

SURREY LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER

The actions and recommendations tracker allows Board Members to monitor responses, actions and outcomes against their recommendations or requests for further actions. The tracker is updated following each Board. Once an action has been completed, it will be shaded out to indicate that it will be removed from the tracker at the next meeting. The next progress check will highlight to members where actions have not been dealt with.

KEY			
	No Progress Reported	Action In Progress	Action Completed

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress
17 January 2020 A1/20	Administration Update (1 September 2019 - 31 December 2019)	Pensions Administration will update the Board on the backdating of the contracting out certificate to 6 April 2000 - detailing the effect on National Insurance contributions and the Modified Pension Scheme.	Scheme Manager	As per FPS Bulletin 24 - September 2019 HMRC have now written to all FRAs with regards to backdating their FPS 2006 scheme contracting out certificate to 6 April 2000. This is to allow HMRC to process the refund of National Insurance Contributions and to correct the contracted-out status. In a few cases HMRC have informed FRAs that they do not currently have a valid contracting out certificate for the FPS 2006 and this will first need to be applied for and then backdated. The relevant form to complete has been sent to each FRA by HMRC and is form APSS155b. The backdating should be from 6 April 2000. HMRC goes on to confirm that 'a notice of intention or explanation must be given to all employees and recognised trade unions and the notice period of up to 3 months must have expired'. On the assumption that some form of consultation took place with employees following the ruling about backdating membership HMRC will accept that as having given the necessary notice of intention or explanation.	Ongoing

Item 5

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				<p>It has been confirmed that DCLG (now Home Office) consulted on changes to the scheme under the retained firefighters pension settlement consultation, so there is no need to issue anything further.</p> <p>In order to reduce the burden on FRAs with regards to providing information for these refunds to be made, it has been agreed with HMRC that only name, date of birth, NI number and period bought back needed to be provided. FPS Bulletin 2 and FPS Bulletin 3 provide more information. This topic was also covered at the special members refresher workshop [slides 52 and 53] to clarify that there was no discretion to not provide this information because it was needed for the HMRC GMP reconciliation project.</p> <p>July 2020: Weightmans are providing advice as part of other work given to them on Modified and 10% Scheme Allowances now we are ready to write back out to members.</p> <p>April 2021: Awaiting details of 2nd options exercise.</p> <p>July 2021: Follow up letters have been sent to members regarding the Modified extending the deadline for Expression of Interest Forms (EOI) to December 2021. This follows a number of enquires and requests for a second opportunity to express interest.</p> <p>October 2021: The period for members to submit their Expression of Interest Forms, remains open. Currently</p>	

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				<p>one form has been received. From January 2022, the calculations will be made and communicated accordingly to those who submit their EOI.</p> <p>January 2022: The date for the Expression of Interest forms to be submitted by has now passed. At present there has not been an update from the Government as to when the Modified Scheme will reopen for pension members to join. Throughout 2021, a further 5 forms were received. All members who returned an Expression Of Interest form (101 people), will be contacted in January 2022 with an update.</p> <p>April 2022: Members who returned their Eoi form by 31 December, were contacted in January 2022 to confirm their wishes had been noted and the Service is waiting for guidance from the government as to when the scheme will reopen. Members were informed no timeline has been suggested and calculations will be worked through once the legislation is in place. The second options exercise has not yet opened and the Service were informed on 15 March that the regulations need to be drafted by the Home Office, and consulted on before they become legislation. This process could take up to 18 months. Therefore it is likely the options exercise will only open around October 2023. Communications to be sent to members by end of May 2022 with an update of the status of the project.</p>	

