

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

LOCAL PENSIONS BOARD

DATE OF MEETING	21 JUNE 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	SCHEME MANAGER UPDATE
REPORT AUTHOR	HR Rewards & Benefits Manager
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>This report provides a summary of current pension matters both nationally and locally which have required input from the Service. This report should also be considered in conjunction with the regular monthly Bulletins which are issued by the Firefighters' Pensions Scheme Advisory Board.</p>

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. This is the update report from the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority (the Authority) delegated Scheme Manager for the Authority's Local Pension Board (the Board). The Scheme Manager is defined as being the Fire and Rescue Authority under The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) Regulations 2014. However, the Scheme Manager may delegate any functions under these Regulations. The Authority has set out in the Discretions Policy where decisions will need to be taken by the Authority. The day-to-day managing and administering of the pension schemes and any statutory scheme connected with them, is delegated to the HR Rewards & Benefits Manager.
- 1.2. The Board provides a number of functions as set out in the Terms of Reference, which include:
- assisting the Scheme Manager to ensure compliance with the relevant regulations and the efficient and effective management of the pension administration;
 - advising on member communications; and
 - monitoring complaints.
- 1.3. This report provides a summary of current pension matters both nationally and locally and further updates will be provided at subsequent Board meetings.

2. **GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY**

- 2.1. Please refer to separate agenda item regarding Board membership including the appointment of a new LPB Chair.

3. **PENSION PROJECTS**

2015 Age Discrimination Remedy (Sargeant)

- 3.1. Since the last Board meeting, the Service has adopted the immediate detriment framework. This was communicated internally via Shout Out, the Pensions page of the intranet and the email group for operational colleagues the week commencing 24 April 2023.
- 3.2. Since adopting the framework, there have been 10 applications submitted for 'Category One' retirement under immediate detriment. At the time of writing, 6 of the cases have already been submitted to WYPF for processing and the remaining 4 are ready for submission, subject to sign off. This provides the Scheme Administrator with a minimum of 6 weeks for calculation prior to the planned retirement date of each member.

- 3.3. Consideration is currently being given to suitable communication for retired colleagues, given that all announcements on this matter to date have been internal and will not have reached those who fall into 'Category Two' under the Immediate Detriment Framework.

Second Options Exercise (Matthews)

- 3.4. On 31 March 2023, the Home Office launched their formal consultation on Retained Firefighters' Pensions: Proposed Changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) 2006.
- 3.5. The aim of this consultation was to focus on the government's commitment to provide further remedy to those individuals who were employed as retained firefighters between 7 April 2000 and 5 April 2006 (inclusive), by providing access to the modified section of Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 (referred to as 'the modified scheme'). It contains the proposed amendments to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) Order 2006 and the Firemen's Pension Scheme Order 1992 to achieve this outcome. The LGA provided a written response, which they have published on the Consultation page of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Regulations and guidance website.
- 3.6. The DSFRS Pensions Officer is currently working with our Communications Team to develop a suitable page on the Service's external website, in order that updates can be published and shared with those who are eligible for the Second Options exercise but no longer DSFRS employees.

Pensions Dashboard Programme

- 3.7. Since the last Scheme Manager update, DWP has laid the Pensions Dashboards (Amendment) Regulations 2023. A link to a summary of the regulations can be found on the Pension Regulator's (tPR) [pension dashboard webpages](#). A link to the full amending regulations can be found on their '[Stay in touch with developments](#)' page. The amending regulations include a postponed connection deadline of 31 October 2026, with anticipation that a staging timeline will be set out in guidance.

4. REPORTING BREACHES OF LAW

- 4.1. Within the Board's Reporting Breaches Procedure, Section 70 of the Pensions Act 2004 (the Act) is referenced. This requires that, where a person has reasonable cause to believe that:
- (a) a duty which is relevant to the administration of the scheme in question, and is imposed by virtue of an enactment or rule of law, has not been or is not being complied with; and
 - (b) the failure to comply is likely to be of material significance to the Regulator in the exercise of any of its functions then they must give a written report on the matter to the Regulator as soon as is reasonably practicable.

4.2. There have been no breaches reported since the last Local Pension Board meeting.

5. INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Within the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme formal complaints are made via the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP). There have been no new complaints under this procedure from FPS members since the last Local Pension Board meeting.

