

Democratic Support Service
One Angel Square
Northampton
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**Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service
Local Pension Board
Meeting held in public in
The Conference Room, Moulton Logistics Centre, Moulton, Northampton**

Actions & Summary of Meeting: Monday 9 March 2020

PRESENT:-

Jim Dorrill (Employee Representative & Chairman)

Shaun Hallam Employer Representative Helen King Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire

Also in attendance (for all or part of the meeting)

Jenny Daniels Democracy Officer (minutes)
Paul Hanson Democratic Services Manager
Joanne Walton LGSS Pensions Governance & Regulations Manager

Item No.	Item	Action to be taken by
01/20	<u>Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest:</u> Apologies were received from Kevin Aitken and the Chief Fire Officer, Darren Dovey. There were no declarations of interest.	Jenny Daniels

<p>02/20</p>	<p><u>Minutes of the Meeting 25 September 2019</u></p> <p>It was noted that a group had been established to determine the anticipated retirement profile for the service and was meeting the following day. It would look at a 12-18 month cycle and would keep this regularly updated. Information would be sent to the Pensions Service following the meeting. In answer to a query it was confirmed that the service tracked the number of members who were coming up to retirement.</p> <p>The service confirmed that it was happy for the board to meet four times per year. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that Democratic Services would offer support until vesting day for the new unitary authorities. The LGSS Pensions Governance & Regulations Manager confirmed they would not be offering support after April 2021.</p> <p>The Chief Finance Officer, Helen King, confirmed that the function had not been included as part of the audit programme but it could be prioritised within the audit that had been discussed with the Assistant Director, Audit and Risk. The LGSS Pensions Governance & Regulations Manager stated that LGSS Audit had reviewed some samples but not the administration of the Scheme. The Chief Finance Officer would seek clarification about the work undertaken.</p> <p>The Chairman confirmed he had spoken to Claire Alcock regarding the work programme. There had been confusion about whether the work programme should include training. The Chairman stated he would send the work programme to members of the Local Pension Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED that: the Local Pension Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) approved the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2019; 2) noted that the Assistant Chief Fire Officer would send details retirement profile following the Board meeting the following day; 	<p>Jenny Daniels Shaun Hallam</p>
<p>03/20</p>	<p><u>Northamptonshire Firefighters' Pension Scheme(s) Administration:</u></p> <p>At the Chairman's invitation, the Pensions Governance & Regulations Manager Joanne Walton introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All KPIs had been met apart from one. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one estimate of Pension Benefits had been processed outside of the 10 day requirement. • As could be seen from the table in 3.2.3, data quality scores had increased over the previous year. • With regard to the contracting out data, HMRC had not released a final file of data that would also contain all of the answers to the queries raised by ITM Ltd. HMRC had been unable to confirm when the final data files would be available. • It was recommended that the remaining deferred member's records with no address available were traced via the Department of Work and Pensions. The Department of Work and Pensions could then confirm if a deferred member was deceased. <p>In answer to queries on the report the following was confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common data would be basic information like a person's name and address. • It was felt the scores outlined in the report represented a health position. The Pensions Regulator would contact Scheme Managers in the event an issue was identified. • As long as the data and fields that were tested were consistent each year, comparisons to ascertain trends in the data were possible. • Scheme members could use the self-service portal but the Pensions Service were reliant on the Employers sending them the correct information. <p>RESOLVED that: the Local Pension Board noted the content of the report and agreed the way forward with regard to Member addresses.</p>	
04/20	<p><u>Compliance with the Pensions Regulator's Code of Practice</u></p> <p>At the Chairman's invitation, the Pensions Governance & Regulations Manager Joanne Walton introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) highlighting Section 2 of the report which showed where the Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service was compliant with the Code of Practice. Work yet to be undertaken included establishing procedures for assessing and managing risk including a risk register and meeting four times a year. It was noted these items were to be discussed later on the agenda.</p> <p>RESOLVED that: The Local Pension Board noted the report and that items included in it would be discussed later on the agenda.</p>	<p>Joanne Walton</p> <p>Joanne Walton</p>

05/20	<p><u>Northamptonshire Firefighters' Pension Scheme(s) Draft Risk Register</u></p> <p>At the Chairman's invitation, the Pensions Governance & Regulations Manager Joanne Walton introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating it was a key piece of documentation. Although a risk strategy was in place, there was no formal risk register. The Board were asked to note that, whilst failure to send out benefits statements on time would be the fault of the administrators (Pensions Service), it would be the Scheme Manager (Fire Service) that would be responsible in law for any consequences.</p> <p>Items on the risk register were then discussed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational disaster (fire/flood): This was scored as a 3,2 & 6. It would be discussed at a forthcoming Contract Review Meeting. • Member data incomplete or inaccurate: This was scored as a 2, 2 & 4. It would be discussed at a forthcoming Contract Review Meeting. • Administration process failure/maladministration: This was scored as a 1, 2 & 2. It also be reviewed at an SLA Review Meeting. • Officers acting outside of delegated responsibility: This should be scored as a 2, 2 & 4. • Employer fails to deduct and pay-over pensions contributions: This should be scored as a 2, 2 & 4. • Failure to interpret rules or legislation correctly: This was in the SLA under training and it would be reviewed as part of the SLA. It was suggested it should read 'failure to respond to emerging legislation or legal precedent'. • Conflicts of Interest: To be reworded as follows: "Pension board member training has been revised in light of changes to membership. Future training reviewed to ensure it meets needs of board members". <p>Further risks would need to be included under Operations as support from LGSS Pensions was ending in 2021. It would be score as a 3, 3 and 9. It was one of the highest risks and would be included in the procurement plan. The Head of Pensions was due to meet with the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Finance Officer to discuss it further. Under Regulatory and Compliance it was suggested that a new action be added to review findings when available from emerging tribunal outcomes and review the score from 2/2 to 3/3. This would be reviewed again by July 2020</p> <p>RESOLVED that: the Local Pension Board approved risks identified on the Northamptonshire Firefighters'</p>	

	Pension(s) Scheme Risk Register and made the changes as noted above.	Joanne Walton
06/20	<p><u>Member Training Policy</u></p> <p>At the Chairman's invitation, the Pensions Governance & Regulations Manager Joanne Walton introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating it had been in place since 2018. A training needs analysis would need to be completed in order to identify gaps. The training toolkit would be very helpful when they were undertaking procurement. The Policy would also need to be altered as it referred to Northamptonshire County Council as the Scheme Manager.</p> <p>RESOLVED that: the Local Pension Board approved the Member Training Policy and would complete the training needs analysis.</p>	Joanne Walton
07/20	<p><u>Committee Dates 2020-2021</u></p> <p>At the Chairman's invitation, the Democratic Services Manager Paul Hanson introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated). It was noted they should move to 4 meetings per year so the Democratic Services Team would add dates in June and December to the timetable.</p> <p>RESOLVED that: The Local Pension Board agreed to meet on the following dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 14 September 2020 • Monday 8 March 2021 • Monday 6 September 2021 <p>And that dates in June and December 2020 would be added to the timetable.</p>	Jenny Daniels

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.15pm.

Jenny Daniels, Democracy Officer.