

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD** held at 10.00 am on 25 November 2021 at Woodhatch Place, Reigate.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 13 January 2022.

(* present)

Elected Members:

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

65/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

None received.

66/21 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 5 AUGUST 2021 [Item 2]

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

67/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None.

68/21 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were none.

69/21 SURREY LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Sally Wilson, Head Of Data, Digital & Special Projects

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman introduced the item and summarised each action update.
2. In regards to A1/20, The Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects explained that there was little to update on the access to modified pension scheme as the expression of interest forms had been circulated with a return deadline of end of 2021.
3. In regards to A19/20, the Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects provided an update on the Internal Pensions Team within the Fire and Rescue Service. Members noted that there was now a Senior Pensions Advisor and a Pensions Project Support Officer within the team. In addition, two further team members previously employed through Orbis had been added on a temporary basis,

4. In regards to A5/21, The Board noted that pensions training had previously been held by the Local Government Authority (LGA) in Spring 2021. Officers agreed to look into booking a further training session for the Board in Spring 2022.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

A5/21 (update) – For Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects to consider options for pensions training for Spring 2022.

Recommendations:

The Board noted the Actions and Recommendations Tracker.

70/21 SCHEME MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Sally Wilson, Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects introduced the item and noted the following:
 - A. That the self-service portal was now live and that all users should have received their activation keys. The Board also noted that the service had received positive feedback on the portal.
 - B. The Service was currently considering the Memorandum of Understanding from the Local Government Association and the Fire Brigade Union on Immediate Detriment Remedy. The Board noted that a decision would follow the risk assessment.
 - C. In regards to 10% Pensionable Allowance, letters would be circulated to priority 1 & 2 cohorts by the end of December 2021. The Board also noted that a further cohort, firefighters that retired prior to 2014, would be contacted at a later stage.
2. Officers confirmed that they were looking into the statute of limitations period for the payback of contributions.
3. The Board asked whether the service had considered options for how the contributions would be repaid. Officers stated that they were in discussion with payroll and finance around how payback would be undertaken.
4. Concerning the limitation period, the Board noted that the date would begin from when the service first received legal advice on 10 October 2021.
5. The Board noted the successful transfer of the Administration service to XPS, and thanked all involved in the project.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Recommendations:

The Board noted the report.

**71/21 XPS ADMINISTRATION - SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
PENSION BOARD REPORT [Item 7]**

Witnesses:

Paul Mudd, XPS

Sally Wilson, Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The representative from XPS introduced the report and made the following comments:
 - A. That XPS felt the transition to XPS went well.
 - B. That many checks had taken place to ensure the data was transferred from the service correctly.
 - C. Provided a brief overview of XPS as a business as well as a run through of the staff within the XPS team.
 - D. An overview of the common data analysis
 - E. Provided an overview of the completed cases as noted in the report.
2. The Board noted that performance statistics for the first two months were encouraging, showing a performance standard of 90% or more.
3. Regarding common data, the Chairman stated it was important to trace and confirm addresses for those people coming up to, or past retirement age. Following further discussion, an action was agreed for the Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects to work with XPS to use a tracing service to confirm address for those past retirement, or within two years of retirement.
4. The Chairman highlighted that there were some issues outstanding prior to the transition to XPS and request an update on their status. The representative from XPS said that there were 178 outstanding tasks at the transition point and that 99 tasks had been cleared so far.
5. A Member of the Board highlighted that he had received positive feedback on the self-service portal however he had received comments that the portal was not displaying additional purchased benefits. The representative from XPS stated that he would speak to the system designers to understand whether additional benefits could be included within the system.
6. A Member of the Board asked whether the pension forecast displayed on the portal could be broken down into more information so that the user could better understand how the forecast was calculated. The representative stated that he would take the members comments away for consideration.
7. The Board had a discussion around benefit statements for scheme members not displaying the correct pensionable pay values in regards to the 10% allowances. The representative from XPS explained that, once the 10% allowance exercise was concluded, XPS would be able to rerun the benefit statement program.
8. The Chairman highlighted that member of the Board could contact the XPS pension's email address if they had any further feedback or support. Following on, the Chairman asked XPS to consider including data on any helpline backlog within a future report.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

A7/21 - 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.

A8/21 – For XPS to provide a continuing update on the clearing of outstanding tasks inherited in the transfer to XPS.

A9/21 – For XPS to provide an update on the suggestions for improvements in the self-service portal, and on the help line backlog.

Recommendations:

The Board noted the report.

72/21 XPS - IMMEDIATE DETRIMENT FRAMEWORK REPORT AND ANALYSIS [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Paul Mudd, XPS

Sally Wilson, Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The representative from XPS introduced the report and provided a brief summary on Immediate Detriment Framework as outlined in the report.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Recommendations:

The Board noted the report.

73/21 ADMIN BULLETIN UPDATE [Item 9]

Witnesses:

Sally Wilson, Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects introduced the report and stated that the bulletins had been included for members' information.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Recommendations:

The Board noted the report.

74/21 RISK REGISTER [Item 10]

Witnesses:

Sally Wilson, Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects introduced the report and highlighted an update to risk 'F8' which provided detail on recruitment within the team and the transfer to XPS, which reduced the level of risk in this area.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Recommendations:

The Board noted the report.

75/21 ANY OTHER BUSINESS [Item 11]

There was none.

76/21 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 12]

Resolved: 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.

77/21 SURREY FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEME MIGRATION - PROJECT CLOSE REPORT [Item 13]

Witnesses:

Sally Wilson, Head of Data, Digital & Special Projects

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Part 2 report was introduced by officers. The Board asked a number of questions which were responded to by the officers present.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

78/21 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 14]

The Board noted the date of the next meeting as 13 January 2021.

Meeting ended at: 11.00 am

Chairman