

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Pension Fund Committee</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">21 July 2015</h3>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Barnet Council Pension Fund Performance for Quarter January to March 2015</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Chief Operating Officer</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>Appendix A – Pension Fund Market Value of Investments as at 31 March 2015 Appendix B – JLT Image Report Quarterly Update 31 March 2015 Appendix C – WM Local Authority Universe Comparison to 31 March 2015</p>
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Summary

This report summarises Pension Fund investment manager performance for the January to March quarter 2015

Recommendations

1. That having considered the performance of the Pension Fund for the quarter to 31 March 2015, the Committee instruct the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Finance Officer to address any issues that it considers necessary

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 To ensure that the pension fund is being invested prudently and in accordance with the investment strategy.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Not applicable

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Not Applicable

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The Chief Operating Officer and Chief Finance Officer will carry out any actions considered necessary.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 To ensure that the pension fund is being invested prudently and to the best advantage in order to achieve the required funding level. Effective monitoring of the Pension Fund will provide support towards the Council's corporate priorities.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 As administering authority for the London Borough of Barnet Pension Fund, the Council is required to invest any funds not required for the payment and administration of pension fund contributions and benefits.
- 5.2.2 The Pension Fund has appointed external fund managers to maximise pension fund assets in accordance with the fund investment strategy. The Pension Fund is a long term investor and volatility of investment return is expected, though in the longer term, the appointed fund managers are expected to deliver positive returns in accordance with the fund benchmarks. The Scheme benchmark is a liability driven benchmark and is dependent on the movement in gilt yield. The Growth portfolio targets of the respective Diversified Growth Funds are Newton; LIBOR +4%, and Schroder; RPI+5%.
- 5.2.3 The total value of the pension fund's investments including internally managed cash was £915.626 million as at 31 March 2015, up from £877.124 million as at 31 December 2014. The total market value of externally managed investments rose by £38.5 million over the quarter. The graph in Appendix A shows how the market value of the fund has grown since 2007.

- 5.2.4 **Summary:** Over the quarter at a total scheme level the Fund's externally managed investments produced an absolute positive return of 4.2% and all the growth and bond funds produced positive absolute returns. However in relative terms the scheme underperformed the liability benchmark and the overall funding level has fallen due to the significant reduction in gilt yields. The attached performance report is the final monitoring report from JLT who provided investment consultant services until May 2015.
- 5.2.5 **Diversified Growth Funds:** The Newton Real Return DGF outperformed for the quarter with a 4.1% return versus a benchmark return of 1.1%. One year return was 6.7% compared to a benchmark return of 4.5%. The Schroder Diversified Growth Fund outperformed for the quarter, 4.3% versus a benchmark return of 1.1%. But one year return was 10.6% versus the benchmark return of 6.0%. The Growth Portfolio, comprising the two DGF funds, underperformed the third benchmark the notional 60/40 global equity benchmark, by 1.7% over the quarter and by 3.1% over 12 months
- 5.2.6 **Corporate Bonds:** For the quarter, the Newton Corporate Bond portfolio underperformed by 0.3%, returning 4.3% against its benchmark of 4.7% and over one year the Fund also underperformed the benchmark with its 17.5% return against a benchmark return of 19.7%. Schroder's Corporate Bond portfolio underperformed the benchmark by 0.3% for the quarter returning 3.3% against its benchmark of 3.3%. Over the year the Schroder corporate bond return was 11.9% versus the benchmark return of 13.2%.
- 5.2.7 **Passive Tracker Funds:** For Legal and General, overseas equities marginally outperformed its benchmark with an absolute return of 7.8% for the quarter and with an annual return of 20% it marginally outperformed the one year benchmark of 19.9% by 0.1%. The fixed interest performed in line with its benchmark with a return of 3.1% for the quarter and with an annual return of 13.4%, it outperformed the one year benchmark return of 13.1% by 0.3%.

Investment Performance & Benchmark

- 5.2.8 The Fund's overall performance is measured against a liability benchmark return. Over the quarter the estimated funding position increased from 75.6 % funding level as at 31 December 2014 to 76.1% as at 31 March 2015
- 5.2.9 The Growth portfolio return is the combined Newton and Schroder Diversified Growth Fund portfolios and is measured against a notional 60/40 global equity benchmark and underlying benchmarks of each fund for comparison. The one year outperformance indicates that both diversified growth funds are performing in line with the investment strategy. But over one year both Newton and

Schroders growth and bond assets are underperforming their respective benchmarks.

5.2.10 Fund Return compared with the WM Local Authority Universe over the quarter to 31 March 2015 for one, three and five years is set out in Appendix C. The relative underperformance over 1 and three years is in part because the Barnet Fund is following a different and more risk adverse strategy than most other local authorities but is also a reflection of longer-term manager underperformance by both Newton and Schroder.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 This report is based on the provisions of Regulation 10 Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2009 made under the powers conferred by section 7 and Schedule 3 of the Superannuation Act 1972.

5.3.2 Constitution – Part 15, Annex A Responsibility for Functions Responsibility for Council Functions in relation to pensions delegated to the Pension Fund Committee through the Pension Fund Governance Compliance Statement. Paragraph 2.2.11 lists one of these functions as ‘To review and challenge at least quarterly the Pension Fund investment managers’ performance against the Statement of Investment Principles in general and investment performance benchmarks and targets in particular.’

5.4 Risk Management

5.4.1 A key risk is that of poor investment performance. The performance of Fund managers is monitored by the committee every quarter with reference to reports from JLT Investment Consulting, the Pension Fund investment adviser, and the WM Company Ltd, a company that measures the performance of pension funds. If fund manager performance is considered inadequate, the fund manager can be replaced.

5.4.2 Risks around safeguarding of pension fund assets are highlighted in the current economic climate following the sovereign debt crises in the Euro zone. Fund managers need to have due regard to longer term investment success, in the context of significant market volatility. Both Newton’s and Schroder’s will attend this Committee to update on their approach in this context

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

5.5.1 Pursuant to the Equalities Act 2010, the Council is under an obligation to have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant ‘protected characteristic’ and those who do not share it; and fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant ‘protected characteristic’ and persons who do not share it. The ‘protected characteristics’ are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

5.5.2 The rules governing admission to and participation in the Pension Fund are in keeping with this public sector equality duty. Good governance arrangements and monitoring of the pension fund managers will benefit everyone who contributes to the fund.

5.6 **Consultation and Engagement**

5.6.1 Not Applicable.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 None