

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority

Local Pension Board Annual Report 2017-18

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Annual Report is to provide information about the status of the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board for Scheme Members (employees and pensioners) and for the Scheme Manager (the Authority) together with a summary of issues considered in the relevant period (1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018).

In accordance with Section 5 and s.30 (1) of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and Regulation 4A of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015, the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board was established in February 2015 to provide advice on the effective and efficient administration and management of the various firefighter pension schemes.

The Report includes commentary on the following;

- A summary of the work undertaken by the Local Pension Board during 2017-18
- Detail of areas investigated and how these areas were dealt with
- Any conflicts of interest and how these were managed
- Any identified risks and other areas of potential concern
- Any expenses and costs incurred by the Board
- Gifts and hospitality received by members of the Board
- Training for Board members

2. Membership and meetings of the Local Pension Board

2.1. The Local Pension Board comprises of six members as follows:

Scheme Manager Representatives:

- Mike Pearson - Chair (Director of Corporate Services)
- Amy Webb (Director of Finance)
- Councillor Brian Greenslade

Scheme Member Representatives:

- Bob Walker
- Andy Hallam
- Peter Redbourn

2.2. In addition to the above, the following officers support the Board and regularly attend Board meetings:

- Steve Pope (HR Manager and Delegated Scheme Manager)
- Steve Yates (Democratic Services Manager)

- Hannah Singleton (Executive Support Assistant)

2.3. The Board has met on three occasions during 2017-18, meetings having taken place on:

- 29 June 2017
- 7 November 2017
- 24 January 2018

The updated terms of reference agreed at the Board meeting on 7 November 2018 stipulate that meetings will be held quarterly.

3. Work undertaken by the Local Pension Board

- Reviewed and updated Terms of Reference for the Board
- Considered and agreed a Conflict of Interest Policy
- Considered and agreed a Reporting Breach Procedure
- Reviewed and updated the self-assessment using the Pension Regulator tool
- Completed the Pension Regulator Public Service Governance Survey
- Attendance at the Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Pensions Annual Conference
- Organised and attended training, both individually and collectively
- Welcomed a Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) member to a Board meeting in order to receive an update on the work of the SAB and the introduction of Local Pension Boards
- Reviewed potential breaches to report/record where necessary
- Reviewed communications with scheme members in run up to change in Pension Administration and Payroll Provider
- Completed LGA Pension Survey
- Received regular updates from the Scheme Manager and Scheme Administrator

4. Identified risks and Board actions

Risks and issues are categorised as follows:

	Action Status
	Not yet started
	In progress
	Complete

Date	Risk/Issue	Agreed Action	Status
05/12/16	Pension Board roles and responsibilities defined and recorded.	Pension discretions policy to be completed and Board Terms of reference reviewed.	
05/12/16	Information about Pension Board published and up to date.	Information to be published on website and reviewed quarterly.	

Date	Risk/Issue	Agreed Action	Status
16/05/17	Pension Board members' knowledge/understanding.	All Board members to complete the Pension Regulator's e-learning modules	
05/12/16	Conflict policy and procedure	Policy and procedure to be developed and put in place.	
05/12/16	Register of Interest	Register published.	
05/12/16	Risk register and procedure for assessing and managing risks	Implement risk processes and risk register	
05/12/16	Internal dispute resolution arrangements	Publish arrangements on website	
05/12/16	Procedures to identify, assess, record and report breaches of the law	Document and implement reporting breaches procedure	
05/12/16	Member communications	Review website and annual benefit statement content	
24/01/18	Member communications	Review communication plan for pension administration and payroll provider project	

5. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Website

5.1. Further information regarding the Local Pension Board can be found on the Services website:

<http://www.dsfire.gov.uk/AboutUs/Pensions/index.cfm?siteCategoryId=2&T1ID=193>

6. Conflicts of Interest

6.1. Members of the Local Pension Board are required to declare any personal, prejudicial, or conflicts of interest. Board members are asked at each meeting to declare any conflicts that may have arisen.

6.2. There have been no declarations made by any Board members, advisor or attendee at any meeting of the Board during the relevant period.

7. Expenses and Costs

7.1. Attendance at two LGA events for Local Pension Board members in May and August 2017. The events were funded by the LGA; the only cost to the Service was for accommodation and travel totalling £709.60.

7.2. In October 2017 two board members attended the LGA Firefighters' Pension Conference in London. Again the cost of the conference was funded by the LGA; the only cost to the Service was for accommodation and travel totalling £565.65

- 7.3. Attendance at a Tax Training Seminar in October 2017, which again was funded for by the LGA. The cost of travel paid by the Service was £142.82.
- 7.4. Attendance at the Scheme Advisory Board's Administration and Benchmarking Committee in London during February 2018. The cost of travel was £187.48.
- 7.5. Training in January 2018 delivered at Service Headquarters by the LGA's Pension Advisor. The cost of advisor's time was covered by the Scheme Advisory Board levy; the only cost incurred by the Service was for subsistence totalling £48.19.
- 7.6. The total cost to the Service for the 2017-18 period was £1,653.74.

8. Gifts and Hospitality

- 8.1. No declarations of gifts or hospitality were made by members of the Board during the relevant period.

9. Training

- 9.1. Attendance at a Tax Training Seminar ran by the LGA (one Board member).
- 9.2. LGA Pension Advisor delivered a tailored training session to the Board and an officer from another South West fire authority on the 24 January 2018.
- 9.3. Board members have completed, or are in the process of completing, e-learning modules on the Pension Regulator's website. Details of each Board member training is published on the Service website.

10. Legislative updates

- 10.1. In accordance with statutory requirements, members of the Board have been provided with regular legislative updates.