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30 April 2020 A16/20 (Informal meeting due to Covid-19)	Action Tracker and Risk Register	<p>A) Pensionable Pay particularly concerning Duty Systems will be added to the action tracker and key headlines and milestones from Weightmans regarding the project, will be shared with the Board once received.</p> <p>B) A risk to be added to the Risk Register concerning Pensionable Pay - particularly in relation to Duty Systems.</p>	Scheme Manager	<p>30/04/20 (informal meeting) - In response, the Vice-Chairman explained that she had approached Jane Marshall from Weightmans legal service who helped scope that work project, for a report. She noted that the Workforce Information Officer had recently chased a reply from legal colleagues who were not in receipt of Weightmans' report. The Vice-Chairman agreed that once the report was received, the Board would receive key headlines and milestones in relation to that project.</p> <p>July 2020: The Project Manager initiated work to look at the allowances to find out what the Surrey County Council situation looked like. He was mandated with a task to prioritise current members and gone back to Weightmans for further advice. An update on pensionable allowances was given to the November Board and a risk has been added to the risk register. The Scheme Manager update will provide the Board with regular updates.</p> <p>April 2021: The Scheme Manager updated the Board on Pensionable Pay and reported that a new project manager was now in place so this and other projects could be taken forward through a Fire Pensions Programme Steering Group. A timeline for the Pensionable Pay project would be established. The Scheme Manager explained that the Steering Group would meet monthly and this Local Firefighters' Pensions Board would receive an update following each meeting.</p>	Ongoing

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				<p>July 2021: Meetings in place and papers are being shared. The previous Project Manager has left. Recruitment is underway for a Senior Pension Advisor.</p> <p>October 2021: Following a recruitment process, two new members joined the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. Both members have commenced working on 10% allowance project. Further resource is being sourced to complete the calculations for the 10% allowance project.</p> <p>January 2022: Calculations were completed in December 2022 for Priority Group 1 (SFRS members due to retire by end of 2023), and letters were sent to notify them of the 10% allowance and the impact this has had on their contributions. A total of 11 people were in this cohort. Calculations have also commenced for Priority Group 2 members (SFRS members who have retired between 2014 and 2020). Letters to this cohort are due to be sent by the end of January 2022.</p> <p>April 2022: After the Priority Group 1 letters were sent, the Service was contacted by the FBU who confirmed they were seeking legal advice. The Pensions Project Team made the decision to pause communicating to other cohorts in case the FBU feedback required an alternative method or message to be adopted. Calculations continue to be worked through and are now completed for Priority Group 2 and are underway for Priority Group 3 and 4. A meeting with the FBU is planned to take place in April 2022.</p>	

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30 April 2020 A19/20 (Informal meeting due to Covid-19)	Risk Register	The Pensions Support & Development Manager to provide an update to the Board on both short and long term solutions to resourcing FPS Pensions Administration. This would include the impact on the Modified Pension Scheme, Pensionable Pay and payment of scheme member benefits as a result.	Scheme Manager	Dec 2020: to be discussed at Jan 2021 meeting April 2021: A Pension Scheme Update is on the agenda for the LFPB. This is a standing agenda item, alongside the Risk Register. October 2021: Two new members joined the Surrey Fire and Rescue Pensions Team. Both members are working on the priority projects: 10% allowance, Age Discrimination and Modified projects, as well as other areas. XPS have taken over the role as Pension Administrators. Further resource is being sourced for two additional members to be part of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Pensions Team into 2022, to complete the calculations for the current priority projects. January 2022: The two further members have been working in the team for the past two months, whereby they have been completing the calculations for the 10% allowance project. January 2022: The Board agreed to close this action.	Completed.
30 April 2020 A20/20 (Informal meeting)	Administration Update (1 January 2020 - 31 March 2020)	The Pensions Support & Development Manager will liaise with the Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects on the next steps concerning the Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) reconciliation - the new Project Manager to assist.	Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects	No major changes. At this stage Mercer, our outsource company dealing with GMP, is still awaiting final data cut for SFRS. We are expecting to receive the project plan for rectification in January 2021 so we can begin planning our side. April 2021: Reports sent to scheme manager for review and decisions regarding tolerance setting levels	Ongoing

