

FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEMES MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING 6 NOVEMBER 2024 – 2.00PM

PRESENT:	EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES Councillor Ben Clayton - Chair Councillor David Coupe EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES Mr David Howe
IN ATTENDANCE:	Simon Weastell - ACFO Community Protection Michelle Richardson - Brigade Pension Advisor Louise Tindall - Governance Advisor Graeme Hall - XPS Business Services
APOLOGIES:	Peter Rickard - Scheme Manager Councillor Mick Stoker Mr Alan Turner - Vice Chair Mr Sid Walker - Employee Representative Sharon Stoker - XPS Business Services

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Coupe informed the Board that he is currently appointed to the Teesside Pension Fund Committee. Louise Tindall (LT) to check with the Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer (LAMO) whether this needs to be recorded.

RESOLVED – LT to seek advice from LAMO regarding Cllr Coupe's position on Teesside Pension Fund Committee.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Local Pension Board Annual General Meeting on 8 August 2024 be confirmed.

3. SCHEME MANAGERS' REPORT TO THE BOARD

The Scheme Manager (SM) provided the Board with the following updates:

- Discretions Applied - none
- Ill Health - one
- Appeals - none

3. SCHEME MANAGERS' REPORT TO THE BOARD cont.

- IDRP - one complaint investigated and not upheld
- Breaches of the law – two potential breaches currently being assessed and the outcomes will be reported to the next LPB in February 2025.
- Cyber Security - no reported breaches
- Compliance – Cyber Essentials Plus (CE+) accredited.
- Risk Register – noted
- Matthews Case Remedy - 88 Members in scope, all written to with a deadline of 29 March 2025 to respond. To date 59 responses received and a further 14 expressions of interest. Only one person not traced.
- Future training dates - noted

McCloud / Sargent Case Remedy update - noted

- IC-RSS Issuance – Michelle Richardson (MR) confirmed that 17 have been issued to date with guidance through liaison with the administrator. Roll-out was expected to commence soon for the Brigade's 100+ members.
- Contingent decisions – six applications received to date to be considered by the Scheme Manager. Work on these cases is imminent.

Dave Howe (DH) asked if there was a hierarchy of how these cases will be dealt with as he was concerned those who have opted out will be dealt with before those still in the scheme. MR confirmed that contingent decisions would be dealt with further along the timeline as they are still active.

Councillor Coupe highlighted the complicated nature of the remedy and the importance of ensuring Members are made aware of what they are entitled to and encouraged to seek independent advice where necessary. DH confirmed the FBU has issued numerous circulars to encourage Members to engage.

RESOLVED - That the Scheme Manager's Report be noted.

4. PERFORMANCE

4.1 XPS Contract Management / Performance Delivery Report Q2

The Board considered the Performance Delivery Report for 1 April – 30 September 2024 which was presented in a new format and covered Headlines, Scheme Events and Projects, Errors and Complaints, Member Experience, Membership, Data Quality, and Regulations and Guidance.

Graeme Hall (GH) confirmed that XPS was currently working on a dashboard readiness report ahead of the dashboard connection deadline of October 2025. The Board recognised the benefits of having a dashboard and the importance of members accessing their information to look at retirement options and to ensure their data is kept up to date.

GH reported that a third of the Brigade's members were still not signed up to the self-serve portal. DH suggested new recruits received pension information as part of their induction. MR agreed to add this to the induction programme. GH also suggested he could hold a pension induction session for new recruits to get them set up online and answer any questions.

4.1 XPS Contract Management / Performance Delivery Report Q2 cont.

The Chair noted the slight improvement in the overall SLA score and asked MR if she was content with how the contract is being managed. MR gave assurance to the Board and confirmed that the recent contract management meeting was positive.

RESOLVED: -

- (i) That the report be noted.**
- (ii) That an XPS Pension session be added to the induction programme for new recruits.**

5. COMMUNICATIONS AND BULLETINS

MR presented the actions from FPS Bulletins 83, 84, 85 and provided the Board with assurance that all actions identified are progressed and are on track.

RESOLVED – that the FPS Bulletin Log be noted.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no additional items for discussion.

Next Meeting - 19 February 2025

**COUNCILLOR BEN CLAYTON
CHAIR**