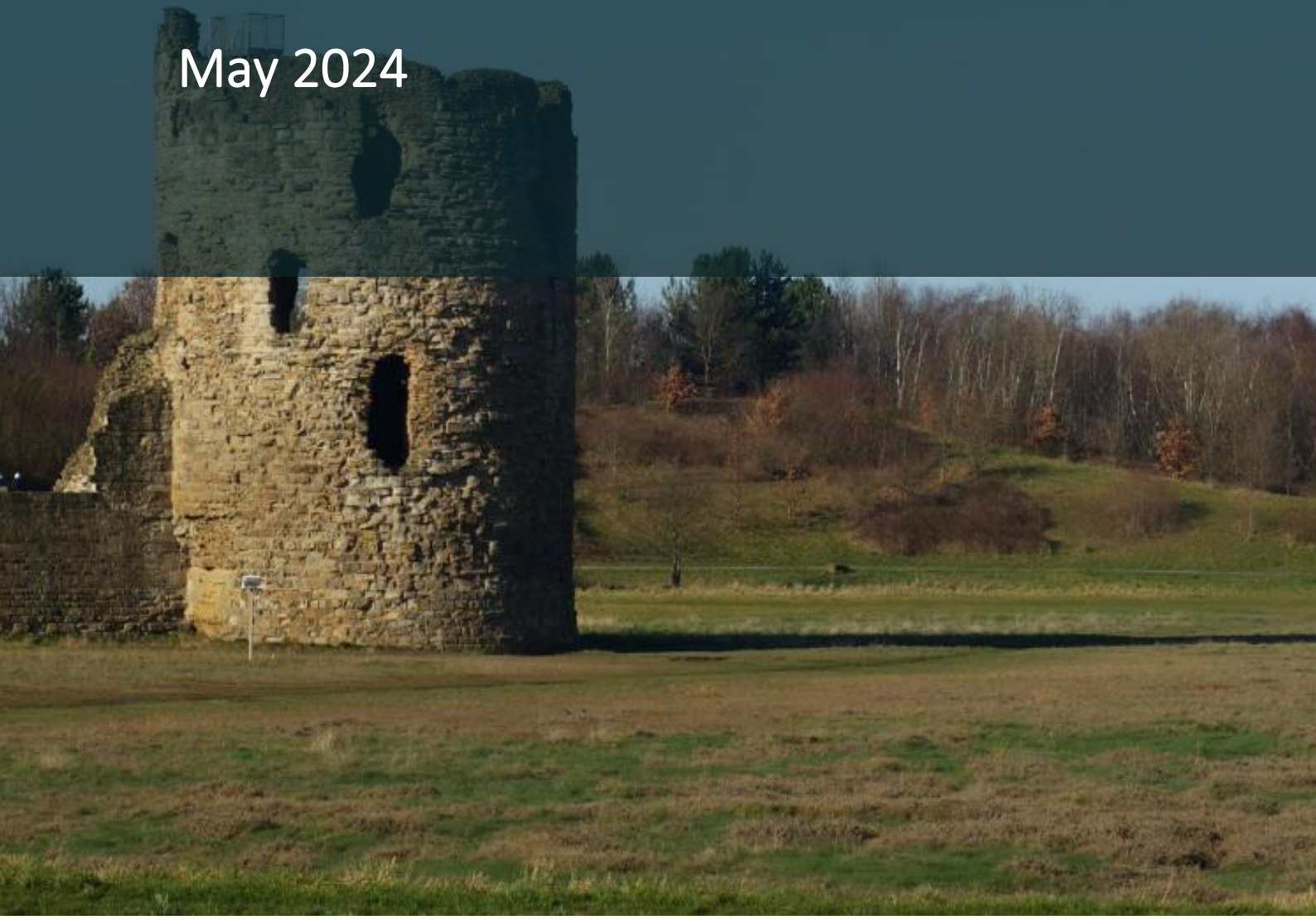


Background Information on the Clwyd Pension Fund and Local Pension Board

May 2024



Contents

Background to the Clwyd Pension Fund	3
Governance and Management of the Fund	3
The Local Pension Board	4
Background and overview	4
The Clwyd Pension Board membership	4
What is the Board’s role?.....	4
How often are meetings and in what format?	5
What items of business do the Board consider?	5
What are the knowledge requirements for the Board?	6
How much time will I need to dedicate to the Board role?	6
Is it a paid position?	7
Managing potential conflicts of interest.....	7
Other background information.....	7
What are the eligibility criteria and the process for being appointed?	7
Appointment process.....	9
Board Meetings.....	9

