

NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

Pension Board

Minutes of the meeting of the Pension Board held on Wednesday 27th March 2019 at 13:30 at North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Thurston Road, Northallerton

PRESENT:

Employer Representatives:	Jonathan FOSTER (JF) (Chair) Stuart SIMPSON (SS)	Carl BOASMAN (CB) Marc WARREN (MW)
Member Representatives:	Andrew BLADES (AB) (FOA) Steve HOWLEY (SH) (FBU)	Alistair BIGGS (ABi) (FBU)
OPFCC Representatives:	Fiona KINNEAR (FK)	Caroline BLACKBURN (CJB)
Advisors in attendance:	David HOOD (DH) (NYFRS Pensions Administrator/Manager) Denise BROWN (ADB) ((Interim) Secretariat to NYPFCCFRA) Claire HEY (CH) LGA (undertaking training following the meeting)	

The agenda, reports and minutes for this meeting are on NYFRS's website

Minute Number	ITEM OF BUSINESS	To be actioned by:-
1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	
	Welcome from Jon David HOOD (DH) – Pensions Administration Manager Claire HEY (CH) – LGA (undertaking training following meeting) Steve HOWLEY (SH) – FBU Brigade Secretary Carl BOASMAN (CB) – AM Head of Professional Standards & Employer Rep. Caroline BLACKBURN (CJB) – Interim Service Delivery Advisor for OPFCC Jonathan FOSTER (JF) – T/DCFO and Chair of Pensions Board Marc WARREN (MW) – GM Scarborough & Ryedale District & Employers Rep. Stuart SIMPSON (SS) – T/AM Head of Risk Management & Employer Rep. Fiona KINNEAR (FK) – OPFCC Policy & Scrutiny Office (Fire & Rescue) Andrew BLADES (AB) – FOA Representative Alistair BIGGS (ABi) – FBU Representative	
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Alan BELL – FOA Representative Simon WALL FBU – SH to advise whether Simon will participate in these meetings going forward.	SH

3.	DECLARATIONS OF ANY PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS	
	No conflicts of interest were declared.	
4.	PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING	
	<p>Minutes The Minutes of the Board's meeting held on 14th September 2018 were accepted as a correct record.</p> <p>Proposer: Andrew Blades Seconder: Marc Warren</p>	
4.1	<p>Matters Arising David Hood reported the following as matters arising from the Minutes:-</p> <p><i>Internal audit and data scoring</i> Following the internal audit by Veritau, certain areas have been highlighted as requiring attention.</p> <p><i>Are benefit figures prepared by West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) sense-checked?</i> Since being appointed last December, DH has devised a system to do sense-checks on all estimates / retirement quotes received. To date nothing amiss has been discovered.</p> <p><i>Actual pensions and payments</i> Throughout the course of this year DH will be scrutinising the payments for retired members / dependents by taking the initial pension at retirement and then calculate its current value by applying the intervening pensions increases. A selection will be looked at each month so that by the end of March 2020, all retired members' pensions will have been checked where retirement occurred before 1st April 2019.</p> <p><i>Year End Process</i> DH is moving to monthly postings and submitting a monthly return to WYPF. This will ensure all information is with WYPF by the end of March 2020, it will speed up the year-end process and ensure any discrepancies there may be are picked up in a more timely fashion.</p> <p><i>Quality of Data</i> WYPF will be contacting their clients during March / April 2019 regarding their data score. This data is divided between "common data" (names/addresses) and "conditional data" (data specific to the scheme's benefit design). DH to report to this meeting once the results are known.</p> <p><i>Training</i> Training plan shows members undertook training in April 2016. Discussion took place regarding the frequency of training required in order to maintain the right level of knowledge. Agree that the Terms of Reference be amended to show training to be revisited every two years.</p> <p>JF reminded Board Members of their own personal responsibility to ensure they have completed the relevant modules.</p> <p>All members to ensure any out-of-date modules are completed by the next Board meeting.</p>	<p>DH</p> <p>DH</p> <p>All</p>