6. PENSION ADMINISTRATOR QUALITY OF SERVICE

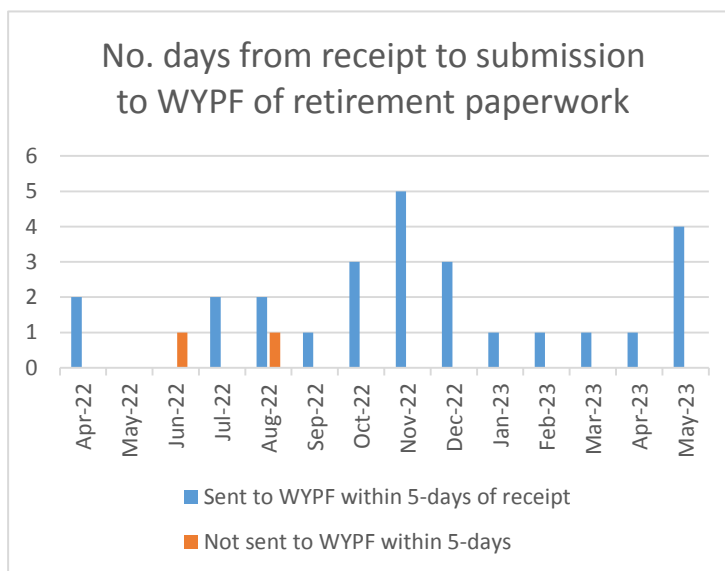
6.1. Data submissions are summarised as follows:

(a) **Submission of monthly pension reporting to WYPF by the last day of the month:**

For the last 12 months, we have achieved this KPI, as detailed below. To note that the submission deadline for 2023 has been brought forward to 19th day of the subsequent month.

Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
20-Jul-22	16-Aug-22	01-Sep-22	26-Oct-22	23-Nov-22	20-Dec-22	19-Jan-23	13-Feb-23	08-Mar-23	15-May-23	19-May-23	24-May-23

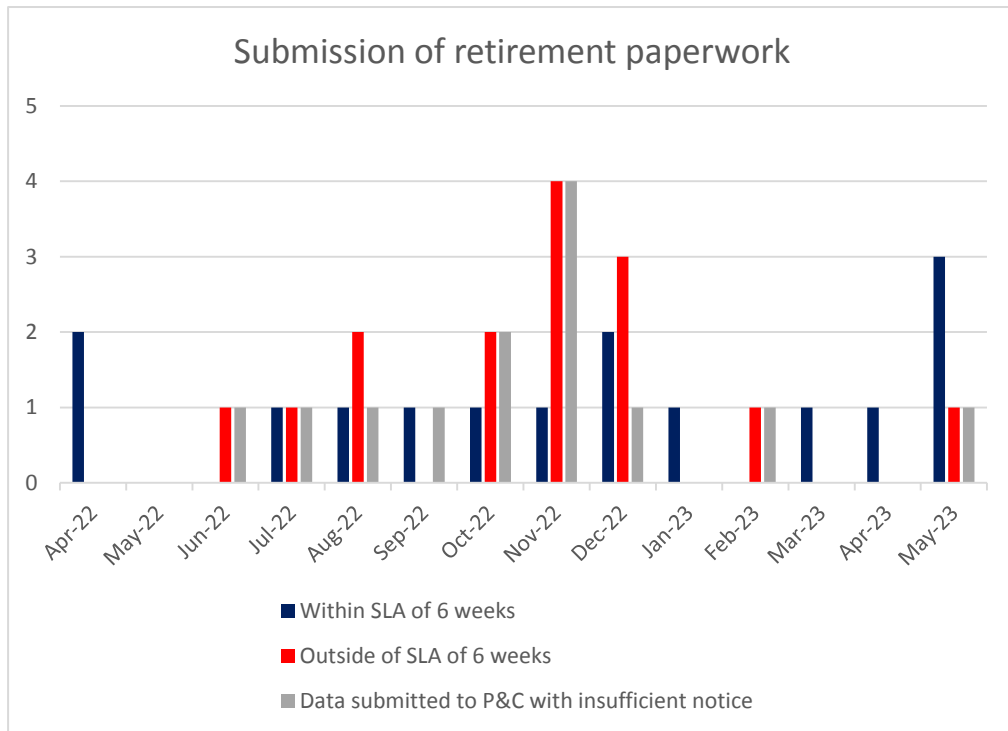
(b) **Notifications of normal retirement and timeframes for submission**



May '22 has no data listed because there were no FPS retirements to record.

6.2. The Pay and Conditions team continue to prioritise informing the Scheme administrator of any retirements as soon as they receive notification.

6.3. Over the period November 2022 to May 2023, there were 16 FPS retirements and half of them were submitted to the scheme administrator less than 6 weeks ahead of the planned retirement date. In all instances this was due to the Pay and Conditions team receiving the notification in a shorter timeframe.



May '22 has no data listed because there were no FPS retirements to record.

ZOE SMYTH
HR Rewards & Benefits Manager