Background to the Clwyd Pension Fund

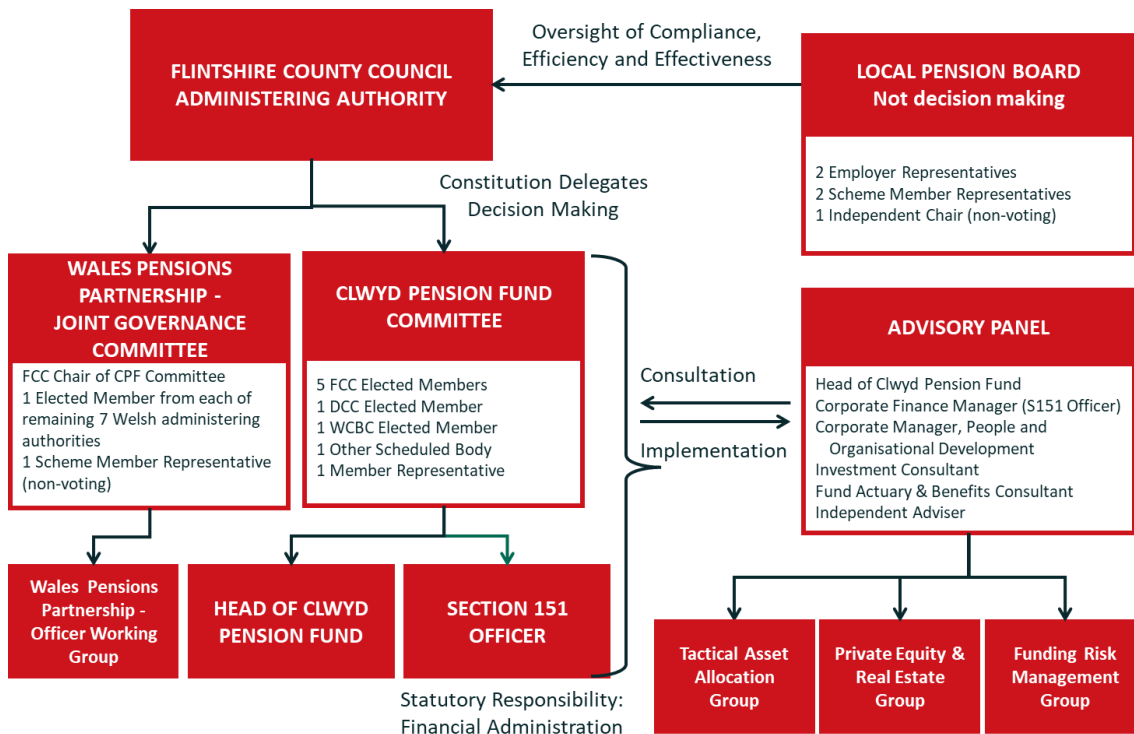
The Clwyd Pension Fund (the Fund) is a £2.3bn¹ fund within the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The Fund provides death and retirement benefits for local government employees (other than teachers, police and firefighters) in North East Wales and employees of other qualifying bodies which provide similar services.

The total Fund membership is approximately 50,000 with about nearly 18,000 active contributors from 52 contributing employers and about 32,500 retired members, dependants and deferred members.

Governance and Management of the Fund

The key decision making and management of the Fund has been delegated by Flintshire County Council (the Council) to a formal Pension Fund Committee, supported by a Pensions Advisory Panel. The Head of Clwyd Pension Fund has day to day responsibility for the management of the Fund. The Corporate Finance Manager is the Section 151 Officer and therefore has a statutory responsibility for the proper financial affairs of the Council including Fund matters. In addition, the Council has delegated specific responsibilities to the Corporate Manager, People and Organisational development.

The Fund’s governance structure is shown below.



¹ As at 31 December 2023

The Local Pension Board

Background and overview

In 2015 there was a new legal requirement for us to have a Local Pension Board. The Board had to be established by the Scheme Manager (which for the Clwyd Pension Fund is Flintshire County Council) and a terms of reference for the Board was agreed. The Clwyd Pension Board's terms of reference (called the Pension Board Protocol) can be found in Flintshire County Council's [Constitution](#) on page 193.

The Clwyd Pension Board membership

Our Board is made up of:

- Two scheme member representatives: one must be nominated by the joint trade unions and the other must be an active, deferred or pensioner member of the Clwyd Pension Fund. Tracey Sutton Postlethwaite holds the role of the joint trade union representative. Elaine Williams, a pensioner member of the Fund who was formerly employed by Denbighshire County Council currently holds the latter role.
- Two employer representatives: Steve Jackson, the Chief Operating Officer for Coleg Cambria holds one of these roles and the other role is held by Richard Weigh, the Chief Officer Finance and ICT for Wrexham County Borough Council.
- An independent chair: this is currently Karen McWilliam of Aon, who are the Fund's Independent Advisers, specialising in governance and administration matters.

