

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 31 JANUARY 2022 VIA STARLEAF

26. PRESENT

Councillor

S Bradwick (Chair)	Rhondda Cynon Taff
L Brown	Monmouthshire
V Smith	Monmouthshire
D White	Bridgend
D King	Fire & Rescue Service Association
R Prendergast	Association of Principal Fire Officers
S Saunders	Fire Brigade's Union
G Tovey	Fire Brigades' Union
Catherine Black	Pension Service Manager, Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC

Apologies

M Alexander	Fire Brigades' Union
Mr I Traylor	Pensions Service Director, Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC

OFFICERS PRESENT:- ACO A Reed – Director of People Services, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, Mr G Thomas – T/ACO – T/Director Corporate - Services; Mrs K Jeal – Accountant, Pensions & Budget Team

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

28. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome

The Chair welcomed Catherine Black, Pension Service Manager to the meeting and thanked her for stepping in and representing Ian Traylor.

Queen's New Year's Honours List

The Chair wished to give recognition to former Fire Authority Member Councillor Maureen Powell of Monmouthshire CC for being awarded the British Empire Medal on the Queen's New Year's Honours List. Members wished to pass on their congratulations to Councillor Powell.

29. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the Local Pension Board Committee held on 18 October 2021 were read and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

30. REPORT TO REVIEW KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND UPDATE REPORT ON PUBLICATIONS OF ANNUAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

The Pension Service Manager advised Members that the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between South Wales Fire & Rescue Service and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council sets out the manner in which certain duties and responsibilities are expected to be carried out. A key element of the SLA is the reporting on actual performance activity against the agreed key delivery Service Standards. The report presented included an update on key activity undertaken during the reporting period including performance data for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 December 2021.

RESOLVED THAT

- 30.1 Members noted the performance data included at Appendix 1 attached to the report.
- 30.2 Members noted the relevant pension administrative overview and update included at Appendix 2 attached to the report.

31. FIREFIGHTER PENSIONS – REMEDYING AGE DISCRIMINATION

The Director of People Services reported to Members that in July 2021, the Fire & Rescue Authority, as Scheme Manager, agreed to provide pension options for those individuals who were considered to be in scope for Immediate Detriment (ID), as described in the formal Home Office guidance issued on 10 June 2021. On 8 October 2021 a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Fire Brigade's Union (FBU) was published and expanded the scope for processing ID cases. Since then, the Home Office guidance has been withdrawn and HM Treasury has published a formal

note in relation to processing cases. A joint statement by the LGA and FBU has also been published. This report was presented to the Fire & Rescue Authority meeting in December 2021, and is shared for information.

RESOLVED THAT

- 31.1 Members noted the content of the report.
- 31.2 Members agreed that work should continue on Immediate Detriment cases as previously agreed, and that work should commence to fully adopt the MoU.
- 31.3 A further report to be presented to Members at the February 2022 Fire and Rescue Authority meeting.

32. THE PENSION'S REGULATOR RETURNS

The Director of People Services provided a report on the completed public service pension scheme returns that were submitted to the Pensions Regulator in relation to the 1992, 2007 and 2015 Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

RESOLVED THAT

- 32.1 Members noted the returns which were shared for information and awareness purposes.

33. PUBLICATIONS, UPDATES, INFORMATION (STANDARD ITEM)

The Director of People Services presented and shared a number of publications, updates and information relating to pensions matters with the Board.

RESOLVED THAT

- 33.1 Members reviewed and noted the publications which were shared for information and awareness purposes.
- 33.2 Future publications be circulated via an electronic link format, in place of hard copies.

34. UPDATE REPORT FROM SCHEME ADVISORY BOARD (SAB)

The Director of People Services provided an update following the SAB meeting held on 4 November 2021. The discussion focussed on:

- The Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill had been introduced to the House of Lords in July 2021.
- The Bill required responsible authorities to make the necessary changes to firefighter pension scheme rules, Welsh Ministers were subsequently required to introduce two sets of regulations.
 - Firstly, Prospective Regulations were required to be introduced by 30 March 2022, in order to transfer “protected members” into the 2015 Scheme as of 1 April 2022.
 - Regulations to implement retrospective remedy would be introduced by October 2023.
- The Welsh Government had published its consultation on the proposed amendments to the 2015 Scheme on the 25 October, together with a copy of the draft amending prospective regulations which modified the transitional provisions in the 2015 scheme to transfer “protected members” into the 2015 scheme as of 1 April 2022. A written response had been provided by the Service and will be circulated to LPB Committee Members separately. A working group has been established and Kim Jeal has been nominated to sit on that group.
- The final results of the evaluation of 2016 pensions is expected to reflect previous discussions at SAB, with no significant changes.

The next SAB meeting is scheduled to take place in February.

RESOLVED THAT

Members noted the update provided on the Scheme Advisory Board.

35. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR LOCAL PENSION BOARD 2021/2022

The Director of People Services presented the Forward work Programme for 2021/2022.

RESOLVED THAT

35.1 Members noted the content of the Forward Work Programme for 2021/2022.

35.2 Members agreed to the postponement of Member training which will be re-scheduled during the new municipal year.

36. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)

There were no items of business that the Chair deemed urgent.