

## **Minutes of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Meeting on 11 January 2016**

### **Present:**

### **Members**

Keith Bray (Chair), Katie Brown, Liz Firmstone, Marcus Giles, Tony Morgan, Gary Phillips

### **Officers**

John Betts, Head of Finance  
Neil Buxton, Pensions Manager  
Sian Stroud, Senior Solicitor and Team Leader  
Paul Williams, Democratic Services Team Leader

## **1. General**

### **(1) Apologies**

Paul Morley

### **(2) Board Members' Disclosures of Interests**

None.

### **(3) Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 July 2015**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2015 were agreed as an accurate record for signing by the Chair. There were no matters arising.

## **2. Administration Update**

Neil Buxton (Pensions Manager) introduced the report explaining that a benchmarking club for Fire Pensions does not exist. The meeting was told that three funds had been approached since the Board's previous meeting with a view to undertaking some benchmarking. Two had replied. The results were broadly similar and indicated that Warwickshire was efficient.

The Fire Pension is relatively easy to administer and as a result costs are low. Such costs as there are are generally absorbed by the Council's Pensions Team. There has been some discussion about bringing a group of fire pensions under one administrator but this has not found favour.

Gary Phillips briefed the meeting on the recent transfer of Fire and Rescue nationally to the Home Office. This is part of a drive towards emergency

services falling under a single body. It is possible that, under this initiative, pensions could be brought under one administering body.

The Government has consulted on whether fire and rescue services should fall under the strategic lead of the Police and Crime Commissioner. At present there is little evidence of support for this. In Warwickshire the current Police and Crime Commissioner has stated that he would not support such a move.

The meeting was advised of two developments. First is the capping of contributions and the second is the fire evaluation by the Government Actuary's Department.

In addition it was noted that staff who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme can now take a share of their pension at 55. However it was also pointed out that anyone doing so is obliged to opt out of the pension scheme. This is regarded as a deterrent by many. For members of the Fire Pension Scheme this is not an option as it is an unfunded public service scheme and as such it is not available.

**3. Next Steps**

Katie Brown informed the meeting that she has enquired about training for members. She agreed to speak to colleagues elsewhere to establish whether any local opportunities for training existed.

**4. Any other Business.**

The meeting was informed of an instance where the Independent Dispute Resolution Procedure had been used. This concerned pension contributions as they relate to payments to retained firefighters. It had been resolved that pension contributions should be paid on the basis of retainer fees only.

The board rose at 15.52

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Chair