Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) Meeting
23 November 2026, 1.30pm – 3.30pm
Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square, London
and Microsoft Teams

Paper F: SAB communications update

Key points to note

This paper provides an update on Board communication activities. It outlines planned engagement events, developments in the Board's digital presence and a short update on the website project.

Recommendation

That the Board notes the update on events held during 2026 and provides feedback on the proposed 2027 calendar, including event priorities, dates and opportunities to strengthen engagement.

Background

The Board has previously approved its Communications Strategy, which means the secretariat is now delivering a significantly expanded programme of events to engage with stakeholders. This report sets out the activities planned or underway in line with the approved strategy.

Communications update

The Secretariat has held the following events since the last Board meeting.

- Local Pension Board Forum - 7 September 2026
- Welcome Event for Newly Appointed Councillors – 15 September 2026
- Independent Governance Review Workshop – 1 October 2026
- Board Annual Assembly – 22 October 2026
- LGPS Live – 5 August 2026; 7 October 2026 and 2 December (planned)

A summary of each event is provided below.

Local Pension Board Forum - 7 September 2026

Email: SABSecretariat@local.gov.uk **Website:** LGPS Board

On 7 September, the Secretariat held its first Local Pension Board Forum. The virtual event was well received and provided a valuable opportunity for Local Pension Board Chairs to network, share experiences and discuss emerging challenges.

The forum brought together Chairs from 37 LGPS funds, making it our most widely attended Chairs' event of the year in terms of fund representation.

Discussions were wide-ranging and covered several common priorities, including:

- Implementation of new governance requirements and regulatory changes;
- Recruitment and retention to governance roles;
- Local government reorganisation;
- Pension administration challenges;
- Training and development.

Feedback from attendees was positive, with suggestions for the forum to be held regularly. Attendees also indicated that they would attend future forums and recommend them to others, demonstrating the value of providing dedicated opportunities for peer networking and knowledge sharing.

Welcome event for newly appointed councillors – 15 September 2026

The Secretariat held a virtual welcome event for newly appointed councillors with responsibilities for the LGPS on 15 September 2026, from 5.00pm to 6.00pm. The event was attended by 58 councillors representing 27 LGPS funds.

Polls conducted during the webinar highlighted varying levels of confidence among attendees in their understanding of the LGPS. Governance and pooling were identified as the two main areas where councillors felt they needed further support.

Responses also highlighted the wider importance of building knowledge and understanding of the scheme and the different roles and responsibilities within it.

Feedback was positive, with attendees particularly valuing the opportunity to ask questions during the Q&A session with the Board Chair and Secretariat. Attendees also expressed an interest in learning more about the Board and its work, highlighting an opportunity for further engagement and support for newly appointed councillors.

Independent Governance Review workshop – 1 October 2026

On 1 October, the Secretariat held an in-person workshop for fund officers on Independent Governance Reviews (IGRs). The event was well attended, with 43 officers representing 43 LGPS funds, alongside colleagues from the National LGPS Frameworks Team and the Pensions Regulator. Feedback from the workshop was largely positive, with 88% of respondents rating the event as Good or Excellent. A further 82% indicated that they would attend again, while 94% would recommend the event to others.

Feedback from the workshop indicated broad support for IGRs but highlighted the need for greater national clarity and consistency around standards, specifications, independence, evidence requirements, procurement, capacity, costs and how findings will be used and published. In response to this feedback, the secretariat has established a working group with fund officers and the National LGPS Frameworks Team to develop a practical core specification for IGRs, helping to support a more consistent approach across the Scheme.

Attendees also expressed a strong interest in further events specifically aimed at senior fund officers, highlighting the value of providing opportunities for peer discussion, sharing experiences and addressing common challenges.

Board Annual Assembly – 22 October 2026

The Board's second Annual Assembly was held on 22 October 2026 at Bevin Hall, Smith Square, with chairs representing 38 LGPS funds in attendance.

