

WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY AUDIT COMMITTEE

9 DECEMBER 2021

REPORT SUMMARY SHEET

AVON PENSION FUND UPDATE

Purpose

The West of England Combined Authority Audit Committee, at its meeting on 22 September 2021, asked officers to investigate whether the West of England Combined Authority was represented on the Avon Pension Fund Committee.

Summary

1. In its role as 'administering authority', Bath & North East Somerset Council has executive responsibility for the Avon Pension Fund. The Council is legally responsible for the Fund as set out in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.
2. The Council delegates its responsibility for administering the Fund to the Avon Pension Fund Committee, this includes the setting up of a Local Pension Board and Investment Panel.
3. There is no representation on the Committee for the Combined Authority.

The Membership of the Committee is as follows:

Membership of the Committee

Voting members (14):

- 5 elected members from B&NES (subject to the rules of political proportionality of the Council)
- 3 independent members
- 1 elected member nominated from each of Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council
- 1 nominated from the Higher and Further education bodies
- 1 nominated from the Academy bodies
- 1 nominated by the trades unions

Non-voting members (3):

1 nominated from the Parish Councils
Up to 2 nominated from different Trades Unions

Subsequent to the previous meeting the following response was received following an enquiry. The Chair, having had sight of this response, requested that the Audit Committee discuss the issue at their next meeting:

“This is purely a Council decision as the administration authority and would be based on a recommendation of the Pensions Committee . The Committee reviews representation across sectors from time to time and local government is well represented. Certainly the four Constituent authorities which make up and Fund WECA are already represented so not clear what rationale would be to increase Committee membership further.”

Therefore if WECA are still keen following the above advice, they could submit a more formal request to the Pensions Committee for them to consider”

Recommendations

Members of the Combined Authority Committee are asked to consider whether a formal request be made for representation of the West of England Combined Authority to join the Avon Pension Fund Committee taking into consideration that the Authority has one elected representative and its constituent councils are represented on the Board.

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