



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

PENSION BOARD

Date and Time

1.00 pm, MONDAY, 18TH JULY, 2022

Location

Virtual Meeting

Contact Point

Lowri Haf Evans

01286 679878

lowrihafevans@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

(DISTRIBUTED 08/07/22)

PENSION BOARD

MEMBERSHIP

EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES

Huw Trainor North Wales Police

Sioned Parry Conwy Borough County Council

Vacant seat

MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES

Hywel Eifion Jones (retired – formerly Anglesey Council)

Osian Richards Members Representative

Sharon Warnes (retired - formerly Gwynedd Council)

AGENDA

1. ELECT CHAIR

To elect Chair for 2022 / 2023

2. ELECT VICE CHAIR

To elect Vice chair for 2022 / 2023

3. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest

5. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items which are urgent business in the opinion of the Chairman so that they may be considered

6. MINUTES

4 - 6

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the meeting of this committee held on 4th April 2022 be signed as a true record.

7. GWYNEDD PENSION FUND'S DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

7 - 51

To consider the report

8. PENSION FUND INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE 2021/22

52 - 56

To consider the report

9. PENSION FUND EVENTS

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To confirm a member for each event

10. PENSION ADMINISTRATION

58 - 64

To consider the report

Agenda Item 6

PENSION BOARD 04-4-2022

Present:

Employer Representatives: Cllr Aled Evans (Chair), Sioned Parry and Huw Trainor

Member Representatives: H. Eifion Jones, Osian Richards and Sharon Warnes

Officers: Dafydd Edwards (Fund Director), Delyth Jones Thomas (Investment Manager), Meirion Jones (Pensions Manager) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democracy Services Officer).

Others invited; Councillor Peredur Jenkins (Chair of the Pensions Committee)

1. APOLOGIES

None to note

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

None to note

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. MINUTES

The Chair accepted the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee, held on 7 March 2022, as a true record.

5. THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE PENSION BOARD'S CHAIRMAN FOR THE PENSION FUND'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair submitted the draft report that had been prepared for inclusion in the Gwynedd Pension Fund annual report, for observations. It was noted that the draft report had been written in accordance with the layout of the 2021 report, but had been updated to include the subjects discussed during the year. A request was made for Members to submit the details of training sessions that they had attended over the year - a record of those sessions attended by the majority of Board members would be included in the report.

Reference was made to matters that the Board had offered observations on them and it was suggested that examples of specific contributions were included. In accordance with the Board's wish to add a clause about the fiduciary duty in the Responsible Investment Policy, it was suggested that this should be referred to in the Annual Report. Agreement was reached on the following statement.

The Board contributes to the development of the fund's policy by pre-scrutinising some draft policies and fine-tuning some aspects before they are taken to Committee for a decision to adopt, e.g. A clause on the fiduciary duty was added to the Responsible Investment Policy following detailed discussions at the Board meeting on 7 March 2022.

Thanks were expressed for the report.

During the ensuing discussion, the following observation by a member was noted:

- A suggestion that the appointment of Osian Richards (Gwynedd Pension Board Member Representative) as a member representative on the Wales Pension Partnership Joint Governance Committee should be included- this was a very positive appointment.

RESOLVED to accept the information

6. REPRESENTATION POLICY

A report was submitted by the Pensions Manager in response to the requirements of the Good Governance Review for authorities to ensure that every fund produced and published a policy on the representation of scheme members and employers that were not a part of the administration authority on the Committees, and explained the voting rights arrangements of every group.

It was highlighted that the policy confirmed the Fund's stance in relation to appointments and the Committee's delegated rights, as well as the constitution of the Pension Board.

Thanks were expressed for the report.

During the ensuing discussion, the following observations were made by members;

- To correct the sentence noting that seven Gwynedd Council elected members were nominated by the Council to note that seven Gwynedd Council elected members were allocated based on the political balance between the various groups of elected members on the Full Council.
- That attention needed to be drawn to the Wales Pension Partnership, noting that the Chair of the Pensions Committee served on the Joint Governance Committee (JGC) of the Wales Pension Partnership and that an invitation would be extended to the Vice-chair if the Chair was unable to attend.

In response to a suggestion that an effort should be made to encourage women to be Members of the Pensions Committee (given that women represent 60% of the workforce, pay their pension contributions, and their wish for the Committee's membership to reflect pension scheme membership), it was noted that this desire could be drawn to the attention of individual political groups when the report on political balance and Committee membership was submitted to the Full Council in May, whilst also highlighting the benefits if several current members remain on the Pensions Committee (given the training needs specific to the field).

RESOLVED to accept the report

7. 2022/23 WORK PROGRAMME

Submitted - the amended work plan for the 2022/23 year. It was noted that the programme included matters noted following consideration by the Board at previous meetings and matters arising. It was also highlighted that comparisons had been drawn against the programmes of other Pension Boards regarding discussion topics. Members were reminded that the document was a working document, to be amended as required.

The following subject was suggested for inclusion on the work programme:

- Update on cyber security at the October / December meeting

Thanks was expressed for the report - the work programme set an order for the Board's work.

It was suggested that every meeting should be commenced at 1pm

RESOLVED to accept the information

The Chair, Councillor Aled Evans, took the opportunity to express his gratitude for the support he had received from his fellow members, for the cooperation of the Pensions Committee and to the staff for always being prepared to help.

Councillor Aled Evans was thanked for his contribution to the Pension Board over the years and he was wished well for the future.

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm and concluded at 2.25pm.

MEETING DATE	PENSION BOARD 18 JULY 2022
TITLE	GWYNEDD PENSION FUND'S DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022
PURPOSE	Present and note – <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft Statement of Accounts
RECOMMENDATION	Receive the information
AUTHOR	Dafydd L Edwards, Fund Directors

1. INTRODUCTION

This report introduces the statutory Statement of Accounts for the 2021/22 financial year, which provides details of the Pension Fund's financial activities during the year which ended on 31 March 2022.

The document in Appendix A is the draft Statements of Accounts in the statutory format.

2. AUDIT BY AUDIT WALES

The draft accounts here are currently subject to audit by Audit Wales. It is possible that some changes will be necessary before a final version is submitted for approval by the Pensions Committee.

3. RECOMMENDATION

The Pension Board is asked to receive the Pension Fund Statement of Accounts (subject to audit) for 2021/22.

Gwynedd Pension Fund

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/22

DRAFT

NARRATIVE REPORT

Introduction

Gwynedd Pension Fund's accounts and notes for the year 2021/22 are presented here on pages 5 to 43.

The accounts consist of the Gwynedd Pension Fund Account and Net Assets Statement.

These accounts are supported by this Narrative Report, the Accounting Policies and various notes to the accounts.

The Pension Fund accounts, and accompanying notes, summarise the financial transactions and net assets related to the provision of pensions and other benefits payable to former employees of all the Fund's employers, including Anglesey, Conwy and Gwynedd Councils, Snowdonia National Park Authority, Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales, Cartrefi Conwy, Adra, various town and community councils, and other scheduled and admitted bodies.

The Statement of Accounts and further information is available on Gwynedd Pension Fund's website www.gwyneddpensionfund.wales.

The Fund has two important statements which set out the strategies for ensuring pensions are funded now and in the future as follows:

- Funding Strategy Statement – the statement sets out the fund-specific strategy which will identify how employer pensions liabilities are best met going forward. It is reviewed every three years after the triennial actuarial valuation and includes individual employer rates for the following period.
- Investment Strategy Statement - the statement sets out the types of investments and broad limits on each type of investment.

Both these statements are available on the Fund's website under the investments section.

An Actuarial Valuation is required every three years to establish the level of assets available to pay pensions now and in the future. The most recent valuation was at 31 March 2019 and any changes to employers' contributions were made from 1 April 2020 onwards. The next valuation is as at 31 March 2022 with any changes to employers' contributions from 1 April 2023 onwards.

Further information relating to the accounts is available from:

Delyth Jones-Thomas
Investment Manager
01286 679128

Finance Department
Gwynedd Council
Council Offices
Caernarfon
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

It is part of the Fund's policy to provide full information relating to the Fund's affairs. In addition, interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed. The availability of the accounts for inspection will be notified on the Pension Fund website at the appropriate time.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

THE PENSION FUND'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Gwynedd Council as administrating authority (effectively the trustee) for Gwynedd Pension Fund is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In Gwynedd Council, that "Section 151 Officer" is the Head of Finance. It is also the administrating authority's responsibility to manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of its resources, to safeguard its assets, and to approve the Statement of Accounts.



27th June 2022

Councillor Stephen Churchman

Pensions Committee Chair

THE HEAD OF FINANCE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Pension Fund Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* ("the Code").

In preparing the statement of accounts, the Head of Finance has selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently; has made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent; and complied with the Code.

The Head of Finance has also kept proper accounting records which were up to date, and has taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S CERTIFICATE

I certify that the Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the arrangements set out above, and presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Gwynedd Pension Fund at 31 March 2022 and the Pension Fund's income and expenditure for the year then ended.



20th June 2022

Dewi Morgan CPFA

Head of Finance, Gwynedd Council

GWYNEDD PENSION FUND ACCOUNTS

THE FUND ACCOUNT

31 March 2021 £'000	Notes	31 March 2022 £'000
Dealings with members, employers and others directly involved in the Fund		
78,252	Contributions	82,971
4	Other Income	4
3,356	Transfers in from other pension funds	2,664
81,612		85,639
(62,378)	Benefits	(66,979)
(3,052)	Payments to and on account of leavers	(3,683)
(65,430)		(70,662)
16,182	Net additions/ (withdrawals) from dealings with members	14,977
(22,669)	Management Expenses	(16,525)
(6,487)	Net additions/ (withdrawals) including fund management expenses	(1,548)
Returns on investments		
30,768	Investment income	26,170
565,511	Profit and losses on disposal of investments and changes in the market value of investments	223,010
596,279	Net returns on investments	249,180
589,792	Net Increase/ (Decrease) in the net assets available for benefits during the year	247,632
1,938,337	Opening net assets of the scheme	2,528,129
2,528,129	Closing net assets of the scheme	2,775,761

The notes on pages 7 to 43 form part of these Financial Statements

NET ASSETS STATEMENT

31 March 2021 £'000		Notes	31 March 2022 £'000
2,515,169	Investment assets	14	2,761,271
146	Cash deposits	14	303
(126)	Investment liabilities	14	(285)
2,515,189	Total net investments		2,761,289
16,153	Current assets	20	17,828
(3,213)	Current liabilities	21	(3,356)
2,528,129	Net assets of the fund available to fund benefits at the end of the reporting period		2,775,761

The Financial Statements do not take into account the Fund's liability to pay pensions and other benefits to all the present contributors to the Fund after the financial year-end, but rather summarises the transactions and net assets of the Fund. The liabilities of the Fund are taken into account in the periodic actuarial valuations of the Fund (most recently as at 31 March 2019) and are reflected in the levels of employers' contributions determined at the valuation, so that the Fund will be able to meet future liabilities. The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits is shown in Note 19.

NOTES TO THE GWYNEDD PENSION FUND ACCOUNTS

NOTE I – DESCRIPTION OF FUND

The Gwynedd Pension Fund (“the Fund”) is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and is administered by Gwynedd Council.

a) General

The Fund is governed by the Public Service Pensions Act 2013. The Fund is administered in accordance with the following secondary legislation:

- the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended);
- the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (as amended);
- the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016.

