

Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters Summergroves Way Kingston upon Hull HU4 7BB
Telephone 01482 565333

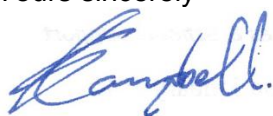
To: Members of the Pension Board	Enquiries to: Samm Campbell Email: committeemanager@humbersidefire.gov.uk Tel. Direct: (01482) 393205 Date: 30 June 2023
----------------------------------	---

Dear Member

I hereby give you notice that a meeting of **PENSION BOARD** will be held on **MONDAY, 10 JULY 2023 at 10.30AM** at **HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, SUMMERGROVES WAY, KINGSTON UPON HULL, HU4 7BB.**

The business to be transacted is set out below.

Yours sincerely



for Lisa Nicholson
Monitoring Officer & Secretary to Fire Authority

Enc.

A G E N D A
PENSION BOARD
Monday 10 July 2023, 10.30AM

Business	Page Number	Lead	Primary Action Requested
1. Apologies for absence	-	Monitoring Officer/ Secretary	To record
2. Declarations of Interest (members and Officers)	-	Monitoring Officer/ Secretary	To declare and withdraw if pecuniary
3. Election of the Chairperson of the Pension Board 2023/24	-	Monitoring Officer/Secretary	To appoint a chairperson
4. Calendar of Board Meetings 2023/24	(pages 1)	Chairperson and Monitoring Officer/ Secretary	To approve
5. Pension Fund Account	(pages 2 - 5)	Head of Finance	To receive
6. Update Report: Reporting Breaches	Verbal	Head of Procurement	To receive

Business	Page Number	Lead	Primary Action Requested
7. Workstreams Update	(pages 6 - 97)	Executive Director of Finance/S151 Officer	To receive
8. Remedy Update	Verbal	Head of Procurement	To receive
9. Any other business	-	All Members	To raise

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2023/24

Date	Meeting
Fri 9 June 2023 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY AGM
Mon 12 June 2023 (10.00am)	Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee AGM
Fri 16 June 2023 (10.00am)	Member Day*
Fri 23 June 2023 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY
Mon 3 July 2023 (10.00am)	Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Fri 7 July 2023 (10.00am)	Member Day*
Mon 10 July 2023 (10.30am)	PENSION BOARD AGM
Fri 21 July 2023 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY
Mon 4 September 2023 (10.00am)	Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Fri 8 September 2023 (10.00am)	Member Day*
Fri 22 September 2023 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY
Fri 6 October 2023 (10.00am)	Member Day*
Fri 3 November 2023 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY
Mon 13 November 2023 (10.00am)	Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Fri 1 December 2023 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY
Mon 22 January 2024 (10.00am)	Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Mon 29 January 2024 (10.30am)	PENSION BOARD
Fri 2 February 2024 (10.00am)	Member Day*
Fri 9 February 2024 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY <i>(Budget and Precept setting)</i>
Mon 19 February 2024 (10.00am)	Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Fri 8 March 2024 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY
Fri 22 March 2024 (10.00am)	Member Day*
Mon 8 April 2024 (10.00am)	Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Fri 26 April 2024 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY
Fri 7 June 2024 (10.30am)	HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY AGM

* Member Days not open to the public



HUMBERSIDE
Fire & Rescue Service

Humberside Fire Authority Pension Fund Account 2022/23

(Subject to Audit)

FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION FUND ACCOUNT

The following table analyses movements on the Fund for the year 2022/23

2021/22		2022/23
£'000s		£'000s
	Contributions receivable:	
(5,366)	Employers' contributions receivable	(5,873)
(2,443)	Firefighters' contributions	(2,588)
<u>(7,809)</u>		<u>(8,461)</u>
<u>-</u>	Transfers in from other authorities	<u>(203)</u>
	Benefits payable:	
16,963	Pensions	17,803
4,152	Commutations & lump sum retirement benefits	4,496
<u>21,115</u>		<u>22,299</u>
	Payments to and on account leavers	
-	Transfers out to other authorities	-
<u>13,306</u>	Net amount payable for the year	<u>13,635</u>
<u>(13,306)</u>	Top-up grant receivable to the Firefighters' Pension Fund	<u>(13,635)</u>
<u>-</u>	Fund Account balance	<u>-</u>

	<u>Net Assets Statement</u>	
2021/22		2022/23
	Current Assets	
4,921	Home Office grant debtor	3,435
1,500	Pensions Paid in Advance	1,652
	Current Liabilities	
(6,421)	Humberside Fire Authority	(5,087)
<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>

Notes to the Firefighters' Pension Fund Account

The funding arrangements for the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) changed on 1 April 2006. The Pension Fund was established under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Amendment) (England) Order 2006. The Pension Fund administers all four of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (the 1992 Firefighters' Pension Scheme, the 2006 Firefighters' Pension Scheme, the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme and the Modified Firefighters' Pension Scheme).

The Pension Fund is administered by Humberside Fire Authority.

The Pension Fund is managed by the Executive Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.

The benefits payable from the Pension Fund are pensions, lump sum commutation payments and ill health pensions. Injury awards are payable from the Authority's General Fund Account.

The Pension Fund is an unfunded scheme, consequently:

- It has no investment assets;
- Benefits payable are funded by contributions from employers and employees; and
- any difference between benefits payable and contributions receivable is met by top-up grant from the Home Office (HO)

The Pension Fund is statutorily prevented from including interest on cashflows and administration expenses in the pension fund. These expenses are accounted for in the Authority's General Fund Account.

Employee and employer contribution levels are based on percentages of pensionable pay set nationally by HO and are subject to triennial revaluation by the Government Actuary's Department. The employers' contribution rates are determined nationally by the Government Actuary's Department and are currently 37.37% for the 1992 FPS, 27.4% for the 2006 FPS, 37.3% for the Modified FPS and 28.8% for the 2015 FPS.

The membership for the pensions fund is as follows;

Category of Member	31/3/2023 1992 FPS	31/3/2023 2006 NFPS	31/3/2023 Modified Pension Scheme	31/3/2023 2015 FPS	31/3/2022 1992 FPS	31/3/2022 2006 NFPS	31/3/2022 Modified Pension Scheme	31/3/2022 2015 FPS
Contributors	-	-	-	747	13	6	19	630
Deferred Pensioners	41	107	5	198	42	110	6	159
Pensioners	1,033	17	80	24	983	12	76	17

Statement of Accounting Policies

The Accounting Policies adopted for the Pension Fund follow those set out in the Authority's Statement of Accounting Policies (Note 1 of the Notes to the Financial Statements). Transfer values are an exception to this policy and are on a cash basis.

The following item(s) are estimated and are material to the Pension Fund account:

- Estimation of top-up grant receivable

The Pension Fund Account does not take account of the obligations to pay pensions and benefits that fall due after the end of the financial year. These are reflected in the Authority's accounts in accordance with IAS 19 – Employee Benefits (Please see note 4 in the Notes to the Financial Statements).

CERTIFICATIONS

We, the undersigned, certify that:-

The Statement of Accounts represents a True and Fair View of the financial position of Humberside Fire Authority as at 31 March 2023 and the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023.

.....

Phil Shillito – Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive

.....

Councillor John Briggs – Chair

.....

Kevin Wilson – Executive Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer

22rd September 2023 (authorised for issue date)

WORKSTREAMS UPDATE

SUMMARY

1. This report sets out an update on the workstreams that were originally agreed at the Pension Board in January 2016.
2. The workstreams are designed to ensure that the Board operates in compliance with the Pension Regulator's Code of Practice for Pension Boards.
3. The list of activities is not exhaustive and has evolved over the last 12 months and will continue to do so over the coming months.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. That the Board considers the workstreams that are set out in this report.

WORKSTREAMS

5. **Appendix 1** of this report sets out the workstreams proposed for the Pension Board over the short-to-medium term.
6. The workload aims to meet the requirements of the Code of Practice for Pension Boards and has therefore been shaped into three broad areas:-

Governance, Administration and Communication

7. The elements that are timetabled to be reported upon at this meeting are set out below:-

- **Governance**

- G3 workstream – Training

Training has been delivered at regular points since the inception of the Board in July 2015.

In September 2017 a training session for Pension Board Members and Officers was delivered by colleagues from LGA Pensions and the Pensions Regulator and more recently training in relation to tax was delivered in October 2019.

In June 2020, the Scheme Advisory Board delivered Pension Board Wrap up Training.

In March 2021, a training session on the role of the Local Pension Board in the age discrimination remedy was delivered to Pension Board Members by colleagues at the Local Government Association.

G5B workstream – Summary of Complaints Received

A clear process for complaints has been adopted and is a key component of the governance of the Firefighter Pension Schemes (FFPS).

There were no complaints in relation to our administration of the FFPS in 2016/17 or 2017/18. There was one complaint in 2018/19 which has been concluded and one in 2019/20 which is being investigated by the Pensions Ombudsman. There were three complaints in 2020/21, two have been resolved and one is being investigated by the Pensions Ombudsman. There was one complaint in 2021/22 which has now been resolved. There were two complaints in 2022/23 which have been resolved. There have been no complaints in 2023/24 to date.

G6 workstreams – Risk Register

The Authority's team involved in the operation of the FFPS have developed a comprehensive Risk Register attached at **Appendix 2**.

The Risk Register identifies the three most dominant risks in Risk Areas 1, 2 and 3 as the maintenance of Member data (Risk 2), cyber security breaches (Risk 4), over reliance on key pensions administration officers (Risk 8), and also legislative change (Risk 9).

These risks reflect the recent significant changes in the FFPS which have brought a much greater emphasis on the completeness and accuracy of data and a number of fundamental scheme changes and legal rulings.

Risks specifically relating to the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic were assessed and included in the Risk Register in Risk Area 4. The most dominant risk is the late payment of benefits (Risk 11).

These risks reflect the different working practices that had to be adopted to ensure the ongoing administration of the scheme during the pandemic.

All of these risks will be monitored carefully, and it is felt that the mitigations and controls in place at present are sufficient.

- **Administration**

A1 workstream – KPIs and Benchmarking, SLAs

The Service has an agreed set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) who act as administrators of the FFPS on our behalf.

The KPIs are monitored and reported on monthly. **Appendix 3** sets out the position for quarter 4 of 2022/23.

The data shows good performance in most of the key areas.

The KPIs provide a sound basis on which to manage performance going forward.

A2 workstream – Costs per Member and Number of Scheme Members

Appendix 4 sets out the latest position of scheme members currently contributing to the 2015 Scheme and those in receipt of a pension. This information will be brought to each Board meeting.

- **Communication**

C1 workstream – Communication by Scheme

West Yorkshire Pension Fund have issued no further member communications since the last Board meeting.

C5 workstream – Communication by the Scheme Advisory Board

The most recent Scheme Advisory Board Bulletins are attached at **Appendix 5**.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

8. No direct issues arising.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

9. No direct issues arising.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10. The workstreams outlined in this report will ensure that HFRS can run a legally compliant Pension Board.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

11. No direct issues arising.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

12. No direct issues arising.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13. No direct issues arising.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

14. No direct issues arising.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION

15. No direct issues arising.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

16. Papers as attached.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

17. That the Board considers the workstreams that are set out in this report.

Officer Contact: Kevin Wilson ☎ 01482 567183
Executive Director of Finance/S151 Officer

Humberside Fire & Rescue Service
Summergroves Way
Kingston upon Hull

KW/SK

19/06/2023

PENSION BOARD – PROPOSED WORKSTREAMS

	Workstream	Progress	Report to Pension Board		
			Previous	Today	Future
GOVERNANCE					
G1	Establish the Pension Board	Completed	July 2015	-	-
G2	Code of Practice	Circulated and discussed at the January 2016 meeting - Completed	January 2016	-	-
G3	Training	Ongoing with initial training completed July/August 2015 and further training in April 2016 and March 2017 LGA training September 2017 WYPF training July 2018 Tax training October 2019 Pension Board Wrap up Training June 2020	July 2015 June 2016 January and July 2017 January and July 2018 January and July 2019 January and July 2020 February and July 2021 January and July 2022 January 2023	Jul 2023	Ongoing
G4	Knowledge	Knowledge matrix as a basis on which to identify Pension Board Members' knowledge gaps circulated at January and June 2016 meetings and at April 2016 Pension Board Training	January and June 2016 and January 2017	-	-
G5A	Complaints	Flowchart for the current complaints procedure for the FFPS circulated and discussed at January 2016 meeting. Procedure updated October 2020.	January 2016	February 2021	-
G5B	Summary of Complaints received	Complaints received in 2015/16 circulated. No complaints in 2016/17 and 2017/18, one complaint in 2018/19 (concluded) one in 2019/20 (under investigation by the Pensions Ombudsman). Three complaints in 2020/21 (two concluded, one being investigated by the Pensions Ombudsman). One complaint in 2021/22 (resolved). Two complaints in 2022/23 (resolved). No complaints in 2023/24.	June 2016 January and July 2017 January and July 2018 January and July 2019 January and July 2020 February and July 2021 January and July 2022 January 2023	Jul 2023	Each Pension Board
G6	Risk Register	The Risk Register is updated on an ongoing basis.	June 2016 January and July 2017 January and July 2018 January and July 2019 January and July 2020 February and July 2021 January and July 2022 January 2023	Jul 2023	Each Pension Board
G7	Policies	Abatement Policy published December 2020	February 2021	-	When published

ADMINISTRATION					
A1	KPIs and Benchmarking, SLAs	KPIs are reported monthly.	June 2016 January and July 2017 January and July 2018 January and July 2019 January and July 2020 February and July 2021 January and July 2022 January 2023	Jul 2023	Each Pension Board
A2	Costs per member and number of scheme members	Reported to January 2016 Board and each Board thereafter	June 2016 January and July 2017 January and July 2018 January and July 2019 January and July 2020 February and July 2021 January and July 2022 January 2023	Jul 2023	Each Pension Board
A3	Data for CARE and data quality	The recent move to the new ERYC payroll system has facilitated the production of this information by 31 March 2016 - Completed	June 2016	-	-
A4	Pension expenditure	Compiled as part of the Annual Accounts	June 2016 July 2017 July 2018 July 2019 July 2020 July 2021 July 2022	Jul 2023	July 2024
COMMUNICATION					
C1	By Scheme	Latest publications presented to meetings	January 2016, January and July 2017 July 2018 July 2019 July 2020 July 2021 July 2022 January 2023	Jul 2023	When published
C2	By the Service	Latest publication presented to January 2016 meeting	January 2016	-	When published
C3	Benefit Statements	Issued week commencing 19 December 2016 and August 2017, 2018 and 2019	January 2017	-	-
C4	Calculators	Circulated at the April 2016 Pension Board Training and now on the Authority's website - Completed	April 2016 Pension Board Training	-	-
C5	By the SAB	Latest publications presented to meetings	July 2020 February 2021 and July 2021 January and July 2022 January 2023	Jul 2023	When published