	<p><i>Current proposals on scheme documents from the Communication Working Group</i></p> <p>DH reported there may be a National Member site going forward. He will update at next Board meeting.</p> <p><i>Proposals to members considering retirement who are both wholetime and RDS</i></p> <p>To date, this remains outstanding, however, the Pensions Administrator / Manager will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draw this to affected members' attention when estimates are requested; and ○ Include reference to this periodically in the Information Bulletin communications. It is intended to also re-advertise the pre-retirement seminar (on 31st May) if places are available, as well as confirm that contribution rates / pay bands will remain unaltered for members for 2019/20. 	DH
5.	PENSIONS UPDATE Report of the Pensions Administrator/Manager	
	<p>Pensions and Scheme Membership Update</p> <p>DH presented his report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the September Board Meeting there have been 13 retirements, namely 20% of scheme members. • On-call have also had a high turnover. • The number of retirements are based on 27th February 2019, the date West Yorkshire provided figures. • DH advised there was a discrepancy in the FPS 1992 retirement figures quoted in the previous meeting's report; this wasn't an actual data / financial error: it was merely quoted in error on the report. To stop this occurring in the future, DH is plotting all individuals on a monthly basis. 	
5.1	<p>Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will remain a 2-stage process that looks at grievances other than those of a medical nature. • There have been no new cases raised since the Board meeting held on 14th September 2018. 	
5.2	<p>Pension Board Training Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claire Hey is attending the meeting today to delivery training to Board members following the meeting. • DH advised update bulletins will make reference to training. • DH will be attending a training day in London on 3rd April regarding data. 	
5.3	<p>Valuation update and Employers' Pension Contributions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public sector pension schemes requirement to be valued every 4 years. • Government has put in a cost cap regarding Employer contribution rates. Rates will be increasing, however firefighters will not see any changes to what they pay. 	
5.4	<p>Other Work Items</p> <p>GMP reconciliation</p> <p>This is assurance for our Firefighters that by paying a lower NI pensions will be at least as good as State second pension they have been taken</p>	

