

Minute

Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with Pension Board

Wednesday, 21 May 2025, 15:15.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Pension Fund Sub-committee:

Councillors P Lindsay Hall, Steven B Heddle, Rachael A King, Kristopher D Leask and Mellissa-Louise Thomson.

Pension Board:

Employer Representatives:

Councillors David Dawson and Owen Tierney, Orkney Islands Council.
Karen Ritch, Orkney Ferries Limited.

Trade Union Representatives:

Karen Kent (Unison) and Eileen Swanney (Unison).

Present via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

Pension Board:

Employer Representative:

Councillor Graham A Bevan.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Erik Knight, Head of Finance.
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance).
- Katie Gibson, Team Manager (Corporate Finance).
- Katrina Tait, Team Manager (Pensions).
- Paul Maxton, Solicitor.

Hymans Robertson:

- David Walker, Partner.

In Attendance via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

- Kunal Malhotra, Audit Manager, KPMG (for Items 1 to 3).

Apologies

Pension Fund Sub-committee:

- Councillor Alexander G Cowie.
- Councillor Heather N Woodbridge.

Trade Union Representative:

- Eoin Miller (Unite).

Not Present

Trade Union Representative:

- Mark Vincent (GMB).

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer (for Item 1).
- Councillor Kristopher D Leask (for Item 2 to 7).

1. Appointment of Chair

As both the Leader and the Depute Leader had intimated their apologies for this meeting, the Clerk called for nominations for Chair, and the Sub-committee:

Resolved that Councillor Kristopher D Leask be appointed Chair for this meeting.

Councillor Kristopher D Leask took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

2. Pension Administration – Performance

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Scrutinised the Pension Fund administration activities, together with performance against key service standards, for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, as detailed in sections 3 to 8 of the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance.

3. Orkney Islands Council Pension Fund – External Audit Plan

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Audit Manager, KPMG, the Sub-committee:

Noted the external audit plan for 2024/25 in respect of the Council's Pension Fund, prepared by KPMG, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance.

4. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor Kristopher D Leask, seconded by Councillor Rachael A King, the Sub-committee resolved that the public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting, as the business to be considered involved the disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

5. Orkney Islands Council Pension Fund – Private Debt Review

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Resolved, in terms of delegated powers, what action should be taken with regard to the Pension Fund's commitment to private debt.

The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

6. Statement of Managed Funds

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Sub-committee:

Scrutinised:

6.1. The investment monitoring report for the Pension Fund produced by Hymans Robertson, the Council's appointed investment advisor, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, relating to the performance of managed funds for the quarter to 31 March 2025.

6.2. The Legal and General Quarterly Engagement report for the quarter ending 31 December 2024, attached as Appendix 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

6.3. The Baillie Gifford report for the quarter ending 31 March 2025, attached as Appendix 3 to the report by the Head of Finance.

Karen Kent left the meeting during discussion of this item.

7. Conclusion of Meeting

At 15:52 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Kristopher D Leask.