Firefighters' Pension Scheme - Administration Risk Register									
Risk Assessment Form									
Organisation: Humberside Fire & Rescue Service									
Scheme Manager: Delegated to Executive Director of Corporate Services and s151 Officer									
	Risk	Assessment of Risk			Risk Control Measures	Owner	Test	Next Review	Comment
	Risk Area 1 - Operations	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Rating					
1	Operational disaster (fire, flood etc)	1	4	4	Business continuity plans in place for Pension Administrator	Senior Finance Officer	Annual	Jan-24	
					Business continuity plans in place for Scheme Manager	Senior Finance Officer	Annual	Jan-24	
2	Member data incomplete or inaccurate	3	3	9	Annual report from Pension Administrator used as basis for rectification/data cleansing plan	Senior Finance Officer	Annual	Jan-24	Regular data checks as part of monthly returns process.
					Returns from annual statements, Life Certificate checks, and National Fraud Initiative checks	Pension Admin	Annual	Jan-24	
3	Administration process failure/maladministration	1	2	2	Formal agreement in place with administrator, including SLAs	Senior Finance Officer	Annual	Jan-24	KPIs subject to quarterly review
					Authority levels clearly agreed and kept up to date	Scheme Manager	Annual	Jan-24	
					Review independent reports of administrator's process	Scheme Manager	Annual	Jan-24	
					Ongoing dialogue with administrator	Senior Finance Officer	Ongoing	Ongoing	
					Contract meetings between Pension Administrator and Senior Finance Officer	Senior Finance Officer	Quarterly	Ongoing	
4	Cyber security breaches	3	4	12	Supporting good decision making and minimising the risk of scams in line with The Pension Regulator's Guidance	Scheme Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	

	Risk Area 2 - Financial	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Rating					
5	Excessive charges by supplier	3	2	6	Annual review of scheme budget, review of costs incurred against budget	Senior Finance Officer	Annual	Jan-24	Charges may increase with additional work required as a result of McCloud/Matthews judgments
					Periodic review of supplier	Senior Finance Officer	Annual	Jan-24	
6	Incorrect employee and employer contributions	1	5	5	Check incoming and outgoing scheme funds against scheme forecast - reconciling all funds	Senior Finance Officer	Monthly	Jan-24	
					Monitoring of contribution payments	Senior Finance Officer	Monthly	Jan-24	
					Annual audit	Head of Finance	Annual	Jan-24	
7	Judicial review of cost cap	4	4	16	Decision to include remedy costs in the cost control mechanism was not unlawful. Unions can apply to the Court of Appeal for permission to appeal. Awaiting final outcome to determine risk control measures needed	Head of Finance	Annual	Jan-24	Accrual rates and contribution rates may increase as a result of appeal
	Risk Area 3 - Regulatory & Compliance	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Rating					
8	Over reliance on key pensions administration officers	3	3	9	Key officers convey specialist knowledge on to colleagues by mentoring	Senior Finance Officer/ Pensions Admin	Ongoing	Ongoing	Additional work caused by McCloud/Matthews may pull key officers away from routine work resulting in potential administrative errors
					Enhance training by bespoke sessions/courses/workshops	Senior Finance Officer/ Pensions Admin	Ongoing	Ongoing	
9	Changes to legislation	5	4	20	Ongoing review of legislative framework	Scheme manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	McCloud/Matthews judgments will result in legislative changes
					Up to date and documented training log, showing completion of scheme specific and	Scheme manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	
					Technical advice and updates	Scheme manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	
10	Delayed Annual Benefit statements (Special Modified Scheme)	2	2	4	Submission of monthly data, and timely submission of year end data	Senior Finance Officer/ Pensions Admin	Ongoing	Ongoing	

11	Conflicts of interest	2	1	2	Pension board awareness of legal responsibilities	Scheme Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	
					All pension board members to declare any conflicts and potential conflicts	Scheme Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	
	Risk Area 4 - Covid-19	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Rating					
11	Late payment of benefits (including processing death and survivor benefits)	3	3	9	Pension payroll operating fully on a remote basis and subject to ongoing review and	Scheme Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	
12	Delay in processing retirements	2	3	6	Prioritising retirement processing in accordance with The Pension Regulator's Guidance	Scheme Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	There may be a slight delay in the payment of retirement lump sums due to payroll processes running weekly, but payment will still be processed within time limits set out in pension legislation
13	Delayed Annual Benefit Statements	3	2	6	Submission of monthly returns ongoing	Scheme Manager	Ongoing	Ongoing	No delay in Annual Benefit Statement production, with 100% meeting the statutory deadline

Risk Matrix

The following model rates the impact and likelihood of an identified risk using a scale of 1 to 5.

The likelihood score is multiplied by the impact score (as shown in the table) to give an overall risk score.

The final score will influence the level of monitoring and/or control required in relation to each risk.

Likelihood Score	1	2	3	4	5
Descriptor	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Frequency How often might it/does it happen	This will probably never happen/recur	Do not expect it to happen/recur but it is possible it may do so	Might happen/recur occasionally	Will probably happen/recur, but it is not a persisting issue/circumstance	Will undoubtedly happen/recur, possibly frequently

Impact Score	1	2	3	4	5
Descriptor	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Risk Area 1 - Operations	Minor problem easily handled by normal day to day processes	Potential for some operational disruption	Significant operational disruption possible	Operations severely damaged	Operational survival at risk
Risk Area 2 - Financial	Little/no financial impact	Potential for short term financial impact	Potential for medium term financial impact	Potential for long term financial impact	Potential for permanent long term financial impact
Risk Area 3 - Regulatory & Compliance	Little/no impact	Misunderstanding of rules/regulations resulting in reduced performance	Breach of rules/regulations resulting in informal complaint(s)	Breach of rules/regulations resulting in formal report or complaint(s) being lodged	Breach of rules/regulations resulting in legal action
Risk Area 4 - Covid 19	Minor problem easily handled by normal day to day processes	Potential for some disruption to normal processes	Significant disruption to normal processes possible	Normal processes severely disrupted	Operational survival at risk

	Likelihood Score				
Impact Score	1	2	3	4	5
5 Catastrophic	5	10	15	20	25
4 Major	4	8	12	16	20
3 Moderate	3	6	9	12	15
2 Minor	2	4	6	8	10
1 Negligible	1	2	3	4	5

	1 to 3	Low risk
	4 to 6	Moderate risk
	8 to 12	High risk
	15 to 25	Extreme risk

KPI Details

Number	Key Performance Indicator	Target	Minimum
1	Additional Pension Contributions Update	10	85%
2	Age 55 Increase to Pension	20	85%
3	Change of Address	20	85%
4	Change of Bank Details	20	85%
5	Death Grant to Set Up	10	85%
6	Death in Retirement	10	85%
7	Death In Service	10	85%
8	Death on Deferred	10	85%
9	Deferred Benefits Into Payment – Payment of Lump	3	85%
10	Deferred Benefits Into Payment Actual	5	90%
11	Deferred Benefits Into Payment Quote	35	85%
12	Deferred Benefits Set Up on Leaving	20	85%
13	Dependant Pension To Set Up	10	100%
14	Divorce Actual	20	85%
15	Divorce Quote	40	85%
16	Divorce Settlement – Pension Sharing order Implemented	80	100%
17	DWP Request For Information	20	85%
18	General Payroll Changes	20	85%
19	Initial letter Death in Retirement	10	85%
20	Initial Letter Death in Service	10	85%
21	Initial letter Death on Deferred	10	85%
22	Injury Review	20	100%
23	Life Certificate	10	85%
24	NI Adjustment to Pension at State Pension Age	20	85%
25	Pension Estimate	10	90%
26	Pension Saving Statement	20	100%
27	Pension Set Up/Payment of Lump Sum	3	85%
28	Purchase of Service Quote	20	85%
29	Refund Actual	10	90%
30	Refund Quote	35	85%
31	Retirement Actual	10	90%
32	Set Up New Spouse Pension	5	85%
33	Transfer In Actual	35	85%
34	Transfer In Quote	35	85%
35	Transfer Out Payment	35	85%
36	Transfer Out Quote Fire	35	85%
37	Update Member Details	20	100%



Key Performance Indicators

Narrative

Death in Retirement 2 out of 6 cases did not meet the target due a to high volume of work in the team. The KPI has a target of 10 days, and the cases that did not meet the target were completed in an average of 17.5 days.

Deferred Benefits Set Up on Leaving 1 out of 10 cases did not meet the target due to other urgent work taking priority. The scheme members received confirmation within 2 months of WYPF receiving the leaver information that they have a deferred benefit. This meets the statutory requirements and the values/details were issued shortly after.

Dependent Pension To Set Up 1 out of 4 cases did not meet the target due to WYPF awaiting further information from the claimant.

Pension Estimate 1 out of 5 cases did not meet the target because estimates with an intended retirement date of 3 months or more in the future are not processed until the more urgent estimates with a retirement date within 3 months have been completed.

Set Up New Spouse Pension 1 out of 4 cases case did not meet the target due to WYPF awaiting further information from the claimant.

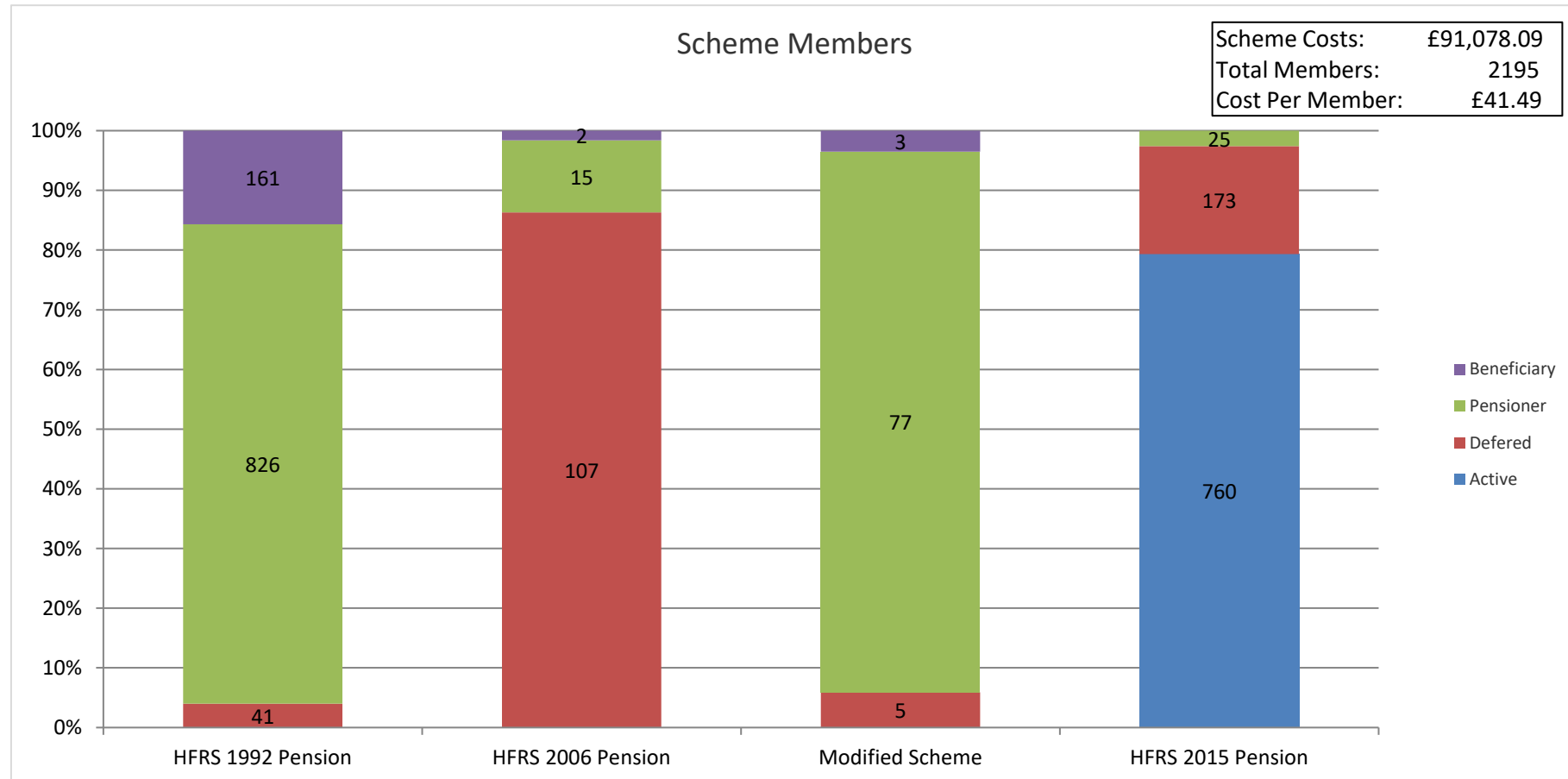
Firefighters' Pension Scheme - Number of Members and Adminstration Cost Per Member as at 31/03/2023

Total Members

Scheme Name	Active	Deferred	Pensioner	Beneficiary
HFRS 1992 Pension	0	41	826	161
HFRS 2006 Pension	0	107	15	2
Modified Scheme	0	5	77	3
HFRS 2015 Pension	760	173	25	0
Total	760	326	943	166
Grand Total				2195

Total Costs

Service	Cost
HFRS Salary	£54,901.65
Administration	£20,146.06
Payroll	£16,030.38
Total	£91,078.09



£41.49

FPS Bulletin 65 – January 2023

Welcome to issue 65 of the Firefighters' Pensions Schemes bulletin. We wish all of our readers a belated Happy New Year.

If you are looking for information on a certain topic, issue and content indexes are held on the [main bulletin page](#) of the website and are updated following each new issue.

