



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE AUTHORITY FIRE FIGHTERS PENSION BOARD</b>
Date and time	<b>WEDNESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2018 COMMENCING AT 2.00PM</b>
Venue	<b>CONFERENCE ROOM 4, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT</b>
Employer Representatives	Cllrs Reg Barry, Tig Outlaw
Scheme Member Representatives	Nigel Probert (Chairman), Ross Singleton
Officers	Jon Baker - Democratic Services Officer Matthew Collier - Employment Services Lead Officer Claire Sarr - Data Improvement Officer Jo Thistlewood - Technical Finance Manager

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11. [Minutes](#)

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2018 be confirmed.

12. [Declarations of Interest](#)

There were no declarations made.

13. [Public Question Time](#)

There were no questions received

14. [Governance Update](#)

The Technical Finance Manager presented a report which provided the Board with the latest output from a review of fire pension governance, against the Pension Regulator's assessment tool.

It was noted that the toolkit had been completed and the results were summarised in the report by means of a Red / Amber / Green (RAG) system. It was noted that there was a slight improvement since the toolkit was last reviewed in October 2016.

One area that was rated as Red was that there was no formal training log; this subject would be covered later in the meeting as a separate agenda item.

Another Red rated item centred on the absence of a specific conflicts of interest policy for pension board members.

The Board also discussed the need for a Risk Management Plan which would focus on strategic risks as opposed to operational ones. It was noted that a risk management workshop would be set up at some future point and a report around risks would be presented at a future Board meeting.

The issue of insurance cover for pension board members was raised, as it had been discussed as an issue at the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) pension board. Members were assured that the Isle of Wight Pension Fund Committee made all decisions via recommendations from both the LGPS Pension Board and Fire Pension Board, so the risk of challenge to a board member was low. The council, having taken into account counsel's opinion, had extended its current Professional Indemnity insurance policy to provide cover for board members; hence there was no need to have a separate insurance policy for the Board.

It was agreed that when the Terms of Reference were next reviewed, insurance would be covered in order to provide clarification of the Board's responsibilities. The issue could also be raised with the LGA Fire Pension Scheme Advisory Board.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the progress made was noted and that the priorities for continued improvement for knowledge, skills, and conflicts of interest policy as well as risk management are agreed.

15. **[Scheme Returns - To note returns to be made to the Pensions Regulator](#)**

The Board discussed a paper that was an example of the scheme return needed to submit to the Pension's Regulator on an annual basis for the 1992, 2006 and 2015 Schemes.

Membership numbers would need to be provided and compared to accounts as well as details around the scheme manager, Board members details and information regarding the record keeping. It also sought to establish who the employers were, who the service administrators and auditors were and the name of the point of contact.

The notification was received in late September 2018 and the return was due to be submitted on 6 November 2018 and the Board was assured that the scheme returns would be made by the due date, thus avoiding any fines from the regulator.

There was a new requirement for 2018 for information about data quality: when it had been assessed, and what the scores were in respect of both common data (e.g. name, address, date of both, etc) and conditional data (scheme specific data, e.g. service start date, pensionable pay, etc).

Members were informed that the data quality scores had not been measured for Fire Fighters Pension Schemes, owing to Local Government Pension Scheme data priorities. It was therefore noted that for the latest scheme return, the regulator would be advised that the data scores had not been measured in the last three years. Members were advised that officers would contact another Fire Authority to discuss purchasing their data scoring procedures. The Board was advised that there were insufficient resources to be able to conduct this exercise in-house at present.

This would then enable an initial assessment of the quality of scheme data to be made, from which future improvements could be measured. The costs of this exercise and the resulting data scores would be reported to a future Board meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the returns to be made to the Pensions Regulator be noted.

16. **Administration Update**

A report from the Technical Finance Manager was reviewed which provided a summary of administration activity since the last meeting of the Fire Pension Board in June 2018.

The Employment Services Lead Officer was pleased to advise that all of the annual benefits statements had been sent out ahead of the 31 August 2018 deadline and the annual pension savings statement for relevant staff would be issued by the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) deadline of 6 October 2018.

With regard to the membership numbers, there were still some spurious figures owing to the ongoing adjustment of records.

Those classified as 'undecided' (no longer active - i.e. have probably left the service) had reduced to 16 members (from 28). Members were reassured that these anomalies arose from historic processing issues, but were taking some time to resolve. It was anticipated that all figures would be adjusted, placing members in the right scheme and status within the next six months.

With regard to the Taper Timetable it was noted that by the end of 2021 there shouldn't be any further tapering with all members either protected in their legacy scheme, or transferred into the 2015 scheme.

The Board was advised that dependents could include children as well as spouses. Children were normally up to the age of 18 but could extend to 23 years of age if they were in full time education. All those aged 18 or over would be annually checked to ensure that they were still in full time education.

It was agreed that for the next Board Meeting on 12 December 2018 a project update on automatic enrolment would be added to the agenda.

RESOLVED:

THAT the update be noted.

17. Pensions Issues Log

The Technical Finance Manager presented to the Board the latest progress made with regard to the Issues Log. Again the RAG system was used in order to provide analysis of progress

There had been some slowing down of movement partly because of time and resources required to record issues but also due to the focus on matters concerning the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and various data improvement work.

One item had been moved to a 'Red' category was the Training needs analysis for Board members needed to be undertaken and which was also highlighted in the Governance Report. This would also be discussed later (Minute No 18) as well as be the subject of a member training session following the meeting.

The Board was advised that knowledge and understating needed to be taken seriously as the Pensions Regulator was very robust in ensuring all Board members were up to date with their awareness.

With regard to the administration, the HMRC had stopped taking information from modified members and a spreadsheet had been compiled with regard to member's payment / contributions status.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Pensions Issues Log be noted.

18. Training

The Technical Finance Manager advised members that the Pensions Regulator had very high expectations in respect of board members' levels of knowledge and understanding, to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively.

Representatives from the Regulator would be visiting on 7 November 2018 in order to deliver a training programme for Board Members and all were expected to attend.

In early October 2018 Board members were requested, via an email, to complete a questionnaire about their current levels of knowledge and understanding. Members were requested return the checklist to the Technical Finance Officer which would then help to identify the training needs.

Members were also reminded that as part of the annual Scheme Advisory Board levy, the Isle of Wight Fire Pension Board was entitled to a free development session, hosted by staff from the Local Government Association and this would be organised with dates communicated in due course.

There would be a Governance and Administration Workshop on 23 November 2018 which would be held after the main Pension Fund Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Training Update be noted.

19. **Work Plan**

The Board was advised that the administration timetable which was scheduled to be considered would now be carried forward to the meeting on 12 December 2018.

20. **Member Question Time**

There were no written questions received.

Cllr Outlaw asked whether any meetings had been scheduled with the scheme manager and relevant officers on the Isle of Wight and Hampshire in terms of accuracy of scheme data, should the proposed combined Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire Authority be approved in early 2019.

It was noted that meetings and discussions had already begun, in advance of the formal decision; to prepare for the work which would be needed should the proposal be adopted. Going forward it was expected that there would be a Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire Authority pension scheme in which both authority members would transfer into.

CHAIRMAN