

**Minutes of the meeting of the Local Pension Board  
held on 21 July 2022 via Zoom**

PRESENT

Employer Representatives:

Cllr John B Hughes  
Dafydd Edwards, Treasurer  
Gareth Owens, Clerk

Employee Representatives:

Richard Fairhead, Fire Leaders Association - Prospect, Employee Representative (Chair)  
Bob Mason, Fire Officers' Association  
Stuart Stanley, Fire Brigades Union

Advisors

Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Rebecca Marfleet, Pensions Officer

Minute Taker

Alwen Davies, Members' Liaison Officer

1 APOLOGIES

Cllr Bryan Apsley  
Duncan Stewart-Ball, Fire Brigades Union

2 CONFIRMATION OF CHAIR

It was explained to Members that following a local government election, it was necessary to review the membership of the Board. With members' agreement it was recommended that Richard Fairhead continue his second year of tenure as Chair of the Board.

**Resolved to agree that Richard Fairhead continue as Chair of the Board for 2022/23.**

3 RE-ELECTION OF MEMBERS

The membership of the Board was confirmed as follows:

Employer Representatives:

Cllr Bryan Apsley  
Cllr John B Hughes  
Dafydd Edwards, Treasurer  
Gareth Owens, Clerk.

### Employee Representatives:

Richard Fairhead, Fire Leaders Association - Prospect, Employee Representative (Chair)  
Bob Mason, Fire Officers' Association  
Stuart Stanley, Fire Brigades Union  
Duncan Stewart-Ball, Fire Brigades Union

It was confirmed that if necessary a substitute could attend the meeting. However, they would need to have completed all the Pensions Regulator training modules.

#### 4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4.1 None.

#### 5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022 were approved as a correct record.

#### 6 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF LOCAL PENSION BOARD

6.1 The terms of reference were presented for consideration.

6.2 **RESOLVED to agree the terms of reference.**

#### 7 TRAINING

7.1 ACFO MacArthur delivered an induction training session on the work of the Local Pension Board. It was noted that one of the requirements of the Pensions Regulator is that all members received appropriate training and has sufficient knowledge of the Schemes. The training covered the following areas:

- the Legal Framework
- the Firefighters' Pension Scheme(s)
- the financial aspects
- scheme regulation
- addressing concerns informally where possible; alternatively the formal process known as the internal dispute resolution procedure (IDRP) will be followed.

7.2 **RESOLVED to note the information provided and thank ACFO MacArthur for the informative presentation.**

## 8 FORWARD WORK PLAN

8.1 The forward work plan was presented to Members to provide an overview of the work for the Board for the financial year 2022/23.

8.2 It was agreed that an element of training would be on the agenda for every meeting and that a training needs analysis will be undertaken at the next meeting.

### 8.3 **RESOLVED to**

- (i) approve the proposed dates and workplan for 2022/23;**
- (ii) agree that training will be on every meeting agenda and that a training needs analysis will be undertaken at the next meeting.**

## 9 FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEMES – UPDATE REPORT

9.1 The Pensions Officer presented the report which provided an update on current issues relating to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes as follows:

- with effect from 1 April 2022 all active members and future members are/will be in the 2015 Pension Scheme. Prior to April 2022, there were four different pension schemes;
- an auto-enrolment exercise will be undertaken in October 2022 in accordance with the Pensions Act 2008 which states that every three years, those individuals who have opted out of the pension scheme need to be opted back in, and a re-declaration of compliance is required showing evidence of this exercise;
- the Government Actuary's Department has been commissioned to undertake the four yearly valuation of the firefighters pension schemes. This framework of valuations allows for greater transparency in the risk sharing between members and taxpayers;
- a pensions dashboard is being introduced to help individuals, who may have numerous pension policies, to see all their pensions information in one place. This is a national project and the Service is currently in the phase scheduled for April 2024.

### 9.2 **RESOLVED to note the report.**

## 10 DYFED PENSION FUND UPDATE (SCHEME ADMINISTRATOR)

10.1 ACFO Macarthur presented the Dyfed Pension Fund report which provided information on the following areas:

- Regulatory Update
- E-communication
- GMP reconciliation
- My Pensions Online
- Workflow.

10.2 The importance of the pension scheme members checking their My Pensions Online account was again highlighted as this is the quickest and easiest way of identifying any issues. It was noted that representative bodies need to keep communicating and promoting this to their members.

10.3 **RESOLVED to note the information provided.**

11 UPDATE ON LEGAL MATTERS

11.1 ACFO MacArthur presented the report which gave an update on legal matters affecting the firefighters pension scheme.

11.2 It was noted that there are two national legal challenges which will impact on the Firefighters Pension Schemes; the McCloud judgment and the O'Brien judgment. Updates on these will be provided to members at every meeting.

11.3 In terms of the McCloud/Sargeant judgment, it was noted that this is a case around a challenge based on age discrimination and is applicable to all public sector schemes. The UK Government is currently working through the legislative processes and it is anticipated that this will be completed by around October 2023. However, for members who are due to retire prior to that date they are considered to be at 'immediate detriment'. In the Service, there are approximately 10 individuals who are potentially coming up to retirement and will be affected by this matter; they are being supported by the Service. It was also noted that the Scheme administrators will provide these individuals with calculations including tax implications. It was, however, highlighted that these calculations take up a lot of time and therefore scheme members who are not nearing retirement are asked to use the online calculator rather than contact the scheme administrators.

11.4 It was noted that the O'Brien judgment has been accepted as being applicable to personnel on the retained duty system. It was confirmed that the Scheme Advisory Board for Wales will take this forward together with the Welsh Government and no further action is required by the Authority at this time.

11.5 **RESOLVED to note the ongoing legal matters relevant to the firefighters pension scheme.**

12 MANAGEMENT OF RISKS

12.1 The report was presented to provide an update on the risk management arrangements.

- 12.2 It was noted that the effective management of the firefighter pension schemes is underpinned by risk management arrangements. These arrangements include the identification, evaluation, management and reporting of risks that are relevant to achieving the scheme objectives. The Authority's classification of risks falls into four headings:
- Operations
  - Financial
  - Funding
  - Compliance.

**RESOLVED to**

- (i) note the approach to risk management for the firefighter pension schemes;**
- (ii) agree that the risk register is included on each agenda of the Local Pension Board and all risks are reviewed on a cyclical basis.**

13 MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO THE FRA

- 13.1 It was agreed that no issues needed to be referred to the FRA.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 14.1 My Pensions Online – union representatives asked to encourage all of the members to access My Pensions Online.

- 14.2 Pension training for on-call/RDS personnel - It had been identified that members of staff working the on-call/retained duty system would benefit from receiving training on pensions and therefore training sessions will be held for all on-call members of staff. If required, similar sessions could be held for whole-time duty system members of staff as well.

15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 15.1 It was noted that the next meeting will be held on 27 October 2022.