

Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held at Templeton House on 24 February 2026 at 10am.

Members Present

Mark McBride (Chair), Michael Rafferty, Richard Baker, Alan Law (Via Teams), Antoinette McMillen, Shane McCurdy, Heather McKinstry, Peter Moore, Paul Francey (Via Teams), Dooley Harte, Ken Clayton and JJ Tohill.

In Attendance

David Murphy (Secretary)
Nicola Todd (Deputy Secretary)
Denise McElrea (Head of Governance and HR)
Catherine Whyte (Governance Manager)
Jennifer Campbell (HR Manager)
Annie McElhatton (Investment Services Manager)
Gemma Major (Governance Officer)
Gerard Murray (Department for Communities)
Chris Lyons (Legal & General)
Robert Dowling (Legal & General)
Lloyd Butcher (BlueBay)
Blair Reid (BlueBay)

Apologies

Cathy Matthews

1 Declaration of Member Interests

Alan Law joined the meeting via teams.

- 1.1 Antionette McMillen and Alan Law declared an interest in risk O18 which is included in item 6(ii), the NIPSA claim budget at item 8 and item 4.4 of the Secretary's Report. As these matters related to a previously declared interest arising with their employment by NIPSA, both members had received redacted versions of each paper. It was agreed that both members would leave for any discussions on the conflicted items.
- 1.2 Alan Law declared an interest in item 4.5 of the Secretary's Report which related to the Thornhill legal action, also relating to his employment by NIPSA. Antoinette McMillen also wished to declare a conflict on this matter relating to her employment by NIPSA, and asked that her conflict form be updated to reflect this.

2 Chairperson's Business and Apologies

- 2.1 The Chairperson conveyed the apologies of Cathy Matthews, who was unable to attend the meeting due to a bereavement in her family.
- 2.2 The Committee extended their sincere condolences to Cathy during this difficult time.
- 2.3 The Chair advised that the Partnership Agreement has been returned to the Department and thanked all members for their contributions and responses in order to get to this point.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting on 27 January 2026

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2026, having been circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising

- 4.1 The Secretary noted that the Department had requested a further amendment to the Partnership Agreement since the last meeting, confirming that Committee agreement for the change was obtained by email.

5 Staffing Committee

- 5.1.1 The Chair of the Staffing Committee provided a verbal report of the most recent meeting held on 20 January 2026.
- 5.1.2 Shane McCurdy informed the Committee that the Staffing Committee had reviewed the proposal for the establishment of additional resources and that this was included later on the agenda.
- 5.1.3 The Committee noted the verbal update.
- 5.2 *Review of Disciplinary Policy*
 - 5.2.1 The HR Manager presented the updated Disciplinary Policy which sets out the guidance on how to deal with matters related to conduct. She noted that the policy was recently reviewed and updated, and a minimal number of changes were made. The Staffing Committee had reviewed and noted the amendments at its most recent meeting.
 - 5.2.2 The Committee raised a query regarding the wording of section 3.10 of the policy. It was agreed that the officers would amend the existing wording to make clear that consideration of an individual's previous service record would not change the disciplinary process undertaken, rather that it could

be considered as a mitigating factor when determining an appropriate penalty.

5.2.3 The Committee noted and approved the Disciplinary Policy, subject to the above amendment.

5.3 Establishment of Additional Resources 2026/27

5.3.1 The Deputy Secretary presented to a paper relating to the establishment of additional resources. She advised that the management team has identified two areas where it considered additional resources are required to successfully deliver on the corporate plan. In addition, an extension was sought in relation to four existing temporary posts.

5.3.2 The Deputy Secretary set out the business need for the additional resources proposed together with the associated funding implications.

5.3.3 The Committee discussed the extension of four temporary posts and the business need for these roles to be extended for a further 12 months, as well as the staffing costs involved.

5.3.4 The Management Committee noted the endorsement of the Staffing Committee and approved the future funding for the associated salary costs of establishing four new posts within the Pension Services team, together with the extension of four existing temporary posts for an additional 12 months.

The HR Manager left the meeting.

6 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

6.1.1 A verbal report was provided by the Chair of the ARAC on the meeting held on 4 February 2026.

6.1.2 Michael Rafferty advised that the internal audit program for the year was nearly complete with only one remaining and no new incidents of fraud had been reported.

6.1.3 The verbal report was noted by the Committee.

6.2 2025/26 Risk Register Review Quarter Ended 31 December 2025

6.2.1 The Governance Manager presented the risk register review for the quarter ended 31 December 2025.

6.2.2 The Committee noted the outcome of the quarterly risk review for the quarter ended 31 December 2025 which demonstrated that the risk management and internal control systems are operating effectively.

6.2.3 Gerard Murray advised that, in relation to risk C5, the McCloud guidance was still with the Minister for Communities.

6.2.4 The Committee agreed the Risk Register.

The Governance Manager left the meeting, and the Head of Finance joined the meeting.

7 Corporate Plan 2026/27 – 2028/29

7.1 The Deputy Secretary presented the Corporate Plan for the rolling three years ending 31 March 2029. She provided an overview of the corporate plan and the proposed amendments to the current iteration.

