

27 April 2023

Agenda Item: 4

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR – FINANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPROVEMENT

TRIENNIAL VALUATION – RESULTS

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform members of the results of the triennial valuation of the Fund as at 31 March 2022.

Information

2. The Fund is required to obtain an actuarial valuation of the assets and liabilities of the Fund every three years in order to determine the contributions payable by each employer. The actuary issues a rates and adjustments certificate specifying the common rate of employer's contribution and any individual adjustments to take account of circumstances particular to each employer. These circumstances include the different membership profiles of each employer and the level of assessed deficit of liabilities over assets.
3. The rates and adjustments certificate covers the three years following the year in which the valuation is prepared. The latest triennial valuation of the Fund was required as at 31 March 2022 with rates being certified for years 2023/24 to 2025/26. The final report was published on the website on 31 March 2023 and forms Appendix A of this report.
4. In order to carry out the valuation, the actuaries, Barnett Waddingham, require detailed information about the membership of the fund and its investments. This information is used to estimate the cash flows in relation to each member. The actuaries have made assumptions over pay increases, inflation, life expectancy and other relevant issues in order to come up with this estimate. Further assumptions are used (mainly in respect of expected investment returns) to determine a 'discount rate' which is then used to discount the cash flows to estimate the total of the Fund's liabilities.
5. The basic premise of the discount rate is that investment returns can help to cover liabilities in the future – if the Fund has £100 now and can expect investment returns of 5% pa then that £100 is sufficient to cover £105 of liabilities in 1 years' time. Hence the liability figure (in this example £105) is 'discounted' back to the present value (£100) using the assumed rate of investment return. The actuaries therefore look at the asset allocation of the Fund and the expected long term returns of each asset class in deciding the appropriate discount rate. It is important to note that a lower discount rate produces a higher liability figure (and vice versa).

6. The agreed financial assumptions used in the latest valuation are shown below, along with comparisons from the previous valuation.

Financial Assumptions	31/03/22	31/03/19
Central Discount Rate	4.7%	4.8%
Salary Increases	3.9%	3.6%
Pension Increases (CPI)	2.9%	2.6%

7. Factored in to the discount rate is a prudence adjustment of 1.4%.
8. As can be seen, the discount rate has reduced slightly increasing liabilities, although the increase is mitigated slightly by assumptions over mortality. Initial results for the Fund show liabilities of £6,489 million compared to assets of £6,481 million, giving a funding level of (virtually) 100%. This is up from 93% at 2019.
9. The contributions determined at this valuation payable by each employer are set out in the actuary's final report. These are either based on the employer's own membership and experience or they are the employer's share of the contributions payable within a pool of employers. Future service contributions are certified as a percentage of payroll. For the majority of employers, deficit recovery contributions have been certified as a monetary amount, payable each year in addition to the future service rate. This is to ensure that deficit contributions are made at the required level regardless of any reductions in payroll. The certified contributions are the minimum that each employer is required to pay. The deficit recovery contributions are set to enable employers to move towards a fully funded position over the recovery period which is specific to each employer. No employers have a recovery period longer than 18 years (reduced from 19 years at the last valuation).
10. As part of the communication process with employers a briefing note was prepared by the Actuary in January and circulated to employers. It was also made available via the employers section of the Funds website. In addition specific queries were passed to the Actuary for individual responses as they were received.

Other Options Considered

11. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

12. The triennial valuation is an important part of the management of the funding for the Pension Fund.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

14. The triennial valuation ensures that employer contributions are set at an appropriate level to ensure the solvency and sustainability of the Fund.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That members note the report and the results of the triennial valuation of the Fund as at 31 March 2022 and consider whether there are any actions they require in relation to the issues contained within the report.

Nigel Stevenson

Service Director – Finance, Infrastructure and Improvement

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Tamsin Rabbitts

Constitutional Comments (KK 18/04/2023)

15. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund Committee.

Financial Comments (TMR 31/03/2023)

16. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 14.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All