LOCAL PENSION BOARD

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEMES
MINUTES OF MEETING-27 FEBRUARY 2019

PRESENT: **EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE**
Dave Howe – Vice Chair
EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES
Karen Winter

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Hayton - Scheme Manager
Beverley Parker - Governance/Training Advisor
Diane Snelling - Technical Pensions Advisor
Paul Mudd - Governance Manager, XPS Pensions Unit

APOLOGIES: Councillor Teresa Higgins – Chair

13. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS
It was noted no Declarations of Interests were submitted to the meeting.

14. MINUTES
RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Local Pension Board Meeting on 12 September 2018 be confirmed.

15. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
15.1 Resignation
Bev Parker confirmed that a letter of resignation had been received from retired employee representative Dave Kelly on 15 November 2018. He thanked Board Members and Officers for their support and guidance during his term of office. Dave Howe confirmed that Brian Gibson had indicated that he was interested in the vacancy. Diane Snelling confirmed that the vacancy did not have to be advertised. The Board agreed that the appointment and documentation be forwarded to the Scheme Manager.

RESOLVED:-
(i) that the resignation of Dave Kelly be noted.
(ii) that Brian Gibson's recommendation to be appointed as retired employee representative be sent to the Scheme Manager for his approval.

15.2 XPS Pension Group

The Board received details of the taker over of Kier Pensions Unit to the XPS Pension Group on 1 November 2018.

15.3 Breaches of the Law

No Breaches, or potential breaches, of the Law were reported.

15.4 Annual Work Programme – Internal Controls

The Board re-visited the Annual Work Programme, which was agreed at the AGM on 12 September 2018. Paul Mudd confirmed that the year-end Annual Benefit Statements were due to go out imminently and the Governance Survey would be sent later in the year.

The Board discussed mandatory returns and agreed that the Board and/or Scheme Manager should be consulted prior to submission. It was also agreed that the LPB Privacy Notice needed to be updated with details of the new company.

RESOLVED:-

(i) that the Board and /or Scheme Manager be consulted on all mandatory returns prior to submission.

(ii) that 'Consultation on Mandatory Returns' be added to the Work Programme.

(iii) that the privacy notice be updated to reflect the new company XPS Pension Group.

16. COMMUNICATIONS

16.1 Update to the Board

FPS Bulletins 11-16

The Board discussed the bulletins which had been previously circulated to the Board which covered:

- Annual Benefit Survey
- Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) Levy
- Ill Health and Injury Determinations and Role of the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioner (QMP)
- Pensionable Pay Update
- The Pensions Regulator Scheme Return
- Court of Appeal transitional protections judgement
- Amendments to Firefighter Pension Schemes (England) – Consultation
- FPS Benchmarking exercise
- Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) request for information
- FPS 2016 valuation
- Online Forum for Board Members

The Board discussed whether the SAB levy represented good value for money at £3800 for 2018/19. The Board felt that circulars were not always clear and it would be helpful if they highlighted what action was required. The Board agreed to contact Clair Alcock / Claire Hey and forward suggestions for improvement.

16.1 FPS Bulletins 11-16 cont.

RESOLVED:-

(i) that the report be noted

(ii) that issues with circulars be fed back to the Scheme Advisory Board.

17. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT 2018/19

17.1 The Board considered the training log at Appendix 1 and agreed that it should be tailored to incorporate the training needs of new Board Members.

RESOLVED:-

(i) that the report be noted

(ii) that the training needs of new members be incorporated into the Training Log.

18. PROGRESS OF RISK REGISTER

18.1 Identified Risks and Mitigation

The Board reviewed the risk register at Appendix 1 which had been updated to reflect the changes agreed at the Board's annual meeting on 12 September 2018.

The Scheme Manager confirmed that an open tender exercise was underway for a FPS Administration and Payroll Services provider. This was discussed in detail at Agenda Item 12 (minute 23 refers).

RESOLVED – that the Board reviewed the Risk Register and no further key risks were identified.

19. LEGAL ADVISER AND MONITORING OFFICER REPORT

19.1 Consideration of a Regional Scheme

The Board considered the report of the Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer (LAMO) on the feasibility of operating a regional scheme, as discussed at its meeting on 17 April 2018.

Mrs Parker referred the Board to paragraph 5.1 which stated: 'Through the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015, there is a provision for the operation of a 'Joint Local Pension Board.' However, this is only where '*the administration and management of a scheme is wholly or mainly shared by two or more 'Administering Authorities'.* Furthermore, those Administering Authorities may only establish a 'Joint Local Pension Board', with the approval of the Secretary of State.'

In conclusion, the LAMO noted that this Authority did not meet the statutory criteria to establish a Joint Local Pension Board however the sentiment of seeking to improve the 'skillbase' of LBP members could be achieved through the informal arrangements of shared training and network initiatives.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

20. XPS BUSINESS SERVICE UPDATE

20.1 Brexit update

Mr Mudd provided Members with a summary of an internal risk assessment of the impacts of the UK leaving the European Union. This included:

- Regulatory environment
- Data and GDPR
- Contracts
- Staffing
- Third Party Providers and Supply Chain
- Financial
- Uncertainty over Final Brexit Deal

RESOLVED – that the report be noted

20.2 Cleveland Fire Service Delivery Report April 2018 – March 2019

Mr Mudd agreed to forward the full figures for 2018/19 (including March) out to Members once available.

He confirmed that the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) had been completed on 25 September 2018 and outcomes were still awaited and agreed to chase this up and feed back to next meeting.

He reported no complaints had been received and outlined the complaints procedure which carried a 20 day turn around.

Mr Mudd referred to page 10 of the report and highlighted an increase in data scores from 98.06% to 99.03% since the last report. He noted that XPS was proactively trying to increase common data scores across the board and the reason for this anomaly was due to temporary National Insurance numbers.

Mrs Winter queried how XPS checked its records were accurate. Mr Mudd confirmed that having complete and accurate records was important to XPS and it had service delivery teams working on correspondence to ensure this was kept up to date. He added that a Self-Serve Online facility had been launched and the Annual Benefits Statement which included a ‘statement of particulars’ provided a further opportunity to make contact with customers to ensure the common data held was correct.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

21.1 The Board agreed to cancel the meeting scheduled for 17 April 2019. Bev Parker to circulate new dates.

RESOLVED – that the meeting of the Local Pension Board on 17 April 2019 be cancelled and Bev Parker to circulate a new date.

Mr Mudd left the meeting

22. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION ORDER) 2006

RESOLVED - That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority) holding that information.

23. PENSION CONTRACT – VERBAL UPDATE

The Board received a confidential update on the Brigade's Pension Contract.

MR DAVE HOWE
VICE CHAIR