

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD** held at 10.30 am on 23 November 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, 8 February 2024.

(* present)

Elected Members:

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

In attendance

Benedict Mulliss (substitute Member)

31/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

No apologies for absence were received.

32/23 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 20 JULY 2023 [Item 2]

The minutes from the meeting on 20 July 2023 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

33/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None.

34/23 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were none.

35/23 SURREY FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKER [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Sally Wilson, Scheme Manager

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman introduced the Action and Recommendation Tracker. The following comments were raised:

A11/22 - Pension Scams – The Scheme Manager suggested that the action be closed which was agreed.

A7/23 - Annual Benefit Statements – The Scheme Manager stated that the Annual Benefit Statements were not published by the deadline due to changes in the payroll software. XPS were due to make the statements available online by the end of November 2023. A member of the Board stated that he understood that officer annual leave within the pension team also caused issues and asked what insurances were in place to prevent future similar issues. The Scheme Manager stated that she was not aware that the publication was impacted by resources however noted that a risk register item on resources was due to be considered within Part 2 of the meeting's agenda.

Closed actions – the Board agreed to close the items noted within the 'completed actions' section of the tracker.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Board noted the Actions and Recommendations Tracker.

36/23 SCHEME MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Sally Wilson, Scheme Manager
Janine May, Pensions Support Assistant

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Senior Pensions Advisor introduced the report and highlighted the following points:
 - a. In regard to the McCloud - Age Discrimination Remedy, Members noted that the Government published their response to the consultation document in July 2023 and that the legislation came into force on 1 October 2023.
 - b. In regard to the McCloud - Age Discrimination Remedy, Members noted that a calculator had been developed by the Government Actuaries Department (GAD) which was released to Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) at the end of August 2023. A Member suggested that information on the GAD calculator and contribution adjustment was made available to scheme members on the SharePoint site.
 - c. Noted details around the 10% Pensionable Allowance as outlined in the report.
 - d. Noted details around the Matthews - Retained Scheme – On-Call Access as outlined in the report. Members noted that guidance had been provided by the Local Government Authority on how administrative cases where scheme members were affected by both Matthews and McCloud.
 - e. Noted that work around the Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Rectification was ongoing.
 - f. Provided detail on the Pre-Retirement Courses as outlined in the report. A member of the Board stated that they felt the courses were very helpful and thanks the team for their work.

g. Noted details on communications as outlined in the report.

2. The Chairman thanked officers for their report.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Board noted the report.

37/23 XPS - SURREY FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY PENSION BOARD REPORT [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Paul Mudd, XPS

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. Details related to regulations and guidance as outlined in the report.
 - b. That XPS Administration had achieved accreditation against the PASA Pensions Administration Standards.
 - c. Detail on the use of tracing service to confirm addresses for those members approaching, or beyond, Normal Retirement Age
 - d. Details on Conditional Data Testing, National Fraud Initiative and the analysis of late tasks
 - e. Noted data related to Member Self-Service as noted within the report.
 - f. Presented the updated common data as noted within the report.
 - g. Noted the data included within the Membership tables.
 - h. Noted the completed cases overview.
2. In regard to completed cases, a member noted that the percentage of completed cases for August and September 2023 were down to 70% and 75% and asked what assurances could be given that it would increase going forward. The representative from XPS stated that, due to the additional work caused by the implementation of remedies, XPS were unable to give assurances however resource and training had been increased significantly within the team. Following this, the Member noted that the general enquiry percentage had decreased in recent months and asked that this be monitored.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Board noted the report.

38/23 FIRE BULLETINS [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Sally Wilson, Scheme Manager

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.

39/23 RISK REGISTERS [Item 9]**Witnesses:**

Sally Wilson, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Janine May, Pensions Support Assistant

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Senior Pensions Advisor introduced the report and provided a brief overview.
2. The Scheme Manager highlighted the risks identified to be closed within the Pensions Team Risk Register. The Board agreed to close the risks.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Board noted the risk register.

40/23 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 10]**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.

41/23 RISK REGISTERS [Item 11]

This item was considered within Part 2.

42/23 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 12]

The Board noted that the date of the next meeting was 8 February 2024.

Meeting ended at: 11.30 am

Chairman

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