Steve and Karen have been part of the Board since it was established in 2015. Elaine joined in 2020, Richard joined in 2023 and Tracey joined in 2024.

Member and employer representatives are appointed for an initial period of three years, which can be extended for a further two years. Board members can also be reappointed for further terms, subject to satisfying the recruitment process and continuing to meet the eligibility criteria. Continuity is important as members build up a good level of knowledge about how the Fund operates and the ongoing challenges it can face in delivering to its stakeholders.

The role that is being advertised is the scheme member representative currently held by Elaine Williams as she is coming to the end of the five-year term. Elaine can apply to be reappointed to this role.

What is the Board's role?

The purpose of the Local Pension Board is set out in legislation.

- to assist in:
 - securing compliance with legislation and any requirements imposed by The Pensions Regulator, and

- ensuring the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme.

Whilst the Pension Board isn't a decision-making body, it works very closely with Fund officers and the Pension Fund Committee, providing assurance and oversight.

Pension Board members must focus on delivering the Board's responsibilities, working jointly in the best interest of the Pension Fund as a whole, rather than representing the interest of any individual (or group of) stakeholders. This doesn't mean Board members can't share their knowledge on how matters might impact specific stakeholders of the Fund. This individual knowledge is extremely useful in providing insight to the other Board members, the Fund officers and Committee members.

How often are meetings and in what format?

The Board typically meets three times a year (there is flexibility for it to meet more often) and meetings currently tend to run for about five hours starting in the morning (with lunch provided).

Board meetings are not open to the public so usually only Board members and the Pension Fund Management Team attend. Sometimes there will be a guest, such as an adviser or other specialist presenting on a specific subject.

Current Board members have said they prefer face to face meetings if possible, and so this now tends to be the default. However, hybrid facilities will be made available should a Board member not wish or be able to attend an arranged face to face meeting in person.

What items of business do the Board consider?

A typical Pension Board agenda might include:

- the latest performance in relation to routine administration tasks
- a discussion around resourcing and recruitment challenges in the pensions team
- consideration of the latest Pension Fund Committee agenda including areas such as the risk register
- an update on significant projects, which can include national initiatives affecting all LGPS funds or even all UK pension schemes

The majority of items include a verbal update or presentation from the Pension Fund Management Team.

The Board's responsibilities relate to administration and governance matters; not where the Fund's assets are invested nor how employer contribution rates are calculated (although it does have an interest in how investment and funding strategy is set, i.e. from a governance perspective).

The Board agenda and meeting pack is issued about a week before each meeting. Previous minutes and updates from Pension Board meetings can be viewed in the Pension Fund

Committee Governance Update reports which can be found within the Committee [meeting packs](#).

What are the knowledge requirements for the Board?

You do not need to have any pensions knowledge to be eligible to join the Board.

Board members are however legally required to attain a level of knowledge about the Fund, the LGPS and pensions more generally that allows them to properly undertake their Board duties. Full induction training and support will be provided by Fund officers and advisers, and there will be opportunities to attend external training courses and events such as conferences. In order to meet the legal requirements and the expectations of the Fund's Knowledge and Skills Policy², members must have the time to attend such training.

How much time will I need to dedicate to the Board role?

The time commitment can vary depending on the Fund's priorities and external factors. National changes in particular can mean a need for more meetings and/or training. As a guide you should consider the following meetings/events, some of which will be face to face, some hybrid and some virtual:

Essential attendance at:

- Pension Board meetings: three days a year (usually about five hours)
- Induction training: about two full days (albeit this can be delivered over multiple shorter sessions, if preferred)
- Ongoing Fund specific training: three or four half day sessions a year (with most being on the same day as the Pension Fund Committee meetings)
- Ad-hoc Board meetings or other working groups: typically two or three short (one or two hours) sessions a year

Preferred attendance at:

- Pension Fund Committee meetings: five half day meetings a year: Attendance is expected by at least some of the Pension Board at all meetings, to ensure the Board can properly carry out their responsibilities. These can be attended virtually.

Other optional events (expected to attend a total of at least one full day a year)

- Wales Pensions Partnership training sessions: approximately four a year for a couple of hours, usually virtual
- Conferences and other training events

Clearly there is a reasonable time commitment and Board members are legally required to have the capacity to undertake their responsibilities.

² All the Fund's published policies and strategies can be found here:
<https://mss.clwydpensionfund.org.uk/home/investments-and-governance/strategies-and-policies>

Is it a paid position?

