

DERBYSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

PENSIONS BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2018

Board Members: Chris Tapp, FBU (Chair), Cllr Steve Marshall-Clarke, Cllr Neil Atkin, Marc Redford (FBU), Simon Allsop, Sean Connor

Attendees: Ian Howe (LCC Pensions), Elena Johnston (LCC Pensions)

Notes: Laura Slade

1. Apologies

Emma Stevenson, Advisor – HR

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2018

M Redford informed the Board that a judgement on the discrimination tribunal was expect on 29 January.

The board agreed the accuracy of the minutes.

4. Pensions Board Annual Work Programme 2017/18

S Allsop presented a draft annual work programme for the board which highlighted all the reference areas that require discussion throughout the year. Any other issues will be discussed as they arise.

It was agreed that a training log for members of the board would be beneficial. Documentation provided at training events should also be circulated to members of the board.

5. Risk Register

The board discussed the risks associated with the firefighters' pension schemes and comments as follows:

Operational disaster fire/flood

I Howe confirmed that the electronic system is supported on an external backup server.

Member data and records incomplete or inaccurate

I Howe informed the board of a data improvement plan which has been introduced by the pension's regulator. All administrators have been asked to produce a plan which will become an annual exercise. The board noted that data checks are completed and any incomplete areas are held back.

Single points of competence in HR advice and support

The board raised concern around the Service having a single point of competence for advice and support. I Howe confirmed that LCC would be available to assist with day to day enquiries if required, however, would not be able to assist with the same support currently provided by S Connor.

S Allsop confirmed that the job description for the Head of Accountancy is being revisited to include assistance to the pension's board.

S Allsop will amend the risk to include a breakdown of the different areas of knowledge required and points of contact.

Administration process failure/maladministration

S Allsop confirmed that there is an SLA in place with the administrator.

Excessive charges by DFRS Pension Administrators

The board confirmed that they were satisfied with the service provided by LCC and agreed to keep the costs (£26.65p per member record for 2018/19) under review.

Sole pension software supplier. DFRS lack control over increase in costs and ability to delivery development work

I Howe informed the board of a current tender in partnership with Derbyshire County Council for a pension's replacement system. The tender is for one system under one provider. The board requested site of the project plan, once available and requested update reports where any issues arise.

Failure to apply tax rules correctly

M Redford highlighted that some members fall foul of the tax rules when promoted. The board were reassured that measures were in place to inform employees of potential issues and signpost them to further information through the recruitment process.

Fraudulent behaviour

S Allsop confirmed that appropriate processes are in place.

Insurance for Pension Board members

S Allsop and S Connor are awaiting LGA guidance.

Annual Benefits Statements to be issued by statutory deadline

DFRS are still working towards providing monthly data. E Johnston informed the board of a testing working party which will raise any incidents with Haywood for fixing and then sign off.

National GMP Reconciliation

I Howe provided the board with an update. Out of 543 cases, there are 25 queries sent back to HMRC. There are 15 cases whereby HMRC and LCC are in disagreement.

General Data Protection Requirement

S Allsop and L Taylor will provide the board with an update at the next meeting.

Communications with members may not meet statutory requirements

Any comments/feedback from members are taken into consideration.

The board agreed that the risk register will become a standing agenda item. A footnote will be included at the bottom of the assurance map table to identify the areas that are included.

6. Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)

S Connor presented the board with a new employment policy which outlines the internal dispute resolution procedure in relation to firefighters' pension schemes. The policy does not include ill health retirement and injury awards.

The board noted the contents of the procedure and recommended that it is submitted for formal 21 day consultation.

7. Pensions Regulator Training

The board agreed to defer the training module to the next meeting.

8. Administrators Update and Performance Update

The administrators update had been provided during the risk register discussions.

The board noted the performance against targets. In addition, I Howe wished to thank the team for meeting all of the targets and the board wished to give thanks for the continued good work.

9. Update on Member Training Events

C Tapp expressed disappointment that a recent training seminar was fully booked immediately after circulation of the booking details. S Allsop offered to provide feedback to Clair Alcock and discuss how places are allocated.

10. Update on Injury Awards Tax position

S Connor provided the board with an update on the current position regarding injury tax awards. I Howe confirmed he had written to the Scheme Advisory Board seeking support for legal advice. Scheme members, along with the fire brigades union have been informed of the current position.

A further update will be provided at the next meeting.