

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **SURREY LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD** held at 10.00 am on 17 December 2018 at Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Croydon Road, Reigate, Surrey RH2 0EJ.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Board at its next meeting (TBC).

**Elected Members:**

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

**39/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Glyn Parry-Jones.

**40/18 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 18 OCTOBER 2018 [Item 2]**

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

**41/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

There were none.

**42/18 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

1. The Board received questions from members of the public and responses were tabled at the meeting (attached as Annex 1).
2. Concerns were raised by the Board with the level of response in dealing with concerning member's benefits issues and recommended action to improve operational processes and the timeline of payments.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

The Vice-Chairman to provide the public questioners with the Board's responses.

**43/18 ACTION TRACKER [Item 5]**

1. The Board agreed it would be useful to have some training organised to refresh and develop a wider understanding of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. The Pensions Service Delivery Manager agreed to explore training opportunities for the Board.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

The Pensions Service Delivery Manager to explore training opportunities for the Board.

**Resolved:**

The Board reviewed and noted its Action Tracker.

**44/18 ADMINISTRATION UPDATE 1 OCTOBER - 30 NOVEMBER 2018 [Item 6]**

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Witnesses:**

Clare Chambers, Pensions Service Delivery Manager  
Michael Mann, Pensions Lead Manager  
Jane Marshall, Partner, Weightmans LLP

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Pensions Service Delivery Manager introduced the report and provided the Board with an update of performance and current issues.
2. It was noted that work was underway in respect of data quality scores. Detailed reports identifying areas of improvement would be provided by Heywood's.
3. To enable the Board to keep track of key dates and progress the Pensions Service Delivery Manager agreed to share the scheme calendar.
4. It was highlighted that the Member Self Service Portal was still in development and would require further testing before it was launched to members of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.
5. There was a discussion around the ongoing issue with the retained firefighters' option to elect to join the modified section of the FPS 2006. The Board noted that legal advice had been sought on how to correct the matter and that the resolution of this breach had been prioritised by the Administration team.
6. It was noted that the failure to comply with overriding legislation and statutory guidance on this matter was not a country wide issue and therefore any anticipated resolution from the Home Office was highly unlikely. It was further noted actuarial advice would need to be sought to determine how to resolve reaching an arrangement or compensating those affected.
7. It was highlighted that there would be different solutions for the different types of members affected by this breach. The Board noted that deferred members would be the most complex category to determine going forward.
8. The Pensions Lead Manager agreed to share the Service's work plan at the Board's next meeting to demonstrate progress in resolving the issue.

9. The Board were informed that Surrey's Internal Audit Department were reviewing how the issue arose and make recommendations for improvement.

10. The Chairman agreed to take the meeting into Part 2, private.

Recommendation: That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

The Pensions Service Delivery Manager to share the Pensions Scheme calendar with the Board.

The Board to receive a report from Heywoods on Data Quality Scores.

The Pensions Lead Manager to provide the Board with the Service's work plan to rectify the issue concerning the Modified Scheme 2006.

The Board to review the report on the matter from Internal Audit.

**Resolved:**

The Board noted the content of this report.

**45/18 A FAILURE TO PAY MEMBER/DEPENDANT BENEFITS EITHER ACCURATELY OR IN A TIMELY MANNER [Item 7]**

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Witnesses:**

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

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Board noted the breach report submitted to the Pensions Regulator regarding outstanding payments and were advised that the matter had now been resolved.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

None

**Resolved:**

The Board noted the content of this report.

**46/18 GUARANTEED MINIMUM PENSION (GMP) RECONCILIATION PROJECT [Item 8]**

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Witnesses:**

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

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Lead Pensions Manager provided an update on the guaranteed minimum pensions (GMP) reconciliation exercise, informing the Board that the number of GMP discrepancies submitted to HMRC (National Insurance Services to Pensions Industry) was reducing.
2. It was highlighted HMRC were expecting a large number of queries to be registered with them on a national basis and as a consequence, issue resolution would take place through to April 2019.
3. The Board noted some decisions would need to be made on how to progress certain issues and these would be presented as the project developed. The Board noted that resolution of discrepancies would follow advice from the Home Office and LGA.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

None

**Resolved:**

The Board noted the content of this report.

**47/18 SURREY FIREFIGHTERS' RISK REGISTER [Item 9]**

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Witnesses:**

Ayaz Malik, Accountant Advisor – Pensions

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Accountant Advisor introduced the report by highlighting the new risks added to the register:
  - The failure to agree ownership for scheme manager responsibilities
  - A sub-risk under F9 to identify the modified scheme issue
  - The cost floor breach

2. The Board requested that the risk register include a new risk to highlight the lack of resources within the Pension Service and within Surrey Fire and Rescue..
3. The Board asked the Accountant Advisor to review risk F5, indicating that the contact details on the public website were out dated.
4. The Accountant Advisor noted discrepancies with the residual risk figures for F8, F9 and F19 and assured the Board the risk register would be reviewed to resolve this.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

None

**Resolved:**

The Board noted the content of this report, the inclusion of additional risks and and recommended the following amendments;

- a) Add a new risk to highlight the lack of resources
- b) To re-review risks F5, F8, F9 and F19

**48/18 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 10]**

Due to the increased activity surrounding the Firefighters' Pension Scheme the Board decided it would be appropriate to have quarterly meetings in 2019 and agreed there next meeting to be held in March 2019. As a result of agreeing two additional meetings next year the Board were asked to reconsider the provision of substitute members.

Meeting ended at: 11.20 am

---

**Chairman**