It is a contributory defined benefit pension scheme administered by Gwynedd Council to provide pensions and other benefits for pensionable employees of Gwynedd Council, two other local authorities and other scheduled, resolution and admission bodies within the former Gwynedd County Council area. Teachers, police officers and firefighters are not included as they are in other national pension schemes. The Fund is overseen by the Pensions Committee, which is a committee of Gwynedd Council.

b) Membership

Membership of the LGPS is voluntary and employees are free to choose whether to join the scheme, remain in the scheme or make their own personal arrangements outside the scheme. Organisations participating in the Gwynedd Pension Fund include:

- Scheduled bodies, which are local authorities and similar bodies whose staff are automatically entitled to be members of the Fund.
- Resolution bodies, which are city, town and community councils. They have the power to decide if their employees can join the LGPS and pass a resolution accordingly.
- Admission bodies, which are other organisations that participate in the Fund under an admission agreement between the Fund and the relevant organisation. Admission bodies include voluntary, charitable and similar bodies or private contractors undertaking a local authority function following outsourcing to the private sector.

NOTE 1 – DESCRIPTION OF FUND (continued)

The following bodies are active employers within the Pension Fund:

Scheduled Bodies	
Gwynedd Council	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Conwy County Borough Council	Bryn Eilian School
Isle of Anglesey County Council	Emrys ap Iwan School
Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales	Pen y Bryn School
Llandrillo – Menai Group	Eirias High School
GwE	North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency
North Wales Economic Ambition Board	
Resolution Bodies	
Llanllyfni Community Council	Ffestiniog Town Council
Bangor City Council	Llandudno Town Council
Abergele Town Council	Llangefni Town Council
Colwyn Bay Town Council	Menai Bridge Town Council
Beaumaris Town Council	Towyn and Kinmel Bay Town Council
Holyhead Town Council	Tywyn Town Council
Caernarfon Town Council	Conwy Town Council
Llanfairfechan Town Council	
Admission Bodies	
Adult Learning Wales	North Wales Society for the Blind
Adferiad Recovery (formerly Cais)	Community and Voluntary Support Conwy
Holyhead Joint Burial Committee	Careers Wales North West
Cwmni Cynnal	Mantell Gwynedd
Cwmni'r Fran Wen	Medrwn Môn
Menter Môn	
Community Admission Bodies	
Cartrefi Conwy	Adra
Byw'n Iach	
Transferee Admission Bodies	
ABM Catering	Caterlink (until 31/07/21)
Kingdom Services Group	Chartwells (from 01/08/21)
A E & A T Lewis	

NOTE I – DESCRIPTION OF FUND (continued)

Membership details are set out below:

	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
Number of employers	46	46
Number of employees in scheme		
County Council	14,518	14,691
Other employers	3,777	3,966
Total	18,295	18,657
Number of pensioners		
County Council	8,902	9,281
Other employers	1,878	2,017
Total	10,780	11,298
Deferred pensioners		
County Council	10,473	10,512
Other employers	1,958	2,028
Total	12,431	12,540
Unclaimed benefits		
County Council	1,864	2,142
Other employers	230	283
Total	2,094	2,425
Undecided Leavers		
County Council	5,280	5,455
Other employers	759	737
Total	6,039	6,192
Total number of members in pension scheme	49,639	51,112

c) Funding

Benefits are funded by contributions and investment earnings. Contributions are made by active members of the Fund in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 and ranged from 2.75% to 12.5% of pensionable pay for the financial year ending 31 March 2022. Employer contributions are set based on triennial actuarial funding valuations. The last such valuation was at 31 March 2019. Currently, employer contribution rates range from 7.7% to 36.1% of pensionable pay.

NOTE 1 – DESCRIPTION OF FUND (continued)

d) Benefits

Prior to 1 April 2014 pension benefits under the LGPS were based on final pensionable pay and length of pensionable service, summarised below:

	Service pre-1 April 2008	Service post-31 March 2008
Pension	Each year worked is worth 1/80 x final pensionable salary.	Each year worked is worth 1/60 x final pensionable salary.
Lump sum	Automatic lump sum of 3 x salary. In addition, part of the annual pension can be exchanged for a one-off tax-free cash payment. A lump sum of £12 is paid for each £1 of pension given up.	No automatic lump sum. Part of the annual pension can be exchanged for a one-off tax-free cash payment. A lump sum of £12 is paid for each £1 of pension given up.

From 1 April 2014, the Fund became a career average scheme as summarised below:

	Service post-31 March 2014
Pension	Each year worked is worth 1/49 x career average revalued earnings (CARE)
Lump Sum	No automatic lump sum. Part of the annual pension can be exchanged for a one-off tax-free cash payment. A lump sum of £12 is paid for each £1 of pension given up.

Accrued pension is increased annually in line with the Consumer Prices Index.

There are a number of other benefits provided under the scheme including early retirement, disability pensions and death benefits. For more details, please refer to the Gwynedd Pension Fund scheme handbook available from Gwynedd Council's Pensions Section.

NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PREPARATION

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Fund's transactions for the 2021/22 financial year and its position at year-end as at 31 March 2022. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 which is based upon International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), as amended for the UK public sector. The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

Paragraph 3.3.1.2 of the Code requires disclosure of any accounting standards issued but not yet adopted. No such accounting standards have been identified for 2021/22.

The accounts report on the net assets available to pay pension benefits. They do not take account of obligations to pay pensions and benefits that fall due after the end of the financial year nor do they take into account the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits. The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits, valued on an International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19 basis, is disclosed at Note 19 of these accounts.

NOTE 3 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Fund Account – revenue recognition

a) Contribution Income

Normal contributions are accounted for on an accrual basis as follows:

- Employee contributions rates are set in accordance with LGPS regulations, using common percentage rates for all schemes that rise according to pensionable pay.
- Employer contributions are set at the percentage rate recommend by the fund actuary for the period to which they relate.

Employer deficit funding contributions are accounted for on the due dates on which they are payable under the schedule of contributions set by the fund’s actuary or on receipt if earlier than the due date.

Employers’ augmentation contributions and pensions strain contributions are accounted for in the period in which the liability arises. Any amount due in year but unpaid will be classed as a current financial asset. Amounts not due until future years are classed as long-term financial assets.

b) Transfers to and from other schemes

Transfer in and out relate to members who have joined or left the fund.

Individual transfers in/ out are accounted for when received or paid. Transfers in from members wishing to use the proceeds of their additional voluntary contributions (see below) to purchase scheme benefits are accounted for on a receipts basis and are included in Transfers In (Note 9).

Bulk (group) transfers are accounted for on an accruals basis in accordance with the terms of the transfer agreement.

c) Investment income

i) Interest income

Interest income is recognised in the Fund account as it accrues, using the effective interest rate of the financial instrument as at the date of acquisition or origination.

ii) Dividend income

Dividend income is recognised on the date the shares are quoted ex-dividend. Any amount not received by the end of the reporting period is disclosed in the net assets statement as a current financial asset.

iii) Distributions from pooled funds including property

Distributions from pooled funds are recognised at the date of issue. Any amount not received by the end of the reporting period is disclosed in the net assets statement as a current financial asset.

iv) Movement in the net market value of investments

Changes in the net market value of investments are recognised as income and comprise all realised and unrealised profits/losses during the year.

NOTE 3 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Fund account – expense items

d) Benefits payable

Pensions and lump-sum benefits payable include all amounts known to be due as at the end of the financial year. Any amounts due but unpaid are disclosed in the net assets statement as current liabilities, providing that payment has been approved.

e) Management expenses

The fund discloses its management expenses in line with CIPFA guidance Accounting for Local Government Pension Scheme Management Expenses (2016), as shown below. All items of expenditure are charged to the fund on an accrual basis as follows:

Administrative expenses

All staff costs of the pensions administration team are charged direct to the Fund. Council recharges for management, accommodation and other overhead costs are also accounted for as administrative expenses of the fund.

Oversight and governance costs

All costs associated with oversight and governance are separately identified, apportioned to this activity and charged as expenses to the fund.

Investment management expenses

Investment fees are charged directly to the fund as part of management expenses and are not included in, or netted off from, the reported return on investments. Where fees are netted off returns by investment managers, these expenses are grossed up to increase the change in value of investments.

Fees charges by external investment managers and custodians are set out in the respective mandates governing their appointments. Broadly, these are based on the market value of the investments under their management and therefore increase or reduce as the value of these investments change.

Transaction costs are associated with the acquisition or disposal of fund assets and are disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

f) Taxation

The Fund is a registered public service scheme under section 1(1) of Schedule 36 of the Finance Act 2004 and as such is exempt from UK income tax on interest received and from capital gains tax on the proceeds of investments sold. Income from overseas investments suffers withholding tax in the country of origin, unless exemption is permitted. Irrecoverable tax is accounted for as a Fund expense as it arises.

NOTE 3 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Net assets statement

g) Financial assets

All investment assets are included in the net assets statement on a fair value basis as at the reporting date. A financial asset is recognised in the net assets statement on the date the fund becomes party to the contractual acquisition of the asset. Any gains or losses on investment sales arising from changes in the fair value of the asset are recognised in the fund account.

The values of investments as shown in the net assets statement have been determined at fair value in accordance with the requirement of the Code and IFRS 13 (see note 14). For the purposes of disclosing levels of fair value hierarchy, the fund has adopted the classification guidelines recommended in Practical Guidance on Investment Disclosures (PRAG/ Investment Association, 2016).

h) Foreign currency transactions

Dividends, interest and purchases and sales of investments in foreign currencies have been accounted for at the spot market rates at the date of transaction. End of year spot market exchange rates are used to value cash balances held in foreign currency bank accounts, market values of overseas investments and purchases and sales outstanding at the end of the reporting period.

i) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash comprises cash in hand and demand deposits and includes amounts held by the fund's external managers. All cash balances are short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and that are subject to minimal risk of changes in value.

j) Financial liabilities

A financial liability is recognised in the net asset statement on the date the fund becomes legally responsible for that liability. The fund recognises financial liabilities relating to investment trading at fair value and any gains and losses arising from changes in the fair value of the liability between contract date, the year-end date and the eventual settlement date are recognised in the fund account as part of the change in value of investments.

Other financial liabilities classed as amortised cost are carried in the net assets statement at the value of the outstanding principal at 31 March each year. Any interest due not yet paid is accounted for on an accruals basis and included in administration costs.

k) Actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits is assessed on a triennial basis by the fund actuary in accordance with the requirements of IAS19 and relevant actuarial standards.

As permitted under the Code, the Fund has opted to disclose the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits by way of a note to the net assets statement (Note 19).

NOTE 3 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

l) Additional voluntary contributions

Gwynedd Pension Fund provides an additional voluntary contributions (AVC) scheme for its members, the assets of which are invested separately from those of the Pension Fund. There are three AVC funds. They are held with Clerical Medical, Utmost Life and Standard Life. The AVC providers secure additional benefits on a money purchase basis for those members electing to pay additional voluntary contributions. Members participating in these arrangements each receive an annual statement made up to 31 March confirming the amounts held in their account and the movements in year.

AVCs are not included in the accounts in accordance with Section 4(1)(b) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 but are disclosed for information only in Note 22.

m) Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place giving rise to a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed or otherwise by future events. A contingent liability arises where an event prior to the year end has created a possible financial obligation whose existence will only be confirmed or otherwise by future events. Contingent liabilities can also arise when it is not possible at the Balance Sheet to measure the value of the financial obligation reliably.

Contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the net asset statement but are disclosed by way of narrative in the notes.

NOTE 4 – CRITICAL JUDGEMENTS IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Unquoted private equity and infrastructure investments

The fair value of private equity investments and infrastructure are inherently based on forward-looking estimates and judgements involving many factors. Unquoted private equities and infrastructure are valued by the investment managers using guidelines set out by IFRS accounting standards. The value of unquoted securities at 31 March 2022 was £226.1 million (£211.6 million at 31 March 2021).

Pension fund liability

The pension fund liability is calculated every three years by the appointed actuary, with annual updates in the intervening years. The methodology used is in line with accepted guidelines and in accordance with IAS19. Assumptions underpinning the valuations are agreed with the actuary and are summarised in Note 18. This estimate is subject to significant variances based on changes to the underlying assumptions.

