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

4. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

4.1 The term of office of the previous Board Chair expired following the last meeting. This created the vacancy of Chair of the Local Pension Board which under the Board's terms of reference is then filled by the Deputy Chair.

5. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR

- 5.1 This means there is a vacancy for Deputy Chair which needs to be filled from the scheme-member Board representatives.
- 5.2 Under the Board's terms of reference, the role of Deputy Chair is appointed by the Chair, hence recommendation 2.2 above. It is worth noting that Deputy Chair will become the Chair through rotation which happens every two years as set out in the terms of reference. The new Chair is required to select a Deputy Chair from the scheme-member Board representatives.

6 BOARD VACANCIES

- 6.1 There were two vacancies on the Local Pension Board following the last meeting;

A vacancy for a scheme-member Board representatives drawn from the recognised trade unions representing employees who are scheme members of the Fund and,

A vacancy for an employer-member Board representatives drawn from an employer other than the four main Councils (Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton Councils).
- 6.2 A request was made to the trade unions to nominate a scheme member representative to the Board with a closing date for nominations of 7th November 2025. The trade unions that can nominate employer representatives are GMB, UNISON and UNITE. Previous scheme member representatives were able to apply. If there was more than one nomination the candidates would have been invited to interview, which would have been conducted by a selection panel consisting of Middlesbrough Council's Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer and Head of Pensions Governance and Investments.
- 6.3 Only one nomination was received from the trade unions for Paul Thompson of Unison whose nomination was also supported by GMB. Paul is welcomed back onto the Board with a new four year term.
- 6.4 In relation to the employer-member Board representatives drawn from the four main Councils we have received a request from a Councillor at Hartlepool Borough Council to consider altering the Local Pension Board's terms of reference to change the membership composition of the Board. The suggestion is that each of the four main councils should have a representative on the Board which would enable Hartlepool Borough Council to retain a member on the Board.
- 6.5 The recruitment to the employer-member Board representatives has been paused until this request has been considered by the Local Pension Board so it can be determined how many vacancies to fill.

7 PROPOSED CHANGE IN BOARD COMPOSITION

- 7.1 There is a request that the terms of reference are amended so that each of the four main councils have representation on the Local Pension Board. This would mean increasing the number of employer nominated Board members by two to allow each council to send a representative.
- 7.2 The regulations under which Local Pension Board's are constituted, namely [Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 \[SI 2013/2356\]](#), regulations (106 to 108) and regulation 109 state that;
- the administering authority must appoint an equal number of employer and Scheme member representatives, which must be no less than 4 in total, to the local Pension Board and must be satisfied that the employer and Scheme member representatives have the capacity to represent, respectively, employers and Scheme members.
- 7.3 This suggests that should we increase the employer member representatives by two to accommodate the request outlined above we would also have to increase the Scheme member representatives on the Local Pension Board by two. We would also have to consider if the new make up of the Board has the capacity to represent employers and scheme members.
- Is there too much representation being afforded to the council scheme employers at the expense of other groups?
 - Do we need to expand the other employer representation to balance the Board composition?
- 7.4 We would also have to consider the quorum requirements of an enlarged Board. Current quorum is one board member representing each of the scheme member and employer side. Increasing the quorum requirements would increase the risk of inquorate meetings when there have been several inquorate meetings since the inception of the Board. Recently council employer member representatives' attendance has been less good than other groups. Increasing the number of representatives from this group may therefore increase the likelihood of inquorate meetings.
- 7.5 It is a requirement that all members of the Board have the requisite skills and knowledge. Increasing the size of the Board will increase the burden on the Fund to develop training programmes to allow Board Members to attain the required knowledge and skills.
- 7.6 A larger Board size will further limit the committee rooms which are able to accommodate the Board meeting constraining the potential meeting arrangements.
- 7.7 Whatever the Board composition the members are representatives for their constituent group. One might question what increasing the size of Board membership can add to achieve the purpose of the Board which is responsible for assisting the Administering Authority:

- to secure compliance with the Regulations, any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme, and requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the Scheme; and
- to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme.

The Council considers this to mean that the Pension Board is providing oversight of these matters and, accordingly, the Pension Board is not a decision making body in relation to the management of the Pension Fund. The Board makes recommendations and provides assurance to assist in the management of the Fund.

- 7.8 Following discussion over this request the Board Secretary will put in place the recruitment process to fill the vacancy or vacancies and put in place the process to amend the terms of reference of the Local Pension Board if required.

8 TERMS OF OFFICE

- 8.1 The term of office for members of the Board is four years from the date of the first Board meeting after their appointment. Extensions to terms of office up to a maximum of two years may be made by the Appointment Panel with the agreement of the Board or a Board member may be appointed for further terms of office using the usual appointment process.
- 8.2 The terms of office for the current members of the Board are detailed below.

June Stubbs – Member Representative

Appointed 14 October 2022 for four years (2026)
First Board meeting after appointment was 14 November 2022

Paul Thompson - Member Representative

Appointed 7 November 2025 for four years (2029)
First Board meeting after appointment is 17 November 2025

Mr Jeffrey Bell – Member Representative

Appointed 28 January 2022 for four years (2026)
First Board meeting after appointment was 21 February 2022

Councillor Christopher Massey – Employer Representative

Appointed 4 July 2023 for four years (2027)

First Board meeting after appointment was 11 Sep 2023

Councillor Nicky Walker – Employer Representative

Appointed 4 July 2023 for four years (2027)

First Board meeting after appointment was 11 Sep 2023

Vacancy – Employer Representative (Non-Council)

9 EXTENSION TO TERM OF OFFICE

- 9.1 As set out in section 8, the term of office for the member representative – pensioner Mr Jeff Bell runs up to February 2026 which is likely to be before the next meeting of the Local Pension Board.
- 9.2 Extensions to terms of office up to a maximum of two years may be made by the Appointment Panel with the agreement of the Board or a Board member may be appointed for further terms of office using the usual appointment process.
- 9.3 Jeff has been asked if he would like to continue on the Board and has kindly agreed to extend his membership.
- 9.4 Agreement of the Board to an extension of the term of office of two years for Jeff Bell is therefore sought.

10 NEXT STEPS

- 10.1 The Head of Pensions Governance and Investments will coordinate the recruitment process set out in paragraph 6 and report back on progress to the next Board meeting.
- 10.2 Put in place an extension to the terms of office of Jeff Bell for two years following agreement by the Board.

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