

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD** held at 2.00 pm on 18 October 2018 at County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Monday, 17 December 2018.

Elected Members:

*Present

- * Mr Nick Harrison (Chairman)
- * Richard Jones
- * Glynn Parry-Jones
- * Sally Wilson (Vice-Chairman)

30/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

There were no apologies of absence.

31/18 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 29 MARCH 2018 [Item 2]

Witnesses:

Michael Mann, Lead Pensions Manager
Clare Chambers, Pension Service Delivery Manager

Key Points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers agreed to provide an update on action plan work streams at the Board's next meeting in December 2018.
2. Members requested a progress report on the online portal facility to highlight any development or other issues ahead of its launch.
3. There was a discussion around the Stage 2 complaint which was raised at the last Board meeting on 29 March 2018 and Members noted that the matter had resolved.

Actions / further information to be provided:

The Board to receive an update report on;

- a) Action plan work streams and the
- b) Online portal

Resolved:

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

32/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

33/18 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

Witnesses:

Michael Mann, Lead Pensions Manager
Clare Chambers, Pension Service Delivery Manager
Eric Jameson, Senior Pensions Officer

Key Points Raised during the discussion:

1. Questions were submitted to the Board on 9 October 2018 from the widow of a retired firefighter on issues regarding outstanding payments. The Pensions Service Delivery Manager informed members that this would be handled through the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP).
2. Officers advised the Board that payments were not discharged due to the absence of an indemnity form and the lack of resources. The Board were assured that officers planned to resolve the issue by the end of November 2018.
3. The Board requested that the Board receive an update report on this matter at its next meeting in December 2018.
4. The Board recommended that the Pensions Lead Manager report the breach to the Pensions Regulator.

Actions / further information to be provided

- a) The Board to receive a written report on the existing IDRP cases including a summary of the issue and how it was resolved.
- b) The Pensions Lead Manager to report the outstanding payments breach to the Pensions Regulator.

34/18 ACTION TRACKER [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Michael Mann, Lead Pensions Manager
Clare Chambers, Pension Service Delivery Manager
Ayaz Malik, Pensions Accountant Advisor

Key Points Raised during the discussion:

1. Members referred to action 22/18, where the Board requested a copy of the breach report and the Pensions Lead Manager indicated that it would be circulated to the Board once available.

2. It was noted that the Administration update report included a recruitment summary and the Board agreed to mark action 24/18 complete.

Actions / further information to be provided:

None

Resolved:

The Board reviewed its action tracker.

**35/18 ADMINISTRATION UPDATE: 1 MARCH 2018 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2018
[Item 6]**

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Michael Mann, Lead Pensions Manager
Clare Chambers, Pension Service Delivery Manager
Eric Jameson, Senior Pensions Officer

Key Points Raised during the discussion:

1. The Pensions Service Delivery Manager was pleased to report that all Annual Benefit Statements were issued by the deadline and 12 retirements were processed within a week of members' retirement date.
2. Officers agreed to provide data on how many deferred members' addresses had remained outstanding in the next update report.
3. Members queried the reasons for members' opting out of the pension scheme and requested this information to be presented in the update report for the Board's meeting in December 2018.
4. It was noted that 31 October was confirmed as the deadline for Fire and Rescue Authorities to return Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) reconciliation data to HMRC. It was further noted that Jardine Lloyd Thompson were providing the second analysis regarding the work being undertaken for the GMP reconciliation and the next update was scheduled for 22 October 2018. Officers asked the Members to take into consideration that queries may well be presented and decisions required from the Board following any referrals for unresolved cases. Officers agreed to report back on progress of the GMP reconciliation process at the Board's next meeting in December 2018.
5. It was highlighted, that despite reassurances given at the previous Board meeting, the former Pensions Lead Manager had left no

effective project plan or resources dedicated to resolving the issue with the modified scheme. Members expressed their disappointment and asked officers to report the breach to the Pension Regulator. It was noted that the recently recruited Lead Pension Manager and Pensions Service Delivery Manager planned to take legal advice as well as input from the LGA adviser to find the way forward. Officers agreed to provide a progress report on this exercise at the Board's next meeting on 17 December 2018.

Actions / further information to be provided:

- a) The Board to receive statistics on deferred members' addresses.
- b) Officers to provide members' reasons for opting out of the pension scheme.
- c) Officers to provide a further update on the GMP reconciliation process.
- d) Officers to report back on the Modified Scheme.

Resolved:

The Board noted the report.

36/18 SURREY FIREFIGHTERS' RISK REGISTER [Item 7]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Ayaz Malik, Pension Account Advisor

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. It was noted that Head of Pensions was organising a meeting with the Fire Service, Pension Administration team and Pension Fund team to review the governance to agree scheme manager responsibilities within the Council. The Board recommended that this issue should be identified as a new risk.
2. Members suggested that risk F9, failure to administer the scheme in line with regulations and policies should have a sub-risk to identify the modified scheme issue.
3. Members highlighted that the current valuation of the Firefighters Pension Scheme could potentially have its cost floor breached. Without secure funding from central government this would have financial implications for the Fire service. The Board advised that this should be reported to the Section 151 Officer and added to the risk register.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

Officers to report the cost implications of the current valuation to the Section 151 Officer.

Resolved

The Board noted the content of this report, including changes to the scoring of current risks and the inclusion of additional risks and recommended the following amendments,

- a) The Board asked officers to consider adding the following new risks;
 - i. The failure to agree ownership for scheme manager responsibilities.
 - ii. A sub-risk under risk F9 to identify the modified scheme issue.
 - iii. Add the cost floor breach to the risk register.

37/18 THE PROVISION FOR SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS ON THE LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD [Item 8]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Sharmina Ullah, Democratic Services Assistant

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman advised that observers were permitted to attend Local Firefighters' Pension Board meetings as it was a meeting held in public.
2. It was highlighted that the terms of reference does not permit substitutes to attend on behalf of absent Local Firefighters' Pension Board Members.
3. The Chairman explained that only two meetings a year were scheduled for the Board and these were scheduled to ensure attendance from all Board Members. The Board agreed not to recommend amendment to it terms of reference on this basis.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None

Recommendations:

The Board noted the contents of this report.

38/18 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 9]

The next meeting of the Local Firefighters' Pension Board will be held on 17 December 2018.

Meeting ended at: 3.00 pm

Chairman