

Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Pensions Board Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide the Policy and Resources Committee with an update on the establishment and activities of the Pensions Board.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the following areas of progress are noted:

(i) The Pension Board has been established and is compliant with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

(ii) There have been two meetings of the Pensions Board.

(iii) Pension Board members have attended one training session.

Background

2. The Public Sector Pensions Act 2013 requires scheme regulations to provide for the establishment of a Pension Board from 1 April 2015 to assist the Scheme Manager in:
 - Securing compliance with the Scheme regulations and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme
 - Securing compliance with any requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator
 - Any other matters as detailed by the regulations.
3. The Authority established its Pension Board at the Policy and Resources Committee on 25 March 2015. The authority to implement the Pensions Board and make appointments to the Board was delegated to the Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee.

Update

4. Following my last report to the Policy and Resources Committee in March 2016, the Pension Board agreed to expand its membership to 3 Employee and 3 Employer Representatives to improve sustainability. It was acknowledged that there was a potential for a conflict of Interest for the Director of Finance's roles as Pensions Lead and as Treasurer. He has, therefore, stood down as an Employer Representative but will continue to attend as a Board Advisor.

5. Two meetings have been held on 8 June 2016 and 18 October 2016. The meeting scheduled for 25 January 2017 was postponed due to the number of apologies received, however, there have been ongoing informal discussions between the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the Director of Finance to enable progression of agreed Board activities.
6. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been formally agreed with the Pension Administrators (refer to Appendix A) to enable the level of service to be monitored and maintained. These will be provided to the Board on a quarterly basis along with the Firefighters' Pension Scheme membership figures.
7. Board members attended a training day on 30 September 2016. Training was provided by the Local Government Association and included an introduction to the Firefighter Pension fund, Pension Regulator Governance and the roles and responsibilities of the Pension Board. Training, where possible, will be organised on a regional basis.
8. A work plan and training programme for the Board has been established.
9. The publication of information regarding the Board and its activities has been agreed and uploaded onto the Fire Service website within the Fire Authority section.

Conclusion/Summary

10. This paper provides an update on the activities of the Pensions Board for the Firefighter Pension Schemes (FPS) to assist the Scheme Manager in securing compliance with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	The local Pension Board has been implemented in accordance with the Public Sector Pensions Act 2013 which is a new burden on Fire Authorities.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None.
Risk Management/Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores.	A risk register has been introduced.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter).	None
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?	None

Supporting Information

Appendix A: Key Performance Indicators - Firefighter Pension Administration and Pensioner Payroll

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