

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

LOCAL PENSIONS BOARD

DATE OF MEETING	22 March 2022
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 that is 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. Further to the last Board meeting, this is to report that the agreed governance strategy document is currently being prepared for publication on the Pensions section of the DSFRS website.

3. PENSION COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1. To note that LGA has published a useful document entitled 'FPS 2015 Remedy Factchecker' – this has been developed by Barnett Waddingham, in collaboration with the SAB the Board secretariat, and the Scheme Management & Administration committee. A link to the factchecker was included in a 'Shout Out' announcement last month and has also been added the pensions section of the intranet.
- 3.2. As per the most recent FPS Bulletin, the Pensions Ombudsman (TPO) is running a series of short webinars at the end of this month and has also posted several new factsheets on its website.

4. PENSION PROJECTS

2015 Remedy (Sargeant)

- 4.1. The total number of confirmed retirements being processed under immediate detriment (before 1 April 2022) now totals 12 FPS members. The number of initial requests totalled 25, but some were not eligible and others decided to postpone their retirement. This was either due to a promotion opportunity or the fact that they only qualified for a restricted lump sum at this point in time due to their age and length of service.
- 4.2. The LGA has recommended that each authority provides protected members with written confirmation that they will be moved into the 2015 scheme from 01 April 2022. Within the Service, there are currently 74 protected members in total who have remained in the 3 final salary schemes. The Pensions Officer will be conducting an email merge and also posting hard copy letters to those in On Call roles before the end of the month.

5. REPORTING BREACHES OF LAW

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. There have been no breaches reported since the last Local Pension Board meeting.

6. INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 6.1. 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 since the last Local Pension Board meeting.

7. PENSION ADMINISTRATOR QUALITY OF SERVICE

- 7.1. The Service continues to have an excellent working relationship with WYPF and both sides are continuing to collaborate and periodically review the arrangements that are in place to identify potential improvements that can be made.

8. BOARD MEMBERSHIP

- 8.1. To report that the recruitment process for a new staff representative has been delayed and will commence by the end of the current FY.

ZOE SMYTH
HR Rewards & Benefits Manager