

Paper E: Local pension board support and guidance

Key points to note

The secretariat has been looking into ways in which we can provide support, networking and learning opportunities for local pension board (LPB) chairs. This builds on recent activity where we have been running successful events for pension committee chairs and initiated the Annual Assembly. This paper looks at a range of possible options and invites the committee to provide a steer on the most appropriate way forward.

Recommendation

That we ask the Board to approve a new programme of work which will aim to:

- 1) Provide a forum for support and networking of LPB chairs
- 2) Provide input for a review of the Board's LPB guidance
- 3) Kick this off with an initial meeting of LPB Chairs in May 2026.

Background

LPBs were first required to be established for all locally administering schemes in 2015 under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013. Specific provision for LPBs were then made under Regulations 106-109 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations 2013. The purpose of the LPB under those regulations is to assist the administering authority to secure compliance with its legal obligations under the LGPS Regulations, any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme as well as any other legal requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator. In addition, they are charged with helping to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme. In discharging this broad purpose, they have a general power to do anything needed to facilitate that role.

In 2015, the Board set out some initial guidance on the establishment of LPBs and offered a draft term of reference for funds to adopt. Since then, further guidance has

followed from CIPFA on the knowledge and understanding that is expected of LPB members.

The proposals being implemented under Fit for the Future have placed a welcome emphasis on the good governance of the scheme and made some significant changes to the governance architecture at fund level. There has also been a renewed interest in managing the potential conflict of interests that arise from administering authorities also being scheme employers.

We therefore believe that now is the right time to review and the LPB guidance and consider what can be done to support LPBs, which potentially provide the main opportunity for other scheme employers and scheme member representatives to have a voice in scheme governance.

Considerations

The Firefighters' Pensions (England) Scheme Advisory Board already offers a range of services for LPB chairs and members. That includes regular drop-in sessions, where they can ask questions and network with each other, as well as running dedicated training courses. The secretariat recommend that we should aim to replicate this for LGPS LPB chairs. We can also explore whether there are ways in which we can use the additional functionality in the new Board website to allow facilitated dialogue online as well.

We have data on who the current LPB Chairs are via the LGPS database, which is maintained by funds. We can use this information to contact Board chairs in the first instance to inform them of what we are planning and canvass topics that are likely to be of interest to them. Initial topics for training could include the changes being instituted through Fit for the Future and the impact of these on the LPB governance role, such as the new Independent Governance Review, independent person, Senior LGPS officer role and knowledge and understanding requirements. It would also be a good opportunity to speak to LPB Chairs about volunteering to help pilot the peer support offer we are developing.

The secretariat would also recommend that we use the LPB network to support the review of the LPB guidance. This group can help us identify both best practice and where there is friction in the discharge of their role.

Our initial plan would be to write to LPB chairs immediately after the March 2026 Board meeting, and to invite them to an initial event in May.

CRC Meeting – 2 March 2026

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