

DERBYSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

PENSIONS BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2017

Board Members: Cllr Steve Marshall-Clarke (Chair), Cllr Stuart Brittain,
Chris Tapp (FBU), Simon Allsop, Sean Connor

Attendees: Ian Howe (Advisor – LCC Pensions), Ian Potter (LCC Pensions),
Marc Redford (FBU), Emma Neely (Advisor - HR), Rachel
McNamee (Head of Accountancy),

Notes: Anne Wathall

I Howe introduced his colleague, Ian Potter, to the meeting and S Allsop introduced Rachel McNamee as an observer.

1. Apologies

Cllr Brittain for the beginning of the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2016

Members agreed the accuracy of the minutes and the following matters arising were discussed:

- Feedback on writing to the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB). I Howe had drafted a joint communication from the three boards for their approval and sign off. Two themes highlighted were taxation advice and online modeller/information. Members noted the content for sign off by S Allsop. C Tapp asked for clarification regarding 'scheme managers' which it was agreed should be changed to 'Pension Boards'.
- C Tapp informed the Board that the FBU had made a formal arrangement with Lighthouse Financial Advice for its members and information would be published in a formal circular. C Tapp to forward details to S Allsop for signposting on the DFRS intranet page.
- M Redford raised the issue of lack of places available for the recent Pensions Conference. Allocation should have been two per Service but S Allsop and S Connor had raised lack of availability with Clare Allcock as 'lessons learned' for future conferences.

4. LGPS Pension Modeller

I Potter gave a demonstration of the on-line pension modeller used by Leicestershire County Council. He explained how members used the on-line tool and the level of detail it could show.

(Cllr Brittain joined the meeting at 10.30 am)

After discussion it was agreed that the Board were in support of the on-line pension modeller and felt it should be taken up nationally. Set-up costs would need to be explored in view of the complexity of firefighters' pensions. In the first instance the Chair suggested writing to the Government and copying in the Fire Commissioner to lobby support.

Thanks were given to Ian Potter for the 'live' demonstration.

5. Pensions Administrator Update and Performance

The Board discussed the Derbyshire Metric Data for the quarter ending 30.9.16. In order to compare figures with Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, I Howe circulated a comparison document showing the size and split amongst the three Services.

C Tapp reported that members were able to access information much more easily now and thanked I Howe and his team.

6. Update on Communications and Proposal on Pension Discretions Report

S Connor presented the above briefing paper and explained that an on-line modeller would address a lot of confusion currently experienced around pension/retirement choices. In order to assist members, a series of workshops across the three Services was currently being organised to give presentations and individual support to attendees. Invitations would be sent out in the near future. The Chair added his support to the workshops and requested that feedback from firefighters was captured in order to back-up correspondence with the SAB. After discussion, the Board recommended that Clare Allcock from the LGA was also invited to attend and the workshops were by invitation only.

The Board then went on to discuss the following Pension Scheme Discretions proposals:

- 1) 2006 Scheme Retirement Below Age 60 – Members who wish to access their pension after 55 with an actuarial reduction in benefits must currently seek formal approval from the FRS before the pension administrator can process the request. The discretion put forward was that LCC could process such requests without formal approval from the employer.

The Chair raised concerns regarding this proposal and recommended that the actuarial reduction value was included in correspondence. He requested that a further paper was submitted to the next full Fire Authority meeting and a copy of the proposed draft letter was sent to him beforehand.

- 2) Timing of Pension Payments to 1992 Scheme Members – the proposal put forward to align pension payments between the 2006 and 1992 schemes to be paid in arrears was explained and agreed that this was required in order to alleviate the current issues being experienced. The Board agreed that this discretion would only be implemented in respect of new retirements post-April 2017 and a further paper would be submitted to the next full Fire Authority for approval.

7. Presentation on Further Information for FPS Members

S Connor briefed the Board on the presentation slides to be included on the intranet for members' information. The Board agreed that although calculations were not included, the rules and examples given would provide useful information, along with the proposed workshops. C Tapp reported that he had written an article for the FBU magazine and agreed to forward this information to S Connor for use on the intranet site.

8. Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) Update

Minutes of the quarterly meeting held on 6 December 2016 were provided for information.

9. Any Other Business

- M Redford reported that outcomes on the appeal process for discrimination could have significant impacts and agreed to update at the next Pensions Board meeting.
- Date of next meeting – Tuesday 4 April 2017 at 10.00 am in the Fire Boardroom at DFRS HQ, Butterley Hall, Ripley.