NOTE 5 – ASSUMPTIONS MADE ABOUT THE FUTURE AND OTHER MAJOR SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts. Estimates and assumptions take account of historical experience, current trends and future expectations. However, actual outcomes could be different from assumptions and estimates made.

The items in the net assets statement for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if actual results differ from assumptions
Actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits (Note 19)	Estimation of the net liability to pay pension depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, salary increases, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and return on fund assets. Hymans Robertson is engaged to provide the fund with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.	The effects on the net pensions liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. However, the assumptions interact in complex ways.
Private equity and infrastructure	Private equity and infrastructure investments are valued at fair value in accordance with British Venture Capital Association guidelines (December 2018). These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in the valuation.	The total private equity and infrastructure investments in the financial statements are £226.1 million. There is a risk that this investment may be under or overstated in the accounts.

NOTE 6 – EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING DATE

There are no significant events after the year end to report.

NOTE 7 – CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED

By category

2020/21		2021/22
£'000		£'000
18,671	Employees' contributions	19,703
	Employers' contributions:	
59,581	• Normal contributions	63,233
0	• Deficit recovery contributions	35
59,581	Total employers' contributions	63,268
78,252	Total contributions receivable	82,971

By type of employer

2020/21		2021/22
£'000		£'000
25,328	Gwynedd Council	27,650
47,917	Other scheduled bodies	50,205
1,749	Admission bodies	1,716
2,712	Community admission bodies	2,892
140	Transferee admission bodies	161
352	Resolution bodies	313
54	Closed funds*	34
78,252		82,971

* Closed funds – These are contributions received from Ynys Môn Citizens Advice Bureau and Conwy Citizens Advice Bureau which were admitted bodies but are now closed funds.

NOTE 8 – OTHER INCOME

2020/21		2021/22
£'000		£'000
2	Interest on deferred contributions	2
2	Income from divorce calculations	2
4		4

NOTE 9 – TRANSFERS IN FROM OTHER PENSION FUNDS

2020/21		2021/22
£'000		£'000
3,356	Individual transfers	2,664
3,356		2,664

NOTE 10 - BENEFITS PAID

By category

2020/21		2021/22
£'000		£'000
50,411	Pensions	52,087
10,807	Commutation and lump sum retirement benefits	13,123
1,160	Lump sum death benefits	1,769
62,378		66,979

By type of employer

2020/21*		2021/22
£'000		£'000
18,773	Gwynedd Council	20,183
28,234	Other scheduled bodies	31,868
1,506	Admission bodies	1,651
1,133	Community admission bodies	1,217
50	Transferee admission bodies	104
174	Resolution bodies	109
12,508	Closed funds	11,847
62,378		66,979

2020/21 figures have been reanalysed to correct the employer categories

NOTE 11 – PAYMENTS TO AND ON ACCOUNT OF LEAVERS

2020/21		2021/22
£'000		£'000
92	Refunds to members leaving service	138
2,960	Individual transfers	3,545
3,052		3,683

NOTE 12 – MANAGEMENT EXPENSES

2020/21		2021/22
£'000		£'000
21,128	Investment management expenses	14,788
1,268	Administrative costs	1,373
273	Oversight and governance costs	364
22,669		16,525

NOTE 12a – INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT EXPENSES

2021/22	Management Fees £'000	Transaction Costs £'000	Total £'000
Pooled Funds			
Fixed Income	297	0	297
Equities	2,420	693	3,113
Other Investments			
Pooled Property	1,744	0	1,744
Private Equity	6,445	0	6,445
Infrastructure	2,937	0	2,937
	13,843	693	14,536
Custody Fees			252
Total			14,788

2020/21	Management fees £'000	Transaction costs £'000	Total £'000
Pooled Funds			
Fixed Income	865	0	865
Equities	2,733	442	3,175
Other Investments			
Pooled Property	1,565	0	1,565
Private Equity	12,274	0	12,274
Infrastructure	3,044	0	3,044
	20,481	442	20,923
Custody Fees			205
Total			21,128

The management fees disclosed above include all investment management fees directly incurred by the Fund including those charged on pooled investment vehicles. There are no performance-related fees paid to investment managers. In addition to these costs, indirect costs are incurred through the bid-offer spread on investment sales and purchases. They are reflected in the cost of investment purchases and in the proceeds of sales of investments in Note 14a.

The WPP Global Opportunities, Multi Asset Credit, Absolute Return Bond and Emerging Market funds are investments which are appointed via a manager of manager approach which have their own underlying fees. The return for this mandate are net of the underlying manager fees which is reflected in Note 14a within the Change in Market value- for transparency, the fees in 2021/22 were £1,881,000 (£1,846,000 in 2020/21).

NOTE 12b- ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

2020/21 £'000		2021/22 £'000
576	Direct employee costs	652
316	Other direct costs	344
376	Support services, including IT	377
1,268		1,373

Administrative costs include amounts charged to the Pension Fund by Gwynedd Council for staff costs, support services and accommodation.

NOTE 12c- OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE COSTS

2020/21 £'000		2021/22 £'000
88	Actuarial fees	117
44	Investment consultancy fees	49
13	Performance monitoring service	9
34	External audit fees	36
6	Pensions Committee and Local Pension Board	18
88	Wales Pensions Partnership	135
273		364

NOTE 12d- WALES PENSION PARTNERSHIP

The Investment Management Expenses in Note 12a are fees payable to Link Fund Solutions (the WPP operator) and include fund manager fees (which also includes the operator fee and other associated costs), transaction costs and custody fees. These costs are based on each Fund's percentage share of WPP pooled assets and are deducted from the NAV.

The oversight and governance costs in Note 12c are the annual running costs of the pool which includes the host authority costs and other external advisor costs. These costs are funded equally by all eight of the local authority Pension Funds in Wales.

The following fees are included in Note 12 in relation to the Wales Pension Partnership and further details on the WPP can be found in the Annual Report.

	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Investment Management Expenses		
Fund Manager fees	1,955	2,286
Transaction costs	442	693
Custody fees	179	227
	2,576	3,206
Oversight and governance costs		
Running Costs	88	135
Total	2,664	3,341

NOTE 13 – INVESTMENT INCOME

2020/21 £'000		2021/22 £'000
1,579	Fixed Income	4,430
20,587	Equities	12,141
1,108	Private Equity	2,090
888	Infrastructure	280
6,507	Pooled property investments	7,213
99	Interest on cash deposits	16
30,768	Total before taxes	26,170

The Gwynedd Pension Fund has two bank accounts which are held as part of Gwynedd Council's Group of Bank Accounts. The overall surplus cash held in the Group of Bank Accounts is invested on a daily basis. At the end of the financial year, Gwynedd Council pays interest over to the Pension Fund, based on the Fund's daily balances over the year.

The Pension Fund also has a Euro account to deal with receipts and payments in Euros and to minimise exchange transactions and relevant costs.

NOTE 14 – INVESTMENTS

31 March 2021 £'000		31 March 2022 £'000
	Investment assets	
	Pooled Funds	
484,315	Fixed income	551,777
1,624,630	Equities	1,730,845
	Other Investments	
194,581	Pooled property investments	252,521
165,423	Private equity	158,711
46,220	Infrastructure	67,417
2,515,169		2,761,271
146	Cash deposits	303
2,515,315	Total investment assets	2,761,574
	Investment liabilities	
(126)	Amounts payable for purchases	(285)
(126)	Total investment liabilities	(285)
2,515,189	Net investment assets	2,761,289

NOTE 14a – RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENTS IN INVESTMENTS AND DERIVATIVES

2021/22	Market value at 1 April 2021	Purchases during the year	Sales during the year	Change in market value during the year	Market value at 31 March 2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Pooled investments	2,108,945	151,612	(116,647)	138,712	2,282,622
Pooled property investments	194,581	19,038	0	38,902	252,521
Private equity / infrastructure	211,643	38,945	(56,756)	32,296	226,128
	<u>2,515,169</u>	<u>209,595</u>	<u>(173,403)</u>	<u>209,910</u>	<u>2,761,271</u>
Cash deposits	146				303
Amounts payable for purchases of investments	(126)				(285)
Fees within pooled vehicles				13,100	
Net investment assets	2,515,189			223,010	2,761,289

2020/21	Market value at 1 April 2020	Purchases during the year	Sales during the year	Change in market value during the year	Market value at 31 March 2021
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Pooled investments	1,580,029	759,879	(727,541)	496,578	2,108,945
Pooled property investments	191,256	3,592	(281)	14	194,581
Private equity / infrastructure	157,230	29,249	(24,283)	49,447	211,643
	<u>1,928,515</u>	<u>792,720</u>	<u>(752,105)</u>	<u>546,039</u>	<u>2,515,169</u>
Cash deposits	783				146
Amounts payable for purchases of investments	0				(126)
Fees within pooled vehicles				19,472	
Net investment assets	1,929,298			565,511	2,515,189

NOTE 14b – ANALYSIS OF INVESTMENTS

Investments analysed by fund manager

Market Value at 31 March 2021			Market Value at 31 March 2022		
£'000	%		£'000	%	
1,360,124	54.1	Wales Pension Partnership	1,496,425	54.2	
735,481	29.2	BlackRock	851,675	30.9	
211,643	8.4	Partners Group	226,128	8.2	
47,627	1.9	UBS	75,739	2.7	
61,338	2.4	Lothbury	72,139	2.6	
31,904	1.3	Threadneedle	39,450	1.4	
20	0.0	Veritas	18	0.0	
67,178	2.7	Fidelity	0	0.0	
2,515,315	100.0		2,761,574	100.0	

The following investments represent more than 5% of the net assets of the Fund:

Market Value at 31 March 2021			Market Value at 31 March 2022		
£'000	%		£'000	%	
442,964	17.5	WPP Global Opportunities Fund	454,098	16.4	
432,845	17.1	WPP Global Growth Fund	430,749	15.5	
307,181	12.2	WPP Absolute Return Bond	353,857	12.7	
297,967	11.8	Black Rock ACS World Low Carbon Fund	346,072	12.5	
211,625	8.4	Black Rock Aquila Life UK Equity Index Fund	239,314	8.6	
172,052	6.8	Black Rock Aquila Life GI Dev Fundamental Fund	200,811	7.2	
177,134	7.0	WPP Multi Asset Credit Fund	197,920	7.1	

NOTE 14c – STOCK LENDING

The Fund's investment strategy permits stock lending subject to specific approval. The income earned by the fund through stock lending was £126,800. Currently the Fund has total quoted equities of £35.8m on loan. These equities continue to be recognised in the Fund's financial statements. No liabilities are associated with the loaned assets.

NOTE 15 – FAIR VALUE- BASIS OF VALUATION

All investment assets are valued using fair value techniques based on the characteristics of each instrument, where possible using market- based information. There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year.

Assets and liabilities have been classified into three levels, according to the quality and reliability of information used to determine fair values.

Level 1 - where the fair values are derived from unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities, comprising quoted equities, quoted bonds and unit trusts.

Level 2 - where quoted market prices are not available, or where valuation techniques are used to determine fair value based on observable data.

Level 3 - where at least one input that could have a significant effect on the instrument's valuation is not based on observable market data.

