



Minutes

Local Pension Board

Date: 05 July 2019

Time: 12 noon

Venue: Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Birkenshaw

Present: Paul Drinkwater (Scheme Member representative), Councillor Peter Harrand (Scheme Manager representative – items 1 – 10 only Min nos. 1 – 10 refer), Chris Lawton (Scheme Member representative) and Councillor Angela Wenham (Scheme Manager representative)

In Attendance: Claire Johnson - Technical Adviser and Clair Alcock (Firefighters' Pensions Senior Adviser – Local Government Association)

Apologies: Ian Brandwood – Chief Employment and Services Officer

1 Appointment of Chair and Vice chair

RESOLVED

- a) That Councillor Peter Harrand, Scheme Manager representative, be appointed Chair of the Local Pension Board for the 2019 – 20 year; and
- b) That Chris Lawton, Scheme Member representative, be appointed Vice chair of the Local Pension Board for the 2019 – 20 year.

2 Membership of the Local Pension Board 2019 – 20

Members received a report which advised of the membership of the Board for 2019 – 20 as follows;

Scheme Member representatives

- Paul Drinkwater
- Chris Lawton

Scheme Manager representatives

- Councillor Peter Harrand
- Councillor Angela Wenham

3 Urgent items

FPS Bulletin 21

This had been received after the despatch of the agenda papers and would be considered at agenda item 13 (Min no. 13 refers).

SAB guidance note – application to form a Joint Board

This had been received after the despatch of the agenda papers. Members considered the content of the note.

RESOLVED

That the content of the guidance note from the Scheme Advisory Board on the procedures for application to form a Joint Board currently had no relevance for the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board.

4 Admission of the public

There were no items which required the exclusion of the public and press.

5 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable interest in any matter under consideration at the meeting.

6 Minutes of meetings held on 11 January and 18 April 2019

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of meetings held on 11 January and 18 April 2019 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

7 Terms of Reference – annual review

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Legal and Governance Officer to review the Terms of Reference for the Local Pension Board which had been adopted by the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

RESOLVED

That no proposals for amendment be made.

8 Local Pension Board Annual Report 2018 – 19

Members considered a report of the Chief Legal and Governance Officer which advised that the Local Pension Board Annual Report 2018 – 19 had been formally submitted to the 5 July 2019 meeting of the Fire Authority's Human Resources Committee which had confirmed that the Board had acted within its Terms of Reference and in accordance with good governance principles during the 2018 – 19 municipal year.

RESOLVED

That, subject to the correction of a typographical error in the Annual Report 2018 – 19, the report be noted.

9 Local Pension Board Activity report

Members considered a report submitted by the Chief Employment Services Officer concerning performance in key areas for the period 1 December 2018 to 31 May 2019.

Members raised the following specific issues;

- the opt-out process
- availability of on-line pension assessment
- data reliability (particularly for deferred members)

and were advised that membership had increased by 49 due to the intake of the new recruits.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted,
- b) That the Scheme Manager be encouraged to pursue as a matter of some urgency the provision of on-line assessment for pension scheme members, and
- c) That future activity reports include information on the number of Grey Book employees in West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service to improve scrutiny in terms of the number / type of scheme members.

10 Scrutiny and review

The Chief Employment Services Officer submitted information on the following areas for scrutiny and review;

- Pension Risk and Breaches policies – implementation of new policies
- Discretions made by the Scheme Manager – used on two occasions since the date of the last meeting
- Breaches register – no additional breaches to report
- Pension Risk register – the format of this would be reviewed prior to the next meeting of the Board. Members were advised that the SCAPE and Appeal Court pensions issues were now included on the corporate risk register
- Compliance deadlines – detail of the different compliance deadlines throughout a calendar year

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

11 Pension Ombudsman – update

Members received a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which presented one relevant sample case reviewed by the Pension Ombudsman since the date of the last meeting as follows;

- Mrs N's estate – ill health benefits

To assist with an analysis of how the Pension Scheme Manager would rule in any similar case, Members were reminded that the Authority was a signatory to the Dying to Work Charter which, in effect, gave the Scheme Manager no discretion in the application of ill health benefits in any cases such as the one herein considered.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

12 Legislative update

The Chief Employment Services Officer submitted a report which provided an update with regard to the following;

- Transitional protections – final decisions and government guidance on how the appeal court ruling might be applied (and which may impact upon West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue for whom some Firefighters were still transitioning into the 2015 scheme) were still awaited
- Revised GAD factors – assurance had been received from West Yorkshire Pension Fund that the backlog and stockpile of cases that had accrued pending receipt of the revised GAD factors had been prioritised
- Pensionable pay – Members were advised that the Scheme Manager had been applying the legislation correctly and that any changes to the pensionable element of duties had been deferred by Management Board pending further information. An update would be provided to the next meeting of the Local Pension Board.
- Automatic enrolment – in accordance with the Pension Act 2008 the triennial enrolment process would be initiated by Scheme Manager in 2019. 59 employees were eligible for reenrolment into a Firefighter Pension Scheme.

Members were further advised of the recent Government imposed restriction on exit payments (£90k per employee) – it was not thought this would affect many members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

13 Firefighter Pensions England bulletins update

Consideration was given to the content of bulletins 16 – 21, which had been circulated to Members upon issue by the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) with the exception of the most recently issued Bulletin 21 (Min no. 3 refers)

The following issues were highlighted;

- Suspension of cost cap rectification process
- Significant increase in employers' contributions
- Assurance for the Local Pension Board that the revised GAD factors had been implemented by the Scheme Manager
- Effect on pension due to divorce, career break, resignation
- Pension debit adjustment and pension credit factors – Members were advised that this was still in the process of implementation
- Two pension award (split pension entitlement)
- Pensionable pay guidance

RESOLVED

That the content of Bulletins 16 – 21 be noted.

14 Scheme Advisory Board

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Effectiveness Committee meetings held on 23 January and 18 April 2019 and the Minutes of the Scheme Advisory Board of a meeting held on 14 March 2019 be noted.

15 West Yorkshire Pension Fund – key performance indicators

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which advised of West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) performance in key areas for the periods 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019 and 1 April 2019 – 31 May 2019.;

Members were advised that there had been three areas of concern during the 2018 – 19 year in particular as follows;

- deferred benefits set up on leaving fire
- Pension estimates, and
- Transfer-in quotes

Figures for the current year raised the following areas of concern where targets were not being met;

- Deferred benefits
- New spouse pension set-up
- Spouse potential, and
- Transfer-in quotes

RESOLVED

That the performance of West Yorkshire Pension Fund in key areas be noted.

16 Local Pension Board – training session

Clair Alcock, Blue Light senior pension adviser at the Local Government Association (LGA), attended the meeting to provide a brief updated training session to Members of the Local Pension Board.

Chair