

**Constitution Committee – 17 January 2022**  
**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

<p><b>1. Questioner's name: Alan Mossman</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</b></p>
<p>Agenda Item 7: Pensions Committee Report</p> <p>I believe that at the last Pensions Committee meeting (3 December 2021) a request was made for an additional scheme member (an employee making pension contributions or in receipt of a pension managed/overseen by the Pensions Board and Pensions Committee) to sit on the committee.</p> <p>I can find no mention of this in the minutes of that Committee and I note that the report to Constitution Committee (Agendum 7 Appendix 1 p.21) ignores that request too. I recognise that the decisions facing the Pensions Committee are often complex and technical and require high calibre participants. Given that the purpose of the Pension Committee is to "give advice on the proper management of the Gloucestershire Pension Fund ..." and that the Pension Fund exists for the benefit of the Scheme Members, why has a decision been taken to continue to have only one Scheme Member/employee representing the huge diversity of scheme members (blue and white collar, parish, academy, district and many other organisations as well as the county council employees) on the committee?</p>	<p>No formal request for an additional scheme member representative was laid before or debated at the Pensions Committee at its meeting on 3 December 2021.</p> <p>The recommendation being proposed by the Pensions Committee to the Constitution Committee is being made after taking appropriate advice from AON (the firm that undertook the review) as part of the governance review that the Pensions Committee instigated, and after debate at its meeting on 24 September 2021. The review has been undertaken, with regard to the anticipated guidance from Government as a result of the good governance review that is being undertaken by the Scheme Advisory Board. The recommendation from the Pensions Committee is made on the basis that it will increase the Committees engagement with the key stakeholders in the discharging of its statutory function as the administering authority of the Pension Fund. The Pensions Committee at its meeting on 24 September 2021 as part of the recommendation agreed to review the situation again in 2 years with consideration as to whether making further changes would be desirable at that time.</p>
<p><b>2. Questioner's name: Alan Mossman</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</b></p>
<p>Agenda Item 7: Pensions Committee Report</p>	<p>The proposed changes are intended to increase the Pensions</p>

<p>In Agendum 7 Appendix 1 Pensions Committee Membership (p.21) it is proposed to double the number of employer representatives. What is the benefit to scheme members and to the purpose and duties of the Pensions Committee of increasing employer representation?</p>	<p>Committee engagement with its key stakeholders and reflect the diverse nature of the participating employers (c200) in the Fund whilst maintain the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 under which the Pensions Committee is constituted.</p>				
<p><b>3. Questioner's name: Alan Mossman</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</b></p>				
<p>Agenda Item 7: Pensions Committee Report</p> <p>In Agendum 7 Appendix 1 Pensions Committee Membership (p.21) it is proposed that the employer representatives should now sit without voting rights. Previously the single employer representative had a vote. The employee representative has not recently had a vote. What is the benefit to scheme members and to the purpose and duties of the Pensions Committee of disenfranchising the employer and the employee representatives (however many there are)?</p>	<p>The Pensions Committee has to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 under which it is constituted. Under the act, it requires that political proportionality is applied to the Committee. The Pensions Committee as part of their debate received advise from Officers, that there was a potential that if representatives maintain voting rights, this could have implications on the political proportionality requirements not only on the Pensions Committee but on the wider membership on all Committees of Gloucestershire County Council. The Pensions Committee as part of the debate, sought the opinion of the current district council (employer) representative, who did not have an objection of the removal of the voting rights on the basis of the information provided.</p>				
<p><b>4. Questioner's name: Alan Mossman</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</b></p>				
<p>Agenda Item 7: Pensions Committee Report</p> <p>Approximately how many scheme members are served by the Pensions Committee?</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="208 1337 1055 1418"> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>County employees</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Total		County employees		<p>Membership data contained in the 2020/21 Pension Fund Annual Report is as follows:</p> <p>Contributing Members: 19,222 Pensioners deferring receipt of their pension: 20,274</p>
Total					
County employees					

Employees in district councils		Pensions in receipt of their pension: 17,290 Total membership: 56,786
Employees in other organisations		
Pensioners deferring receipt of their pension		
Pensioners in receipt of their pension		

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**MEMBER QUESTIONS**

<p><b>1. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</b></p>
<p>Agenda item 7: Pensions Committee</p> <p>What is the rationale for making all employer and employee members of the Committee non-voting members, and in particular why is the existing vote right being removed from the existing employer representative? How are these members of the Committee to represent their employers/fellow employees in any meaningful way if they have no right to vote in the decisions of the Committee?</p>	<p>The Pensions Committee has to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 under which it is constituted. Under the act, it requires that political proportionality is applied to the Committee. The Pensions Committee as part of their debate received advise from Officers, that there was a potential that if representatives maintain voting rights, this could have implications on the political proportionality requirements not only on the Pensions Committee but on the wider membership on all Committees of Gloucestershire County Council. The Pensions Committee as part of the debate, sought the opinion of the current district council (employer) representative, who did not have an objection of the removal of the voting rights on the basis of the information provided.</p>
<p><b>2. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</b></p>
<p>Agenda item 7: Pensions Committee</p> <p>At the meeting of the Pensions Committee on 24th September, when the Governance Review was discussed (para 23), the notes record that "The Employee representative felt it was regrettable that the employee representation on the Committee would not be increased at this time, he felt this was unbalanced as members on the committee represented councils and not those who contributed directly to the fund. He added as the staff representative he didn't feel this was the right decision. The Head of Pensions offered to relay these comments to the Constitution Committee". Does the Constitution Committee think it right that no account has been taken of the opinion of the Employee Representative in the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference? I note that since the Employee Representative is granted no voting right</p>	<p>The Constitution Committee will be made aware of the comments of the staff representative that were made and minuted in the debate held by the Pensions Committee on 24 September 2021 when they receive the report. It will also be advised that the Pensions Committee as part of its recommendations wish to review the situation in 2 years with consideration as to whether making any further changes is desirable at that time.</p>

(see above), he is further hampered in his ability to represent the views of his fellow employees in the business of the Committee.