

CUMBRIA FIRE LOCAL PENSION BOARD

Meeting date: 22 October 2020

From: Chief Fire Officer

CUMBRIA FIRE LOCAL PENSION BOARD REPORTS TO COUNCIL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 *This report provides an Annual Report outlining the work of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board in 2019/20, and an update to Council for the six months ending 30th September 2020.*

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

2.1 *The Annual Report of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board contributes to the Council Plan (2018-2022) through supporting our four ways of working, principally our commitment to enterprise and efficiency, through maximisation of our resources.*

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board

3.1 *Formally approve the Annual Report of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board for 2019/20; and*

3.2 *Approve the draft “update to Council for the six months ending 30th September 2020” report for presentation to the County Council in early 2021.*

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board is constituted under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and the Fire Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2014. The role of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board is to assist Cumbria County Council (as the Scheme Manager of the Cumbria Firefighters' Pension Scheme):

4.2 (a) to secure compliance with:

(i) The regulations covering administration of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (FPS);

(ii) Other legislation relation to the governance and administration of the FPS; and

(iii) The requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the FPS; and

(b) in ensuring the effective and efficient governance and administration of the FPS.

4.3 In its role in assisting the Scheme Manager the Board is required to report to Council on matters reviewed and suggestions for its consideration. To comply with this requirement this report contains, in Appendix 1, the Annual Report of the Fire Local Pension Board for 2019/20, and at Appendix 2 a draft report "Update to Council for the six months ending 30th September 2020".

4.4 Where the Fire Local Pension 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.

4.5 The Board has no such matters of non-compliance that are considered appropriate to raise with the Audit and Assurance Committee.

Annual Report for 2019/20:

4.6 The Annual Report of the Fire Local Pension Board was presented to the Board as an appendix to the Scheme Update paper, circulated by e-mail in July 2020, and followed up by a group call. There were no issues arising from this review.

4.7 The Annual Report for 2019/20 was then presented to Council on 9th September 2020 by Councillor Arthur Lamb, and the report noted. It is attached as Appendix 1 to this report for formal approval by the Board.

Update Report for Council:

4.8 A draft report "Update to Council for the six months ending 30th September 2020" is attached at Appendix 2 for approval by the Board ahead of presenting to Council in early 2021, as required by the Terms of Reference.

4.9 The report details how the Board meetings scheduled for May and July 2020 were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but that given the important Governance role of the Board, Members received a Scheme Update paper in July, which was circulated by e-mail and followed up by a group call to enable them to raise any queries and discuss matters further. The key message being that in terms of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme it was very much 'business as usual' as far as possible.

- 4.10 Pensions continued to be paid on time, Annual Benefit Statements were issued ahead of the Statutory deadline and the Administration provider was in regular contact. Updates on the Sargeant case and other national developments had been given by representatives from the LGA, with training and development of Board Members continuing to be a priority.

5.0 OPTIONS

- 5.1 Option 1: Formally approve the Annual Report of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board for 2019/20; and approve the draft “update to Council for the six months ending 30th September 2020” report for presentation to the County Council in early 2021 in line with paragraph 2.3 of the Board’s Terms of Reference (Part 2Q of the Council’s Constitution).
- 5.2 Option 2: Formally approve the Annual Report of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board for 2019/20; and request amendments to the draft “update to Council for the six months ending 30th September 2020” report for presentation to the County Council in early 2021.

6.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no resources or value for money implications associated with this report.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Fire Local Pension Board assists the Council (as Scheme Manager) to comply with legislative requirements and ensure effective governance of the Cumbria Firefighters Pension Scheme. Under its terms of reference, the Board reports to the Council twice yearly on matters reviewed and suggestions for consideration.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The presentation of the reports twice yearly to Council will assist the Fire Pension Board in fulfilling its function to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the FPS.

Steve Healey
Chief Fire Officer
22nd October 2020

APPENDICES

1. Annual Report of the Fire Local Pension Board for 2019/20

2. Draft Report - "Update to Council for the six months ending 30th September 2020."

Electoral Division(s): All

Executive Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*
Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*
If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A*
Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*
If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A*
Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny? If so, give details below.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*
Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A*
Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A*

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

None.

REPORT AUTHOR

Contact:

Gill Welbourn, Technical Finance Officer – Pensions

07765 221527

Gill.welbourn@cumbria.gov.uk