

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme

Monday 14 February 2022

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Martin Reohorn (Chair)
Barnaby Briggs
Caroline Jones
Paul Morley

Officers

Neil Buxton, Technical Specialist - Pension Fund Policy and Governance
Liz Firmstone, Service Manager (Transformation)
Ian Marriott, Delivery Lead – Commercial and Regulatory
Paul Spencer, Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. General

1(1) Apologies

Victoria Jenks, Pensions Administration Delivery Lead.

1(2) Board Members' Disclosures of Interest

None.

1(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

2. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board, Risk Register

Neil Buxton, Technical Specialist - Pension Fund Policy and Governance, presented this report to the Board. It provided an update on risk appetite, the risk register, risk monitoring and the risks identified. Appendices to the report provided the risk definitions and the risk register. The main area of focus for the risk register was the outsourcing to West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF). A

comprehensive report on this would be provided to the next meeting, to include where responsibility for each risk rested under the new outsourced pensions administration arrangements.

The Chair asked if there was a need to change any of the risks in relation to the current position on immediate detriment. Liz Firmstone would check if there had been an adjustment following the withdrawal of the Home Office guidance. Further information on immediate detriment would be provided as part of an item later on the agenda.

The Chair noted the information provided about the outsourcing and responsibility for risk. Discussion about the responsibilities for the scheme manager, the current position and the potential sharing of knowledge and reduced risk from the revised model, when this was implemented. Officers had reviewed the risk register looking at areas where the new provider should become responsible.

The Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board noted the report and the attached risk register.

3. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board Forward Plan

Neil Buxton presented this report to the Board, which set out a rolling forward plan for a one-year period. Reference to the training sessions which would be provided for the Board.

Barnaby Briggs asked about the recurring item on administration service outsource. There would be periodic reports to this Board relating to the outsourced aspects. The Chair understood these would explain how the revised arrangements had 'bedded in'. It was viewed as similar to the administration activity and performance update reports. Liz Firmstone suggested that the forward plan report could include how the outsourcing process was going and part of it would be a post-implementation review and then ongoing monitoring. There was an expectation that someone from WYPF would present the reports to the board at least initially.

The Chair noted the plans for training for the Board and where possible, this would be held jointly. He encouraged attendance as this would be useful for new members particularly. Neil Buxton would circulate the training dates to the Board. The Chair referred to an LGA quarterly guide which it would be useful to align the forward plan to.

The Board noted its forward plan, with the changes outlined above.

4. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board, Policy Update

Neil Buxton presented this report to the Board, which set out the policies reviewed either as part of an annual review, or where there had been minor amendments required. Specific sections were provided on the cyber security policy, breaches policy and terms of reference & conflicts of interest policy.

Neil Buxton focussed on the cyber security aspects. There was a reliance on the County Council's ICT infrastructure. A number of meetings had taken place with ICT colleagues and given the importance of having robust cyber security arrangements, a range of tests of systems were proposed. The Pension Regulator placed a lot of importance on cyber security. It was also

important to become conversant with the WYPF practices and policies and how these would interrelate to those in Warwickshire.

The Board noted the content of the report.

5. Pensions Administration Service Activity and Performance update

This report was presented by Liz Firmstone, Service Manager (Transformation). It updated the Board on key developments affecting the administration of the Fire Pension Scheme and the performance of the Pensions Administration Service (PAS). The following areas were highlighted:

- An update on the change of service provider to transfer administration of the payroll functions to WYPF
- On immediate detriment cases, the Home Office guidance had been withdrawn. An update was provided on the current position for Warwickshire and planned way forward
- Consultation on regulation changes
- McCloud/Sergeant project update
- Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)
- Cost control mechanism
- LGA bulletins
- FRA remedy self-assessment survey

Further detail was provided in a number of appendices.

Barnaby Briggs commented on the position on immediate detriment. Endeavours were being made to liaise with fire service personnel whilst this was resolved. Context was provided on the number individuals affected as category 1 or category 2 cases. The Chair agreed that ongoing communication with those affected was important. Liz Firmstone offered to report back on whether there may be any further category 2 cases and the position of those cases identified to date in regard to a 62-day timeframe, linked to a memorandum.

The Chair asked about the McCloud/Sergeant software changes. Warwickshire would be changing to a different software solution (Civica) as part of the move to WYPF and he asked about the data transfer aspects. There were ongoing discussions, and a detailed update could be sought. He clarified that the board just needed to be assured this was in hand.

On the IDRPs case the Chair asked what type of issue this related to. It concerned reemployment and abatement and was not related to immediate detriment. There were no known trends for IDRPs cases. It would be helpful to bring an analysis of the FRA remedy self-assessment survey back to the next meeting. This could include comparative information from the collaboration group for the region and it would enable shared learning.

The Board noted the updates.

6. Any Other Business

Barnaby Briggs would provide updated contact details for board member Tony Morgan. He also noted that Councillor Horner was not shown on the invite list for the meeting.

The Chair placed on record his thanks to Neil Buxton as this was Neil's last meeting before retiring and he was wished well for the future. Martin Griffiths had been appointed as his replacement.

A discussion on the potential of having a face-to-face meeting once per year, with June being suggested. There was also an option of using hybrid meeting technology so some participants could join remotely.

7. Future Meeting Dates

The dates of future meetings were noted.

The meeting rose at 2.35pm

.....
Chair