NOTE 15 – FAIR VALUE- BASIS OF VALUATION (continued)

Description of Asset	Valuation hierarchy	Basis of valuation	Observable and unobservable inputs	Key sensitivities affecting the Valuations provided
Cash and cash equivalents	Level 1	Carrying value is deemed to be fair value because of the short- term nature of these financial instruments	Not required	Not required
Pooled investments- equity funds	Level 2	The 'NAV' (net asset value) is calculated based on the market value of the underlying assets	Evaluated price feeds	Not required
Pooled investments- fixed income	Level 2	The 'NAV' is calculated based on the market value of the underlying fixed income Securities	Evaluated price feeds	Not required
Pooled property funds	Level 2	Closing bid price where bid and offer prices are published; closing single price where single price is published	'NAV'- based set on a forward pricing basis	Not required
Private equities	Level 3	Comparable valuation of similar companies in accordance with International Private Equity and Venture Capital Valuation Guidelines 2018 and the IPEV Board's Special Valuation Guidance (March 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EBITDA multiple • Revenue multiple • Discount for lack of marketability • Control premium 	Valuations could be affected by changes to expected cashflows or by differences between audited and unaudited accounts
Infrastructure	Level 3	Valued using discounted cashflow techniques to generate a net present value	Discount rate and cashflow used in the models	Rate of inflation, interest, tax and foreign exchange

Sensitivity of assets valued at level 3

The values reported in the Level 3 valuations represent the most accurate estimation of the portfolio values as at 31 March 2022. Any subjectivity related to the investment value is incorporated into the valuation, and the sensitivity analysis can be seen in Note 17.

Transfers between levels 1 and 2

There were no transfers between levels 1 and 2 investments during 2021/22.

NOTE 15a – FAIR VALUE HIERARCHY

The values of the investment in private equity are based on valuations provided by the general partners to the private equity funds in which Gwynedd Pension Fund has invested. These valuations are prepared in accordance with the International Private Equity and Venture Capital Valuation Guidelines, which follow the valuation principles of IFRS and US GAAP.

The following table provides an analysis of the financial assets and liabilities of the pension fund grouped into Levels 1 to 3, based on the level at which the fair value is observable.

Values at 31 March 2022	Quoted market price Level 1 £'000	Using observable inputs Level 2 £'000	With significant unobservable inputs Level 3 £'000	Total £'000
Financial assets at fair value through profit and loss				
Fixed income	0	551,777	0	551,777
Equities	0	1,730,845	0	1,730,845
Pooled property investments	0	252,521	0	252,521
Private equity	0	0	158,711	158,711
Infrastructure	0	0	67,417	67,417
Cash deposits	303	0	0	303
	303	2,535,143	226,128	2,761,574
Financial liabilities at fair value through profit and loss				
Payables for investment purchases	(285)	0	0	(285)
Total	18	2,535,143	226,128	2,761,289

NOTE 15a – FAIR VALUE HIERARCHY (CONTINUED)

Values at 31 March 2021	Quoted market price Level 1 £'000	Using observable inputs Level 2 £'000	With significant unobservable inputs Level 3 £'000	Total £'000
Financial assets at fair value through profit and loss				
Fixed income	0	484,315	0	484,315
Equities	0	1,624,630	0	1,624,630
Pooled property investments	0	194,581	0	194,581
Private equity	0	0	165,423	165,423
Infrastructure	0	0	46,220	46,220
Cash deposits	146	0	0	146
	146	2,303,526	211,643	2,515,315
Financial liabilities at fair value through profit and loss				
Payables for investment purchases	(126)	0	0	(126)
Total	20	2,303,526	211,643	2,515,189

NOTE 15b – RECONCILIATION OF FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS WITHIN LEVEL 3

	Market Value 1 April 2021 £'000	Transfers out of Level 3 £'000	Purchases during the year £'000	Sales during the year £'000	Unrealised gains/ (losses) £'000	Realised (gains)/ losses £'000	Market Value 31 March 2022 £'000
Property Unit Trusts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private Equity	165,423	0	23,050	(22,550)	23,275	(30,487)	158,711
Infrastructure	46,220	0	15,895	(3,488)	9,021	(231)	67,417
Total Level 3	211,643	0	38,945	(26,038)	32,296	(30,718)	226,128

	Market Value 1 April 2020 £'000	Transfers out of Level 3 £'000	Purchases during the year £'000	Sales during the year £'000	Unrealised gains/ (losses) £'000	Realised (gains)/ losses £'000	Market Value 31 March 2021 £'000
Property Unit Trusts	191,256	(191,256)	0	0	0	0	0
Private Equity	112,661	0	18,796	(7,115)	45,538	(4,457)	165,423
Infrastructure	44,569	0	10,453	(7,952)	3,909	(4,759)	46,220
Total Level 3	348,486	(191,256)	29,249	(15,067)	49,447	(9,216)	211,643

The transfer from level 3 in 2020/21 is the movement of Property Unit Trusts as the material uncertainty clause was removed from property valuations.

NOTE 16 - CLASSIFICATION OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Accounting policies describe how different asset classes of financial instruments are measured, and how income and expenses, including fair value gains and losses, are recognised. The following table analyses the carrying amounts of financial assets and liabilities by category and net assets statement heading. No financial assets were reclassified during the accounting period.

As at 31 March 2021			As at 31 March 2022		
Fair value through profit and loss	Assets at amortised cost	Liabilities at amortised cost	Fair value through profit and loss	Assets at amortised cost	Liabilities at amortised cost
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
			Financial assets		
2,108,945			2,282,622		
194,581			252,521		
165,423			158,711		
46,220			67,417		
	12,282			14,481	
	4,017			3,650	
2,515,169	16,299	0	2,761,271	18,131	0
			Financial liabilities		
		(3,339)			(3,641)
0	0	(3,339)	0	0	(3,641)
2,515,169	16,299	(3,339)	2,761,271	18,131	(3,641)

NOTE 16a – NET GAINS AND LOSSES ON FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

31 March 2021		31 March 2022	
Fair value		Fair value	
£'000		£'000	
		Financial assets	
546,039	Fair value through profit and loss	209,909	
0	Loans and receivables	0	
546,039	Total financial assets	209,909	
		Financial liabilities	
0	Fair value through profit and loss	0	
0	Financial liabilities at cost	0	
0	Total financial liabilities	0	
546,039	Net financial assets	209,909	

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Risk and risk management

The Fund's primary long-term risk is that the Fund's assets will fall short of its liabilities (i.e. promised benefits payable to members). The aim of investment risk management is to minimise the risk of an overall reduction in the value of the Fund and to maximise the opportunity for gains across the whole Fund portfolio. The Fund achieves this through asset diversification to reduce exposure to market risk (pricerisk, currency risk and interest rate risk) and credit risk to an acceptable level. In addition, the Fund manages its liquidity risk to ensure there is sufficient liquidity to meet the Fund's forecast cash flows. The Fund manages these investment risks as part of its overall Pension Fund risk management programme.

Responsibility for the Fund's risk management strategy rests with the Pensions Committee. Risk management policies are established to identify and analyse the risks faced by the Pension's Fund operations, then reviewed regularly to reflect changes in activity and market conditions.

a) Market risk

Market risk is the risk of loss from fluctuations in equity and commodity prices, interest and foreign exchange rates and credit spreads. The Fund is exposed to market risk from its investment activities, particularly through its equity holdings. The level of risk exposure depends on market conditions, expectations of future price and yield movements and the asset mix.

The objective of the Fund's risk management strategy is to identify, manage and control market risk exposure within acceptable parameters, whilst optimising investment return.

In general, excessive volatility in market risk is managed through the diversification of the portfolio in terms of geographical and industry sectors and individual securities. To mitigate market risk, the Fund and its investment advisors undertake appropriate monitoring of market conditions and benchmark analysis.

The Fund manages these risks in two ways:

- the exposure of the Fund to market risk is monitored through a risk factor analysis to ensure that risk remains within tolerable levels;
- specific risk exposure is limited by applying risk-weighted maximum exposures to individual investments.

Other price risk

Other price risk represents the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate as a result of changes in market prices (other than those arising from interest rate risk or foreign exchange risk), whether those changes are caused by factors specific to the individual instrument or its issuer or by factors affecting all such instruments in the market.

The Fund is exposed to share price risk. The Fund's investment managers mitigate this price risk through diversification and the selection of securities and other financial instruments is monitored to ensure it is within the limits set in the Fund investment strategy.

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

Other price risk – sensitivity analysis

Following analysis of historical data and expected investment return movement during the financial year, in consultation with the Fund's investment advisors, the Fund has determined that the following movements in market price risk are reasonably possible for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 reporting period.

Asset type	Potential market movement (+/-)	
	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
	%	%
UK Equities	16.7	19.9
Global Equities	17.4	20.1
Emerging Markets Equities	22.1	27.0
Private Equity	28.5	31.2
Absolute Return Bond	2.1	2.8
Infrastructure	21.0	14.6
Property	14.2	15.0
Diversified Credit	6.2	7.4
Cash	0.3	0.3
Total Fund	11.7	14.3

The potential volatilities disclosed above are consistent with a one-standard deviation movement in the change of value of the assets over the latest three years. The total fund volatility takes into account the expected interactions between the different asset classes shown, based on the underlying volatilities and correlations of the assets, in line with mean variance portfolio theory.

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

Had the market price of the Fund investments increased/decreased in line with the above, the change in the market price of the net assets available to pay benefits would have been as follows:

Asset type	Value as at 31 March 2022 £'000	Percentage change %	Value on increase £'000	Value on decrease £'000
UK Equities	239,314	19.9	286,937	191,690
Global Equities	1,431,729	20.1	1,719,508	1,143,952
Emerging Markets Equities	59,802	27.0	75,948	43,655
Private Equity*	158,711	31.2	208,228	109,193
Absolute Return Bonds	353,857	2.8	363,765	343,949
Infrastructure*	67,417	14.6	77,260	57,574
Property	252,521	15.0	290,399	214,643
Diversified Credit	197,920	7.4	212,566	183,274
Cash	14,481	0.3	14,525	14,438
Debtors and Creditors	9	0.0	9	9
Total assets available to pay benefits	2,775,761		3,249,145	2,302,377
*Level 3 assets	226,128		285,488	166,767

Asset type	Value as at 31 March 2021 £'000	Percentage change %	Value on increase £'000	Value on decrease £'000
UK Equities	211,625	16.7	246,966	176,283
Global Equities	1,345,827	17.4	1,580,001	1,111,653
Emerging Markets Equities	67,178	22.1	82,025	52,332
Private Equity*	165,423	28.5	212,568	118,277
Absolute Return Bonds	307,181	2.1	313,632	300,730
Infrastructure*	46,220	21.0	55,926	36,514
Property	194,581	14.2	222,211	166,950
Diversified Credit	177,134	6.2	188,116	166,152
Cash	12,282	0.3	12,318	12,245
Debtors and Creditors	678	0.0	678	678
Total assets available to pay benefits	2,528,129		2,914,441	2,141,814
*Level 3 assets	211,643		268,494	154,791

Interest rate risk

The Fund invests in financial assets for the primary purpose of obtaining a return on investments. These investments are subject to interest rate risks, which represent the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.

The Fund's interest rate risk is routinely monitored in accordance with the Fund's risk management strategy, including monitoring the exposure to interest rates and assessment of actual interest rates against the relevant benchmarks.

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

The Fund's direct exposure to interest rate movements as at 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2022 is set out below. These disclosures present interest rate risk based on the underlying financial assets at fair value:

Asset type	As at 31 March 2021	As at 31 March 2022
	£'000	£'000
Cash and cash equivalents	12,136	14,178
Cash balances	146	303
Pooled Fixed Income	484,315	551,777
Total	496,597	566,258

Interest rate risk sensitivity analysis

The Fund recognises that interest rates can vary and can affect both income to the Fund and the value of net assets available to pay benefits. A 1% movement in interest rates is consistent with the level of sensitivity applied as part of the Fund's risk management strategy. The analysis that follows assumes that all other variables, in particular exchange rates, remain constant, and shows the effect in the year on the net assets available to pay benefits of a +/- 1% change in interest rates:

Asset type	Carrying amount as at 31 March 2022	Change in year in the net assets available to pay benefits	
		+1%	-1%
		£'000	£'000
Cash and cash equivalents	14,178	142	(142)
Cash balances	303	3	(3)
Pooled Fixed Income *	551,777	5,518	(5,518)
Total change in assets available	566,258	5,663	(5,663)

* A change of 1% in interest rate does not have a direct impact on fixed interest securities but does have a partial impact as calculated in the tables above.

