

CUMBRIA FIRE LOCAL PENSION BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board held on Thursday, 9 March 2023 at 2.00 pm at Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service HQ, Carleton Avenue, Penrith, CA10 2FA

PRESENT:

Mr D Harrison (Chair)

Mr M Nicholson

Mrs J Willis (Vice-Chair)

Also in Attendance:-

Mr C Dawson	-	Head of Engagement, Marketing & Communication (LPPA)
Mr J Beard	-	Chief Fire Officer
Mr A Farrar	-	Democratic Services Officer
Ms L Taylor	-	Finance Manager - Pensions Investments and Governance
Ms S Sedgwick	-	Senior Advisor Pensions
Ms K Ward	-	Business Partner
Ms E Hebblethwaite	-	Client Relationship Manager (LPPA)
Ms S Benson	-	Senior Advisor
Mr P McCall	-	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Ms C Hey	-	Local Government Association

PART 1 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received. The Chair welcomed Mr McCall to the meeting.

42 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference were noted.

43 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest made at this meeting.

44 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Items No 10 – Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30

September 2022 IDRPs (Part 2) and No 11 – Verbal Update on McCloud and Mathews and No 12 – Verbal Update on Emerging Issues by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as the reports contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

A minute's silence was observed upon the death of Councillor Lamb.

The Chair gave a brief tribute to Councillor Lamb and recalled his first meeting with him when Councillor Lamb came to Fire Service Headquarters with the portfolio holder as part of work experience shadowing a Cumbria County Councillor at the age of 16.

45 MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the previous meetings held on 20 October 2022 and 5 December be agreed as a true and accurate record.

46 SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The future meeting dates of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board would be confirmed as Local Government Reorganisation in Cumbria progresses.

47 MONITORING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

Members considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer which advised them of any material risk management, policy or governance issues and national regulatory changes to 31 December 2022 and any performance monitoring issues of the Scheme to 30 September 2022.

The Chief Fire Officer brought to the Board's attention a breach and updated the Board that it was not reportable and highlighted the risk register.

The Chair noted the key personnel risk and asked if the Chief Fire Officer was comfortable with the position and would there be further links with Cumbria Constabulary.

The Chief Fire Officer noted that he was aware that there were gaps regarding personnel but commented that it would be a 2 year programme for disaggregation. It was important that Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service initially stand alone and then it would be clear where collaborations would be required. In the meantime there will be Inter Authority Agreements (IAA's) to ensure continuity. There is also an intention to recruit their own Senior Pensions Advisor.

The Police & Crime Commissioner commented that the challenge at the moment is that they don't know the stand alone costs of running Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service. All options were open and blue light collaboration was possible.

The Business Partner commented that work had been undertaken and an agreement would be in place with LPPA, Pension Administrators, for 1 April.

The Senior Advisor – Pensions highlighted the following:

- **Remedy to Sargeant Age Discrimination Case** – A copy of the draft regulations had been received in the previous week and will be circulated to Board members. The consultation runs until the 23 May 2023.
- **Matthews Second Options exercise** – Received guidance document and was gathering background information although data is an issue.
- **Training plan** – the Training questionnaire will be reissued and a Training plan will be developed.

The Chair noted that the implementation timescale of Pensions Dashboards had been deferred. The Senior Advisor -Pensions commented that it was better to ensure that everything was in order and correct before roll out.

RESOLVED, That the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board received and noted the performance of the Cumbria Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) to 30 September 2022 and any material policy or governance issues and national regulatory changes to 31 December 2022.

48 LPPA UPDATE

The Head of Engagement, Marketing & Communication- Local Pension Partnership Administration gave an update. The following areas were covered including:-

- Pensions Dashboard
- Project PACE
- Quarter 3 Performance
- Helpdesk

The Chair commented on dissatisfaction levels and if any reasons had been communicated.

The Head of Marketing, LPPA noted that the following reasons were given wait time, delays in paperwork and query of information in the packs. This was as a result of implementing the new system but they were actively managing the drop in performance including training for staff and focusing on quality.

A round table discussion took place about the decline in the number of members who had registered with the new portal. The Senior Advisor – Pensions agreed that it would be promoted internally. LPPA will send some promotional material to assist with this.

The Chair congratulated LPPA on their performance and thanked the Head of Engagement, Marketing & Communication at LPPA for their update. The Chair also noted that PensionPoint seemed to be an improvement on the old system.

49 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting date of the Cumbria Fire Pension Board will be confirmed as Local Government Reorganisation in Cumbria progresses.

50 MONITORING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2022 IDR P (PART2)

The Senior Advisor Pensions gave an update on IDR P Stage 2 appeal and on IDR P Stage 1 appeal.

51 VERBAL UPDATE ON MCCLOUD AND MATHEWS

The Local Government Association gave an update. The following areas were covered including:-

- Sargeant timeline
- Key provisions
- Legislative timeline
- Matthews
- 2023 options exercise
- 2023 options exercise in scope
- 2023 options exercise entitlement
- Challenges
- Mitigations
- Pensions dashboard
- Staging
- Cost Cap
- Actions for schemes

52 VERBAL UPDATE ON EMERGING ISSUES

The Chief Fire Officer updated the Board on current emerging issues, including:-

- Pay Award Agreement
- Change in Governance

The Chair thanked Councillor Willis as this would be her last meeting. The Police and Crime Commissioner thanked Councillor Willis for her energy, enthusiasm and commitment to Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service.

The Chair and Vice Chair thanked the Chief Fire Officer for his work and wished him well in his retirement and then continued to thank the wider team for their hard work.

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm