

AT A MEETING of the HFRA Hampshire Firefighters' Pension Board held at the
Fire and Police Headquarters, Eastleigh on Friday, 7 February 2020

Chairman:
* Stew Adamson

* Malcolm Eastwood
* Richard North
* Councillor Roger Price
* Richard Scarth
Dan Tasker

*Present

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman:

Ros Singleton, Chairman, Isle of Wight Fire Authority Fire Fighters Pension
Board
Jo Thistlewood, Technical Finance Manager, Isle of Wight Council

84. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Dan Tasker.

85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other personal interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

There were no declarations of interest received for the meeting.

86. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

87. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations on this occasion.

88. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman extended his and the Board's gratitude and well wishes to Malcolm Eastwood for his contribution to the Pension Board, and wished him all the best for the future. Malcolm thanked the Board for their encouragement and support towards him, and highlighted that the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) were currently undertaking a recruitment exercise to recruit to the position of Chairman of the SAB. Jo Thistlewood who was observing from the Isle of Wight Council also extended her thanks for Malcolm's invaluable support over the years.

89. SCHEME ADVISORY BOARD - VERBAL UPDATE

The Board were updated on various issues from Malcolm Eastwood and Cllr Roger Price, members of the HFRA Firefighters' Pension Board and the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Advisory Board (SAB). Various issues were highlighted including communications, claims and the three SAB sub-committees. It was noted that the sub-committees were currently focusing on Remedy in relation to the pension scheme.

It was highlighted that the next few years would be both interesting and challenging for the SAB in areas such as pension contributions, the different pension schemes and claims and complexities around all of these. Members were also updated on issues relating to the pensions dashboard and the latest government response to this.

RESOLVED:

That the HFRA Firefighters' Pension Board noted the update on the Scheme Advisory Board.

90. LEGISLATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) UPDATE REPORT

The Board were provided with an update on Legislation and the Local Government Association (LGA) (Item 7 in the Minute Book). Members were informed how the report illustrated that officers were up to date with new legislation and issues arising from the LGA.

Officers drew the Board's attention to paragraph 18 of the report which detailed some key results in relation to Fire and Rescue workforce and pension statistics from April 2018 to March 2019, and the high costs associated with some of these were highlighted.

Members were content with the report and no questions were raised.

RESOLVED:

That the HFRA Firefighters' Pension Board noted the contents of the report

91. FIRE PENSION BOARD STATUS REPORT

The Board received a report of the Chief Financial Officer, providing the Board with an update on ongoing issues (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

The report was introduced, and the Board were updated on statutory reporting as set out in paragraphs 3-6 of the report. It was highlighted that the number of pension saving statements was increasing and there were now 18 issued in 2018/19, the support given to those who had taxable excesses was discussed.

Officers drew attention to paragraph 19 of the report, and in particular Appendix E which would appear to show that the conditional data score had worsened from year end 2018 to year end 2019. It was explained that previously there had been no definition of what conditional data was, but for year end 2019 there was now greater clarity.

In relation to missing address data on deferred records, it was explained that Hampshire Pension Services were intending to use a tracing company and Members views on this were asked. It was noted that the cost for the initial report would be £1 for each search, and this cost would rise if a decision was made to undertake further work on individual searches subject to what was found from the initial report. Members discussed and were content with the process and the cost.

Members attention was also drawn to the O'Brien case, and the complex work that would need to be undertaken arising from this case. It was heard that there were now issues that were being driven nationally rather than locally, which would indicate more work in the future. It was noted that Officers hoped to have more information in relation to the O'Brien case in the forthcoming weeks. In relation to the McCloud/Sargeant case, it was explained that a lot of data collection had been undertaken and it would mean work in undertaking calculations in relation to the 1992 and 2015 fire pension schemes.

Paragraphs 54-58 of the report detailed registrations to the Pensions Member Portal. It was noted that there had been an increase in registration from 16% to 23% since the last Board meeting. Forthcoming developments by Hampshire Pension Services were being planned which included the introduction of member estimates, which may be a tool which people might want to go in and use. In relation to Annual Benefit Statements (ABS), it was noted that whilst 100% had been produced on time to meet statutory requirements, it was down to personal responsibility to register to the portal to view. Officers confirmed that communications would continue to draw attention to the importance of registering to the Portal. Officers would also look into ensuring that an individual's ABS was highlighted on their individual area on the Portal.

Officers also highlighted the pension presentations which the Employer Pension Manager had recently given, and there had been one to new recruits on the 17 January 2020 which new recruits had been interested in and engaged with.

In concluding, Officers thanked Malcolm Eastwood for his contributions to the Board over the last few years and his enthusiasm for pensions.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the HFRA Firefighters' Pension Board noted the contents of the report.
- b) That the Board approved the plan for the data improvement as set out in Paragraphs 20-25 and Appendix F of the report.
- c) That the Board approved the Risk Register as set out in Paragraph 28 and Appendix G of the report.
- d) That the Board approved the workplan for 2020/21 as set out in Paragraph 61 and Appendix K of the report.
- e) That the Board approved arranging for Clair Alcock to attend a Fire Pension Board meeting and deliver some training as set out in Paragraph 64 of the report.

Chairman,