

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

25 September 2023

Governance and Policy Update

Recommendation

That the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board notes and comments on the Regulatory updates affecting Firefighter Pension Schemes set out in this report.

1. Regulatory Update

- 1.1 On 19 July, the Home Office published the government's formal response to the consultation on retrospective remedy. The Firefighters' Pensions (Remedial Service) Regulations 2023 were laid on 20 July 2023 and come into effect on 1 October 2023.
- 1.2 The Local Government Association (LGA) have informed both Fire Authorities and administrators, through their monthly bulletins, actions that should be taken in order to be ready for 1 October 2023. A data collection exercise has already been undertaken to provide WYPF with the information required for members in scope.
- 1.3 The LGA have been made aware of potential pension scams involving companies offering to help members in public sector pensions schemes 'claim' their 2015 remedy benefits. LGA have provided wording to be added to websites to inform members of the possibility of being contacted regarding this. This has been added to the Warwickshire Pension Fund website.
- 1.4 The Government Actuaries Department (GAD) have been reviewing and revising factors used when calculating benefits following the update to the ¹SCAPE discount rate, this has led to a delay in processing some cases. In most instances the new factors provide better outcomes for members.
- 1.5 On 9 June 2023, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) laid draft Pensions Dashboards (Amendment) Regulations 2023. The amending regulations remove the phased staging timeline, replacing it with a single connection deadline of 31 October 2026. The regulations will allow the DWP and the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) to issue guidance setting out a

¹ Superannuation contributions adjusted for past experience.

staged connection timeline for individual schemes, to which FRAs must have regard. MaPS aim to collaborate with industry on the guidance later this year.

- 1.6 On 31 March 2023, the Home Office launched the formal consultation on Retained Firefighters' Pensions: Proposed Changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) 2006. This consultation closed on 9 June 2023. The second retained modified exercise will commence from 1 October 2023 when the draft Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 (England) (Amendment) Order 2023 is laid before Parliament for certain retained officers to be eligible for pension scheme membership.
- 1.7 The LGA issued a response to the consultation, setting out concerns with regard to the time scales for which the work required for this exercise would need to be undertaken. The legislation for this will be in place from 1 October 2023, this is the same time as Age Discrimination legislation, putting a tremendous amount of pressure on Fire Authorities and administrators. We await the response from the Home Office with regard to these concerns.
- 1.8 A training log has been created to record training undertaken by board members. This will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure board members are completing the necessary training.

Policy update

There are no policies set for review in this quarter.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 None arising directly from this report.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 None arising directly from this report.

4. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 4.1 None

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): n/a

Other members: Cllrs Dahmesh and Gifford