

TEESSIDE PENSION FUND

Administered by Middlesbrough Council

TEESSIDE PENSION BOARD REPORT

9 FEBRUARY 2026

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION– ANDREW HUMBLE

Update on Work Plan Items

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present Members of the Teesside Pension Board (the Board) with information on items scheduled in the work plan for consideration at the current meeting.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Board Members note this report and discuss any issues arising from it.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At its meeting on 19 July 2021 the Board agreed an updated work plan for the coming months and years which set out areas for the Board to discuss or consider at subsequent meetings. These were typically areas that the Pensions Regulator and/or the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) had identified as important for Local Pension Boards to consider. This work plan has been reviewed and updated periodically by the Board, with the last updated approved at its 25 November 2024 meeting.
- 4.2 The items scheduled for consideration in the work plan for this meeting are review standard employer and scheme member communications and review procurements carried out by Fund – detail on these is set out below. The current work plan is contained at Appendix A.

5 REVIEW STANDARD EMPLOYER COMMUNICATIONS AND SCHEME MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

- 5.1 Tyne and Wear Pension Fund took over the pensions administration contract from 1 June 2025. To encourage efficiency most communications between TWPF and employers and members are made through secure portals. This allows the use of workflows to ensure processes are monitored.
- 5.2 There are some regular email communications made with employers to the registered contacts identified by the employers through the admission process and regularly updated. TWPF have supplied a couple of email examples which are included as Appendix A and Appendix B.
- 5.3 The first is an email advising of the latest information on the LGPS provided in a monthly bulletin by the Local Government Pensions Committee of the Local Government Association. Each year one of these monthly bulletins will include the changes in employee contribution bands which the employer will need to apply for the following financial year.
- 5.4 The second example email is an invite to a webinar run by TWPF. Supporting and informing employers is a role which TWPF takes seriously to assist employers to operate the systems and processes TWPF use in administering the Fund effectively.
- 5.5 TWPF have also provided an example of the newsletter from TWPF web page signposted to members in the pensioner update, annual benefit statements and social media which is attached as Appendix C. These provide a useful source of information and mechanism for delivering information useful to members.
- 5.6 New members receive a welcome letter (Appendix D) from TWPF which includes the information to transfer pension rights from other pensions, what the member can do if they are unhappy, more information and how to contact the pension administration service as well as how to sign up to the MyPension portal for secure transfer of information between the member and the administrator.
- 5.7 Appendix E is an example communication to leavers from the Fund advising them of their current benefits and options in taking up those benefits along with the forms required to indicate to the pensions administrator what action the member wishes to take. The communication includes information and signposting to help the member make decisions. The LGPS is a complex scheme which is why so much information needs to be passed to the member to allow them to make their choices at retirement.
- 5.9 Tyne and Wear Pension Fund has developed their standard communications to conform with statutory requirements and best practice. Whilst tailored to the Teesside Pension Fund the communications have been developed from those used to communicate with TWPFs 186,904 members and 390 employers.

6 REVIEW PROCUREMENTS CARRIED OUT BY THE FUND

- 6.1 Teesside Pension Fund relies on suppliers to assist in providing services to members and in governance of the Fund. The key contracts and their timescales are listed below:

Service	Supplier	Start Date	End Date
Pensions Administration	Tyne and Wear Pension Fund	01/06/2025	31/05/2029
Custody	Northern Trust	01/06/2022	30/05/2026
Performance Measurement	Hymans Robertson	1/12/2023	Rolling One year
Investment Advice	Linchpin (William Bourne) Peter Moon	03/12/2018	31/03/2026
Direct Property Management	Aberdeen Investments		
Property Valuation	Knight Frank		

- 6.2 The Pensions Administration Contract was awarded to Tyne and Wear Pension Fund following a competitive tendering process during 2024. A full competitive tendering process was adopted using a 40% price, 60% quality evaluation of the tenders. Tyne and Wear Pension Fund had the highest scores in both price and quality of all of the tenders received.
- 6.3 The custody contract is due for renegotiation during 2026. Border to Coast and most of the Partner Funds in the pool also use Northern Trust for custody services and there is a limited number of suppliers to the LGPS. The nature of the contract is changing with less requirement to hold securities on behalf of the Fund and more requirement for book of record and banking services. There are advantages for Border to Coast in Partner Funds having the same custodian, maintaining one custodian connection for their systems.
- 6.4 The performance measurement contract was awarded to Hymans Robertson following the withdrawal from the market of the previous provider, Performance Evaluation. Again, there is a limited pool of suppliers of this type of service to LGPS funds.
- 6.5 The Investment advice contract is due for procurement. The procurement for this service has been delayed whilst awaiting clarity as to the requirements for this role which is the subject of legislation through the Pensions Bill and the regulations and guidance which will follow. It is anticipated that the coverage of advice provided by this role will encompass administration as well as investment advice. There will be a limited number of people with the knowledge, skills and qualifications to fit this new role.
- 6.6 The Direct Property Management and Property Valuation contracts for the stay behind property portfolio are let by Border to Coast on behalf of Teesside Pension Fund as part of the wider management of the Pools direct property portfolio and

other Funds stay behind portfolios. This approach has generated savings through economies of scale and enable Border to Coast's management of all these portfolios on behalf of Partner Funds.

7. NEXT STEPS

7.1 The workplan will continue to be provided to future Board meetings.

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Appendix A

Teesside Pension Board Work Plan		
Date of Board meeting and any standard items scheduled	Suggested areas of focus (from the Pensions Regulator's Public Service Toolkit list)	Suggested activities (including from the Scheme Advisory Board guidance)
November 2024 Annual Review of Board Training		Review the arrangements for the training of Board members and those elected members and officers with delegated responsibilities for the management and administration of the Scheme
February 2025	Conflicts of interest	Update on Code of Practice review
March 2025 Annual Board Report	Managing risk and internal controls	Review of risk register Review internal and external audit reports
July 2025 Draft Report and Accounts	Maintaining accurate member data	Review administration reports, including data quality scores and progress in relation to any data improvement plans.
November 2025 Annual Review of Board Training	Maintaining member contributions	Review administration reports including in relation to any late payment of contributions. Review the arrangements for the training of Board members and those elected members and officers with delegated responsibilities for the management and administration of the Scheme.
February 2026	Providing information to members and others	Review standard employer and scheme member communications. Review procurements carried out by Fund.
April 2026 Annual Board Report	Resolving internal disputes	Review any internal dispute cases / Pensions Ombudsman cases since the last review. Review the outcome of actuarial reporting and valuations.
July 2026 Draft Report and Accounts	Reporting breaches of the law	Review breaches process and log. Review the complete and proper exercise of employer and administering authority discretions.
November 2026 Annual Review of Board Training		Review the arrangements for the training of Board members and those elected members and officers with delegated responsibilities for the management and administration of the Scheme
February 2027	TBC	TBC
April 2027 Annual Board Report	TBC	TBC
July 2027 Draft Report and Accounts	TBC	TBC
November 2027 Annual Review of Board Training	TBC	TBC