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due to Covid-19)				<p>August 2021: Officers confirmed that a meeting on Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) reconciliation was held with XPS to agree a timeline and arrange processes following the transfer over to XPS.</p> <p>October 2021: Mercer have provided a breakdown of the information they have completed to date which has been passed to XPS to obtain a quote to complete the GMP rectification project.</p> <p>January 2022: Communications are underway with Mercer and the payment for this service is in process.</p> <p>April 2022: Mercer have confirmed further data is required from XPS following the Pensions Increase and a session to go through the project plan. Mercer will send through a template of the data they need which will allow them to continue with the GMP rectification.</p>	
22 April 2021 A5/21	Action Tracker	<p><i>The Board agreed to combine Actions A14/20 and A15/20 as they both related to Board Member training.</i></p> <p>The Board to regularly consider future training needs.</p>	Committee Manager	<p>November 2021 Update: For Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects to consider options for pensions training for Spring 2022.</p> <p>January 2022: The LGA have been contacted, and have confirmed they can provide training in March 2022. A date for the training to go ahead needs to be confirmed by the Board and the SFRS Pensions Project Team. The LGA also confirmed training on the age discrimination remedy will be facilitated as part of the</p>	Ongoing

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				<p>LGA's remedy project implementation. Details of this and any other future events will be advertised via the monthly FPS bulletins. The Pensions Project Team will monitor the website accordingly.</p> <p>April 2022: Training took place with the LGA which was attended by the Pensions Team, Scheme Manager and Local Pension Board members on 29 March 2022.</p>	
25 November 2021 A7/21	XPS Administration - Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Pension Board Report	For the Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects to work with XPS to use a tracing service to confirm addresses for those past retirement or within two years of retirement.	Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects	<p>January 2022: XPS confirmed that they were in the process of obtaining costs to undertake address tracing.</p> <p>April 2022: XPS have provided the cost for this Service. This has been sent to the Scheme Manager to review and approve.</p>	Ongoing
25 November 2021 A8/21	XPS Administration - Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Pension Board Report	For XPS to provide a continuing update on the clearing of outstanding tasks inherited in the transfer to XPS.	Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects	<p>January 2022: The Pensions Project Team held a Service meeting with XPS on 29 November 2021. XPS confirmed the majority of cases have now been completed. There were 56 cases that have gone back to SFRS due to ongoing transfer queries. Some of these tasks have been outstanding for some time now but it is very positive that most have been completed now.</p> <p>January 2022: the Chairman agreed to close the action provided that the Board were supplied with detail on the process in place to track the completion of outstanding inherited tasks.</p>	Closed

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25 November 2021 A9/21	XPS Administration - Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Pension Board Report	For XPS to provide an update on the suggestions for improvements in the self-service portal, and on the help line backlog.	Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects	<p>January 2022: XPS stated that they were investigating systems that can provide a “live” view of calls waiting and available team members which should help reduce missed calls further. This development will be rolled out during 2022.</p> <p>April 2022: Monthly service meetings take place between XPS and SFRS to monitor the progress of tasks and provide areas of improvement where required.</p>	Ongoing
13 January 2022 A1/22	Surrey Local Firefighters' Pension Board Actions and Recommendations Tracker	For the Scheme Manager to circulate detail and timeline information related to each priority group to members of the Board.	Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects	April 2022: A timeline of when members are due to be contacted was sent to the Fire Officer Association employee representative on 21 January 2022. After this date the Service heard from the FBU and the communications to members was placed on hold. A follow up email was sent to the employee representative on 22 February to notify him the timeline will change due to the pause in communications. A revised copy will be sent after the meeting with the FBU has taken place.	Ongoing
13 January 2022 A2/22	Surrey Local Firefighters' Pension Board Actions and Recommendations Tracker	For the Scheme Manager to contact scheme members within relevant priority groups to highlight that the pension team should be contacted directly to deal with any specific issues.	Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects	April 2022: The communications sent to all members in Priority Group 1 were advised of the pensions team email address and to contact them if they have any queries. The email address was also included on all communications to member of the modified and McCloud project.	Ongoing

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