Asset type	Carrying amount as at 31 March 2021	Change in year in the net assets available to pay benefits	
		+1%	-1%
		£'000	£'000
Cash and cash equivalents	12,136	121	(121)
Cash balances	146	1	(1)
Pooled Fixed Income *	484,315	4,843	(4,843)
Total change in assets available	496,597	4,965	(4,965)

* A change of 1% in interest rate does not have a direct impact on fixed interest securities but does have a partial impact as calculated in the tables above.

The impact that a 1% change in interest rates would have on interest received is minimal as the average interest rate received on cash during the year was 0.10% amounting to interest of £14,183 for the year.

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

A 1% increase in interest rates will not affect the interest received on fixed income assets but will reduce their fair value, as shown in the tables above. Changes in interest rates do not impact on the value of cash / cash equivalents but they will affect the interest income received on those balances. Changes to both the fair value of assets and income received from investments impact on the net assets to pay benefits but as noted above this does not have a significant effect on the Fund.

Currency risk

Currency risk represents the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in foreign exchange rates. The Fund is exposed to currency risk on financial instruments that are denominated in any currency other than the functional currency of the Fund (£UK). The Fund holds assets denominated in currencies other than £UK.

The Fund has made commitments to private equity and infrastructure in foreign currency (€363.2 million and \$88.6 million). These commitments are being drawn down on request from the investment manager over a number of years. The current commitments still outstanding are shown in Note 24. The risk is that the pound is weak relative to the dollar and euro at the time of the drawdown and then strengthens when the Fund is fully funded. The Fund has been funding the commitments since 2005 and therefore the liability is balanced out over a long period.

The Fund's currency rate risk has been calculated based on the volatility of the currencies which would affect the value of the investments and any cash held in those currencies.

Currency risk – sensitivity analysis

Following analysis of historical data in consultation with the Fund investment advisors, the likely volatility associated with foreign exchange rate movements has been calculated with reference to the historic volatility of the currencies and their relative amounts in the Fund's investments.

The 1 year expected standard deviation for an individual currency as at 31 March 2022 is 9.5%. The equivalent rate for the year ended 31 March 2021 was 9.8%. This analysis assumes that all other variables, in particular interest rates, remain constant.

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

The tables below show a breakdown of the Fund's exposure to individual currencies as at 31 March 2022 and at the end of the previous financial year:

Currency exposure - by asset type	Carrying amount as at 31 March 2022	Change in year in the net assets available to pay benefits	
		Value on increase	Value on decrease
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Global Equities	1,431,729	1,567,744	1,295,716
Emerging Markets Equities	59,802	65,483	54,120
Private Equity	158,711	173,788	143,633
Absolute Return Bonds	353,857	387,473	320,240
Infrastructure	67,417	73,822	61,013
Diversified Credit	197,920	216,722	179,118
Total change in assets available	2,269,436	2,485,032	2,053,840

Currency exposure - by asset type	Carrying amount as at 31 March 2021	Change in year in the net assets available to pay benefits	
		Value on increase	Value on decrease
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Global Equities	1,345,827	1,477,718	1,213,936
Emerging Markets Equities	67,178	73,762	60,595
Private Equity	165,423	181,634	149,211
Absolute Return Bonds	307,181	337,285	277,077
Infrastructure	46,220	50,750	41,690
Diversified Credit	177,134	194,493	159,775
Property	0	0	0
Total change in assets available	2,108,963	2,315,642	1,902,284

b) Credit risk

Credit risk represents the risk that the counterparty to a transaction or a financial instrument will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the Fund to incur a financial loss. The market values of investments generally reflect an assessment of credit in their pricing and consequently the risk of loss is implicitly provided for in the carrying value of the Fund's financial assets and liabilities.

In essence, the Fund's entire investment portfolio is exposed to some form of credit risk. However, the selection of high quality counterparties, brokers and financial institutions minimises credit risk that may occur through the failure to settle a transaction in a timely manner.

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

The benchmark for the concentration of the funds held with investment managers is as follows:

Investment Manager	Percentage of Portfolio
BlackRock	29.5%
Wales Pension Partnership Emerging Markets	2.5%
Wales Pension Partnership Global Growth	14.0%
Wales Pension Partnership Global Opportunities	14.0%
Wales Pension Partnership Multi Asset Credit	7.5%
Wales Pension Partnership Absolute Return Bond	15.0%
Property (UBS, Threadneedle, Lothbury, BlackRock)	10.0%
Partners Group	7.5%

All investments held by investment managers are held in the name of the Pension Fund so, if the investment manager fails, the Fund's investments are not classed amongst their assets.

Contractual credit risk is represented by the net payment or receipt that remains outstanding. The residual risk is minimal due to the various insurance policies held by the exchanges to cover defaulting counterparties.

In order to maximise the returns from short-term investments and cash deposits, the Council invests any temporarily surplus funds in its bank accounts along with any surplus funds in the Gwynedd Pension Fund bank accounts. An appropriate share of the interest earned is paid to the Pension Fund and any losses on investment are shared with the Pension Fund in the same proportion. Due to the nature of the banking arrangements, any surplus cash in the Pension Fund bank accounts is not transferred to the Council's bank accounts. As the short-term investments are made in the name of Gwynedd Council, they are shown in full on the Council's Balance Sheet. The Pension Fund element of the short-term investments and cash deposits at 31 March 2022 was £14.3m (£12.5m at 31 March 2021).

Deposits are not made with banks and financial institutions unless they are rated independently and meet the Council's credit criteria. The Council has also set limits as to the maximum percentage of deposits placed with any one class of financial institution. In addition, the Council invests an agreed percentage of funds in the money markets to provide diversification. Money market funds chosen all have AAA rating from a leading ratings agency.

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

Employers in the Fund are not currently assessed for their creditworthiness or individual credit limits set. There is risk of being unable to collect contributions from employers with no contributing members (e.g. risk associated with employers with a small number of declining contributing members) so the Administering Authority monitors membership movements on an annual basis.

New employers to the Fund will need to agree to the provision of a bond or obtain a guarantee to reduce the risk of future financial loss to the Fund in the event of not being able to meet its pension liability on cessation. As shown in Note 25 two employers have provided bonds. Any future liabilities falling on the Fund as a result of cessation are borne by the whole Fund and spread across all employers. This is done to ensure that actuarial recovery periods and amounts are kept at a manageable level for smaller employers.

This risk has increased by a legal judgement, which potentially indicates that employers with no contributing members cannot be charged contributions under the LGPS Administration Regulations. This ruling, however, does not affect the ability to collect contributions following a cessation valuation under Regulation 38(2). The Actuary may be instructed to consider revising the rates and Adjustments certificate to increase an employer's contributions under Regulation 38 of the LGPS (Administration) Regulations 2008 between triennial valuations.

c) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk represents the risk that the Fund will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The Council therefore takes steps to ensure that the Pension Fund has adequate cash resources to meet its commitments to pay pensions and other costs and to meet investment commitments.

The Council has a cash flow system that seeks to ensure that cash is available if needed. In addition, current contributions received from contributing employers and members far exceed the benefits being paid. Surplus cash is invested and cannot be paid back to employers. The Fund's Actuary establishes the contributions that should be paid in order that all future liabilities can be met.

There is no limit on the amount that the Pension Fund bank account can hold. The amounts held in this account should meet the normal liquidity needs of the Fund. Any temporary surplus is invested by the Council in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy Statement to provide additional income to the Pension Fund. Surplus cash is invested in accordance with the Statement of Investment Principles.

The Fund also has access to an overdraft facility through the Council's group bank account arrangements. This facility would only be used to meet short-term timing differences on pension payments. As these borrowings would be of a limited short-term nature, the Fund's exposure to credit risk is considered negligible.

NOTE 17 – NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

The Fund defines liquid assets as assets that can be converted to cash within three months. Illiquid assets are those assets which will take longer than three months to convert into cash. As at 31 March 2022 the value of illiquid assets was £479m, which represented 17.2% of the total Fund assets (31 March 2021: £406m, which represented 16.1% of the total Fund assets).

Management prepares periodic cash flow forecasts to understand and manage the timing of the Fund's cash flows. The appropriate strategic level of cash balances to be held forms part of the Fund investment strategy.

All financial liabilities at 31 March 2022 are due within one year as was the case at 31 March 2021.

Refinancing risk

The key risk is that the Fund will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its financial instruments at a time of unfavourable interest rates. The Fund does not have any financial instruments that have a refinancing risk as part of its treasury management and investment strategies.

NOTE 18 – FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

In line with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2013, the Fund's actuary undertakes a funding valuation every three years for the purpose of setting employer contribution rates for the forthcoming triennial period. The last such valuation took place as at 31 March 2019 and the next valuation is due to take place as at 31 March 2022.

Description of Funding Policy

The funding policy is set out in the Administering Authority's Funding Strategy Statement and was reviewed as part of the 2019 valuation.

The key elements of the funding policy are:

- to ensure the long-term solvency of the Fund using a prudent long-term view. This will ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet all members'/dependants' benefits as they fall due for payment.
- to ensure that employer contribution rates are reasonably stable where appropriate.
- to minimise the long-term cash contributions which employers need to pay to the Fund by recognising the link between assets and liabilities and adopting an investment strategy which balances risk and return (this will also minimise the costs to be borne by Council Tax payers).
- to reflect the different characteristics of different employers in determining contribution rates by having a clear and transparent funding strategy to demonstrate how each employer can best meet its own liabilities over future years.
- to use reasonable measures to reduce the risk to other employers and ultimately to the Council Tax payer from an employer defaulting on its pension obligations.

The Funding Strategy Statement sets out how the Administering Authority seeks to balance the conflicting aims of securing the solvency of the Fund and keeping employer contributions stable.

NOTE 18 – FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS (continued)

For employers whose covenant was considered by the Administering Authority to be sufficiently strong, contributions have been stabilised to have a sufficiently high likelihood of achieving the funding target over 17 years. Asset-liability modelling has been carried out which demonstrates that if these contribution rates are paid and future contribution changes are constrained as set out in the Funding Strategy Statement, there is still around a 70% chance that the Fund will return to full funding over the 17 years.

Funding Position as at the Last Formal Funding Valuation

The most recent actuarial valuation carried out under Regulation 62 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 was at 31 March 2019. This valuation revealed that the Fund's assets, which at 31 March 2019 were valued at £2,081 million, were sufficient to meet 108% of the liabilities (i.e. the present value of promised retirement benefits) accrued up to that date. The resulting surplus at the 2019 valuation was £156 million.

Each employer had contribution requirements set at the valuation, with the aim of achieving full funding within a time horizon and probability measure as per the Funding Strategy Statement. Individual employers' contributions for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023 were set in accordance with the Fund's funding policy as set out in its Funding Strategy Statement.

Principal Actuarial Assumptions and Method used to Value the Liabilities

Full details of the methods and assumptions used are described in the 2019 valuation report.

Method

The liabilities were assessed using an accrued benefits method which takes into account pensionable membership up to the valuation date, and makes an allowance for expected future salary growth to retirement or expected earlier date of leaving pensionable membership.

Assumptions

A market-related approach was taken to valuing the liabilities, for consistency with the valuation of the Fund assets at their market value.

