

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **SURREY LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD** held at 10.30 am on 27 April 2023 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, 20 July 2023.

(\* present)

**Elected Members:**

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

**In attendance**

Benedict Mulliss, substitute member, virtual

**11/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

The Chairman stated that the meeting would be an informal meeting as the attendance did not meet quorum. In order for the meeting to be quorate, at least one employer representative and one member representative was required to be in attendance in person.

Apologies were received from Glyn Parry-Jones and Paul Bowyer.

**12/23 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 10 NOVEMBER 2022 & 24 FEBRUARY 2023 [Item 2]**

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

The minutes would be formally agreed at the next formal meeting

**13/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

None.

**14/23 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

There were none.

**15/23 SURREY FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKER [Item 5]**

**Witnesses:**

Sally Wilson, Scheme Manger  
Carrie Pearce, Pensions Project Officer

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman introduced the Action and Recommendation Tracker.  
No comments were raised.

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

None.

**Resolved:**

The Board noted the Actions and Recommendations Tracker.

**16/23 SCHEME MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT [Item 6]**

**Witnesses:**

Sally Wilson, Scheme Manger  
Carrie Pearce, Pensions Project Officer

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Scheme Manager introduced the report and highlighted detail related to:
  - a. McCloud Age Discrimination
  - b. the McCloud consultation where Members noted that a meeting to review the consultation response was scheduled for 16 May 2023
  - c. 10% Pensionable Allowance
  - d. updates related to the modified scheme
  - e. details related to the spring budget
  - f. details related to the pay award
  - g. the next auto enrolment date in 2025
  - h. that Richard Scarth was recently appointed as a substitute member of the board
  - i. details related to recent training from the LGA.
2. In regard to communications, the Chairman said that the Board would welcome any feedback on communications from the employee representatives.

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

None.

**Resolved:**

The Board noted the report.

**17/23 XPS - SURREY FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY PENSION BOARD REPORT [Item 7]**

**Witnesses:**

Paul Mudd, XPS  
Sally Wilson, Scheme Manger  
Carrie Pearce, Pensions Project Officer

### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The representative from XPS introduced the item and provided a summary of its content. The following details were noted:
  - a. XPS would be holding an online 'open day' focused on details related to McCloud. It was further noted that XPS would also provide their own response to the McCloud consultation.
  - b. Details related to additional work / previous minutes as outlined in the report.
  - c. An overview of the Member Self-Service Data as outlined in the report.
  - d. An overview of the common data as outlined in the report.
  - e. An update on membership.
  - f. An overview of completed cases where it was noted that completed cases were at 94% for the quarter. Details were also noted related to task analysis as included within the report.
  - g. Noted that no complaints had been received.
2. In regard to the Year-end Data Templates, the Chairman asked whether officers were aware of any reason why the upcoming deadline would not be met. The Pensions Project Officer stated that a delay was likely and that she was in touch with the payroll team to find out more information on when the information was going to be available.
3. In regard to the tracing service, and the one member who exceeded normal pension age for a deferred beneficiary who was overseas, the Chairman asked that XPS make their best efforts to contact the member.
4. In regard to completed cases, as substitute member of the Board, Benedict Mulliss, asked for more details on the cases not completed on schedule and the extent of the delay. The representative from XPS stated that he did not have the information to hand on the extent of the delay however he would seek to include the information in future reports. The representative added that the number of days for each delay was usually low.
5. In regard to estimate cases, the Vice-Chairman said that there was a trend emerging from January to March which showed that cases were not being delivered to target. The Vice-Chairman asked whether XPS could provide detail on the reasons for not meeting the target. The representative stated that additional training had been delivered to members of the team on estimates in order to improve performance. The representative added that, when there are spikes in workload, the team prioritised work related to pension payments to ensure they were delivered on time. Following a discussion, the Chairman requested that XPS provide detail on the longest failure to meeting an estimate target at the next meeting.

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

A5/23 - XPS to provide detail on the longest failure to meet an estimate target at the next meeting.

### **Resolved:**

The Board noted the report.

## **18/23 FIRE BULLETINS [Item 8]**

### **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.

## **19/23 RISK REGISTERS [Item 9]**

### **Witnesses:**

Paul Mudd, XPS

Sally Wilson, Scheme Manger

Carrie Pearce, Pensions Project Officer

### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Scheme Manager introduced the report and highlighted the risk summary included in the report. Members noted that the highest risks which were related to:
  - a. 10% Day Related Flexible Hours Allowance and Variable Crewing Hours Allowance
  - b. Retained Firefighters' Modified Pension Scheme Update (Matthews) Project
  - c. McCloud / Age Discrimination
  - d. Pensions Team Skills and Team Resourcing.
2. In regard to Pensions Team Skills and Team Resourcing, officers confirmed that resources had been increased within the team and that training was underway.
3. In regard to the McCloud Risk Summary, Members noted the six identified risks which were:
  - a. McCloud Data Collection Exercise
  - b. staff not feeling valued due to the implementation of McCloud and when pension payments will be made
  - c. inability to successfully succession plan into key roles/ranks across the Service could result in degradation of some activities/Services
  - d. delay in XPS providing member's pensions
  - e. legislation is not implemented in October 2023
  - f. the failure to interpret or apply legislation correctly.
4. In regard to the Data Collection Exercise, the Pensions Project Officer stated that they were reassured that officers could utilise the resource within the team to complete the exercise as the largest of the two returns for the 1992 scheme been completed and submitted to XPS. Officers had also spoken with XPS to understand the position of other FRA's when completing the exercise.
5. In regard to the risk related to a delay in XPS providing member's pensions, the Pensions Project Officer stated that challenges included being reliant on the software being available on time and whether the

current 10 day key performance indicator was achievable. Members noted that officers were communicating with members who were considering retirement in October to management their expectations and offer advice. Information had been included on the pension SharePoint to provide detail to members on what it would look like if they were to retire before the 1 October.

6. The Vice-Chairman said that it was important to share intelligence related to workforce retirements with the Workforce Working Group to inform future workforce planning.
7. The Board noted that the pension payments legislation was expected in Summer 2023.
8. The Chairman requested that the next XPS report in July 2023 include detail on the pension payments legislation and whether preparations were expected to be ready in time for the implementation of the pension payment legislation in October 2023.
9. The Vice-Chairman said that officers should consider whether low scored risks should continue to be included on the risk register and when they could transition to being 'business as usual' risks.

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

A6/23 - Members to be provided with detail within the next XPS report on the pension payments legislation and whether preparations were expected to be ready in time for the scheduled implementation in October 2023.

**Resolved:**

The Board noted the risk register.

**20/23 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 10]**

The Board noted that the date of the next meeting was 20 July 2023.

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**Chairman**

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