If you have any comments on this bulletin, suggested items for future issues, or a job you would like to advertise, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Contents

Calendar of events	2
Actions arising	3
FPS	3
Ill-health reassessment factsheet updated	3
Template member consent letters available	3
Potential Industrial Action	4
Technical query log.....	4
FPS England SAB updates	4
Barnett Waddingham Case Study on FPS Remedy 2015 – Your Questions Answered Member Communications	4
SAB levy 2022-23 – Reminder for Purchase Order numbers	5
SAB remedy engagement sessions.....	6
Other News and Updates	6
PDP publishes consumer protection video	6
Automatic Enrolment trigger remains the same	7
Dominic Harris starts as Pensions Ombudsman.....	7
Public sector unions granted judicial review over McCloud cost remedy	8
HMRC	8

LGA and SAB responses to the consultation on the Public Services Pension Scheme (rectification of unlawful discrimination) (Tax) Regulations 2023	8
Events	9
FPS coffee mornings	9
Useful links	9
Contact details	10
Copyright	10
Disclaimer	11

Calendar of events

Please see below a calendar of upcoming events relevant to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes. Only those events which are hyperlinked are currently available to book. If you have any events you would like to be included in a future bulletin, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Table 1: Calendar of events

Event	Date
FPS coffee morning	14 and 28 February 2023
FPS Technical Working Group	17 February 2023
FPS Communications Working Group	14 March 2023
North East regional group	15 March 2023
SAB	23 March 2023
SAB	8 June 2023
SAB	14 September 2023
SAB	14 December 2023

Actions arising

Readers are asked to note the following actions arising from the bulletin:

[Template member consent letters](#): FRAs to identify affected members of the pension scheme who may need to be sent for an ill-health reassessment and arrange for the appropriate member consent letter to be sent to them.

[SAB levy 2022-23 – Request for Purchase Order numbers](#): FRAs to provide a valid purchase order number, stating the number of employees eligible to join one of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes as of 1 April 2022, using the form provided with the SAB 2022-23 levy letter.

FPS

Ill-health reassessment factsheet updated

In [FPS Bulletin 63 – November 2022](#), we published an [ill-health reassessment factsheet](#) to help FRAs determine which individuals require a reassessment of their ill-health determination as a result of remedy implementation. This has recently been updated to include FPS 2006 special members. We sought clarity from the Home Office to confirm that special members should be treated in line with FPS 1992 members due to them being assessed against a normal pension age of 55.

Template member consent letters available

Letters for scenarios one and two, seven, and nine as referred to in the [ill-health reassessment factsheet](#) have now been added to the [Retrospective remedy webpage](#).

ACTION for FRAs: Identify affected members of the pension scheme who may need to be sent for an ill-health reassessment and arrange for the appropriate member consent letter to be sent to them.

Potential Industrial Action

In [FPS Bulletin 61 - September 2022](#), we provided information about how strike action affects a member's pension benefits, how the amount that the member needs to repay is calculated, and the importance of continuing to record service breaks. Please refer to the information given in that bulletin to help resolve any queries that you have regarding industrial action. The LGA is planning to provide sample communications for FRAs if industrial action goes ahead, and members wish to repay the missing period of service.

Technical query log

The [current log of queries and responses](#) can be accessed by practitioners in the member-restricted area of the FPS Regulations and Guidance website. The queries have been anonymised and divided into topics. The log is updated monthly in line with the bulletin release dates.

Queries have been answered this month in the following categories: compensation scheme (page 50).

FPS England SAB updates

Barnett Waddingham Case Study on FPS Remedy 2015 – Your Questions Answered Member Communications

In [FPS bulletin 54 - February 2022](#), we advised that following the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) [meeting of 30 September 2021](#) an action was taken to commission a suite of illustrative member scenarios to provide members with a better understanding of the implications of the McCloud/ Sargeant remedy on their benefits. This included a selection of members' personas across the schemes, with benefits illustrated at a range of key retirement milestones.

Barnett Waddingham was appointed to deliver this work following a successful procurement exercise and as part of the project, warm-up communications were produced to answer some key concerns or recurring questions that members have about the changes which took place on 1 April 2022 and beyond.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

The [FPS 2015 Remedy 'fact checker'](#) was developed by Barnett Waddingham, in collaboration with the SAB the Board secretariat, and the Scheme Management & Administration committee.

The document text was added as a new page to the [FPS Member 2015 Remedy section](#), with the PDF available as a download.

Barnett Waddingham has since produced a case study about working with the scheme to provide this information for members on the remedy changes and this can be read at [Appendix 1](#).

SAB levy 2022-23 – Reminder for Purchase Order numbers

In [FPS bulletin 63- November 2022](#), we confirmed that the SAB budget for 2022-23 had been approved by the minister.

The total levy for the 2022-23 year will be £6.27 per firefighter, which is calculated at £4.39 for the SAB and £1.88 for employers. A letter was sent by email to Chief Fire Officers and HR Directors on 21 November 2022 advising them of this.

Devolved FRAs have also been sent levy requests regarding the employer advice service provided to them by the LGA.

Please can we politely remind FRAs, if they have not done so already, to provide a valid purchase order number, stating the number of employees eligible to join one of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes as of 1 April 2022, using the form provided with the letter in order that an invoice can be sent accordingly.

ACTION: FRAs to provide a valid purchase order number, stating the number of employees eligible to join one of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes as of 1 April 2022, using the form provided with the SAB 2022-23 levy letter.

SAB remedy engagement sessions

As reported in [FPS Bulletin 57 – May 2022](#), the SAB has been invited by the Home Office to take part in a series of joint engagement sessions with the Police SAB to consider scheme specific versions of the Provision Definition Documents (PDDs) which define the provisions of the [Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act \(PSPJOA\) 2022](#) for each area of the 2015 Remedy.

One session is taking place per month between June 2022 and February 2023, with two topics discussed at each meeting. These discussions will help to inform the drafting of secondary legislation, ahead of formal consultation. Formal consultation is now expected to commence during February 2023.

The most recent session considered Annual Allowance and bereavement. Material from some sessions has been added to a new page called '[age discrimination remedy – Provision Definition Documents](#)' in the member restricted area of the FPS Regulations and Guidance area for the benefit of practitioners.

Any actions arising from the feedback from the Fire and Police SABs will be taken forward and responded to by the Home Office.

Other News and Updates

PDP publishes consumer protection video

The Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) has recently published [an explainer video on consumer protection](#).

The video explains what protections will be in place to ensure dashboards are safe and secure.

Please see [the consumer protection page of PDP's website](#) for more information on this topic.

Automatic Enrolment trigger remains the same

On 26 January 2023, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published its [review of the automatic enrolment thresholds for 2023/24](#).

The Pensions Act 2008 requires DWP to annually review various thresholds relevant for automatic enrolment rules. As is relevant for the FPS, the earnings trigger remains at £10,000 for 2023/24.

Dominic Harris starts as Pensions Ombudsman

On 16 January 2023, Dominic Harris started as the Pensions Ombudsman.

Dominic's term of office is five years.

Dominic has recently sent an introductory message to TPO's contact list:

"The New Year has brought with it a "New Ombudsman", and so I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself and say how excited I am to be joining TPO.

This is an organisation that is so important in ensuring that pension scheme members and their dependants have access to support and justice, for free, in what can often be complex and stressful disputes. It really does level the playing field. I have looked on from the other side of the fence at the work

TPO does – and am proud to be a part of it over the next few years. Clearly, Anthony Arter has done a sterling job over his tenure, and I am looking forward to building on his great work.

I look forward to understanding better how TPO works and some of the challenges we face. It is so important that we continue to work collaboratively to improve dispute resolution across the industry. I hope I will be able to meet many of you over the coming months."

You can find out more about Dominic on the ['who we are' page of TPO's website](#).

Please email stakeholder@pensions-ombudsman.org.uk if you would like to join TPO's contact list.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Public sector unions granted judicial review over McCloud cost remedy

In [FPS bulletin 62 – October 2022](#) we confirmed that public sector unions had been granted a judicial review in relation to the McCloud/ Sargeant remedy costs in the cost control mechanism. We can now confirm that the dates for the hearing are from 30 January to 3 February 2023.

HMRC

LGA and SAB responses to the consultation on the Public Services Pension Scheme (rectification of unlawful discrimination) (Tax) Regulations 2023

In [FPS bulletin 63-November 2022](#), we advised that HMRC had published a [technical consultation on a draft statutory instrument](#), which ensures the pensions tax framework will apply as intended to pension scheme administrators and members affected by the public service pensions remedy. The consultation closed on 6 January 2023.

The consultation sought views from pension scheme administrators on the draft regulations. The regulations set out changes to how the pensions tax rules will apply to pension scheme administrators and members of public service pension schemes as a result of the public service pensions remedy.

The regulations will make changes to how pensions tax legislation operates in certain circumstances, including changes to how schemes will need to report and pay extra tax charges or reclaim overpaid tax and ensure that schemes can pay pension benefits as authorised payments.

This legislation is intended to take effect from 6 April 2023, but some provisions will have a retrospective effect.

We are pleased to share both the LGA and SAB responses to the consultation on the Public Services Pension Scheme (rectification of unlawful discrimination) (Tax) Regulations 2023 as follows:

[LGA response to the consultation on the Public Services Pension Scheme \(rectification of unlawful discrimination\) \(Tax\) regulations 2023](#)

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

[SAB response to the consultation on the Public Services Pension Scheme \(rectification of unlawful discrimination\) \(Tax\) regulations 2023](#)

Events

FPS coffee mornings

Our MS Teams coffee mornings are continuing every second Tuesday. The informal sessions lasting up to an hour allow practitioners to catch up with colleagues and hear a brief update on FPS issues from the LGA Bluelight team.

We are pleased to include the presentations from recent sessions below:

[5 January 2023 – Remedy timetabling](#)

[26 January 2023 – HMT Remedy Directions](#)

If you do not already receive the meeting invitations and would like to join us, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk. Please note that attendance at the coffee mornings is generally restricted to FPS practitioners and managers.

Useful links

- [The Firefighters' Pensions \(England\) Scheme Advisory Board](#)
- [FPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [FPS Member](#)
- [Khub Firefighters Pensions Discussion Forum](#)
- [FPS1992 guidance and commentary](#)
- [The Pensions Regulator Public Service Schemes](#)
- [The Pensions Ombudsman](#)
- [HMRC Pensions Tax Manual](#)
- [LGA pensions website](#)
- [LGPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [LGPC Bulletins](#)
- [LGPS member site](#)

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

- [Scottish Public Pensions Agency - Firefighters](#)
- [Welsh Government Fire circulars](#)

Contact details

Claire Hey (Senior Pensions Adviser)

Telephone: 07825 731 924

Email: claire.hey@local.gov.uk

Claire Johnson (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Employers)

Telephone: 07920 861 552

Email: claire.johnson@local.gov.uk

Elena Johnson (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Governance)

Telephone: 07770 763 031

Email: elena.johnson@local.gov.uk

Copyright

Copyright remains with Local Government Association (LGA). This bulletin may be reproduced without the prior permission of LGA provided it is not used for commercial gain, the source is acknowledged and, if regulations are reproduced, the Crown Copyright Policy Guidance issued by HMSO is adhered to.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this bulletin has been prepared by the Bluelight Pensions team, part of the Local Government Association (LGA). It represents the views of the team and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. Readers may wish, or will need, to take their own legal advice on the interpretation of legislation. No responsibility whatsoever will be assumed by the LGA for any direct or consequential loss, financial or otherwise, damage or inconvenience, or any other obligation or liability incurred by readers relying on information contained in this bulletin.

While every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy of the bulletin, it would be helpful if readers could bring any perceived errors or omissions to the attention of the Bluelight team by emailing bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Case study – McCloud/Sargeant - Pensions Remedy communications

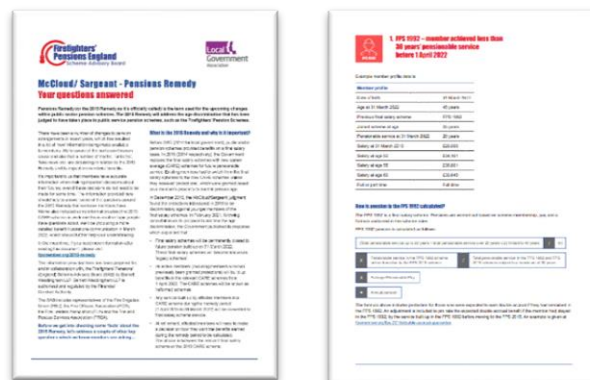
Background

In December 2021, Barnett Waddingham was appointed by the Firefighters' Pensions (England) Scheme Advisory Board to support with communications to help members better understand the implications of the McCloud/Sargeant judgment on their benefits.

What we did

This was a joint project between DrumRoll and Barnett Waddingham's Public Sector team to work with the Firefighters' Pensions (England) Scheme Advisory Board to produce the following communications:

- 1. Your questions answered** – 4-page fact checker to answer some recurring questions members had about the McCloud/Sargeant judgment. The purpose of the fact checker was to reassure members prior to the issue of the main communication.
- 2. Member benefit illustrations** – 24-page benefits illustration document. Using different scenarios and salary profiles, retirement benefits of a selection of example members at key milestones were illustrated, comparing the position if the member chose legacy or reformed benefits at retirement for the remedy period.



In line with good communication principles, we ensured that both communications:

- Included clear messaging, with the purpose of the communication front and centre.
- Were written in the first person, using plain English, with simple sentence structures.
- Included clear instruction on what the member needed to do next, including signposting on where to get more information.
- Included legible font sizes and formatting, colour contrast, best use of white space, wide margins and single columns (in line with best practice for accessibility).

The tone of voice used within the communication was one of reassurance and professionalism.

How we did it?

The timelines for sending out the communications were tight (February 2022 for the fact checker and March/April 2022 for the benefit illustrations). The benefit illustrations involved the production of complex calculations that needed to be worked through by the Public Sector team. Additionally, DrumRoll hadn't worked with the Firefighters' Pension Schemes before so scheme knowledge had to be acquired within a short space of time.

In the kick-off meeting, we worked through the brief with key stakeholders from the Firefighters' team. This gave us the opportunity to ask questions and request additional information. It also allowed us to agree the creative brief, key messages, timelines and deliverables. Project calls were then held throughout the duration of the project as and when they were needed.

