

Part 2Q: Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board

1 Summary

- 1.1 The Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board is responsible for assisting the Scheme Manager of the Cumbria Firefighters' Pension Schemes to comply with all relevant legislative requirements and to ensure the effective governance of the scheme for Cumbria Firefighters Pensions.

2 Functions of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board

- 2.1 The functions of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board are to:

(a) Assist the Scheme Manager of the Cumbria Firefighters' Pension Scheme to secure compliance with:

- (i) The regulations covering administration of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (FPS);
- (ii) Other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the FPS; and
- (iii) The requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the FPS; and

(b) To ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the FPS.

- 2.2 The Board must have a policy and framework to meet the knowledge and understanding requirements of section 248A of the Pensions Act 2004.

- 2.3 In its role in assisting the Scheme Manager as described above, the Board shall report twice yearly to Council on matters reviewed and suggestions for their consideration.

- 2.4 Where the Board is concerned that due consideration has not been given to matters of non-compliance the Board may submit a report for consideration by the Audit and Assurance Committee as the body designated by the Scheme Manager with the capacity to investigate such matters on its behalf.

- 2.5 The Board is constituted under the Public Service Pension Act 2013 and the Fire Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2014 and is therefore not subject to the requirements of s.101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 2.6 The Board has no remit as a decision making body but is established to assist the Scheme Manager fulfil its functions which shall be deemed to cover all aspects of governance and administration of the Pension Scheme.

3 Operating Structure and Codes of Conduct of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board

- 3.1 The operating structure and codes of conduct of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board is as follows:

- a) The Board will be quorate if 50% of designated members (i.e. 2) are in attendance.
- b) Prior to appointment to the Board all members will be required to sign up to the Board's Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest Policy. As a body representing the public interest the Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest Policy of members of the Fire Local Pension Board will be aligned to those applicable to members of the Pension Committee.
- c) The Board will meet as a minimum twice a year. Meetings will be held during normal working hours and will predominantly be held within County boundaries.
- d) Where required, a minimum of two Board members (one from the scheme member representatives and one from the scheme employer representatives) or the Scheme Manager can request a special meeting be convened. Notice of ten working days must be given.
- e) As a non-decision-making body the Board have no authority to establish working parties / sub-groups.
- f) Each member shall have an equal vote and, should it be required, the Chair will have the casting vote.

4 Commissioning of Service providers and Advisors

- 4.1 All members of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board have the right to access the support of independent advisors, however due regard has to be taken of securing value for money and as such whether in the first instance officers of the County Council could provide the assistance required.
- 4.2 Items of expenditure by the Board must have prior approval from the Section 151 Officer.

5 Role of Officers

- 5.1 Reasonable secretarial and professional support will be provided by Officers of the Scheme Manager. Costs associated with this will be charged to Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.

6 Publication and Data Protection

- 6.1 As a general principle meetings will be open to the public.
- 6.2 Paper or electronic versions (as requested) of all agendas and papers will be provided to all members of the Board prior to a meeting. The Chair can accept that items be tabled on the day should such a need arise.
- 6.3 As a matter of policy the Pension Board has adopted the principals of paperless working, therefore as a matter of course public access to all agendas, public papers and minutes etc. will be available on the Council's website. On request alternative media versions are available.
- 6.4 The County Council as the Scheme Manager is the registered data controller of the Cumbria FPS, and as such all policies and practices in this regard applicable within the County Council are directly applicable to the Board.

7 Membership

- 7.1 Equal representation between scheme employers and scheme members is required. The membership of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board will comprise two scheme member representatives and two scheme employer representatives.
- 7.2 **Appointment of Board members** - to ensure an open and transparent selection process and to ensure the Scheme Manager meets its obligation to ensure appointed members have the relevant understanding and capacity, the selection process will be through application, matching to a role profile and interview. The Appointment Panel will consist of the Chief Fire Officer, Monitoring Officer and Portfolio Holder for Fire and Rescue Services.
- 7.3 Appointments will be for four years (or, in the case of elected members for the remainder of their current term of office) and there will be no limit on the number of times a member of the board can seek to be reappointed.
- 7.4 The two scheme member representatives will be selected to ensure all membership groups within the Fund are considered.

- 7.5 **Appointment of the Chair / Vice Chair** – the Scheme Manager will appoint the Chair and the Vice Chair. The roles will be split with one being a scheme member representative and one being a scheme employer representative and this will be alternated on a two yearly cycle.
- 7.6 Reimbursement of reasonable expenses for attendance at meetings and training sessions will be in line with the Council’s agreed policies and rates for elected members. All such costs will be met directly by Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.
- 7.7 **Relevant knowledge and capacity** – the Scheme Manager must ensure that each person appointed to the Board has the relevant knowledge and the capacity to represent the employers or members (as appropriate) of the Scheme. Initially this will be done through selection by the Scheme Manager but, following appointment, it is a member’s individual responsibility to ensure they attend sufficient training to enable them to continue to fulfil the experience and capacity requirements. Full training will be provided and all reasonable costs will be met by Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service. To ensure compliance with the above a general level of attendance at meetings and training events is required.

8 Substitution

- 8.1 Substitutes are permitted and sufficient substitutes will be appointed to ensure that the representation described in 7.2 can be maintained whenever a substitution is required.
- 8.2 In recognition of the requirements relating to relevant knowledge and capacity, substitutes must be subject to the same appointment process as Board members detailed in 7.2 and the relevant knowledge and capacity requirements as set out at 7.7. Each substitute will be appointed for a four year term (or, in the case of elected members for the remainder of their current term of office) and there is no limit on the number of times the substitute can seek to be reappointed.
- 8.3 Reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses for attendance at meetings and training sessions will be in line with the County Council’s agreed policies and rates for elected members. All such costs will be met directly by the Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.