7.2 The Deputy Secretary summarised the planned activities for the year ahead, highlighting current administration challenges and the pensions dashboard programme as key activities.

7.3 The Committee noted ongoing staffing challenges relating to the recruitment of professional and/or niche technical roles. The Committee discussed various options, including the potential introduction of a market supplement policy, noting the hurdles and challenges involved due to the operation of the pay remit approval process.

7.4 Gerard Murray confirmed that the matter of a market supplement policy wasn't about affordability for NILGOSC, rather it was about setting a precedent in the wider public sector. Gerard suggested that NILGOSC send him correspondence setting out the difficulties in recruiting senior, professional posts so that he could raise this centrally with the Department.

7.5 The Committee agreed to take Gerard up on his offer and it was left with the Secretary to take forward.

7.6 The Committee approved the Corporate Plan 2026/27-2028/29.

The Committee had a short break.

8 Annual Budget

8.1.1 The Head of Finance presented the annual budget for 2026/27.

8.1.2 She provided the Committee with a summary of the total expenditure estimate for 2026/27, a breakdown by expenditure type and proposed new capital expenditure for the year ahead.

8.1.3 The Head of Finance discussed the increase of expenditure for IT due to inflationary uplifts, the introduction of new software and enhanced cyber security protocols.

- 8.1.4 The Committee noted the roll forward of the capital budget for the replacement heating system and discussed the rationale for moving to a greener heating solution for Templeton House.
- 8.1.5 The Chairperson acknowledged that this was the last Management Committee meeting for the Head of Finance before her retirement. The Committee congratulated her on eight years with NILGOSC and acknowledged the strong financial management leadership displayed during this period. The Committee wished Maria well in her retirement.
- 8.1.6 The Committee noted and approved the Annual Budget of £8,343,000 together with the capital budget of £510,000.

Alan Law and Antoinette McMillen left the meeting.

8.2 Additional Legal Services - 2026/27 Specific Legal Services Contingency

- 8.2.1 The Head of Finance presented the additional budget paper which outlined the estimated expenditure required for legal services to assist NILGOSC in defending multiple compensation claims made by NIPSA.
- 8.2.2 The Committee noted the update on activity provided, together with the estimated costs for the year ahead.

8.2.3

Alan Law rejoined the meeting.

The Investment Services Manager joined the meeting.

9 **Manager Performance Briefing Note – Legal & General**

- 9.1 The Investment Services Manager presented the report which provided the Committee with an overview of the Legal and General Investment Management (LGIM) portfolio for the year to 31 December 2025.

Antoinette McMillen rejoined the meeting.

- 9.2 The Committee noted the manager performance briefing note for Legal & General.

The Legal & General representatives joined the meeting.

10 **Presentation by Legal & General**

- 10.1 The Chair welcomed the representatives from Legal & General, Chris Lyons and Robert Dowling.

- 10.2 Chris Lyons presented the paper which provided an overview of the relationship, portfolio activity and changes within the L&G team.
- 10.3 Robert Dowling outlined the fund's methodology, the strategy delivery, performance and key characteristics over the year.
- 10.4 The Committee raised a number of questions with Legal & General including senior personnel changes, LCT index composition, the outlook for low carbon stocks, currency hedging issues and expectations for inflation and gilt yield movement over 2026.
- 10.5 The Committee noted the presentation given by Legal & General and the Chair thanked Chris and Robert for attending the meeting.

The Legal & General representatives left the meeting. Antoinette McMilen left the meeting.

11 Manager Performance Briefing Note - BlueBay

- 11.1 The Investment Services Manager presented the report which provided the Committee with an overview of the RBC BlueBay Asset Management (BlueBay) portfolio for the year to 31 December 2025.
- 11.2 The report provided information on key personnel and ownership structure, a breakdown of BlueBay's overall performance and the investment philosophy and process.
- 11.3 The report also outlined ESG considerations, the portfolio construction and derivatives, as well as areas to monitor.
- 11.4 The Committee noted the briefing note paper.

Representatives from BlueBay joined the meeting.

12 Presentation by BlueBay

- 12.1 The Chair welcomed the representatives from BlueBay, Lloyd Butcher and Blair Reid and thanked them for attending the meeting to present their report which covered the portfolio's performance and activity throughout the year to 31 December 2025.
- 12.2 Lloyd Butcher provided an update on the planned retirement of the Head of Multi Asset Credit. Blair Reid provided an overview of bond markets in 2025 together with fund performance.

Gerard Murray left the meeting.

12.3 The Committee raised a number of questions with BlueBay including opportunities to add value, portfolio positioning, defaults in the market and stock specific holdings.

Michael Rafferty left the meeting.

12.4 The Committee noted the paper and thanked Lloyd and Blair for attending the Committee meeting.

The BlueBay representatives and the Investment Services Manager left the meeting.

13 Secretary's Report

13.1 The Secretary's Report was noted by the Committee.

14 Any other Business

14.1 The Secretary advised that he would be circulating details on the Pensions UK Local Authority Conference in the coming weeks.

14.2 There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

The next meeting will be held on 24 March 2026.

Chairperson (Signature).

Date