Was the project successful?

The communications were delivered within the timescale agreed, and had a positive effect on member engagement. Following publication of the illustrations, traffic to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes website increased considerably, with the benefit illustrations page being one of the top three most viewed (with 2,438 hits over a 90-day period).

Having seen the communications for England, the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Advisory Board for Wales (SABW) asked the English Firefighters' team to commission DrumRoll to produce a similar set of communications for the Welsh schemes. This also included a Welsh language version of both communications.

Find out more

You can download the full [documents](#) we produced at the Firefighters' Pension Schemes website.

FPS Bulletin 66 – February 2023

Welcome to issue 66 of the Firefighters' Pensions Schemes bulletin.

If you are looking for information on a certain topic, issue and content indexes are held on the [main bulletin page](#) of the website and are updated following each new issue.

If you have any comments on this bulletin, suggested items for future issues, or a job you would like to advertise, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Calendar of events	2
Actions arising	3
FPS	3
New webpage on the FPS Member website	3
Data collection for the 2015 Remedy	3
FPS Contribution Bandings for 2023-24	4
Matthews pre-work factsheet for FRAs	4
Technical query log	5
FPS England SAB updates	5
SAB meeting 23 January 2023	5
Other News and Updates	6
Appointment to the Bluelight team	6
DWP appoints new chair of MaPS	6
DWP appoints Mary Starks to lead review of TPR	7
Pensions dashboards newsletter	7
The Bereavement Benefits (Remedial) Order 2022	7
Tax rules for 2015 remedy laid	8
Public Service Pension Indexation and Revaluation 2023	8
HMRC	9
Pension schemes newsletter 146 and 147	9
Events	9
FPS coffee mornings	9

LGA/ National Police Chiefs' Council data conference – London – 17 May 2023 (save the date).....	10
FPS AGM – London – 19 to 20 September 2023 (save the date).....	10
Legislation	10
Useful links	11
Contact details	11
Copyright	12
Disclaimer	12

Calendar of events

Please see below a calendar of upcoming events relevant to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes. Only those events which are hyperlinked are currently available to book. If you have any events you would like to be included in a future bulletin, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Table 1: Calendar of events

Event	Date
FPS coffee morning	14 and 21 March 2023
FPS Communications Working Group	14 March 2023
North East regional group	15 March 2023
South East regional group	15 March 2023
Midlands regional group	22 March 2023
SAB	23 March 2023
Data conference	17 May 2023
SAB	8 June 2023
SAB	14 September 2023
FPS AGM	19 and 20 September 2023
SAB	14 December 2023

Actions arising

Readers are asked to note the following actions arising from the bulletin:

[Data collection for the 2015 remedy](#): FRAs to ensure that the data collection template is completed and sent to administrators so that administrators and FRAs are prepared for the implementation of remedy from 1 October 2023.

[Pension scheme migration](#): Migrate to the Managing Pension Schemes service as soon as possible.

[The Bereavement benefits remedial order 2022](#): FRAs and administrators to share this information in communications with pensioners.

FPS

New webpage on the FPS Member website

We are pleased to let you know that a new page relating to the 2015 Remedy is now available for members on the FPS Member website. The new page provides information on:

- [Whether members may be affected by remedy](#)
- [What members can expect if they have already retired](#)
- [What members can expect if they plan to retire before October 2023](#)
- [What active and deferred members can expect](#)

These pages provide a useful timeline for those affected, with the aim of helping to manage their expectations and provide useful information for them.

Data collection for the 2015 Remedy

In the [FPS Bulletin 44- April 2021](#), we advised that remedy data collection tools had been created with the assistance of software suppliers and the Fire Communications Working Group to help FRAs compile the relevant data needed to prepare for the 2015 Remedy. To credit members with their original legacy scheme membership for

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

the remedy period, administrators will need additional data from FRAs to rebuild the final salary record. For example, an unprotected member who transitioned to FPS 2015 from FPS 1992 on 1 April 2015 and remains in employment will need a final salary record creating for the full seven years from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022. The data collection template and notes are as follows:

[FPS remedy data collection template](#)

[FPS remedy data collection notes for completion](#)

[Age discrimination remedy data collection - Guidance for administrators and FRAs – version 2 clean](#)

Additionally, we have previously provided an [age discrimination payroll overview workshop](#), which may also be useful to FRAs when trying to understand the payroll requirements for age discrimination remedy.

FRAs should have already started work with their administrators to identify all eligible members and consider any processes or additional resources that need to be put in place to identify the data required in good time for 1 October 2023 when the Police and Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Amendment) Regulations 2023 come into force.

ACTION: FRAs to ensure that the data collection template is completed and sent to administrators so that administrators and FRAs are prepared for the implementation of remedy from 1 October 2023.

FPS Contribution Bandings for 2023-24

The [contributions banding factsheet](#) which confirms the contribution rates that apply for 2023-24 as set out in the scheme regulations is now available and confirms that there are no changes to the relevant rates for 2023-24.

Matthews pre-work factsheet for FRAs

In [FPS Bulletin 55 – March 2022](#), we confirmed that a second retained firefighters' options exercise would take place. The regulations to implement the second options exercise in England are currently being drafted by the Home Office and will be consulted on before they are laid before Parliament. The Home Office has a

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

maximum period of 18 months to draft, consult, and introduce the necessary secondary legislation.

FRAs will be expected to start the second options exercise as soon as possible after the legislation comes into force. The exercise will run for a maximum period of 18 months.

Ahead of the legislation coming into force, FRAs are advised to take steps to identify retained firefighters who were employed between the relevant dates. With thanks to Claire Neale and the Matthews Technical Working Group, a [Matthews pre-work for FRAs factsheet](#) is now available which is designed to help FRAs to identify the work which should be done before the Matthews legislation comes into force.

Technical query log

The [current log of queries and responses](#) can be accessed by practitioners in the member-restricted area of the FPS Regulations and Guidance website. The queries have been anonymised and divided into topics. The log is updated monthly in line with the bulletin release dates.

Queries have been answered this month in the following categories: pension sharing, page 109, survivor's pensions, page 127 and transfers, page 133.

FPS England SAB updates

SAB meeting 23 January 2023

The Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) last met on 23 January 2023 and discussed the following areas:

- Temporary in the context of the FPS
- Retrospective correction of pensionable pay
- PDD engagement sessions to date
- Remedy timetabling
- Commutation in the FPS 1992 Scotland
- HMRC tax consultation

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Additionally, the SAB was pleased to invite Angela Bell and Lucy Stone from The Pension Regulator to the meeting to give an update on pension dashboards. Angela and Lucy [provided a comprehensive presentation](#) which included:

- Pensions dashboards - current challenges and opportunities
- How pensions dashboards will work
- Consultations and regulations
- Preparing for pensions dashboards
- Commonly asked questions
- Compliance and enforcement policy

Other News and Updates

Appointment to the Bluelight team

Following a successful recruitment campaign, we are delighted to announce that Tara Atkins has been appointed to the Bluelight Team in the role of Firefighters' Pensions Adviser (Communications) and will join the LGA on 20 March 2023.

Tara has over 23 years' public service pension experience, including the LGPS, Police, Teachers, NHS, and Firefighters' Pension Schemes. Tara commenced Local Government employment in July 1999 at West Sussex County Council, where she commenced in the Pensions Administration Team, working her way up to Team Leader until she moved into the County Council's Subject Matter Expert Role in 2012, when the Administration Team were outsourced to a third party.

Tara's role at the LGA is to provide support to FRAs and FPS practitioners and she will lead the development of national FPS communications.

DWP appoints new chair of MaPS

[The Department for Work and Pensions \(DWP\) has appointed Sara Weller CBE](#) as the new permanent Chair of the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS).

Since September 2022 Sara served as a non-executive board member. Sarah will formally take up the role of permanent Chair on 29 March 2023.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

DWP appoints Mary Starks to lead review of TPR

The [review of the Pensions Regulator](#) (TPR) will examine how it is performing its role and where it can improve, providing greater efficiency and value to taxpayers. The report into the review is due to be delivered in May 2023.

Pensions dashboards newsletter

Earlier this month, the Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) published its [February 2023 newsletter](#).

The newsletter contains articles on:

- new connection hub, providing useful resources and information to prepare for connection to the ecosystem
- pensions dashboards myth busting video, demystifying some of the topics around dashboards
- understanding the dashboards available point and how it is different from connecting to dashboards
- inviting PDP to an event such as a regional pension office meeting
- following PDP on Twitter and LinkedIn and signing up for newsletters

The Bereavement Benefits (Remedial) Order 2022

On 15 December 2022, the Department for Work and Pensions [re-laid the above order and published their response to last year's consultation](#).

The Order extends eligibility for Widowed Parent's Allowance (WPA) and the higher rate of Bereavement Support Payment (BSP). Eligibility now includes surviving cohabiting partners with dependent children, who were not in a legal union with the deceased on the date of death. It has retrospective effect back to the 30 August 2018.

Prior to the changes, only those who had been married to, or in a civil partnership with, their deceased partner would be eligible for WPA or BSP.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Currently:

- WPA is up to £126.35 per week
- BSP is a one-off amount of up to £3,500 and 18 monthly payments of up to £350.

Eligible beneficiaries can claim back to 30 August 2018. The monetary value is clearly significant to those eligible.

ACTION: FRAs and administrators to share this information in communications with pensioners.

Tax rules for 2015 remedy laid

In [FPS Bulletin 63 - November 2022](#) we advised that HMRC had published a technical consultation on a draft statutory instrument, which would ensure that the pensions tax framework will apply as intended to pension scheme administrators and members affected by the public service pensions remedy.

Following that consultation, on 6 February 2023, the [Public Service Pension Schemes \(Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination\) \(Tax\) Regulations 2023](#) were laid. They apply to relevant public service pension schemes in England, Wales and Scotland and come into force on 6 April 2023, but some provisions will have retrospective effect.

The regulations set out changes to how the pensions tax rules will apply to pension scheme administrators and members of public service pension schemes because of the 2015 remedy. The regulations make changes to how pensions tax legislation operates in certain circumstances, including changes to how schemes will need to report and pay extra tax charges or reclaim overpaid tax and ensure that schemes can pay pension benefits as authorised payments.

Public Service Pension Indexation and Revaluation 2023

On 20 February 2023, HM Treasury (HMT) issued [written statement HCWS566](#) confirming the Public Service Pension Indexation and Revaluation for 2023.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Public service pensions will be increased in line with the annual increase in the Consumer Prices Index up to September 2022. The statement confirms that the increase from 10 April 2023 is 10.1 per cent except for those public service pensions which have been in payment for less than a year, which will receive a pro-rata increase. The Pensions Increase (Review) Order is expected to be laid during March 2023; however, [the pensions increase multiplier tables](#) are available now.

The statement also confirms that the FPS 2015 will use the figure of 7 per cent for the earnings element of revaluation for active members to be applied at one second after midnight on 31 March 2023.

HMRC

Pension schemes newsletter 146 and 147

On 31 January 2023, HMRC published [pension schemes newsletter 146](#). It contains articles on relief at source, pension flexibility statistics, migrating to the Managing Pension Schemes service, accounting for tax (AFT) returns, and pension scheme transfers

ACTION for FRAs: Migrate to the Managing Pension Schemes service as soon as possible.

On 28 February 2023, HMRC published [pension schemes newsletter 147](#). It contains articles on relief at source, public service pensions remedy, and AFT returns.

Events

FPS coffee mornings

Our MS Teams coffee mornings are continuing every second Tuesday. The informal sessions lasting up to an hour allow practitioners to catch up with colleagues and hear a brief update on FPS issues from the LGA Bluelight team.

We are pleased to include the presentations from recent sessions below:

[14 February 2023 – Remedy pre-work special](#)

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

If you do not already receive the meeting invitations and would like to join us, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk. Please note that attendance at the coffee mornings is generally restricted to FPS practitioners and managers.

LGA/ National Police Chiefs' Council data conference – London – 17 May 2023 (save the date)

The LGA and NPCC are excited to announce that they will be holding a joint data conference on 17 May 2023 at 18 Smith Square, London. The conference will concentrate on understanding and controlling data and will include panel sessions and a data planning workshop. Example themes which will be explored are:

- Successful project implementation
- Engaging members
- Cost of the scheme
- Owning the narrative

The full programme and booking link will be available shortly.

FPS AGM – London – 19 to 20 September 2023 (save the date)

The Fire Pensions Annual Conference will take place from 19 to 20 September this year. The two-day programme will allow delegates to network with fellow colleagues and hear the latest news on the Firefighters' Pension Scheme from the scheme's key stakeholders.

The full programme and booking link will be available in due course.

Legislation

SI	Reference title
SI 2023/113	<u>Public Service Pension Schemes (Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination) (Tax) Regulations 2023</u>
SI 2023/134	<u>The Bereavement Benefits (Remedial) Order 2023</u>

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Useful links

- [The Firefighters' Pensions \(England\) Scheme Advisory Board](#)
- [FPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [FPS Member](#)
- [Khub Firefighters Pensions Discussion Forum](#)
- [FPS1992 guidance and commentary](#)
- [The Pensions Regulator Public Service Schemes](#)
- [The Pensions Ombudsman](#)
- [HMRC Pensions Tax Manual](#)
- [LGA pensions website](#)
- [LGPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [LGPC Bulletins](#)
- [LGPS member site](#)
- [Scottish Public Pensions Agency - Firefighters](#)
- [Welsh Government Fire circulars](#)

Contact details

Claire Hey (Senior Pensions Adviser)

Telephone: 07825 731 924

Email: claire.hey@local.gov.uk

Claire Johnson (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Employers)

Telephone: 07920 861 552

Email: claire.johnson@local.gov.uk

Elena Johnson (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Governance)

Telephone: 07770 763 031

Email: elena.johnson@local.gov.uk

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Copyright

Copyright remains with Local Government Association (LGA). This bulletin may be reproduced without the prior permission of LGA provided it is not used for commercial gain, the source is acknowledged and, if regulations are reproduced, the Crown Copyright Policy Guidance issued by HMSO is adhered to.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this bulletin has been prepared by the Bluelight Pensions team, part of the Local Government Association (LGA). It represents the views of the team and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. Readers may wish, or will need, to take their own legal advice on the interpretation of legislation. No responsibility whatsoever will be assumed by the LGA for any direct or consequential loss, financial or otherwise, damage or inconvenience, or any other obligation or liability incurred by readers relying on information contained in this bulletin.

