Meeting: LPB Effectiveness Committee

Date: 14 July 2026

Agenda Item 5: LPB Chair Forum Update

Introduction

This paper provides an update on discussions held at the Local Pension Board (LPB) Chair Forum on 14 May 2026 and highlights key issues raised by LPB Chairs for consideration by the LPB Effectiveness Committee. A verbal update was provided to the Committee at its meeting on 19 May 2026, and this report provides a fuller summary of the discussion and proposed next steps.

The LPB Chair Forum continues to provide a valuable opportunity for Chairs to share experiences, discuss emerging governance and administration issues, and identify areas where additional support or intervention may be beneficial.

Recent Forum Discussions

Discussion focused on the key challenges currently facing LPBs and the extent to which Boards are able to effectively discharge their statutory responsibilities in an increasingly complex pensions environment. Consistent with previous discussions, Chairs identified administration performance and member experience as the most significant concerns across the sector.

The Forum also considered issues relating to LPB recruitment and succession planning, governance effectiveness, Scheme Manager engagement, and the visibility of existing oversight arrangements. These themes align closely with matters already being considered by the LPB Effectiveness Committee through its ongoing work programme.

Key Themes Raised by LPB Chairs

Administration Performance and Remedy Delivery

Chairs continued to express concern regarding the ongoing impact of administration delays on scheme members, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Sargeant and Matthews remedies. A number of Chairs reported increasing levels of member dissatisfaction and associated escalation activity through Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures (IDRPs).

Regarding the Sargeant remedy, concerns remain that a number of cases have not yet been fully resolved despite statutory deadlines having passed. Some Chairs commented that members increasingly view the IDRP process as a route to accessing the Pensions Ombudsman rather than as a mechanism for local resolution.

In respect of the Matthews remedy, concerns were raised regarding delays in producing retirement packs and processing benefit payments. Chairs noted the significant impact that delays can have on members' retirement planning and confidence in scheme administration.

Member Self-Service (MSS)

Member Self-Service remains a priority issue for LPB Chairs. There was broad agreement that MSS should now be viewed as an essential component of pensions administration rather than an optional enhancement. Chairs highlighted the difficulties members continue to experience in obtaining pension estimates and information and considered that improved digital access could help reduce both member frustration and administrative burden.

The Forum welcomed the SAB's ongoing engagement with software providers and requested continued updates on developments in this area.

Awareness of WYPF Oversight Arrangements

Several Chairs raised concerns regarding administration services provided through West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF). Whilst Chairs acknowledged the work being undertaken to improve performance, it became apparent that not all LPB Chairs were aware of the existence or role of the WYPF Oversight and Engagement Board.

This highlighted a wider issue regarding communication channels and the visibility of governance arrangements. Improved awareness of existing oversight mechanisms would assist LPBs in understanding the assurances available and strengthening local scrutiny activities.

Recruitment and Succession Planning

A further theme discussed was the ongoing challenge of recruiting and retaining LPB members. Whilst widespread vacancies were not reported, Chairs noted that when vacancies do occur they can be difficult to fill and may remain vacant for extended periods. Concerns were raised regarding succession planning and the loss of experienced members through retirement.

Chairs shared examples of positive practice, including inviting prospective members to observe LPB meetings before formally joining the Board. There was general support for further sharing of good practice and greater engagement with Scheme Managers regarding succession planning and recruitment.

LPB Effectiveness and Maturity

Discussion also touched on the varying levels of maturity and effectiveness across LPBs. Chairs recognised that Boards operate in different circumstances and with varying levels of experience and support. There was support for exploring approaches that would enable the Committee to better understand LPB effectiveness across the sector whilst avoiding a burdensome or punitive assessment process.

Potential options discussed included the collection of more consistent information from LPBs, the development of annual returns, and consideration of existing governance and administration data already collected by The Pensions Regulator.

London Weighting and Contributions

The Chair of the London LPB raised concerns regarding the interaction between pension contribution rates and London Weighting payments. Whilst concerns were acknowledged, it was noted that this issue had not been raised through the recent consultation process and that further evidence would be required before any policy consideration could take place.

Emerging Issues for the Committee

The May forum highlighted several areas that align with the Committee's current work programme:

- Continued focus on improving administration performance and monitoring remedy delivery.
- Supporting the development and implementation of Member Self-Service solutions.
- Improving communication and visibility of governance and oversight arrangements.
- Supporting LPBs and Scheme Managers with recruitment, retention and succession planning.
- Developing a stronger evidence base regarding LPB effectiveness, governance maturity and training requirements.

Proposed Next Steps

Since the May Committee meeting, a number of actions have already been identified which support the issues raised through the Forum. These include:

- Developing a review of LPB representation across the sector.
- Sharing best practice to support recruitment and engagement.
- Developing a Local Pension Board Training Needs Analysis framework.
- Exploring approaches to gathering consistent effectiveness and performance information from LPBs.

Engaging with The Pensions Regulator to understand existing governance data collection arrangements and avoid duplication

The Secretariat will continue to use future LPB Chair Forums to monitor emerging risks and governance issues and will ensure that key themes are reported to the Committee and, where appropriate, escalated to the Scheme Advisory Board.

Recommendation

The LPB Effectiveness Committee is asked to:

1. Note the issues raised at the LPB Chair Forum on 14 May 2026.
2. Note the continuing concerns regarding administration performance, remedy delivery and member experience.
3. Support ongoing work to improve communication, recruitment and governance effectiveness across Local Pension Boards.
4. Comment on any additional actions that may assist LPBs in addressing the issues identified.
5. Note that future updates will include progress against the actions arising from the Forum and any new themes emerging from Chairs' discussions.