The key financial assumptions adopted for the 2019 valuation were as follows:

Financial assumptions	31 March 2019
Discount rate	3.9%
Salary increase	2.6%
Benefit increase (CPI)	2.3%

The key demographic assumption was the allowance made for longevity. The life expectancy assumptions are based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2018 model, assuming the current rate of improvements has reached a peak and will converge to a long-term rate of 1.25% p.a. Based on these assumptions, the average future life expectancies at age 65 are as follows:

NOTE 18 – FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS (continued)

Mortality assumption	Male Years	Female Years
Current pensioners	21.3	23.4
Future pensioners (aged 45 at the 2019 valuation)	22.2	25.1

Copies of the 2019 valuation report and the Funding Strategy Statement are available on the Pension Fund's website www.gwyneddpensionfund.wales

Experience over the period since 31 March 2019

Markets were severely disrupted by COVID 19 in March 2020, but over most of 2020/21 and 2021/22 they recovered strongly. However, due to the war in Ukraine, March 2022 markets were particularly volatile, which affects values as at the accounting date. All other things being equal, the funding level of the Fund as at 31 March 2022 is likely to be better than that reported at the previous valuation as at 31 March 2019.

It is important to note that the formal triennial funding valuation exercise is at 31 March 2022 and this may show a different picture when the finalised position is disclosed in next year's annual report. In particular, changes in Fund membership, changes in anticipated real investment returns, and changes in demographic assumptions will affect the valuation results. The Funding Strategy Statements will also be reviewed as part of the triennial funding valuation exercise.

NOTE 19 - ACTUARIAL PRESENT VALUE OF PROMISED RETIREMENT BENEFITS

In addition to the triennial funding valuation, the Fund's actuary also undertakes a valuation of the Pension Fund liabilities, on an IAS19 basis every year using the same base data as the funding valuation rolled forward to the current financial year, taking account of changes in membership numbers and updating assumptions to the current year. This valuation is not carried out on the same basis as that used for setting Fund contribution rates and the Fund accounts do not take account of liabilities to pay pensions and other benefits in the future.

In order to assess the value of the benefits on this basis the actuary has updated the actuarial assumptions (set out below) from those used for funding purposes (see Note 18) and has also used them to provide the IAS19 and FRS102 reports for individual employers in the Fund. The actuary has also valued ill health and death benefits in line with IAS19.

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits at 31 March 2021 and 2022 are shown below:

	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
	£m	£m
Active members	1,939	1,929
Deferred members	631	583
Pensioners	882	818
Total	3,452	3,330

As noted above, the liabilities above are calculated on an IAS19 basis and therefore differ from the results of the 2019 triennial funding valuation (see Note 18) because IAS19 stipulates a discount rate rather than a rate that reflects market rates.

NOTE 19 - ACTUARIAL PRESENT VALUE OF PROMISED RETIREMENT BENEFITS (continued)

Assumptions used

The financial assumptions used are those adopted for the Administering Authority's IAS19 report as shown below and are different as at 31 March 2021 and 2022. The actuary estimates that the impact of the change in financial assumptions to 31 March 2022 is to decrease the actuarial present value by £281m. It is estimated that the impact of the change in demographic and longevity assumptions is to decrease the actuarial present value by £18m.

Assumption	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
	%	%
Pension increase rate	2.85	3.20
Salary increase rate	3.15	3.50
Discount rate	2.00	2.70

The life expectancy for the longevity assumption is based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2021 model, with a 0% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data, standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long term rate of improvement of 1.5% p.a. Based on these assumptions, the average future life expectancies at age 65 are summarised below:

	Male Years	Female Years
Current pensioners	21.3	23.7
Future pensioners (aged 45 at the 2019 valuation)	22.4	25.7

The commutation assumption allows for future retirements to elect to take 50% of the maximum tax-free cash up to the HMRC limit for pre-April 2008 service and 75% of the maximum tax-free cash for post-April 2008 service.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the liabilities are set out below:

Sensitivity to the assumptions for the year ended 31 March 2022	Approximate increase to liabilities %	Approximate monetary amount £m
0.1% p.a. increase in the pension increase rate	2	63
0.1% p.a. increase in the salary increase rate	0	8
0.1% p.a. decrease in the real discount rate	2	72
1 year increase in member life expectancy	4	133

NOTE 20 – CURRENT ASSETS

31 March 2021 £'000		31 March 2022 £'000
421	Contributions due – employees	483
1,402	Contributions due – employers	1,597
2,194	Sundry debtors	1,570
4,017	Total debtors	3,650
12,136	Cash	14,178
16,153	Total	17,828

NOTE 21 – CURRENT LIABILITIES

31 March 2021 £'000		31 March 2022 £'000
1,671	Sundry creditors	1,697
1,542	Benefits payable	1,659
3,213	Total	3,356

NOTE 22 - ADDITIONAL VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS (AVC)

The market value of the funds is stated below:

	Market value at 31 March 2021 £'000	Market value at 31 March 2022 £'000
Clerical Medical	4,372	4,670
Utmost Life	193	182
Standard Life	5	5
Total	4,570	4,857

AVC contributions were paid directly to the following manager:

	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Clerical Medical	597	645
Total	597	645

NOTE 23 - RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Gwynedd Council

The Gwynedd Pension Fund is administered by Gwynedd Council. Consequently, there is a strong relationship between the Council and the Pension Fund.

The Council incurred costs of £1,318,514 (£1,231,146 in 2020/21) in relation to the administration of the Fund and was subsequently reimbursed by the Fund for these expenses. The Council is also one of the largest employers of members of the Fund and contributed £27.87m to the Fund in 2021/22 (£25.33m in 2020/21). At the end of the year, the Council owed £0.32m to the Fund which was primarily in respect of interest paid on the Pension Fund's balances and contributions for March 2022 and the Fund owed £1.31m to the Council which was primarily in respect of recharges to the Council for the administrative costs.

The Gwynedd Pension Fund has two bank accounts which are held as part of Gwynedd Council's Group of Bank Accounts. The overall surplus cash held in the Group of Bank Accounts is invested on a daily basis. At the end of the financial year, Gwynedd Council pays interest over to the Pension Fund, based on the Fund's daily balances over the year. During 2021/22, the Fund received interest of £14,183 (£88,037 in 2020/21) from Gwynedd Council.

Governance

There were two members of the Pensions Committee who were in receipt of pension benefits from the Gwynedd Pension Fund during 2021/22 (committee members P. Jenkins and J.B. Hughes). In addition, committee members S.W. Churchman, R.W. Williams, J.B. Hughes, A.W. Jones, I. Thomas, G. Edwards and S. Glyn are active members of the Pension Fund.

Two members of the Pension Board were in receipt of pension benefits from the Gwynedd Pension Fund during 2021/22 (board members H.E. Jones and S. Warnes). In addition, Board members A.Ll. Evans, O. Richards, H. Trainor and S.E. Parry are active members of the Pension Fund.

Key Management Personnel

The key management personnel of the fund is the Fund Director.

The remuneration payable to key management personnel attributable to the fund is set out below:

31/03/2021 £'000	31/03/2022 £'000
8 Short-term benefits	7
2 Post-employment benefits	1
<hr/> 10	<hr/> 8

NOTE 24 - COMMITMENTS UNDER INVESTMENT CONTRACTS

Outstanding capital commitments (investments) at 31 March were as follows:

	Total commitments €'000	Commitment at 31 March 2021 €'000	Commitment at 31 March 2022 €'000
P.G. Direct 2006	19,224	776	0
P.G. Global Value 2006	50,000	3,477	3,477
P.G. Secondary 2008	15,000	1,960	1,960
P.G. Global Value 2011	15,000	2,096	2,096
P.G. Global Infrastructure 2012	40,000	7,019	7,019
P.G. Direct 2012	12,000	1,181	1,181
P.G. Global Value 2014	12,000	1,531	1,531
P.G. Direct Equity 2016	50,000	2,826	2,826
P.G. Global Value 2017	42,000	23,120	17,870
P.G. Global Infrastructure 2018	28,000	21,516	14,379
P.G. Direct Equity 2019	48,000	30,964	18,432
PG Direct Infrastructure 2020	32,000	29,602	24,800
Total Euros	363,224	126,068	95,571
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
P.G. Emerging Markets 2011	7,000	1,082	1,082
P.G. Secondary 2015	38,000	17,640	15,740
P.G. Direct Infrastructure 2015	43,600	13,780	9,598
Total Dollars	88,600	32,502	26,420

'PG' above refers to Partners Group, the investment manager which invests in 'alternatives' (private equity and infrastructure) on behalf of the Fund.

These commitments relate to outstanding call payments on unquoted limited partnership funds held in the private equity part of the portfolio. The amounts 'called' by these funds are irregular in both size and timing over a number of years from the date of the original commitment.

NOTE 25 – CONTINGENT ASSETS

Two admitted body employers in the Gwynedd Pension Fund hold insurance bonds to guard against the possibility of being unable to meet their pension obligations. These bonds are drawn in favour of the Fund and payment will only be triggered in the event of employer default.

NOTE 26 – CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

There are no contingent liabilities identified.

NOTE 27 – IMPAIRMENT LOSSES

There are no impairment losses identified.

Agenda Item 8

MEETING: **PENSION BOARD**

DATE : **18 JULY 2022**

TITLE: **PENSION FUND INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE 2021/22**

PURPOSE: **TO INFORM THE BOARD OF PERFORMANCE OF PENSION FUND INVESTMENTS**

RECOMMENDATION: **NOTE THE INFORMATION**

AUTHOR: **DELYTH JONES-THOMAS, INVESTMENT MANAGER**

1. Introduction

The investment performance of individual asset managers is monitored by the Investment Panel on a quarterly basis. The asset managers are invited to present to the Panel in turn.

Whilst quarterly and annual monitoring takes place, it should be noted that pension fund returns over the longer term are the aim, and there will inevitably be some fluctuations from year to year, and more volatile performance from quarter to quarter. Generally, individual asset managers' performance is assessed over 3 years.

2. Pension Fund Investment Performance in 2021/22

As at 31st March 2022, the market value of the Pension Fund was £2,776 million with performance against the benchmark set out below:

	3 Months %	1 Year %
Fund	-0.6	10.0
Benchmark	0.3	12.1
Relative Performance	-0.9	-2.1

Following the uncertainty in the markets at the beginning of 2020, there has been a long period of recovery since then, but the impact of the war in Ukraine has destabilized the markets towards the end of the year. There was a performance of 10.0% by the Fund, although this is behind the benchmark, this is position 23 out of 100 LGPS funds, which is in the top quartile.

Equity Investment Manager's Performance

The table below summarises the performance of the individual equity Investment Managers as at 31st March 2022:

	Market Value 31/03/22 £m	Performance 3 Months %	Performance 1 Year %
Black Rock Aquila Life UK Equity	239.3	0.5	13.1
Benchmark		0.5	13.0
Relative Performance		+0.0	+0.1
Black Rock ACS Low Carbon	346.1	-2.5	16.1
Benchmark		-2.6	15.7
Relative Performance		+0.1	+0.4
Black Rock Aquila Life Global Dev	200.8	2.9	16.7
Benchmark		2.8	16.1
Relative Performance		+0.1	+0.6
WPP Emerging Markets Fund	59.8	-4.9	-8.6
Benchmark		-4.3	-7.6
Relative Performance		-0.6	-1.0
WPP Global Growth Fund	430.7	-5.1	2.6
Benchmark		-2.6	12.4
Relative Performance		-2.5	-9.8
WPP Global Opportunities Fund	454.1	-1.4	10.9
Benchmark		-2.6	12.4
Relative Performance		+1.2	-1.5

During the period, Black Rock's investments delivered above benchmark returns as they held 'value' stocks (particularly energy, basic materials and financial) which performed well against a backdrop of supply and demand pressures and rising interest rates.

There was a significantly lower performance than the benchmark from WPP funds in the year, with Baillie Gifford contributing to this in the Global Growth fund as growth stocks performed negatively. It should be noted that this follows a very strong performance since the start of our investment with WPP, so a negative performance is to be expected in the performance cycle, and it can be seen in section 3 that three years' performance is ahead of the benchmark.