	<p>out of. Any queries had to be lodged by 31st October (which was achieved by WYPF). Further details are awaited.</p> <p>Survey Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH ran through the Pensions Regulator survey responses with Members. He advised the survey will be done annually in November. • Another survey was undertaken relating to benchmarking and the costs involved in running the scheme. Approximately 20 organisations work on FPS pension schemes and the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) cannot set a gauge as to how much schemes cost and what the quality of admin / service is. DH completed by deadline date. AON (survey administrator) then issued a separate survey to scheme members. SH advised they had received a good percentage of responses. Results are to be discussed at the June SAB meeting. 	
<p>5.5</p>	<p>Legislative update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have now had amended regulations, the main change relating to equalising the benefits for civil partners and same-sex marriages. • From 1st April 2019 the benefits will be calculated on the same basis as for heterosexual married surviving spouses. • Police and Firefighters' regulations have been issued at the same time due to the Police contribution rates coming to an end. 	
<p>5.6</p>	<p>Firefighters' Pension Schemes Bulletins Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In October the Pensions Ombudsman gave a judgment regarding pay and what is pensionable (for the Welsh FPS). We will receive further guidance in due course (but not until appeal has been finalised). • The 2018 amendment regulations were then discussed. The main part of regulation amendment related to co-habiting partners in the 2006 scheme. Partners could qualify so long as nomination forms were completed. In 2017, the Northern Irish Local Government Pension Scheme was forced to pay a pension to a surviving partner who had previously been denied her pension because a nomination form was not completed. The case was won, and on back of that all other public sector schemes were amended so that eligible partners could receive a pension without a nomination form being completed. DH went on to say that best practice dictates that a form should still be completed, just so administrators know the individual's circumstances. Because this was considered a material scheme change, effected people (FPS 2006 members) needed to be notified within three months. WYPF did this in December 2018. • Claimants still have to provide certain information to prove cohabitation (duration of cohabitation and financial dependence / inter-dependency). • Civil partnerships has been extended to heterosexual couples. • 2019 amendment regulations started as a consultation that ended in January, and will become law on 1st April 2019. DH speaking with WYPF regarding this as there is a need to inform members of the change to the scheme. DH needs to understand what the position is with 2019 amendments and, following a meeting due to be held on 10th April, will let CH know of his findings. • Due to changes to the SCAPE rate, this has had a knock-on effect for factors to calculate lump sums and other benefits. Bulletin does say to check with administrators – DH has spoken with WYPF and they have confirmed that all updated factors have now been uploaded into their software. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensions increase for April 2019: Been notified this will be 2.4%. • Transitional protections: CH to discuss this in the training session. • Ill Health: DH to send Members links to the Scheme Advisory Board and National websites. 	
5.7	<p>Update from National Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The last Communications Working Group meeting was held on 30th January. It is hoped there will be a national member site available for firefighters. • Avon County Council gave a demonstration of a site they have at the meeting. It is hoped something similar will be rolled out nationally. • DH advised we could possibly put some information onto our website, but suggested the matter be deferred to the next Board meeting. • Self-rostering: DH advised pay element falls outside material change of design of scheme and therefore would not warrant members to receive individual letters regarding the matter. • CH is going to be working with the FBU on guidance. 	DH
5.8	<p>West Yorkshire Pension Fund Key Performance Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WYPF have been failing to provide estimates in line with agreed timescales. DH did advise WYPF had staffing issues which have now been addressed. • DH to continue monitoring target figures. He receives a monthly update from WYPF and will discuss with JF. • DH would like to Board to have a “Diary of Key Events”. • WYPF be invited to attend next Board meeting in August/September 2019 – opportune time to discuss pension statements. • Pension estimate, discrepancy in figures (Pensions update para. 11.1). DH to get clarity on figures as average time showing 8 days which is actually less than the target time. 	DH DH DH DH
6.	RISK REGISTER	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH advised the risk register was amended at the September meeting to include GDPR. He has nothing further to raise at this time. • DH noted many of the review dates are historic and JF agreed that the document needed updating to address this. • CB and DH to review the risk register before the next meeting and, if anything still outstanding, a working group to be formed consisting of SH, JF and FK in addition to CB and DH. 	CB / DH
7.	BREACH REGISTER	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register created at the last meeting to lodge issues around the annual benefit statement. • Purpose of the register is to highlight areas of concern for the Board to discuss, and whether the matter needs escalating to the Pensions Regulator. • DH advised if same issue were to be highlighted more than once, it would then become reportable event. • The only item currently showing as a breach has now been rectified and DH will update the breach register to reflect this. 	

8.	FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now need to consider the involvement of the OPFCC as previously secretariat was run by NYCC. • CJB has spoken with PFCC and has been requested that during the transition period prior to an MD being appointed for Enable NY, secretariat support is provided through NYFRS for the foreseeable future. • Frequency of meetings was discussion, CH recommended quarterly meetings. The Board agreed to this. DH/ADB to set up future meetings. • MW requested Skype meetings. FK/CJB to look in to the legality of a Skype meeting. 	DH / ADB FK / CJB
9.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABi reported some of the pdf documents wouldn't open for him. He may require adobe to be installed on his laptop. ABi to enquire. • SH: Potential GDPR breach in terms of IQMP information being lost in the post. Enquired as to where liability for that would lie. SH believes this is a significant breach. SH and DH to discuss outside the meeting. 	ABi SH / DH
10.	PROPOSED FUTURE MEETINGS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 20th June 2019, NYFRS starting 14:00 • Tuesday 1st October, NYFRS starting at 14:00 • Wednesday 10th December, NYFRS starting at 10:00 	All to note

The meeting concluded at 15:20