While every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy of the bulletin, it would be helpful if readers could bring any perceived errors or omissions to the attention of the Bluelight team by emailing bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

FPS Bulletin 67 – March 2023

Welcome to issue 67 of the Firefighters' Pensions Schemes bulletin.

If you are looking for information on a certain topic, issue and content indexes are held on the [main bulletin page](#) of the website and are updated following each new issue.

If you have any comments on this bulletin, suggested items for future issues, or a job you would like to advertise, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Calendar of events	2
Actions arising	3
FPS	3
Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023.....	3
Top up grant 2023 – Collection of pensions accounting data	4
FPS annual update 2023	5
Website downtime	5
Technical query log.....	5
FPS England SAB updates	6
SAB meeting 23 March 2023	6
Other News and Updates	6
Farewell from Claire Hey	6
Judgment on cost cap mechanism	7
DWP supports expansion of auto enrolment	7
DWP announces delays to dashboard connection deadlines	7
Spring budget 2023	8
PDP issues March newsletter	9
GAD publishes blog on pensions dashboards data matching.....	10
Police remedy consultation launched	10
The Pension Regulator publishes blog	10
SCAPE Discount Rate methodology consultation response	11

HMRC	11
Pension schemes newsletter 148	11
Events	12
FPS coffee mornings	12
Fire and Police pensions data conference - 17 May 2023	12
Training and events - 2022/23 facts and figures	13
Legislation	14
Useful links	14
Contact details	15
Copyright	15
Disclaimer	15

Calendar of events

Please see below a calendar of upcoming events relevant to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes. Only those events which are hyperlinked are currently available to book. If you have any events you would like to be included in a future bulletin, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Table 1: Calendar of events

Event	Date
FPS coffee morning	11 April 2023
Matthews Technical Working Group	11 April 2023
FPS Communications Working Group	14 April 2023
Data conference	17 May 2023
SAB	8 June 2023
SAB	14 September 2023
FPS AGM	19-20 September 2023
SAB	14 December 2023

Actions arising

[Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Scheme \(Remediable Service\) Regulations](#)

[2023](#): All interested parties are encouraged to respond to the consultation by the deadline of 23 May 2023.

[Top up grant 2023 – Collection of pensions accounting data](#): FRAs to start preparing their pensions income/expenditure data in order to submit their returns by the Home Office deadline.

[Spring budget 2023](#): FRAs and administrators to share this information with the relevant parties within their organisation.

[DWP announces delays to dashboard connection deadlines](#): FRAs and administrators to make sure that relevant parties within their organisation are aware of the announcement and TPR's actions.

FPS

[Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes \(Remediable Service\) Regulations 2023](#)

On 28 February 2023, the Home Office published [a consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes \(Remediable Service\) Regulations 2023](#). These regulations concentrate on the retrospective elements of the 2015 Remedy that are required to fully deliver the remedy. This includes establishing the deferred choice underpin (DCU) and the changes needed to offer pensioners and beneficiaries of deceased scheme members an immediate choice between legacy or reformed scheme benefits.

The LGA will respond to the consultation and share our response before the consultation closes on 23 May 2023.

ACTION: All interested parties are encouraged to respond to the consultation by 23 May 2023.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Top up grant 2023 – Collection of pensions accounting data

On 2 March 2023, the Home Office sent an email to Claim Certifiers and Administrators to advise that FRAs should now be working towards submitting audited 2021/22 and unaudited 2022/23 pensions income/expenditure data as part of this year's top up grant claim. This year's pension accounting data will need to be submitted on the DELTA online data collection system. Notification will be sent via DELTA when the forms go live in the first week of April.

The Home Office has indicated that it will undertake additional internal checks on any financial data submitted. The additional internal checks involve an in-depth and formal check on the audited and unaudited pension income/expenditure data submitted by FRAs.

As part of this additional check, it will be requesting that all FRAs provide the following information:

- Electronic copies of the trial balances from their audited accounts where the pensions income/expenditure data was extracted; and
- Any post balance sheet adjustment events (showing audit adjustments).

The deadline for completing the returns will be mid-May. This should allow sufficient time for the claims to be scrutinised and approved.

It is important to note that the Department will only be able to make Top Up grant payments on any claims that it can validate as being correct and, as such, failure to provide the requested information, or the submission of incomplete information, will delay any grant payments due in July. It is therefore critical that the accounting data submitted on each FRA's claim form reconciles with trial balances that are submitted as supporting evidence.

The Home Office will be writing to FRAs to formally commission this data in April. However, it is essential that FRAs start making preparations now in order to be able to extract the correct data from their accounts and collate the supporting evidence for their claims.

ACTION: FRAs to start preparing their pensions income/expenditure data in order to submit their returns by the Home Office deadline.

FPS annual update 2023

We confirmed in [FPS Bulletin 66 – February 2023](#) that FPS contribution rates remained unchanged for 2023-24.

All relevant thresholds and rate changes for 2023 are available in the [FPS annual update 2023](#).

All relevant legislation can be viewed on our website under annual update Statutory Instruments.

Website downtime

Please be aware that both the FPS Regulations and Guidance and the FPS Board websites will be unavailable on the morning of 19 April 2023 for an upgrade. As the existing page design template is no longer available in the new version of the website's content management system, users will notice that both sites have a new look following the upgrade.

Downtime will commence at five o'clock in the morning and it is anticipated that this will last for a few hours.

Technical query log

The [current log of queries and responses](#) can be accessed by practitioners in the member-restricted area of the FPS Regulations and Guidance website. The queries have been anonymised and divided into topics. The log is updated monthly in line with the bulletin release dates.

Queries have been answered this month in the following categories: survivor benefits, page 130 and two-pensions, page 141.

FPS England SAB updates

SAB meeting 23 March 2023

The Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) last met on 23 March 2023 and the meeting covered following areas:

- GAD update on the Matthews remedy
- Home Office retrospective remedy consultation
- First Actuarial Spring budget update for the SAB
- GAD update on the 2020 valuation

You can use the links below to find out about the latest updates on the work of the SAB and its committees:

- [SAB membership](#)
- [SAB meeting and agenda papers](#)
- [Committee meetings and agenda papers](#)

Other News and Updates

Farewell from Claire Hey

As readers may know, I am leaving the LGA on 23 April 2023 to take up a role with Heywood Pension Technologies.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with so many committed stakeholders across the Fire sector during my six years with the LGA, and I feel humbled by the support and friendship extended to me during that time.

Following an extremely competitive recruitment process, I am delighted to announce that Claire Johnson has been appointed to the senior adviser role on a permanent basis. And that, as Claire is currently on maternity leave, Elena Johnson has been promoted on a temporary basis to lead the team.

This month I was also delighted to welcome Tara Atkins to the team to lead on

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

communications – as reported in [FPS Bulletin 66](#).

I wish the team all the best for the future and know that they will provide exceptional support and guidance to the sector as we progress through the various challenges ahead.

Judgment on cost cap mechanism

In [FPS bulletin 59 – July 2022](#) we confirmed that public sector unions had been granted a judicial review in relation to the McCloud/ Sargeant remedy costs in the cost control mechanism. The review took place from 31 January 2023 to 3 February 2023.

On 10 March 2023, [the High Court ruled](#) that HM Treasury’s decision to include the McCloud/ Sargeant remedy in the cost cap mechanism was not unlawful. The judge ruled in favour of HM Treasury on all grounds. The judge also refused permission to appeal, but the FBU and other parties are able to apply for permission to appeal directly to the Court of Appeal.

DWP supports expansion of auto enrolment

On 3 March 2023, [the Department for Work and Pensions \(DWP\) confirmed](#) it will support the private members bill expanding Auto Enrolment. [The Pensions \(Extension of Automatic Enrolment\) \(No.2\) Bill 2023](#) proposes to give the government powers to make regulations which:

- abolish the Lower Earnings Limit for contributions – currently £6,250, and
- reduce the age of auto enrolment for eligible jobholders – down from 22 to 18.

The government has not given a timetable for when the changes may take effect.

DWP announces delays to dashboard connection deadlines

On 2 March 2023, the government confirmed its intention to legislate to amend schemes’ connection deadlines. This follows a [written ministerial statement](#) issued by DWP announcing the delays. Delays are necessary to give the Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) the time it needs to meet the challenges in developing the digital architecture. DWP will provide an update on dashboards to Parliament before Summer 2023 recess.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

It is not clear if connection deadlines for public service pension schemes will change.

Following the announcement, The Pensions Regulator (TPR):

- will write to those schemes affected by the announcement to confirm when new deadlines are set – [example communication](#)
- has [published updated guidance and checklist](#), to help schemes focus on what they should be doing now to prepare for their dashboard duties
- will produce a ‘content toolkit’ with key messages for administering authorities to copy / paste / edit / include as appropriate in their communications
- held a free webinar on 30 March 2023 about ‘getting to grips with your data’

ACTION: FRAs and administrators to make sure that relevant parties within their organisation are aware of the announcement and TPR’s actions

Spring budget 2023

On 15 March 2023, the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered his [Spring Budget 2023](#). See [HMRC’s newsletter 148](#) and [Policy paper](#) for more information.

The [Finance \(No.2\) Bill 2022/23](#) was published on 23 March 2023. With effect from 6 April 2023, the Bill proposes to enact some of the changes announced at the Spring budget. This includes:

- increasing the annual allowance from £40,000 to £60,000
- increasing the money purchase annual allowance from £4,000 to £10,000
- increasing the adjusted income level for the tapered annual allowance from £240,000 to £260,000
- increasing the minimum tapered annual allowance from £4,000 to £10,000
- abolishing lifetime allowance (LTA) charges arising in relation to benefit crystallisation events occurring on or after 6 April 2023

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

- allowing members to accrue new pension benefits, join new arrangements or transfer, without losing enhanced protection or fixed protection where the protection was applied for before 15 March 2023
- changing the taxation of the LTA excess lump sum, so that it is taxed as pension income (taxable at marginal rate rather than 55 per cent)
- notwithstanding the LTA charge being abolished, ensuring that payments of (or any part of) serious ill-health lump sums, defined benefit lump sum death benefits or an uncrystallised funds lump sum death benefits that would have incurred an LTA charge remain taxable payments, with the excess taxed as pension income (taxable at marginal rate rather than 55 per cent).

Legislation will be introduced in a future Finance Bill to remove the lifetime allowance from pensions tax legislation.

The SAB's actuarial adviser, [First Actuarial has produced a bulletin](#) which also covers these changes.

ACTION: FRAs and administrators to share the above with the relevant parties within your organisation.

PDP issues March newsletter

In March 2023, PDP [published their March newsletter](#). The newsletter contains articles on:

- DWPs written ministerial statement on pensions dashboards connection times
- FAQs on connection deadlines and revised timeline
- pensions dashboards myth busting videos
- signing up for a new FAQ newsletter
- new PDP website homepage.

GAD publishes blog on pensions dashboards data matching

GAD has published [a blog on the role of data matching](#) for pensions dashboards success. The blog looks at the questions administrators need to ask when deciding what data to use. It also emphasises the need for regular data quality reporting and cleansing. In the blog, GAD Pensions Consultant Taylor Brightwell-Smith noted the particular challenge public service pension schemes face with their data and said:

“Public service pension schemes have an added challenge that many other defined benefit schemes do not. They remain open to new members. This means that the data position will never be static. It will continue to ebb and flow. This poses a challenge to schemes when considering their future interactions with pensions dashboards. They will need to take stock of their data when considering the logic of their matching criteria. No one-size fits all.”

The blog continued:

“That’s the reasoning behind matching criteria not being prescribed in legislation. Schemes need to understand their own data challenges and cleanse as far as possible. This will lay the foundation for robust matching criteria to return results to dashboards quickly and accurately.”

Taylor Brightwell-Smith is due to be a panel member during the [Fire and Police Data Conference](#) on 17 May 2023.

Police remedy consultation launched

On 28 February 2023, [the Home Office published a consultation](#) to enact the second phase of the McCloud remedy for the Police Pension Scheme.

The consultation closes on 23 May 2023.

The Pension Regulator publishes blog

On 21 March 2023, Charles Counsell, the Chief Executive of TPR published [a blog](#) which covers delivering the best possible outcome for savers and the steps TPR is taking to become a data-led, digitally enabled organisation.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

SCAPE Discount Rate methodology consultation response

In [FPS Bulletin 46 – June 2021](#), we indicated that a public [consultation on the discount rate \(the “SCAPE rate”\) methodology](#) had been launched. The Superannuation Contributions Adjusted for Past Experience (SCAPE) discount rate is a discount rate used in the valuation of unfunded public service pension schemes to set employer contribution rates.

The consultation sought views on the appropriate methodology for setting the discount rate used in scheme valuations. The consultation closed on 19 August 2021.

On 30 March 2023, the UK Government [announced](#) the publication of its [response to the June 2021 consultation](#) on the methodology used to set the SCAPE discount rate and has concluded that the existing methodology best meets the balance of the Government’s objectives for the SCAPE discount rate, and therefore does not intend to modify the methodology.

The SCAPE discount rate to be used as part of the ongoing 2020 valuations will therefore be based on the expected long-term Gross Domestic Product growth figures, published by the Office for Budget Responsibility in July 2022. Based on these figures, the new SCAPE discount rate is CPI+1.7% p.a.

Administrators will recognise that usually where the SCAPE rate changes, CETV calculations are suspended until the factors can be amended in line with the new SCAPE rate. We understand that HMT will shortly suspend the [technical note](#) used for the SCAPE rate in calculating CETVs and we will notify you when this happens

HMRC

Pension schemes newsletter 148

On 16 March 2023, HMRC published [pension schemes newsletter 148](#). It contains articles on the Spring Budget 2023, net pay arrangements for low earners, accounting for tax returns and event reporting.

The newsletter also confirms where unfunded public service pension schemes

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

operate final salary and CARE scheme as different arrangements, they will be treated as one arrangement when calculating the annual allowance.

Events

FPS coffee mornings

Our MS Teams coffee mornings are continuing every second Tuesday. The informal sessions lasting up to an hour allow practitioners to catch up with colleagues and hear a brief update on FPS issues from the LGA Bluelight team.