Fixed Income Manager's Performance

	Market Value 31/03/22 £m	Performance 3 Months %	Performance 1 Year %
WPP Multi Asset Credit Fund	197.9	-3.9	-2.3
Benchmark		1.1	4.2
Relative Performance		-5.0	-6.1
WPP Absolute Return Bond Fund	353.9	1.4	0.4
Benchmark		0.6	2.1
Relative Performance		+0.8	-1.7

The fixed income funds launched last year have had a challenging year with a negative start to 2022 from the global financial markets. Market volatility was driven by Russia's attack on Ukraine. Government bonds were also selling although there was a level of geo-political uncertainty. By the end of the period, inflation was at its highest for decades leading to the US Federal Reserve and the Bank England increasing interest rates.

Property Investment Manager's Performance

The table below summarises the performance of the individual Property Asset Managers:

	Market Value 31/03/22 £m	Performance 3 Months %	Performance 1 Year %
UBS	77.7	8.8	26.0
Lothbury Property Trust	73.4	5.5	17.5
Black Rock Property Fund	65.3	6.7	21.3
Threadneedle Property Fund	39.5	4.1	23.8
Threadneedle Property Unit Trust		4.0	21.7
Benchmark		5.6	23.2

Property returns have been positive with a continuation of recovery in capital values reflecting the growing confidence of investors. Growth has continued in the industrial and logistics areas as the change comes from e-commerce.

Partners Group

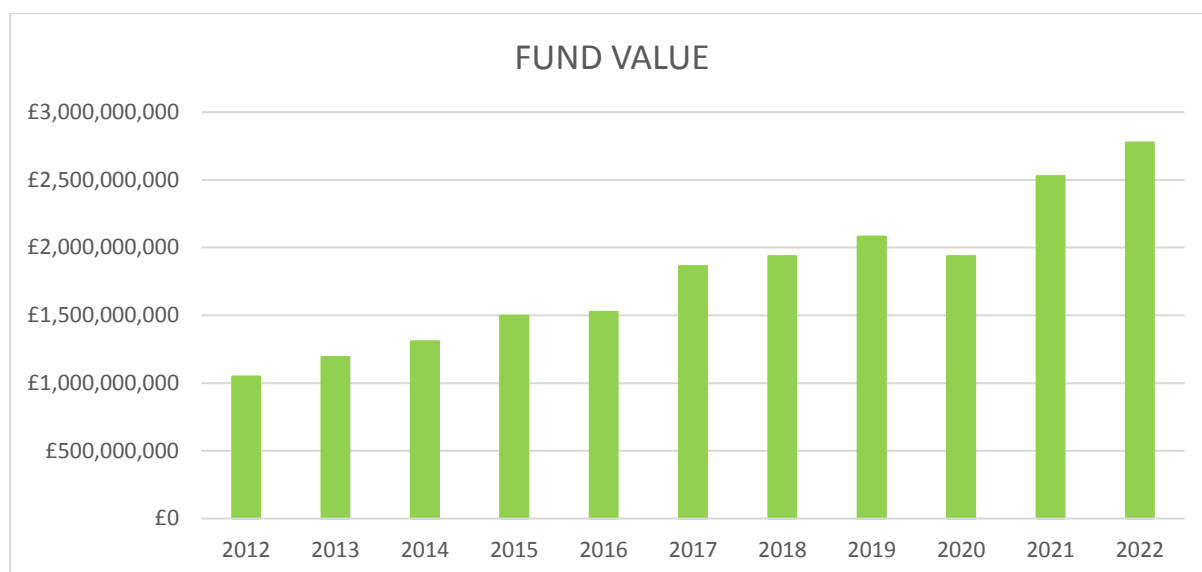
Partners Group is responsible for managing the Fund's private equity investments and infrastructure.

	Market Value 31/03/22 £m
Partners Private Equity	155.1
Partners Infrastructure	61.8
Total	216.9

Monitoring the performance of private equity and infrastructure investments is much more difficult than traditional assets, such as quoted bonds and equities. Private equity funds have a fixed life span of about 10-15 years. Real profits / returns can only be confirmed when individual assets are sold, so actual performance cannot be assessed until the fund is closed. The Fund's programme for private equity and infrastructure investments is reviewed annually by our consultants, Hymans Robertson.

3. Pension Fund historical performance over 10 years

The market value of the Gwynedd Pension Fund over the last 10 years is shown in the graph below:

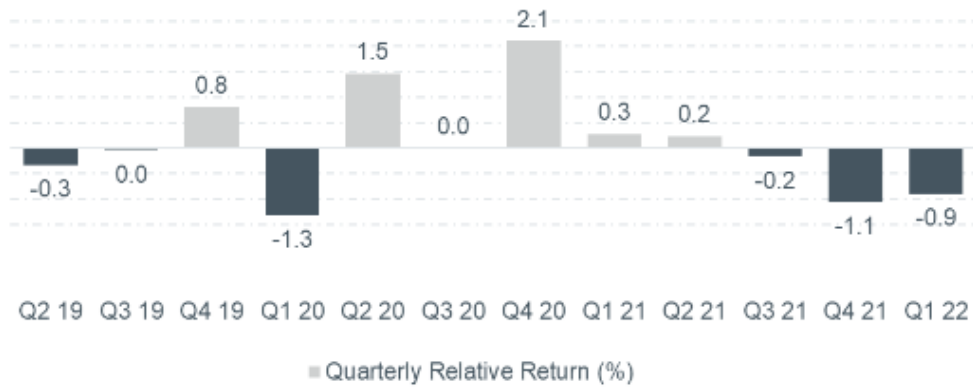


The Gwynedd Pension Fund is in a relatively healthy position with the value of the fund having gradually increased for some time now apart from the decrease on 31st March 2020 due to the effect of the pandemic. The performance of the fund's investments has been lower than the benchmark in the year, mainly due to the performance of some of the equity and fixed income funds, but over a period of three years, the performance has been higher than the benchmark, as seen in the table below:

	1 Year %	3 Years % p.a.
Fund	10.0	9.8
Benchmark	12.1	9.6
Relative Performance	-2.1	+0.2

The 3 year performance of the Fund has been very strong and is in the 7th position from all LGPS funds. The chart below shows the quarterly performance of the fund over the last 3 years.

Relative performance (quarterly)



It is widely recognised that longer-term performance is a more valid performance indicator than a single year because strategies designed for long-term good performance can occasionally suffer short-term losses.

4. Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the information.

MEETING **PENSION BOARD**

DATE **18 JULY 2022**

TITLE **Pension Fund Events**

PURPOSE • **To confirm a member for each event**

AUTHOR **Dafydd L Edwards, Fund Director**

1. INTRODUCTION

There are a number of events in the Autumn and Winter and the board members are invited to attend these events.

2. EVENTS

08/09/22 - 09/09/22

LGC Investment Summit, Leeds

07/12/22 – 09/12/22

Cynhadledd LAPFF, Bournemouth

19/01/23 – 20/01/23

LGA PF Governance, Cardiff

3. RECOMMENDATION

The Pension Board is asked to nominate one member for each event.

Agenda Item 10



Meeting:	Pension Board
Date:	18/07/2022
Title:	Pension Administration
Author:	Meirion Jones, Pensions Manager
Purpose:	For information only

1. Introduction

This report provides a general overview of pension administration over the last 6 months. It contains information about the work carried out over the period, an update on various projects previously mentioned, changes in the regulations and also lists the challenges the department faces on a day-to-day basis.

2. Staffing

Since the last administration update we have lost a number of staff. One experienced member of staff has moved to work as a Pensions Manager at the University in Bangor, 2 members of temporary staff have left to take up new positions and one member of staff has received a secondment within the Council to help with the re-housing of refugees from Ukraine in Gwynedd.

Staff recruitment is currently a challenge with a low number of applications being received for job adverts. Speaking to other fund managers, this is apparently a national problem, with all funds in Wales struggling to attract new staff.

Staff have returned to the office in recent months, with most working a hybrid working pattern, working some days in the office and the rest of the week working from home. So far this arrangement is working well, giving staff opportunities to collaborate on projects face to face and also give each other support in terms of learning different aspects of the work.

We have also been successful in being part of the Council's 'Cynllun Yfory' project. As part of this project a Professional Trainee will join the team and the position will offer the individual the opportunity to develop their leadership and management skills while working in the department. The interviews will take place in the coming weeks.

3. i-Connect

As stated previously, i-Connect updates members' data in our pension administration system on a monthly basis, avoiding the need for employers to send information at the end of the year.

Data is taken directly from a payroll system by i-Connect which then automatically identifies and submits details of new members, opt-outs and leavers to us.

By now all the employers are using i-Connect, with the information being submitted, on the whole, promptly by all the employers.

4. Member Self Service

The Self Service website 'My Pension Online' continues to be very popular, with a large number of members visiting the site daily.

The site is being developed regularly with new features being added e.g. being able to complete the retirement forms online etc.

A new version of the system is in development - from the prototype that has been shown it looks like the new version will give members a better experience.

Around 16,000 have registered for the service so far. There will be a letter going out in the coming months to members who have not registered to encourage them to register.

We are also working on a project that will enable pensioners' payslips to be uploaded to the 'My Pension Online' system. We will contact pensioners when this option is available - but we recognize that a large number of pensioners will prefer to still receive paper slips, and there will be no change to the procedure for them.

5. Training

In the last update, it was mentioned that four members of staff were studying towards a Foundation Degree in Pension Administration and Management. The foundation degree is a mixture of assignments and exams and takes 2 years to complete. I am proud to report that all four have now successfully completed the course.

4 other members of staff have also completed a Certificate in Pensions Administration course. This is a 9 month course which provides a basic understanding of pension schemes in the UK.

Over the past few months Hymans Robertson has been holding training sessions for employers on the subjects below:

- Pensionable Pay and Assumed Pensionable Pay
- Basic responsibilities of employers
- Ill-health retirement - best practice process
- Outsourcing staff
- Employer discretion
- Assumed Pensionable Pay - examples

An invitation was sent to the employers of our fund to attend these sessions and very positive feedback was received to the sessions from the employers who attended.

6. Pension Increase

The Consumer Price Index for September 2021 was 3.1%. This is the figure used in April 2022 to increase pension payments for our Pensioners and our deferred benefits.

A letter was sent in April to all our pensioners to inform them of their increased pension amount and payment dates for 2022/23.

7. Data Measurement

In 2015, the Pensions Regulator (tPR) took over responsibility for Public Sector Pension Schemes. Before that, in June 2010, the tPR published guidance on what they consider to be good practice to measure the presence of members' data.

Over the last few years we have been commissioning our software provider, Aquila Heywood to produce a Data Quality Report for our Fund every September. We now have software to run this report internally.

The report is divided into two sections:

- **Common Data:** e.g. name, address, NI number, gender, date of birth, status and start date

- **Scheme Specific Data:** e.g. benefits in the scheme, transfer details, AVC, salary details, contributions, service, lifetime allowance, annual allowance and GMP.

