



## **Pensions Fund Committee**

### **13 February 2020**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Training Policy and Knowledge Understanding and Skills</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Director of Finance
<b>Wards</b>	N/A
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	No
<b>Enclosures</b>	Appendix A – Training Self Assessment Questionnaire - 2020
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	Mark Fox, Pensions Manager – 0208 359 3341

### **Summary**

To consider the adequacy of training provided to the Committee and future training plans.

### **Recommendations**

That the Pension Fund Committee members are requested to note the report and complete Training Questionnaire as highlight in appendix A in order for training plans can be developed for 2020 and 2021.

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 To be effective, it is important that all those involved with the running of the Barnet Pension Fund have a good understanding of pension matters. There is no legal requirement for members of the Committee to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in pensions. Training has been provided to Committee members on a collective basis and it is intended that training prior to Committee meetings will be used to introduce complex topics that require decisions at the Committee.
- 1.2 To plan future training, the attached questionnaire has been prepared based on the CIPFA Code of Practice. The Committee is asked to endorse its completion. The responses will be aggregated and reported back in summary form to the Committee together with a plan for collective Committee training. The individual responses will not be published. It is suggested that officers discuss with each member of the Committee if they wish to undertake additional training e.g. with officers, advisors or external events.
- 1.3 The role of Pension Fund Committee members covers a wide range of complex issues.
- 1.4 However, there are no legal requirements for members of the Pension Fund Committee to have any formal knowledge and understanding or the LGPS regulations or to undergo training.
- 1.5 Whilst Committee members will be knowledgeable in many of their responsibilities, training can be provided to keep this knowledge up-to-date and relevant.
- 1.6 In 2018, Training Questionnaires were issued to Committee members to help Officers to identify skills gap and collective training needs with a view to establishing future collective training for the Committee.
- 1.7. Following the feedback from these questionnaires during 2019, the Committee was provided with relevant training, which included:
  - Triennial Actuarial (October 2018 & March 2019)
  - Emerging Market Equities (January and November 2019)
  - Private Equity (January 2019)
  - Fixed income (March 2019)
  - Responsible Investment / ESG (November 2019)
- 1.8. To determine the Committee training requirements for 2020 and 2021, Officers propose that these questionnaires are reissued to Committee members so a training and knowledge plan can be put in place over the coming couple of years.
- 1.9 The TPR have developed a Public Sector Schemes Toolkit modules which Committee Members, if they haven't already done so, may wish to complete.

1.10 The modules are on the following topics (and take approximately 30 minutes each to complete):

- Conflicts of Interest
- Managing Risk and Internal Controls
- Maintaining accurate member data
- Maintaining member contributions
- Providing information to members and others
- Resolving Internal Disputes
- Reporting breaches of law

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 Providing Members with adequately trained opportunities is necessary to achieve good governance.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

3.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

4.1 A training plan for the Committee will be devised and the appropriate training will be arranged.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

5.1.1 Training assists in the good management of the Pension Fund. In turn, this will minimise the cost of providing benefits thus enabling funds to be directed to Council priorities as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan for 2019-2024.

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

5.2.1 The cost of training will be provided from the assets of the Pension Fund. The Committee will be notified quarterly of training costs incurred and if the projected annual costs exceed £10,000 in aggregate.

### **5.3 Social Value**

5.3.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

## **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.4.1 The Council's Constitution (Article 7) – includes the responsibilities of the Pension Fund Committee. Although there are no legal requirements for Committee to undergo training, relevant training will assist the Committee to discharge their responsibilities.
- 5.4.2 The questionnaire is based on best practice as represented by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Public Sector Pensions Finance Knowledge and Skills.

## **5.5 Risk Management**

- 5.5.1 Providing good training opportunities to Members of the Committee will improve decision making and mitigate the risks of poor decisions.

## **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

- 5.6.1 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.

## **5.7 Consultation and Engagement**

- 5.7.1 Not applicable in the context of this paper

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 None