We are pleased to include the presentations from recent sessions below:

[14 March 2023 – Pensions dashboard preparations](#) (TPR)

[21 March 2023- Home Office retrospective remedy consultation](#)

If you do not already receive the meeting invitations and would like to join us, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk. Please note that attendance at the coffee mornings is generally restricted to FPS practitioners and managers.

Fire and Police pensions data conference - 17 May 2023

We are pleased to invite readers to a data conference being held at 18 Smith Square, London on Wednesday 17 May 2023, from 10.00 to 15:30. This conference is being held jointly with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

With McCloud remedy and pensions dashboards fast approaching, the conference will explore the following themes:

- successful project implementation
- member engagement
- costing the schemes
- owning the narrative

We have put together an agenda of industry speakers to reflect on why data is so

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

important for the Firefighters and Police Pension Schemes and how technology can help us to get it right.

The event is aimed at Fire and Rescue Authorities and Police Authorities including scheme managers and Local Pension Board representatives, pension practitioners and administrators, along with software providers and industry professionals.

[Book your place now!](#)

Training and events - 2022/23 facts and figures

Between April 2022 and March 2023, we have delivered 20 local or regional training sessions for Local Pension Boards (LPBs) and scheme managers as follows:

Local Pension Board Training: Avon, Bedfordshire, Cheshire, Cumbria, Devon and Somerset, Durham and Darlington, East Sussex, Gloucestershire, Greater Manchester, Hampshire and IOW, Hertfordshire, Kent, Mid and West Wales, Northern Ireland, South Yorkshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands.

Scheme manager training: London Fire Commissioner, West Midlands, and West Sussex.

We have provided administrator updates to Hampshire County Council, WYPF, and XPS, as well as Scheme Advisory Board training for the SABs in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Four meetings of the English SAB have taken place with eight additional SAB collaboration sessions on remedy with NPCC and the Home Office. We have attended 15 regional Fire Pension Officer Group meetings and have facilitated three communications group and three technical group meetings.

We were also pleased to hold our first in-person two-day AGM since the pandemic. Information about our events can be found on our [Events page](#).

Finally, we have been regular virtual visitors to the devolved SAB meetings to provide an overview of issues arising in England and continue to represent FPS interests at sector specific forums including HMT led meetings.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Legislation

SI	Reference title
SI 2023/338	<u>The Pensions Increase (Review) Order 2023</u>
SI 2023/279	<u>The LGPS (Amendment) Regulations 2023</u>
SI 2023/270	<u>The Guaranteed Minimum Pensions Increase Order 2023</u>
SI 2023/252	<u>The Public Service Pensions Revaluation Order 2023</u>

Useful links

- [The Firefighters' Pensions \(England\) Scheme Advisory Board](#)
- [FPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [FPS Member](#)
- [Khub Firefighters Pensions Discussion Forum](#)
- [FPS1992 guidance and commentary](#)
- [The Pensions Regulator Public Service Schemes](#)
- [The Pensions Ombudsman](#)
- [HMRC Pensions Tax Manual](#)
- [LGA pensions website](#)
- [LGPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [LGPC Bulletins](#)
- [LGPS member site](#)
- [Scottish Public Pensions Agency - Firefighters](#)
- [Welsh Government Fire circulars](#)

Contact details

Claire Hey (Senior Pensions Adviser)

Telephone: 07825 731 924

Email: claire.hey@local.gov.uk

Claire Johnson (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Employers)

Telephone: 07920 861 552

Email: claire.johnson@local.gov.uk

Elena Johnson (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Governance)

Telephone: 07770 763 031

Email: elena.johnson@local.gov.uk

Tara Atkins (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Communications)

Email: tara.atkins@local.gov.uk

Copyright

Copyright remains with Local Government Association (LGA). This bulletin may be reproduced without the prior permission of LGA provided it is not used for commercial gain, the source is acknowledged and, if regulations are reproduced, the Crown Copyright Policy Guidance issued by HMSO is adhered to.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this bulletin has been prepared by the Bluelight Pensions team, part of the Local Government Association (LGA). It represents the views of the team and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. Readers may wish, or will need, to take their own legal advice on the interpretation of legislation. No responsibility whatsoever will be assumed by

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

the LGA for any direct or consequential loss, financial or otherwise, damage or inconvenience, or any other obligation or liability incurred by readers relying on information contained in this bulletin.

While every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy of the bulletin, it would be helpful if readers could bring any perceived errors or omissions to the attention of the Bluelight team by emailing bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

FPS Bulletin 68 – April 2023

Welcome to issue 68 of the Firefighters' Pensions Schemes bulletin.

If you are looking for information on a certain topic, issue and content indexes are held on the [main bulletin page](#) of the website and are updated following each new issue.

If you have any comments on this bulletin, suggested items for future issues, or a job you would like to advertise, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Contents

Calendar of events	2
Actions arising	3
FPS	4
Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023.....	4
Consultation on the retained Firefighters' Pensions: Proposed changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) 2006	4
Fire England – Commutation on retirement factors and guidance update	5
Secondary Contracts – Injury and death benefits	5
Matthews Poster	5
Annual Benefit Statements 2023	6
FPS 1992 Commentary	6
Ill Health process guide	6
LTA Factsheet	6
Annual Allowance – impact of backdated pay award.....	7
Generic text for estimate/retirement letters.....	7
Industrial Action template letter.....	8
Request for contact details	8
HMRC retained firefighter bulletin.....	8
Technical query log.....	8

FPS England SAB updates	9
SAB representation at Matthews Technical Working Group	9
SAB website	9
Other News and Updates	9
SCAPE Discount Rate Methodology Consultation Response.....	9
The Pension Regulator (TPR) dashboard webinar	10
The Pensions Regulator Corporate plan 2023/24.....	10
Voluntary NI contributions deadline extended	10
McCloud remedy consultation – Welsh firefighters’	11
HMRC	11
Lifetime allowance guidance newsletter – March 2023.....	11
HMRC issues newsletter 149	11
Events	11
FPS coffee mornings	11
Fire and Police pensions data conference – 17 May 2023	12
Useful links	12
Contact details	13
Copyright	13
Disclaimer	13

Calendar of events

Please see below a calendar of upcoming events relevant to the Firefighters’ Pension Schemes. Only those events which are hyperlinked are currently available to book. If you have any events you would like to be included in a future bulletin, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Table 1: Calendar of events

Event	Date
Police and Fire Data Conference	17 May 2023
FPS coffee morning	6 June 2023
SAB	8 June 2023

FPS Technical Working Group	20 June 2023
FPS Communications Working Group	19 July 2023
SAB	14 September 2023
Fire Pensions Annual Conference	19 and 20 September 2023
SAB	14 December 2023

Actions arising

[Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Scheme \(Remediable Service\) Regulations 2023](#): All interested parties are encouraged to respond to the consultation by the deadline of 23 May 2023.

[Consultation on Retained Firefighters' Pensions: Proposed changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme \(England\) 2006](#): All interested parties are encouraged to respond to the consultation by the deadline of 9 June 2023.

[SCAPE Discount Rate Methodology Consultation Response](#): The CETV technical note was suspended on 30 March 2023. All CETV's, Pensioner cash equivalents and non-club transfers-in should be suspended until the revised technical note is published.

[Fire England – Commutation on retirement factors and guidance updated](#): The new factors are effective from 3 April 2023. Please ensure that you are using the revised factors for any retirements after this date.

[Secondary Contracts](#) – FRAs may wish to review their contracts to ensure that a secondary contract has been awarded correctly.

[A Matthews poster](#) has been published under the [Second options exercise – Resources](#) on the Special members of FPS 2006 page: FRA's will need to personalise the poster and publicise the second options exercise at their fire authority and fire stations.

[Bluelight Inbox Technical Queries](#) - As covered in [Bulletin 58 – June 2022](#), please can we remind you to complete the [query form](#) for all technical queries that are sent to the Bluelight inbox.

[Generic text for estimate/retirement letters](#): FRAs to consider including within their estimates and/or retirement letters to members.

[Request for contact details](#): FRAs and administrators are reminded to include a request to members to keep them updated of any change of contact details in correspondence which is issued to them.

[Annual Allowance – Impact of the backdated pay award](#): FRA's and administrators to consider the factsheet when determining their calculations for Annual Allowance where a backdated pay award has occurred.

FPS

Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023

As a reminder in [FPS Bulletin 67 – March 2023](#) we informed you that the above consultation had been launched.

The LGA will respond to the consultation and share our response before the consultation closes on 23 May 2023.

ACTION: All interested parties are encouraged to respond to the consultation by 23 May 2023.

Consultation on the retained Firefighters' Pensions: Proposed changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) 2006

On 31 March 2023, the Home Office published [a consultation on the proposed changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme \(England\) 2006 in relation to retained Firefighters'](#). These regulations concentrate on providing further remedy to those individuals who were employed as retained firefighters between 7 April 2000 and 5 April 2006 inclusive providing access to the modified section of the Firefighters'

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Pension Scheme 2006 (referred to as ‘the modified scheme’).

The LGA will respond to the consultation and share our response before the consultation closes on 9 June 2023.

ACTION: All interested parties are encouraged to respond to the consultation by 9 June 2023.

Fire England – Commutation on retirement factors and guidance update

On 3 April 2023, following the announcement of the revised SCAPE rate, the Government Actuary’s Department (GAD) published [revised commutation on retirement from FPS 1992 factors and guidance](#).

The factors are effective from 3 April 2023.

ACTION: Please ensure that you are using the correct factors for any retirements following 3 April 2023 (inclusive).

Secondary Contracts – Injury and death benefits

We have received several enquiries with regards to secondary contracts and eligibility under the Firefighters’ Compensation Scheme.

The position has not changed since the introduction of the compensation scheme in 2006 and was communicated to FRAs when we were considering implications of [COVID-19 resilience cover](#).

In order to determine the pensionable consequences of the secondary contracts, with particular reference to the compensation scheme, FRAs should consider the [Secondary Contract – Injury and Death benefits factsheet](#).

ACTION: FRAs may wish to review their contracts to ensure that a secondary contract has been awarded correctly.

Matthews Poster

At the Matthews Technical Working Group and [Firefighters Communications Working Group](#) we discussed the request for a poster to assist FRAs with engaging

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

with retained/on call firefighters ahead of the Matthews second options exercise.

The poster has been published under the [Second options exercise – Resources](#) on the special members of FPS 2006 page.

ACTION: FRAs will need to personalise the poster and publicise the Matthews second options exercise at their fire authority and fire stations.

Annual Benefit Statements 2023

As annual benefit statements (ABS) in 2023 will be based on current scheme regulations up to 31 March 2023, it is recommended that the same approach is adopted as in 2022. [FPS Bulletin 57 – May 2022](#) provides more information.

The standard ABS template, annexes, notes and factsheet have been updated with the new scheme year and published on the [FPS Regulations and Guidance website](#).

FPS 1992 Commentary

Eunice Heaney has very kindly provided updated FPS 1992 Commentary content and a new page [FPS 1992 Commentary](#) has been added to the restricted Member Area on the Firefighters Regulations and Guidance website.

Ill Health process guide

An [ill health process guide](#) has been published to help FRAs navigate the ill health process, and understand their role, as employer and the content of the ill health certificates.

The process guide has been published under resources on the [ill health and injury](#) pages on the restricted Member Area of the Firefighters Regulations and Guidance website.

LTA Factsheet

The [LTA factsheet for members](#) has been updated to reflect the spring budget announcements, as covered in [FPS Bulletin 67 – March 2023](#). The factsheet can be found in the [Guides and sample documents section](#) of the Firefighters Regulations and Guidance website.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Annual Allowance – impact of backdated pay award

A [factsheet](#) has been produced to assist FRAs and administrators regarding the impact of the back dated pay award on the Annual Allowance calculations.

ACTION: FRAs and administrators to consider the factsheet when determining their calculations for Annual Allowance where a backdated pay award has occurred.

Generic text for estimate/retirement letters

The Fire Communications Working Group has agreed template wording below for FRAs to include within their estimate/retirement letters to cover re-employment:

If you have membership in the 1992 Firefighters' Pension Scheme and you are retiring under the age of 55 and not on Ill Health, you will have a Protected Pension Age (PPA) which enables you to draw your benefits before age 55.

For employees who have a PPA and are re-employed with a Fire and Rescue Service or a Sponsoring Employer¹ in any role in any capacity, between the ages of 50 and 54 inclusive, they may be subject to additional tax charges, unless certain conditions are applied.

This will also apply if an employee remains in employment as a retained/on call firefighter beyond retirement from a wholetime role.

To satisfy the conditions to retain your PPA and to avoid the additional tax charges, you must leave all employments with the Fire and Rescue Service or Sponsoring Employer on the same date and have at least one calendar month break before you are re-employed; your pension must also be subject to abatement.

[Further information relating to XXX's retirement policy is available from your employer.]

Failure to notify the Pensions Team of any re-employment may result in your pension being overpaid and you will be required to repay any overpaid pension.

¹ Local Authority when an FRA is part of the Local Authority

ACTION: FRAs to consider including within their estimate and/or retirement letters.

Industrial Action template letter

A template letter has been produced to cover pension contribution repayment requests from members should there be any instances of industrial action in future years. The template letter has been published in the [Guides and sample documents section](#) of the Firefighters regulations and guidance website.

Request for contact details

FRAs are requested to remind members, in correspondence, which is sent out, to keep their administrators updated of any change in address or contact details.

ACTION: FRAs to include a request in correspondence to all members.

HMRC retained firefighter bulletin

We are aware that HMRC have recently sent out emails to Fire Authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland asking for further information in relation to National Insurance refunds for retrospective entry into the pension scheme. Each Fire Authority scheme has received information bespoke to them. HMRC have provided further clarity around the information they have requested which can be located in the [first options exercise resource area](#) of the Regulations and Guidance website.

Technical query log

The [current log of queries and responses](#) can be accessed by practitioners in the member-restricted area of the FPS Regulations and Guidance website. The queries have been anonymised and divided into topics. The log is updated monthly in line with the bulletin release dates.

There have been no queries added this month.

As covered in [Bulletin 58 – June 2022](#), please can we remind you to complete the [query form](#) for all technical queries that are sent to the Bluelight inbox.