We provide below a summary of the results:

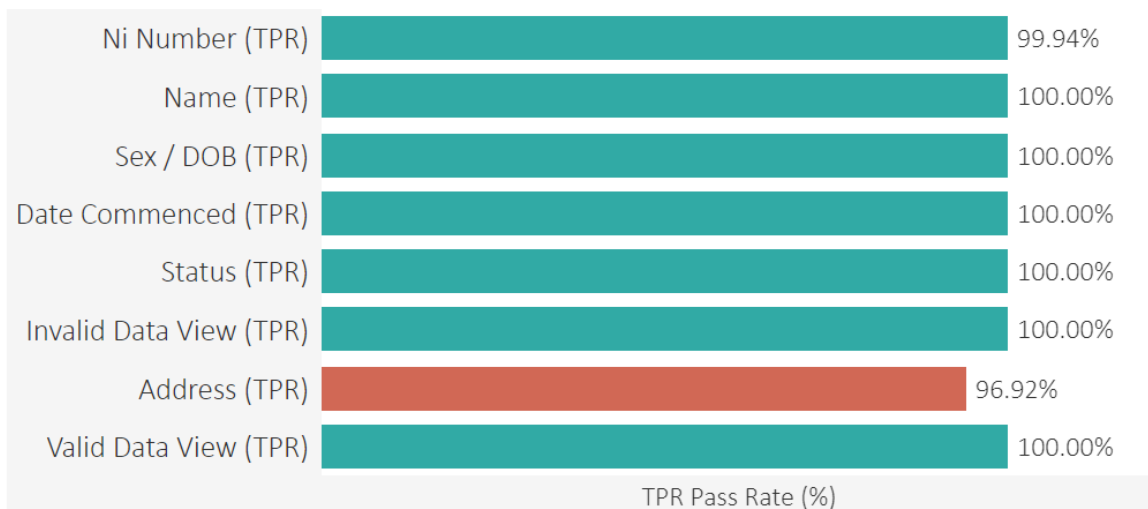
Summary of Common Data Results

The graph below shows Gwynedd's performance for each data category.

7 of the 8 categories achieved the highest benchmark of more than 98% with 6 categories not recording a single failure. The only category that did not reach the highest benchmark in question was members' addresses with a score of **96.92%**. With the exception of **members' addresses**, the general quality of common data in Gwynedd is of a high standard. In order to improve the member address score we have used a company called ATMOS in March 2021 to carry out work to track the address of members recorded as having "disappeared". Although ATMOS has identified approximately 1,400 new addresses for us, there are still approximately 900 records for which we need a correct address.

The percentage of member records without a common data failure is **97.7%** (97.5% last year) and this is the figure the tPR will receive on the scheme's returns.

TPR Pass Rate % by Test Category

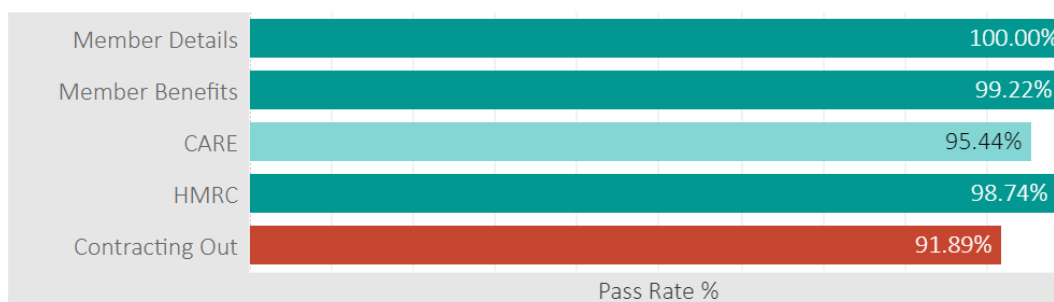


Summary of Scheme Specific Data Results

The graph below shows Gwynedd's performance for each data category against the agreed plan benchmarks.

The percentage of member records without individual data failure that is specific to the scheme is **94.89%** (92.1% last year) and this is the figure that the RP will receive on the scheme's returns.

Grand Total | TPR Pass Rate % by Test Category



An action plan is being developed in relation to the implementation of any data cleansing highlighted as part of this exercise and this data cleansing is expected to improve the data scores for next year.

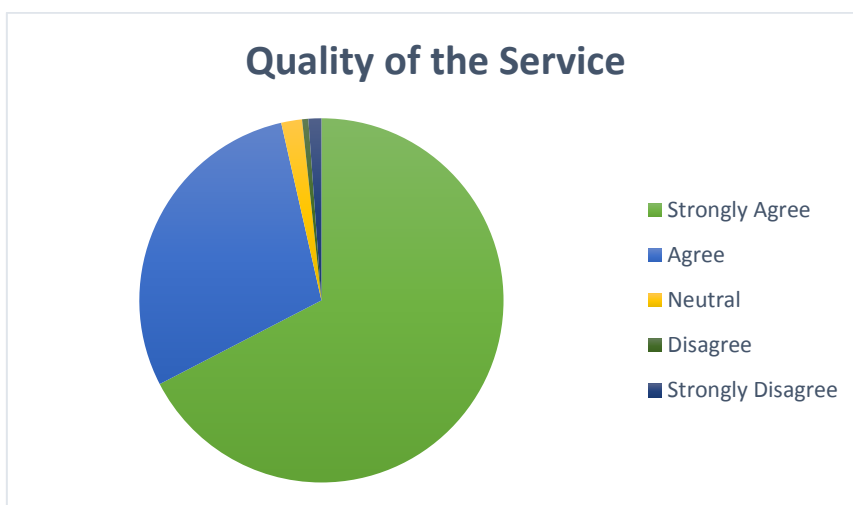
8. Member Satisfaction Survey

To ensure that we offer the best possible service to our members, a Member Satisfaction Survey is sent at the end of each process, e.g. retirements and payment of refunds for the members to give their opinion on the quality of the service received and their opinion about the service provided by the staff

Here is a summary of the 2021/22 results:

Quality of Service

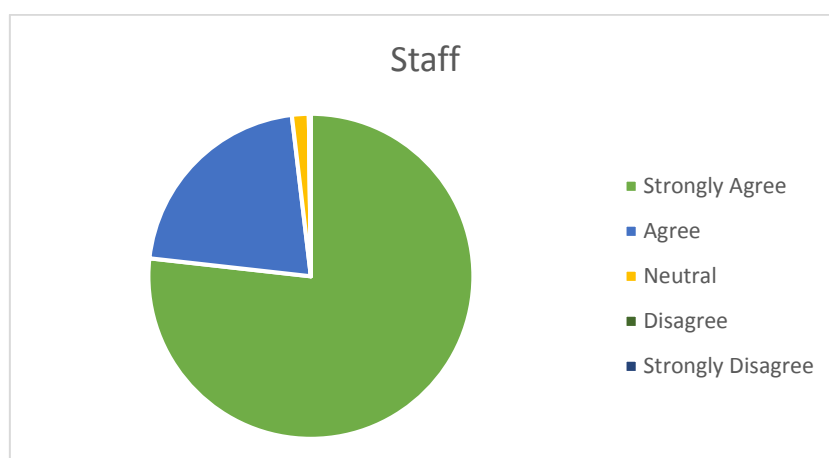
The chart below shows the percentage of users who are satisfied with four aspects of the service's performance based on: i) Service as a whole; ii) clear information; iii) Quality of service; iv) Time to deal with the enquiry.



As can be seen, 96.5% of the users strongly agree or agree that the quality of the service provided is of a high standard.

Staff

The chart below shows the percentage of users who are satisfied with four aspects of staff performance based on: i) Courtesy; ii) Punctuality; iii) Assistance given; iv) level of knowledge.



As can be seen, a high percentage once again (98.75%) of the users strongly agree or agree that the quality of the service provided is of a high standard in relation to the staff.

9. Performance Management

The Pension Fund is committed to improving its provision of service and will review the measures in place to monitor performance annually in order to identify where improvements can be made. Where areas of poor performance are identified, we will review the reasons for poor performance and implement appropriate processes to improve the level of service provided in the future.

We are currently preparing the full performance details for the Pension Fund's annual report. The report will include details on the performance of all the department's duties, but in the meantime see below the 2021/22 performance for the activities that we report on monthly basis to the Chief Executive:

Ref.	Core activities	Performance in 2020/2021		Performance in 2021/2022	
		Number of cases	Average days taken to complete	Number of cases	Average days taken to complete
CD9.03	Number of working days on average taken to send a letter informing of the value of the benefits - estimates	1,680	2.8	1,720	1.33
CD9.04	Number of working days on average taken to send a letter informing of the value of the benefits - actuals	697	1.3	685	0.99
CD9.06	Average number of working days taken to notify the value of dependent benefits	245	3	288	1.84

As can be seen, the performance of the service for the above activities has improved in 2021/22 to compare with the performance of 2020/21.

10. McCloud Judgement

When the Government reformed public service pension schemes in 2014 and 2015 they introduced protections for older members. In December 2018, the Court of Appeal ruled that younger members of the Judges' and Firefighters' Pension schemes had been discriminated against because the protections did not apply to them.

The Government has confirmed that there will be changes to all the main public sector schemes, including the LGPS, to remove age discrimination. This judgment is often called the 'McCloud judgment' after a member of the Judges' Pension Scheme who was involved in the case.

When the LGPS switched from a final salary scheme to a career average pension scheme in 2014, members who were within 10 years of their Normal Pension Age (usually 65) on 1 April 2012 were given a protection called the 'underpin'. When a protected member takes their pension, the benefits payable under the career average and final salary schemes are compared and the higher amount is paid.

Following the McCloud judgment the Government needs to provide protection equal to the basic protection provided to older members in order to eliminate the discrimination.

In order to provide this protection we will have to recalculate the benefits of members who have retired, died and left the scheme since April 2014, as well as updating the records of active members of the fund with details of hours and breaks in service.

This project is a significant one, and we estimate that 20,000 records will need to be looked at again. We hope our software will be able to do the recalculation, but we are currently waiting to hear what options the software provider have available for this.

We have started the work of collecting data. We have received confirmation from most of the small and medium employers that the details we have recorded for members are correct. We have also held a number of meetings with the bigger employers to discuss our requirements in terms of providing data. A number of these employers are currently collecting the data.

As for Gwynedd Council, we will have to do the work of collecting the data ourselves. As Gwynedd is the largest employer of the fund, checking and updating the records will probably be the most work in terms of the project - but it will improve the quality of our data and ensure that our members' records are correct.

We anticipate that we will begin the serious work of correcting records later this year. We have received permission from the Pensions Committee to set up a temporary team to undertake this work. We are currently in the process of recruiting, but as stated above, recruiting staff is currently a problem.

Despite all the work, most members are unlikely to see an increase to their pension, and when an increase is applied, it is likely to be small. The reason for this is that the majority of members will accumulate a higher pension in the career average pension scheme than they would have received under the final salary scheme.

11. 2022 Valuation

As you know, the fund's actuary carries out a valuation of the fund every 3 years in line with Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) regulations. The purpose of the valuation is to review the financial position of the Fund and to set employer contribution rates for the next 3 years.

The actuary estimates the amount of assets that will be required to meet the benefit payments owed to members as they fall due. Separate calculations are carried out to identify the expected cost of members' benefits in respect of scheme membership completed before the valuation date (past service) and that which is expected to be calculated after the valuation date (future service).

A funding ratio is calculated by the actuary which compares the value of the assets and the past service liabilities at the date of the valuation. This ratio provides a check against the aim of meeting the longer term funding level target.

The valuation exercise is complex. The actuary needs to make assumptions about future:

- rates of inflation
- salary increases
- longevity
- investment returns

Work on the 2022 Valuation has started. We have recently sent membership data to the actuary. The actuary is currently analyzing the data and they will publish the results for the entire fund during August. Following discussion of the results with the actuary we anticipate that we would be in a position to release the results to the employers during October. A presentation to the employers by the actuary will be held at that time and Board members will be welcome to attend the session. The date will be announced in the near future.

12. Complaints

Fortunately, the number of complaints we receive is very low. Here are the details of the complaints we have received during 2021/22:

- **Ill-health Retirement:** Members unhappy that their application to retire under the ill-health retirement option was not successful. This decision is outside the fund's control - These complaints are referred back to the relevant employer.
- **Relatives of a deceased member have received an English-only letter:** We have received 1 complaint from a deceased member's relative as they received an English-only letter following their bereavement. The Welsh Language Commissioner is currently investigating this complaint. Normally we ask the family for their language preference, but unfortunately in this case no contact was received from the family and an English letter was

sent out in error (our default choice is to send letters in Welsh if the choice is not language is known). From now on we will send these letters out bilingually in order to avoid such a complaint again.