An allowance can be paid for attending meetings relating to Pension Board business (including attending training). The payment would be at the rates contained in the Schedule of Member Remuneration in Flintshire County Council's Constitution for co-opted members of a Flintshire County Council Committee (which is currently £210 for a day and £105 for a half day). We hope employers of Pension Board members will allow them to perform their Board role within their normal working day without any reduction in pay. If that is the case, the Board member will not be entitled to claim any allowance.

All Board members are entitled to claim travel and subsistence allowances at the rates contained in the Schedule of Member Remuneration in Flintshire County Council's Constitution.

Managing potential conflicts of interest

A Board member is not permitted to have a conflict of interest which is a financial or other interest which is likely to prejudice the person's exercise of functions as a member of the board (noting this does not include a financial or other interest arising merely by virtue of membership of the scheme or any connected scheme). The Head of Clwyd Pension Fund and Pension Board Chair can provide guidance on what might be treated as a conflict of interest.

Other background information

There is further useful information on the Fund's website, particularly in the Investments, Governance and GDPR page:

mss.clwydpensionfund.org.uk/home/investments-and-governance/strategies-and-policies

If you are thinking about taking on a role on the Pension Board, you may also find the Fund's Business Plan and Knowledge and Skills Policy useful. These can be accessed from the web page above and can also be found attached to the covering email.

Information on Pension Fund Committee meetings are available here:

<https://committeemeetings.flintshire.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=445&Year=0&LLL=0>

What are the eligibility criteria and the process for being appointed?

Eligibility criteria

To meet legal requirements, you:

- must have the capacity to be able to attend the required meetings and training, and

- should not have a conflict of interest that would mean you could not be appointed.

The Fund has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy in place which recognises the benefits that come with having individuals with a broad range of characteristics, life experiences, expertise and skills involved in the management of the Fund, including on the Pension Board. One of our actions to support in delivering our equality, diversity and inclusion aims as outlined within that Policy, is encouraging diversity and inclusion as part of the appointment process for Board members. As such, we encourage applications from individuals with protected characteristics such as age, disability, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation and/or broader characteristics such as socio-economic background, life experiences, education levels and languages.

We are looking for someone who:

- is **committed and enthusiastic** about the role of the Pension Board.
- appreciates the need for **discretion and confidentiality**.
- has a **balanced mindset** and respects others' views.

Some of the following characteristics might also be useful:

- A **good communicator** with good interpersonal skills to build relationships, encourage, listen and support others.
- An **enthusiastic contributor**, who has the willingness to be inquisitive, able to ask questions and contribute to discussions.
- A **creative thinker** who is able to think 'outside the box' and consider and discuss issues laterally and strategically.
- An **independent thinker** who acts with integrity, trustworthiness, discretion and high ethical standards.
- An **inquisitive thinker** with an eye for detail and an ability to absorb and analyse detailed information.

Experience in any of the following areas could also be useful:

- Risk management; assessing, prioritising and mitigating risks
- Operational planning and management
- Sitting on other governance boards
- Strategic business planning
- Human resources and employment policies
- Technology solutions including cyber crime
- Supplier or contract management
- Handling enquiries and complaints
- Customer services
- Financial management/accounting and audit
- Governance policies, procedures and controls
- Legal experience; working with lawyers and/or reviewing legal documentation
- Communications, marketing and engagement

- Data handling and protections
- Evaluating decisions
- Performance reviews
- Contingency planning & crisis management
- Developing and implementing diversity, equality and inclusion policies or objectives
- Pensions administration or management

Appointment process

If you are interested in applying for this role, please complete the application form which is found on the Fund's website and forward it to the Head of Clwyd Pension Fund pensionboard@flintshire.gov.uk. The deadline for receipt of applications is 15th January 2025.

Philip Latham, the Head of Clwyd Pension Fund, is responsible for deciding who will fill the vacant position. However, he will do this in consultation with the Board's Chair, Karen McWilliam. If there are multiple applications that are considered suitable for the position, they may be invited to an informal discussion in January or February 2025 to assist Mr Latham in deciding who should take on the position.

Board Meetings

The first Pension Board meeting after the appointment period is on 1st April 2025 (expected time is 9.30am to 2.30pm). Further meeting dates for the period to May 2026 will be decided in early summer 2025.



mss.clwydpensionfund.org.uk

Clwyd Pension Fund, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire, CH7 6NA

Please note that Flintshire County Council is the administrative authority of the Clwyd Pension Fund and we use your personal data in accordance with Data Protection legislation to provide you with a pension administration service. For more information about how we use your data, who we share it with and what rights you have in relation to your data, please visit the Privacy Notice on our website.