

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD** held at 10.30 am on 25 July 2024 at Committee Room, Woodhatch Place, 11 Cockshot Hill, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 8EF.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 21 November 2024.

(* present)

Elected Members:

- * Paul Bowyer
- * Nick Harrison (Chairman)
- * Glyn Parry-Jones
- * Dan Quin (Vice-Chairman)

23/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

None received.

24/24 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 26 APRIL 2024 [Item 2]

The minutes from the meeting on 26 April 2024 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

25/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None.

26/24 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were none.

27/24 SURREY FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKER [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Danni Lamaignere, Scheme Manager
Gary Bartliff, Senior Pensions Advisor

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. In regard to Action A1/20, officers stated that the team had focused on prioritising the creation and distribution of retained settlement statements to address the backlog. The Data Protection Impact Assessment had to be finalised before commencing the tracing exercise. Additionally, the pensions team explored the procedure for implementing accepted settlements, which was still under review.
2. In regard to Action A6/23, officers stated that the pensions team had continued to supply the required GAD data to XPS for all cohorts of

membership. They were at the point of tidying up any unusual or outstanding cases.

3. The Board agreed to close Action A7/23.
4. Members noted that there were three additional actions noted within the minutes of the previous meeting. These were:

A3/24 - A Member of the Board stated that he was aware of members of the pension scheme who had not received their pension forecast figures on time and further stated that members of the scheme were frustrated with the lack of information. The Chairman requested the detail be shared with XPS allowing an investigation.

A4/24 – The Chairman asked for detail on data included within the ‘general’ section within the tables under Completed Cases by Month. The representative from XPS would seek more information to be shared with the Board and the Pensions Team.

A5/24 - it was agreed that it would be beneficial for XPS and the Pension Team to liaise further in order to better understand each other’s processes.

5. In regard to Action A4/24, the Chairman noted that the information had not yet been shared with XPS and requested that the Member contact XPS directly if any issues remained.
6. In regard to Action A5/24, the representative from XPS explained that the "general" category was used for items not already specified within the service level agreement.
7. In regard to Action A6/24, the representative from XPS informed the Board that they had met with the Pension Team to discuss each other’s processes and explore ways to maximise collaboration from both sides.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Board noted the Actions and Recommendations Tracker.

28/24 SCHEME MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Danni Lamaignere, Scheme Manager
Gary Bartliff, Senior Pensions Advisor

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers introduced the report and provided Members with a brief overview. Members noted details related to McCloud - Age Discrimination Remedy, 10% Pensionable Allowance, Retained Settlement – Matthew’s cases, Annual Benefit Statements / Remediable Service Statement, Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Rectification, Pension Dashboard, Pre-Retirement Course, Training,

Pension Team Resourcing and the Pensions Sharepoint site. Full details could be found within the published report.

2. In regard to the Retained Settlement – Matthew’s cases, the Chairman noted that 208 members had been contacted and inquired whether any additional members needed to be reached. Officers confirmed that they had contacted all known members and stated that a tracing exercise would be conducted to determine if there were any further members to contact. A Member also requested details on the total number of members in the population to compare with the 208 who had been contacted. Officers agreed to provide this information outside the meeting.
3. In regard to the Annual Benefit Statements / Remediable Service Statement, Members noted that the End-of-Year (EOY) return for 2023/24 had not yet been issued to XPS. The data, which was due to be supplied by the payroll team by the end of May 2024, had been requested two months earlier but had still not been produced. The Chairman mentioned that he had written to the relevant Head of Service to highlight the issue and received a response indicating that re-planning was taking place within the service to allocate the necessary resources to complete the work. No further update had been received since. The Vice-Chairman highlighted that the Pension Team was scheduled to meet with the relevant department after the Board meeting and stressed the importance of promptly communicating any potential delays in issuing statements to members. The Chairman requested that the Board be regularly updated on the timelines.
4. In regard to Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Rectification, the representative from XPS confirmed that the data would be with their projects team and that an update would be provided at the next meeting.
5. In regard to the Unit 4 Payroll Adjustments, a member asked if officers were aware of the total number of members impacted and whether they had been contacted to state that there was an issue that would be resolved in due course. Officers stated that Payroll were dealing with this and correcting contributions. Officers agreed request an update from payroll.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

A6/24 - Retained Settlement – Matthew’s cases – It was agreed that officers share the total number of members in the population to compare with the 208 who had been contacted. The Scheme Manager agreed to provide this information outside the meeting.

A7/24 – Unit 4 Payroll Adjustments – A member inquired whether officers were aware of the total number of affected members and whether they had been notified about the issue and its resolution. Officers confirmed that Payroll was actively addressing the issue and correcting contributions. Officers agreed to request an update from Payroll to ensure that impacted members are informed of the situation and the expected resolution timeline.

A9/24 - End-of-Year (EOY) return for 2023/24 - The Pension Team to meet with the relevant department after the Board meeting to discuss the delayed End-of-Year (EOY) return for 2023/24, emphasising the importance of timely updates on any further delays in issuing Annual Benefit Statements /

Remediable Service Statements. The Board to be regularly updated on timelines.

A10/24 - Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Rectification - In regard to Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Rectification, the representative from XPS confirmed that the data would be with their projects team and that an update would be provided at the next meeting.

Resolved:

The Board noted the report.

29/24 XPS - SURREY FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY PENSION BOARD REPORT [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Graeme Hall, XPS
Sharon Stoker, XPS

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The representative from XPS introduced the report and provided members with a brief update. The Board noted detail related to the APT tool and the absence of automation on XPS's pensions software, Member Self-Service, data quality, Completed Cases Overview and by month, and complaints.
2. In regard to the Annual Benefit Statements and the Pension Savings Statement, a member noted that they would be saved in the Member Self-Service area and inquired if they would also be emailed to members. The representative from XPS stated that a communication would be circulated to direct members to the location.
3. The representative from XPS acknowledged that the number of completed cases for Quarter 1 was low but emphasised that XPS was working to improve this by further automation and updating internal processes.
4. A Member suggested that XPS include data from previous quarters to enable members to compare trends over time. The representative confirmed that this data would be incorporated into the updated report template, which would be presented at the next meeting. The Chairman additionally requested that future reports include monthly backlog data to provide clearer insight into what is being carried over.
5. In regard to Complaints, it was requested that the charts be amended to clearly distinguish between 'live' cases and 'completed' cases.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

Action A11/24 – Complaints - it was requested that the charts be amended to clearly distinguish between 'live' cases and 'completed' cases.

A12/24 – Data - A Member asked that XPS include data from previous quarters to enable members to compare trends over time. The representative confirmed that this data would be incorporated into the updated report template, which would be presented at the next meeting. The Chairman additionally requested that future reports include monthly backlog data to provide clearer insight into what is being carried over.

Resolved:

The Board noted the report.

30/24 FIRE BULLETINS [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Danni Lamaignere, Scheme Manager
Gary Bartliff, Senior Pensions Advisor

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Board noted the fire bulletins.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Board noted the fire bulletins.

31/24 RISK REGISTERS [Item 9]

Witnesses:

Danni Lamaignere, Scheme Manager
Gary Bartliff, Senior Pensions Advisor

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Board noted the risk registers.
2. Officers highlighted the issue related to payroll information being sent to XPS which had previously been discussed.
3. The Board asked that future risk registers include RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

A8/24 – It was agreed that, moving forward, risk registers should include Red, Amber, Green (RAG) ratings to provide clearer visibility of risk levels.

Resolved:

The Board noted the risk register.

32/24 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 10]

The Board noted that the date of the next meeting was 25 July 2024.

Meeting ended at: 11.40 am

Chairman