ACTION: FRAs and administrators are requested to use the [Bluelight inbox](#) for email correspondence with the Bluelight team. FRAs and administrators to complete query

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

form when submitting a technical query.

FPS England SAB updates

SAB representation at Matthews Technical Working Group

In [FPS Bulletin 61-September 2022](#), we advised that a Matthews Technical Working Group had been set up to assist with the technical aspects of the implementation of the Matthews second options exercise. This group has met on a regular basis from that point with representation from the Home Office, the Government Actuary's Department, fire authorities and administrators. From April 2023, representation will include SAB members.

SAB website

You can use the links below to find out about the latest updates on the work of the SAB and its committees on the [SAB website](#):

- [SAB membership](#)
- [SAB meeting and agenda papers](#)
- [Committee meetings and agenda papers](#)

Other News and Updates

SCAPE Discount Rate Methodology Consultation Response

In [Bulletin 67- March 2023](#) we informed you that the SCAPE discount rate had changed.

Administrators will recognise that when the SCAPE rate changes, CETV calculations are suspended until the factors can be amended in line with the new SCAPE rate.

On 11 April 2023 we confirmed that the CETV technical note had been suspended.

ACTION: All CETV's, Pensioner cash equivalents and non-club transfers-in should be suspended until the revised technical note is published.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

The Pension Regulator (TPR) dashboard webinar

TPR held a webinar on dashboards on 30 March 2023. The webinar covered data preparation duties and the steps schemes need to take to ensure their data is accurate, complete, up-to-date and digitally accessible. You can watch a [recording of the webinar](#) on their website.

The Pensions Regulator Corporate plan 2023/24

On 21 April 2023, TPR published [its Corporate Plan for 2023/24](#).

The plan outlines TPR's key priorities for the year. These include:

- working with the Financial Conduct Authority and DWP to develop a value for money framework
- launching the new defined benefit funding code
- laying foundations for a significant increase in addressing quality outcomes in defined contribution schemes
- increasing its attention on tackling scammers
- supporting schemes to prepare for dashboards.

The document also includes TPR's plans beyond March 2024.

See the [press release for more information](#).

Voluntary NI contributions deadline extended

In [a written ministerial statement](#) published on 7 March 2023, the Government announced that it was extending the deadline to pay voluntary National Insurance (NI) contributions from 5 April 2023 to 31 July 2023. This applies for tax years 2006/07 to 2016/17. This came after HMRC and DWP had experienced a recent surge in customer contact.

Paying voluntary NI contributions enables individuals to fill gaps in their NI record to boost their State Pension.

For more information, see [the policy paper](#) the Government published on 24 March 2023.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

McCloud remedy consultation – Welsh firefighters’

The Welsh Government has published [a consultation setting out the proposed McCloud remedy](#) for the Welsh Firefighters Pension Scheme, The consultation closes on 23 June 2023.

HMRC

Lifetime allowance guidance newsletter – March 2023

On 27 March 2023, HMRC published [Lifetime allowance guidance newsletter – March 2023](#). It contained articles on:

- pension commencement lump sum and lifetime allowance protections
- taxable lump sums and employer PAYE payroll reporting
- the public service pensions remedy
- the lifetime allowance working group

HMRC issues newsletter 149

On 26 April 2023, HMRC published [newsletter 149](#). The newsletter contains articles on:

- the annual allowance calculator – currently members cannot use it for tax year 2023/24
- Pension Scheme Returns
- reminding schemes to use the Managing Pension Schemes service to submit any new Accounting for Tax returns for any quarter beginning on or after 1 April 2020
- an update on submitting Event Reports.

Events

FPS coffee mornings

Our MS Teams coffee mornings are continuing regularly with the next session being held in June 2023. The informal sessions lasting up to an hour allow practitioners to catch up with colleagues and hear a brief update on FPS issues from the LGA

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Bluelight team.

We are pleased to include the presentations from recent sessions below:

[11 April 2023 – Home Office Matthews consultation](#)

If you do not already receive the meeting invitations and would like to join us, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk. Please note that attendance at the coffee mornings is generally restricted to FPS practitioners and managers.

Fire and Police pensions data conference – 17 May 2023

As detailed in [FPS Bulletin 67 – March 2023](#) we are holding a data conference jointly with the National Police Chiefs Council (NFCC).

The event is now fully booked; however you can email events@local.gov.uk to put your name on the waiting list, or to request dial in details.

Useful links

- [The Firefighters' Pensions \(England\) Scheme Advisory Board](#)
- [FPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [FPS Member](#)
- [Khub Firefighters Pensions Discussion Forum](#)
- [FPS1992 guidance and commentary](#)
- [The Pensions Regulator Public Service Schemes](#)
- [The Pensions Ombudsman](#)
- [HMRC Pensions Tax Manual](#)
- [LGA pensions website](#)
- [LGPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [LGPC Bulletins](#)
- [LGPS member site](#)
- [Scottish Public Pensions Agency - Firefighters](#)
- [Welsh Government Fire circulars](#)

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Contact details

Elena Johnson (Acting Senior Pensions Adviser)

Telephone: 07770 763 031

Email: elena.johnson@local.gov.uk

Claire Johnson (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Employers)

Telephone: 07920 861 552

Email: claire.johnson@local.gov.uk

Tara Atkins (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Communications)

Email: Tara.atkins@local.gov.uk

Copyright

Copyright remains with Local Government Association (LGA). This bulletin may be reproduced without the prior permission of LGA provided it is not used for commercial gain, the source is acknowledged and, if regulations are reproduced, the Crown Copyright Policy Guidance issued by HMSO is adhered to.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this bulletin has been prepared by the Bluelight Pensions team, part of the Local Government Association (LGA). It represents the views of the team and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. Readers may wish, or will need, to take their own legal advice on the interpretation of legislation. No responsibility whatsoever will be assumed by the LGA for any direct or consequential loss, financial or otherwise, damage or inconvenience, or any other obligation or liability incurred by readers relying on information contained in this bulletin.

While every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy of the bulletin, it would be

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

helpful if readers could bring any perceived errors or omissions to the attention of the Bluelight team by emailing bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

FPS Bulletin 69 – May 2023

Welcome to issue 69 of the Firefighters' Pensions Schemes bulletin.

If you are looking for information on a certain topic, issue and content indexes are held on the [main bulletin page](#) of the website and are updated following each new issue.

If you have any comments on this bulletin, suggested items for future issues, or a job you would like to advertise, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Contents

Calendar of events	2
Actions arising	3
FPS	5
Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023.....	5
The Pension Regulator (TPR) data requirements – 2023 scheme return	5
Ill health re-assessment IQMP template referral letters available	5
Government Actuaries Department (GAD) – updated factors.....	6
Age Discrimination remedy - Data Sharing.....	7
Technical query log.....	7
FPS England SAB updates	8
SAB response to the Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023	8
SAB Guidance Note on Pensionable Pay Remedies.....	8
SAB collaboration session on Matthews remedy.....	9
SAB website	9
Other News and Updates	9
The Scottish Firefighters' Pension Schemes' Consultation on implementing the 2015 Remedy	9
The Police Pension Schemes' Consultation response to Retrospective remedy.	9

Public Service Pensions – cost control mechanism and reformed scheme only design	10
Automatic enrolment - call for evidence	10
Consent and authorisation wording for dashboards.....	10
Pensions Dashboards Latest news.....	11
Pensions Dashboards (Prohibition of Indemnification) Act 2023	11
‘Where to go for help with your pension complaint’ factsheet	12
Capita cyber security incident	12
Club transfers – extending the 12-month time limit.....	12
NHS Pension Scheme consultation: changes to contribution thresholds.....	13
HMRC	13
The Public Service Pension Schemes (Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination) (Tax) (No. 2) Regulations 2023.....	13
Proposed Public Service Pension Schemes – Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination – Tax Administration Regulations Summary	14
Remedy newsletter – May 2023	14
Events	14
Fire and Police Data Conference.....	14
FPS coffee mornings	18
Legislation	19
Useful links	19
Contact details	20
Copyright	20
Disclaimer	21

Calendar of events

Please see below a calendar of upcoming events relevant to the Firefighters’ Pension Schemes. Only those events which are hyperlinked are currently available to book. If you have any events you would like to be included in a future bulletin, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.

Table 1: Calendar of events

Event	Date
FPS coffee morning	6 June 2023
SAB	8 June 2023
Northeast Fire Officers' Group	14 June 2023
FPS Technical Working Group	20 June 2023
Midlands Fire Officers' Group	22 June 2023
Eastern Fire Officers' Group	28 June 2023
FPS Communications Working Group	19 July 2023
SAB	14 September 2023
SAB	14 December 2023

Actions arising

[Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes \(Remediable Service\)](#)

[Regulations 2023](#): FRAs and administrators should familiarise themselves with the response, ahead of the Home Office's response to the consultation.

[The Pension Regulator data requirements – 2023 scheme return](#): FRAs and administrators to review the data scoring guidance for 2023 ahead of the scheme return.

[Ill health re-assessment IQMP template referral letters available](#): FRAs should send these and the relevant accompanying documentation to the IQMP using the relevant IQMP template referral letter.

[Government Actuaries Department \(GAD\) - updated factors](#): FRAs and Administrators to ensure that they are using the correct factors.

[Data Conference Slides](#): FRAs to view the slides and consider data more strategically now and in the future.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

[Age Discrimination remedy – data sharing](#): Administrators to share pensionable data for members who are subject to age discrimination remedy and have had an inter-brigade transfer during the remedy period with the current FRA's administrator on request.

To review your privacy notice and add some additional wording, where relevant. Any amendments should be approved as per your internal processes.

[Automatic enrolment – Call for evidence](#): FRAs to be aware of this call for evidence.

[The Public Service Pension Schemes \(Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination\) \(Tax\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2023](#): Interested parties to review the consultation and establish whether you wish to respond to the consultation by 19 June 2023.

Also, consider whether you wish to be part of the round table sessions.

[SAB response to the Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes \(Remediable Service\) Regulations 2023](#): FRAs and administrators should familiarise themselves with the response, ahead of the Home Office's response to the consultation.

[SAB Guidance Note on Pensionable Pay Remedies](#): FRAs to refer to the pensionable pay note when dealing with cases where elements of pay need retrospectively adjusting.

[HMRC Remedy Newsletter](#): Administrators and FRAs to consider whether you wish to volunteer to assist HMRC.

FPS

Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023

In [FPS Bulletin 67 – March 2023](#) we informed you that the above consultation had been launched. The LGA has responded to the consultation and our response is available on the [Consultations section](#) of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes Regulations and Guidance website.

ACTION: FRAs and administrators to familiarise themselves with the response, for information ahead of the Home Office's response to the consultation.

The Pension Regulator (TPR) data requirements – 2023 scheme return

In [FPS Bulletin 25 – October 2019](#) the LGA provided fire authorities with informal data scoring guidance in order to complete The Pension Regulator's scheme return.

[The Data Scoring Guidance](#) has now been updated for the 2023 return to take account of age discrimination remedy and immediate detriment.

The guidance is available under Data Scoring on the [Guides and Sample documents](#) section the Firefighters' Pension Schemes Regulations and Guidance website.

ACTION: FRAs and administrators should ensure that they are aware of what is included when considering the data scores for the 2023 scheme return.

Ill health re-assessment IQMP template referral letters available

In [FPS Bulletin 63 – November 2022](#), we published an [ill-health reassessment factsheet](#) to help FRAs determine which individuals require a reassessment of their ill-health determination as a result of remedy implementation.

IQMP template referral letters for scenarios one and two, seven, and nine as referred to in the [ill-health reassessment factsheet](#) have now been added to the [Retrospective remedy webpage](#).

ACTION for FRAs: Once affected members of the pension scheme have returned the appropriate member consent letter, FRAs should send these and the relevant

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

accompanying documentation to the IQMP using the relevant IQMP template referral letter.

Government Actuaries Department (GAD) – updated factors

In [FPS Bulletin 68 – April 2023](#) we confirmed that the CETV technical note had been suspended, and therefore all CETVs, Pensioner cash equivalents and non-club transfers-in should be suspended.

On 25 May 2023, Home Office confirmed that the following factors had been updated:

- CETVs (x-201 to x-215),
- Pensioner cash equivalents (x-301 to x-312),
- Pension credits (x-313 to x-317),
- Pension debits (x-318 to x-328)

The following should be noted:

- The updated factors have removed Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) factors for all active members (where they had not already been removed) and for pensioner members aged under 69. GMP factors should no longer be needed for these members.
- The updated factors set all National Insurance Modification (NI Mod) factors to zero. For most members, NI Mod no longer has a material impact on benefits.

These factors should be implemented from 29 March 2023.

The updated factors should be used in conjunction with the relevant existing guidance notes in force for the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

The factors are published on the relevant [GAD guidance pages](#) of the Firefighters Pension Scheme regulations and guidance website.

ACTION: FRAs and administrators to ensure that they are using the revised factors from 29 March 2023.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Age Discrimination remedy - Data Sharing

As a reminder, in [FPS Bulletin 59 – July 2022](#), we covered that following a detailed discussion at the Fire Technical Working Group (FTWG) on Monday 25 July 2022 it was decided that, to remove any GDPR issues, the information should be shared with the current administrator instead of the current FRA. This is because the administrator has a legitimate reason for needing the data.

Administrators and FRAs may also want to consider adding some additional wording to their privacy notices to cover this.

Example text is as follows:

“From time to time, we will share your personal data with third parties, including our contractors, advisors, government bodies, and dispute resolution and law enforcement agencies. We do this in order to comply with our obligations under law, and to help us provide services and carry out our duties, rights and discretions in relation to the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme(s).

Occasionally, we may request/provide some of your data from/to a previous pension administrator for the purposes of enabling us to understand your pension rights from the scheme.”

ACTION: Administrators to share pensionable data for members who are subject to age discrimination remedy and have had an inter-brigade transfer during the remedy period with the current FRA’s administrator on request.

To review your privacy notice and add some additional wording, where relevant. Any amendments should be approved as per your internal processes.

Technical query log

The [current log of queries and responses](#) can be accessed by practitioners in the member-restricted area of the FPS Regulations and Guidance website. The queries have been anonymised and divided into topics. The log is updated monthly in line with the bulletin release dates.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Queries have been answered this month in the following categories:

- Ill Health retirement – Payable under the Scottish Compensation Regulations page 93
- Cross Border transfers page 144

FPS England SAB updates

SAB response to the Consultation on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023

In [FPS Bulletin 67 – March 2023](#) we informed you that the above consultation had been launched.

