

Meeting: LPB Effectiveness Committee

Date: 20 October 2026

Agenda item 7: Local Pension Board and Scheme Manager Engagement

Introduction

1. Following an [initial survey](#), seven LPB Chairs who reported that their Scheme Manager rarely or never attends LPB meetings were contacted with a follow-up survey. Six responses were received, and this report presents an analysis of those responses, focusing on the communication and engagement arrangements in place between the Board and Scheme Manager.

Key messages

- Despite Scheme Managers rarely or never attending LPB meetings, five of the six respondents (83%) considered communication and engagement between the LPB and Scheme Manager to be effective. The remaining respondent considered it partly effective.
- A range of formal and informal arrangements are used to maintain communication. The most reported arrangements were the sharing of minutes and meeting papers and separate meetings between the LPB Chair and Scheme Manager, each reported by four respondents (67%).
- Free-text responses particularly highlighted regular direct contact between the LPB Chair and Scheme Manager, supported in some cases by administrators, senior pensions advisers or representatives.
- Respondents identified regular contact, informal meetings, accessibility and established governance arrangements as practices that support effective engagement.
- There was limited demand for additional support from the Committee among those who answered the question, although one respondent suggested sharing good practice to encourage consistency

Survey Responses

Responses to multiple choice question: How is the Scheme Manager kept informed of matters discussed by the Board?

2. Respondents reported a range of arrangements for keeping the Scheme Manager informed of matters discussed by the Board. The most frequently reported arrangements were providing minutes following meetings, sharing meeting papers and separate meetings between the LPB Chair and Scheme Manager, each selected by four respondents (67%). Three respondents (50%) reported that formal reports are submitted

to the Scheme Manager. Other arrangements included regular direct contact between the LPB Chair and Scheme Manager and attendance by a Scheme Manager representative.

Communication and engagement arrangement	Number	Percentage
Minutes are provided following meetings	4	67%
Meeting papers are shared	4	67%
Formal reports are submitted to the Scheme Manager	3	50%
The LPB Chair meets with the Scheme Manager separately	4	67%
Other: Regular direct contact between the LPB Chair and Scheme Manager	1	17%
Other: Scheme Manager sends a representative	1	17%

Responses to free text question: How are recommendations, concerns or requests from the Local Pension Board communicated to the Scheme Manager?

- Responses indicate that recommendations, concerns and requests are communicated through a combination of direct contact and established governance arrangements. Several respondents referred to regular meetings or communication between the LPB Chair and Scheme Manager, with administrators and pensions teams also involved in some arrangements. Other routes identified included the Board Secretary/Senior Pensions Adviser and formal governance reports

Arrangement described
As LPB chair I meet with the scheme manager / CFO to make him aware of any recommendations, concerns or requests from the LPB and he has the opportunity to do the same with myself as we see each other pretty much on a daily basis at SHQ and this arrangement works very well as we never have any long delays trying to schedule meetings etc and are quick to resolve any issues.
As above and regular meetings with Scheme Manager and pension administrator.
Directly via the Board Secretary/Senior Pensions Adviser
Regular 121s, meetings with pensions team, LPB and scheme manager.
Through regular communication between the LPB chair, scheme manager and administrator.
Governance reports

Responses to free text question: How does the Scheme Manager provide feedback, responses or decisions back to the Local Pension Board?

4. Feedback, responses and decisions are provided to the Board through a variety of routes. Responses most commonly described communication through the LPB Chair, either directly from the Scheme Manager or through regular meetings. Other arrangements included communication through the administrator, a Scheme Manager representative or Senior Pensions Adviser, and updates through meeting papers. One response referred to feedback being provided to the CFO as delegated Scheme Manager and then to the LPB.

Arrangement described
The Scheme manager will come directly to myself (LPB Chair) to provide any feedback, responses or decisions which are then subsequently documented and fed back to the LPB members at the earliest opportunity.
Meeting papers and updates provided to the LPB. Regular meetings with LPB chair.
Via the representative or Senior Pensions Adviser
As per Q3.
Through the LPB chair and administrator
Feedback to the CFO as delegated Scheme Manager, through to the LPB

Responses to single choice question: Overall, do you feel there is effective communication and engagement between the Local Pension Board and the Scheme Manager despite their limited attendance at meetings?

5. Overall, respondents reported positively on communication and engagement. Five of the six respondents (83%) considered communication and engagement between the LPB and Scheme Manager to be effective despite the Scheme Manager's limited attendance at meetings. One respondent (17%) considered it partly effective, while no respondents considered communication and engagement to be ineffective.

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	5	83%
Partly	1	17%
No	0	0%

Responses to free text question: Are there any particular arrangements or practices that you feel work well and support effective engagement between the Board and the Scheme Manager?

6. Respondents identified regular and accessible communication as an important feature of effective engagement. Examples included regular informal meetings and contact,

opportunities for the LPB Chair and Scheme Manager to discuss issues as they arise, and regular communication arising from the respective organisational roles of the Chair and Scheme Manager. Good governance and risk management were also identified as supporting effective engagement. One respondent particularly highlighted an open and inclusive organisational culture that enables issues and concerns to be raised promptly and supports timely responses.

Arrangement or practice described
The approachable and inclusive culture here at CFRS which allows the LPB Chair and members to drop into the CFO / scheme managers office to discuss any issues or concerns in a timely manner and the fact that the scheme manager also reciprocates by dropping into everyone's office pretty much on a daily basis when he is at SHQ. This works well and removes the barriers where board members are reluctant to raise issues should any arise and provides timely responses / outcomes.
Regular informal meetings
As answer 4
Regular contact
This is assisted by the roles that undertake these positions. In Cornwall the Chief Fire Officer is the Scheme Manager and an Assistant Chief Fire Officer is the pension board chair. This provides sufficient opportunity through regular communication and meetings to discuss pension related matters.
Good governance and risk management

Responses to free text question: How could the LPB Effectiveness Committee support effective engagement between the Local Pension Board and the Scheme Manager??

- Four responses were provided to this question. Two respondents indicated that their existing arrangements work well and did not identify a need for additional support. One respondent suggested that the Committee could share good practice to encourage consistency. Another respondent was unsure what further support could be provided and noted that arrangements would be monitored following a change in Director of Finance.

Support Identified
I think currently the process we have running at CFRS to ensure engagement between the LPB and scheme manager works exceptionally well and is very much a 2 way method of communication and this is due to the culture of the organisation, which is driven by the CFO down, so currently there is no real requirement for additional support in this area.
Share good practice to encourage consistency

Not sure they could. We now have a new Director of Finance and will monitor their approach to the Scheme Manager role

In Cornwall it works well.

Responses to free text question: Is there anything else you would like to share regarding communication and engagement between the Local Pension Board and the Scheme Manager?

8. One additional comment was received:

- My view as stated above is that we here at CFRS have a excellent communication and engagement between the LPB and the CFO / scheme manager due to the level of access available and that the Scheme manager/ CFO has a detailed knowledge of current pension legislation / remedy etc

Summary

9. The responses indicate that limited attendance by Scheme Managers at LPB meetings does not, in itself, prevent effective communication and engagement. Five of the six respondents considered their arrangements to be effective, with the remaining respondent considering them partly effective. Respondents described a range of mechanisms for maintaining engagement, with regular contact between LPB Chairs and Scheme Managers, supported by the sharing of meeting information and established governance arrangements, featuring prominently in the responses.
10. While local arrangements vary, the responses highlight regular and accessible communication as a recurring feature of effective engagement. There was limited demand for additional support from the LPB Effectiveness Committee, although sharing good practice to encourage consistency was identified as one area where the Committee could provide support.