Discussions covered administration pressures, investment oversight, funding matters, governance and opportunities for training and development. The Assembly also provided a valuable opportunity for peer networking, allowing chairs to share experiences, discuss common challenges and exchange ideas with colleagues from across the LGPS, helping to strengthen relationships and encourage greater collaboration across the Scheme.

Feedback from the event was positive, with attendees indicating that they would attend future events and recommend the event to others. The most popular session was the panel session with fellow chairs.

Overview of event attendance

An analysis of attendance across these six events highlighted varying levels of engagement among LGPS funds.

It is important to note that whilst we didn't ask for apologies when sending out invitations, non-response was a consistent trend, with between 33 and 45 funds not responding to invitations for each event although the secretariat is aware of some clashes with other events. Four funds did not respond to any of the six invitations.

Overall, 15 funds did not have any representation attend any of the six events. In contrast, seven funds demonstrated strong engagement, attending at least five of the six events.

The table below summarises attendance across the six events.

Event	Funds Attended	Did Not Respond	Did Not Show
17 March 2026 – Virtual event **Pension Committee Chairs discussion**	38	33	11
12 May 2026 – Virtual event **Local Pension Board Chairs discussion**	42	33	8
7 September 2026 – Virtual event **Local Pension Board Forum**	37	36	4
15 September 2026 – Virtual event **Welcome event for newly appointed councillors**	27	43	14
22 October 2026 – In person event **SAB Annual Assembly (number of Board Chairs attended)**	24	44	10
22 October 2026 – In person event **SAB Annual Assembly (number of Committee Chairs attended)**	22	45	10

Overall, 71 funds (83%) attended at least one event, while 15 funds (17%) had no recorded attendance. The 2026 attendance data demonstrates that SAB's events programme has achieved broad engagement across the LGPS, with 83% of funds represented at least once.

As planning begins for 2027, the findings provide a useful basis for reviewing the events programme, strengthening communication with less active funds and building on established engagement with chairs. In preparing the 2027 Board events calendar, the secretariat is reviewing other LGPS organisations' event calendars and liaising with stakeholders to confirm their planned event dates, to avoid any known clashes.

LGPS Live

The secretariat has continued to see strong attendance and engagement for the LGPS Live. The webinar is open to all LGPS stakeholders and attracts a broad range of attendees from across the Scheme. Previous sessions have been attended by representatives from administering authorities, investment pools, advisers, actuaries, policy representatives and governance specialists.

The session on the jointly commissioned Gender Pension Gap report saw the highest engagement and representation yet. Attendees extended across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland providing a broad UK-wide perspective. Feedback around the webinars has been rated as excellent with informative and relevant content.

Further communications activity

As part of this update, the Board Communications Policy has been reviewed, and the secretariat isn't recommending any amendments at this stage. However, we would welcome any comments the Board has on whether any further activities should be undertaken.

With the Pensions Dashboard expected to become publicly available during the 2027/28 financial year, the National Communications Working Group is establishing a working group to consider communications ahead of its launch, with the LGPC focusing on developing supporting materials. The Board is invited to consider whether it wishes to develop its own communications or focus on amplifying materials produced by the LGPC and the working group.

We are proposing the following events for next year (dates to be confirmed) and

would welcome the Board's views on the proposed programme, including suggestions for any additional events or areas of focus.

- Independent Person workshop
- LGPS Senior Officer workshop
- A decade of Leadership: Reflections with Cllr Phillips OBE
- SAB Local investment Event
- Pension Committee Discussion
- Local Pension Board Forum
- Welcome event for councillors with LGPS responsibilities
- SAB Annual Assembly

Social media update

The Board's presence on LinkedIn continues to grow, with the page now attracting over 1,500 followers. Engagement with our content has also increased, particularly during our autumn programme of events, which provided opportunities to highlight the Board's activities and encourage wider participation. The page continues to be used to raise awareness of the Board's work and share scheme-level updates. It is also providing an additional avenue for feedback, with discussions on posts generating suggestions and areas for the Board to consider as part of its ongoing work.