The Scheme Advisory Board has responded to the consultation and the response is available on the [Consultations section](#) of the Firefighters' Pensions SAB (England) website.

ACTION: FRAs and administrators to familiarise themselves with the response, for information ahead of the Home Office's response to the consultation.

SAB Guidance Note on Pensionable Pay Remedies

The legal adviser to the SAB, Weightmans, have written a [useful note on pensionable pay remedies](#). There are a number of [pensionable pay resources](#) available relating to the various landmark High Court decisions and Pension Ombudsman determinations about firefighters' pay, and what elements are pensionable under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. The note provides an implementation plan for remedying cases in which pay has not been treated as pensionable but should have been under the scheme rules. It also highlights some issues that remain unresolved.

ACTION: FRAs to refer to the pensionable pay note when dealing with cases where elements of pay need retrospectively adjusting.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

SAB collaboration session on Matthews remedy

In [FPS Bulletin 61 – September 2022](#), we confirmed that the SAB, the LGA, and the Home Office were working together in the form of collaboration sessions on Matthews to discuss Matthews legislation and policy, the interaction between Matthews and McCloud and the proposed timeline for implementation. The first session took place during September 2022 and an additional session took place on 25 May 2023. Additionally, the Matthews Technical Working Group has met regularly since that time and now has SAB representation within the group.

SAB website

You can use the links below to find out about the latest updates on the work of the SAB and its committees on the [SAB website](#):

- [SAB membership](#)
- [SAB meeting and agenda papers](#)
- [Committee meetings and agenda papers](#)

The next SAB meeting is on 8 June 2023.

Other News and Updates

The Scottish Firefighters' Pension Schemes' Consultation on implementing the 2015 Remedy

On 16 May 2023, the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) published [Firefighters' Pension Scheme Consultation on the implementing the 2015 remedy](#). These regulations concentrate on the retrospective elements of the 2015 Remedy that are required to fully deliver the remedy.

The consultation closes on 23 July 2023.

The Police Pension Schemes' Consultation response to Retrospective remedy

The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) has responded to the consultation and their response is available on the [age discrimination – useful information](#) page on the restricted member area of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes Regulations and

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Guidance website.

Public Service Pensions – cost control mechanism and reformed scheme only design

On 15 May 2023, HM Treasury (HMT) published a [written ministerial statement](#) and [further detail](#), on the cost control mechanism and reformed scheme only design.

The publications confirm only the reformed scheme design will be included in the cost control mechanism. Any cost increases associated with final salary benefits and the impact of the underpin, will be excluded.

Automatic enrolment - call for evidence

On 15 May 2023, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) [published a call for evidence](#) on the alternative quality requirement used by defined benefit schemes for automatic enrolment (AE). The call for evidence closes on 19 June 2023.

The existing requirements allow for simpler alternative tests to be used so the scheme can demonstrate it is of sufficient quality to be used by employers to fulfil their AE duty. The call for evidence aims to conclude whether the government's policy in this area continues to be achieved.

ACTION for FRAs: FRAs to be aware of this call for evidence.

Consent and authorisation wording for dashboards

The Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) commissioned Ipsos to undertake [research to help develop consents and authorisation wording](#) for dashboards.

A research group covering a range of ages, income levels and pension types was asked to provide feedback on draft versions of consent and authorisation wording that would appear on dashboards. The wording explained what the Money and Pensions Service would and would not do with users' data and asked for consent for these uses. The feedback was positive and will be used to further shape the wording.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Pensions Dashboards Latest news

In May 2023, PDP [published their Progress update report on dashboards](#). There are articles on:

- The Department for Work & Pensions (DWP's) written ministerial statement on pensions dashboards connection times confirming that there will be an update before Parliament's summer recess
- Programme reset following the written ministerial statement – reset got underway on 20 March and more information will be available before parliamentary recess starting in July
- Consent comprehension research - a research into users' understanding of how their data will be used during the dashboards journey
- Preparing for dashboards – connection, data, matching, awareness and understanding legal and regulatory obligations
- Updates from DWP, the Financial Conduct Authority and the Pensions Regulator
- Useful resources
- Subscribing to PDP's newsletter

Pensions Dashboards (Prohibition of Indemnification) Act 2023

On 2 May 2023, the [Pensions Dashboards \(Prohibition of Indemnification\) Act 2023](#) received Royal Assent.

The Act will prohibit trustees and managers of occupational and personal pension schemes from being reimbursed out of scheme assets for any penalties imposed on them under [the dashboard regulations](#).

The Act applies to the United Kingdom and comes into force on a date determined by the Department for Work and Pensions (or, in the case of Northern Ireland, the Department for Communities).

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

[‘Where to go for help with your pension complaint’ factsheet](#)

On 27 April 2023, The Pensions Ombudsman (TPO) published a factsheet titled [‘Where to go for help with your pension complaint’](#).

The factsheet assists members when deciding whether to refer their complaint to TPO or the Financial Ombudsman Service.

[Capita cyber security incident](#)

On 12 May 2023, [the Pensions Regulator \(TPR\) updated its website](#) with a page covering the Capita cyber security incident. This follows a security breach where it is now known that some data has been exfiltrated from Capita’s servers.

TPR encourages all administrators who use Capita’s services to check whether their pension scheme data could be affected.

[Club transfers – extending the 12-month time limit](#)

On 26 April 2023, the cabinet office clarified a club transfer may take place outside the 12-month time limit, in exceptional circumstances and providing both the sending and receiving schemes agree. Colin Hennem (Pensions Technical Manager) confirmed:

“[the Club Memorandum](#) requires a transfer to be calculated on Club terms if the member confirms in writing that they wish the transfer to proceed within 12 months of joining the new Club scheme. The Club Memorandum is silent on what should happen if that confirmation is sent outside the 12-month time limit. However, it has long been our policy that the two schemes involved may agree to a Club transfer outside the 12-month time limit (i.e. a belated Club transfer) if there are exceptional circumstances that prevented the member from sending the confirmation within the 12 month time limit - e.g. if there were delays in providing the necessary quotes that were outside the member's control. In the past, when the additional cost of the more generous Club transfer terms was met by the receiving scheme, our view was that it was only necessary for the receiving scheme to agree to a belated Club transfer. However, under the 'inner' Club arrangements, the additional cost of the more generous terms is spread more evenly between the two schemes. Therefore, I think

it is appropriate that a belated Club transfer can only proceed if both the sending and receiving schemes agree to this. The Cabinet Office (as Secretary to the Club) has no authority to compel the schemes in question to agree to a belated Club transfer.”

ACTION: Administrators to incorporate this into their club transfer process

NHS Pension Scheme consultation: changes to contribution thresholds

On 3 May 2023, the Department of Health and Social Care launched a consultation on uplifting the member contribution thresholds in the NHS Pension Scheme 2015 (England and Wales) for 2023/24. The consultation closed on 17 May 2023.

You can access the consultation documents on [the relevant page of gov.uk](#).

HMRC

The Public Service Pension Schemes (Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination) (Tax) (No. 2) Regulations 2023

On 23 May 2023, HMRC published a consultation on [The Public Service Pension Schemes \(Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination\) \(Tax\) \(No.2\) Regulations 2023](#) which set out changes to how pensions tax rules will apply as a result of the public service pensions remedy.

The draft regulations supplement [The Public Service Pension Schemes \(Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination\) \(Tax\) Regulations 2023](#) ('first set of regulations'), which came into force on 6 April 2023.

As part of the consultation, HMRC will be holding several round tables. This will provide an opportunity to raise any technical points on the draft regulations. If you would like to be involved, email policypensions@hmrc.gov.uk, putting 'Public service pensions remedy tax regulations round tables' in the subject line.

The LGA will respond to the consultation before the consultation closes on 19 June 2023.

ACTION: Interested parties to review the consultation and establish whether you

wish to respond to the consultation by 19 June 2023.

Also, consider whether you wish to be part of the round table sessions.

Proposed Public Service Pension Schemes – Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination – Tax Administration Regulations Summary

HMRC have published a summary paper which provides a short introduction to the consultation reference above.

This has been published on the [age discrimination – retrospective remedy](#) pages of the Firefighters’ Pension scheme regulations and guidance website.

Remedy newsletter – May 2023

On 23 May 2023, HMRC published [Remedy newsletter May 2023](#). The newsletter provides information on the following topics:

- Draft regulations: summarises the draft rectification regulations mentioned in the article above.
- HMRC processes: HMRC is currently developing processes it will need to support the McCloud remedy. As part of this, they will provide a single point of contact for each public service organisation.
- Guidance: HMRC is currently drafting McCloud remedy guidance, which they hope to publish in Autumn 2023. In advance of this, they would like to test some of the guidance with users to make sure it is covering what is needed. If you would like to volunteer, email publicservicepensionsremedy@hmrc.gov.uk and put ‘Guidance testing’ in the subject line.

ACTION: Consider whether you wish to volunteer to assist HMRC

Events

Fire and Police Data Conference

We were pleased to welcome 140 delegates (60 in person to Smith Square and 80 virtually) on 17 May 2023, to hear a host of industry experts take part in panel

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

sessions to reflect on why data is so important for the Firefighters' and Police Pension Schemes.



Our hosts for the day were Phil Wells, Assistant Chief Officer, Bedfordshire Police and Gavin Chambers, Assistant Chief Officer, Bedfordshire Fire.

The day was split into four interactive panel sessions and a workshop. The sessions were:

- Successful Project Implementation.
- Engaging members after dashboards.
- Cost of the Scheme.
- Owning the narrative to make strategic decisions.

The audience first heard from Clair Alcock, Head of Police Pensions, NPCC, who spoke about successful project implementation on the imminent McCloud exercise.



Jo Darbyshire, Managing Director, LPPA, then held our first panel of the day. Her panellists were Taylor Brightwell-Smith, Pensions Consultant, GAD, Leanne Ferreira, Project Specialist, XPS and Helen Scargill, Client Relationship Manager, West Yorkshire Pension Fund. The panel were asked questions to share their knowledge, experience, and concerns over the McCloud Data exercise.



Delegates both in person and virtually took part in a workshop to discuss: How FRAs were ensuring the quality of data to be provided to their administrators? How had their experience been so far, including any unexpected challenges and how had they overcome them? What their lessons learnt so far had been?

We then welcomed Andrew Lowe, Co-Chair of PASA Dashboard Committee, ITM, who gave a presentation on engaging members after dashboards, before joining our second panel, chaired by Chris Connelly, Chief Strategy Officer, Heywoods Pension

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Technologies, and the other panellists Graeme Hall, Operations Manager, XPS, and Paul Turpin, Pensions Advisor, Police Federation.



The afternoon session was opened by James Allen, First Actuarial and Robert Fornear, GAD, who gave an insightful overview of the valuation process, including calculations, assumptions, and outcomes. Not the easiest of sessions for them following lunch, but I think it would be fair to say that they kept us all engaged and provided a very useful session.



The final session of the day was delivered by John Simmonds, Principle, CEM Benchmarking. John provided a useful session on benchmarking before joining our final panel of the day, chaired by Jo Donnelly, Head of Pensions, LGA, and other panellists Jennifer Atthey, Senior Manager, Isio, Alison Murray, Partner, Aon and Jo Darbyshire, Managing Director LPPA. Jo was able to share LPPA's experience of using CEM Benchmarking's services, and what they use the outcomes for. Alison and Jennifer were able to share the barriers that they had both experienced when

collecting data to provide separately the Fire and Police Scheme Advisory Boards with a report on the Cost of the Scheme



View the presentation [slide decks from the data event held on 17 May 2023](#)

ACTION: For FRAs to view the slides and consider data more strategically now and in the future.

FPS coffee mornings

Our MS Teams coffee mornings are continuing on a regular basis. The informal sessions lasting up to an hour allow practitioners to catch up with colleagues and hear a brief update on FPS issues from the LGA Bluelight team. We are pleased to include the presentations from recent sessions below:

[23 May 2023 – Data Conference – Workshop Feedback](#)

If you do not already receive the meeting invitations and would like to join us, please email bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk. Please note that attendance at the coffee mornings is generally restricted to FPS practitioners and managers.

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Legislation

Acts

[Pensions Dashboards \(Prohibition of Indemnification\) Act 2023](#)

Useful links

- [The Firefighters' Pensions \(England\) Scheme Advisory Board](#)
- [FPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [FPS Member](#)
- [Khub Firefighters Pensions Discussion Forum](#)
- [FPS1992 guidance and commentary](#)
- [The Pensions Regulator Public Service Schemes](#)
- [The Pensions Ombudsman](#)
- [HMRC Pensions Tax Manual](#)
- [LGA pensions website](#)
- [LGPS Regulations and Guidance](#)
- [LGPS member site](#)
- [Scottish Public Pensions Agency - Firefighters](#)
- [Welsh Government Fire circulars](#)

[Click here to return to Contents](#)

Contact details

Elena Johnson (Senior Firefighters' Pensions Adviser (Interim))

Telephone: 07770 763 031

Email: elena.johnson@local.gov.uk

Claire Johnson (Senior Firefighters' Pensions Adviser)

Telephone: 07920 861 552

Email: claire.johnson@local.gov.uk

Tara Atkins (Firefighters' Pensions Adviser – Communications)

Telephone: 07825 731 924

Email: Tara.atkins@local.gov.uk

Copyright

Copyright remains with Local Government Association (LGA). This bulletin may be reproduced without the prior permission of LGA provided it is not used for commercial gain, the source is acknowledged and, if regulations are reproduced, the Crown Copyright Policy Guidance issued by HMSO is adhered to.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this bulletin has been prepared by the Bluelight Pensions team, part of the Local Government Association (LGA). It represents the views of the team and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. Readers may wish, or will need, to take their own legal advice on the interpretation of legislation. No responsibility whatsoever will be assumed by the LGA for any direct or consequential loss, financial or otherwise, damage or inconvenience, or any other obligation or liability incurred by readers relying on information contained in this bulletin.

While every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy of the bulletin, it would be helpful if readers could bring any perceived errors or omissions to the attention of the Bluelight team by emailing bluelightpensions@local.gov.uk.