

**HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY**

**PENSION BOARD**

**27 JANUARY 2020**

**PRESENT:**

Employer representatives: Councillor Shepherd (Chairperson) and P McCourt (Director of Public Safety)

Scheme Member representatives: Mr B Johnson

Councillors Briggs and Green attended as observers.

Kevin Wilson - Executive Director of Corporate Services/Section 151 Officer and Scheme Manager; Miriam Heppell - Director of People and Development, David Lofthouse - Procurement Manager, Sarah Keyes - Finance Officer, Mathew Buckley - Monitoring Officer/Secretary and Committee Manager.

The meeting was held at the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Kingston upon Hull. Meeting commenced at 10.30a.m.

**1/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Apologies for absence were received from Mr G Marshall.

**2/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - There were no declarations of interest.

**3/20 MINUTES - Resolved** - That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 12 July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

In Minute 10/19, the phrase 'the HFRS Modified Pension Scheme' should, instead, read 'the Modified Pension Scheme'.

**4/20 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES** - There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**5/20 REPORTING BREACHES** - The Procurement Manager informed the Board that there had been no breaches since the meeting held on 12 July 2019.

**Resolved** - That the update be received.

**6/20 PENSION BOARD WORKSTREAMS UPDATE** - The Executive Director of Corporate Services/Section 151 Officer submitted a report setting out an update on the Board's workstreams for 2019/20.

Training in relation to tax was delivered for the Board in October 2019. The Risk Register for the FFPS identified the three most dominant risks as: the maintenance of Member data, overreliance on key pensions administration officers, and legislative change. These risks reflected recent, significant changes in the FFPS which had emphasised the importance of completeness and accuracy with regard to data as well as a number of fundamental scheme changes resulting from legal rulings.

**Resolved** - (a) That the report be received, and

(b) that Members submit suggestions for topics for future training sessions.

**7/20 THE MCCLOUD/SARGEANT PENSION CASE - RESTITUTION** - The Procurement Manager provided a verbal update in relation to the McCloud/Sargeant Pension Case.

The case was the result of a dispute with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) in relation to the 1992 Pension Scheme. Leave from the Court of Appeal had been refused and the case had been referred back to the Tribunal for restitution. Fire authorities were awaiting guidance from the Home Office on how the judgements would affect the administration of pensions and how to proceed following the restitution.

**Resolved** - That the update be received.

**8/20 THE O'BRIEN RDS MODIFIED PART 2 JUDGEMENT** - The Procurement Manager provided a verbal update in relation to the O'Brien RDS Modified Part 2 Judgement.

This judgement was the result of a challenge mounted by an on-call firefighter to access a modified pension scheme. While on-call firefighters had not previously been allowed access to the FFPS, the judgement had led to their being allowed to access a modified version of the scheme and to their membership being back-dated to July 2000. The Part 2 Judgement was the result of a further challenge to allow on-call firefighters rights to the modified scheme for their full length of service.

**Resolved** - That the update be received.

**9/20 PENSION SCHEME TRANSITIONAL PROTECTIONS: 2006 SCHEME** - The Procurement Manager provided a verbal update in relation to the transitional protections for the 2006 Pension Scheme.

**Resolved** - That the update be received.

**10/20 FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEME - ADMINISTRATION AND BENCHMARKING** - The Finance Officer submitted a report summarising the administration and benchmarking activity in relation to the FFPS.

The main themes to emerge from administration and benchmarking activity in relation to the FFPS were the complexity of the various different schemes and the fact that there were 45 different fire and rescue services across the country working in different ways. The costs associated with the administration of the schemes were difficult to calculate and services had been absorbing the costs which were increasing as a result of changes to legislation and legal rulings. The benchmarking process had shown a need for standardisation in the administration of pension schemes across the country and recommended the establishment of regional strategies.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**11/20 THE PENSIONS REGULATOR SURVEY** - The Finance Officer submitted a report which included the Service's responses to the Pensions Regulator's Survey.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**12/20 GAD 2016 VALUATION DATA** - The Procurement Manager submitted a report summarising the FFPS valuation data for 2016.

The quality of data held by the Service was good compared to that held by other fire and rescue services, which was a significant and positive factor in the light of the amount of extra work that legal rulings and legislative changes necessitated.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**13/20 PENSION SCHEME BILL** - The Finance Officer provided a verbal update in relation to the Pension Scheme Bill.

The Bill was due to be subjected to its second reading following its first prior to the dissolution of Parliament in November 2019. The Bill would introduce a new pension scheme, allowing various defined contributions from employers to provide more choice. It would also involve the establishment of a pensions dashboard for members in order that they could easily access information concerning their pensions.

**Resolved** - That the update be received.

**14/20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS** – There were no items.

Meeting closed at 10.55 a.m.