

**Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
Pension Board
held on Wednesday, 22 July 2015 at 3.00 pm
in The Juniper Room, Service Headquarters, Shrewsbury**

Present

Members

Employer Representatives

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Rod Hammerton
Treasurer and S151 Officer James Walton – by teleconference

Member Representatives

Brigade Secretary Fire Brigades Union Matt Lamb
Representative of the Retained Firefighters Union Tony Talbot

Officers

Corporate Support Manager, Human Resources Manager and
Executive Support Officer

1 Appointment of Chair

The Corporate Support Manager advised that the Fire Authority would decide at its October meeting upon the process for appointment of the Chair of the Pension Board. In the meantime it was necessary for the Board to appoint a Chair to hold office until an appointment had been made in accordance with that process.

It was proposed by Matt Lamb, seconded by Tony Talbot and on a vote, with no other nominations,

Resolved that Deputy Chief Fire Officer Rod Hammerton be appointed Chair of the Pension Board to hold office until a Chair had been appointed in accordance with the process to be agreed by the Fire Authority at its meeting in October

2 Introductions

As this was the inaugural meeting of the Pension Board, the Chair introduced those present as follows:

- Himself and James Walton, as employer representatives;
- Matt Lamb, as an employee representative – Fire Brigade's Union; and
- Tony Talbot, as employee representative – Retained Firefighter's Union

3 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

4 Conflicts of Interest

The Chair advised Board members that they should declare any interests or responsibilities, which might lead to conflicts of interest in the subject area or any specific agenda item of this meeting.

He went on to say that a conflict of interest was defined as a financial or other interest, which was likely to prejudice a person's exercise of functions as a member of the Pension Board. It did not include a financial or other interest arising merely by virtue of that person being a member of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. He felt it would be helpful, if the Board were to receive some training in this area.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

5 Guidance on the Creation and Operation of Local Pension Boards in England

Board members had received a copy of the 'Firefighters' Pension Scheme - Guidance on the creation and operation of Local Pension Boards in England'. Issued by the Local Government Association, the Guidance was designed to assist Scheme Managers in the creation and operation of Local Pension Boards in line with relevant legislation and, in particular, The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and Regulations emanating from that Act.

The Corporate Support Manager advised that there were a number of typographic errors in the Guidance, in particular where cross references were given.

The Human Resources Manager asked the Board to take note of Section A (page 67 onwards), which contained useful information on their role and could be used to form the basis of a Training Needs Analysis.

There was some discussion on the recent training in London, which Matt Lamb and Tony Talbot had attended. They felt that the training was lacking, as it had not explained what work Board members would be doing, having concentrated on how the Board had come into existence. The Human Resources Manager responded that she would liaise with regional Fire and Rescue Services and the current training provider to source further, more specific training for the Board.

It was proposed by Matt Lamb, seconded by James Walton and

Resolved that the Guidance be noted

6 Pension Board Terms of Reference

This report asked the Pension Board to agree its Terms of Reference, a draft of which was set out at the appendix to the report.

There was discussion regarding the size of the Board in that there could be additional members, as long as the employer and employee side were equally represented. It was noted that it was also possible to have a co-opted Chair, who would have no voting powers.

The Corporate Support Manager advised that the Terms of Reference proposed that administration of meetings follow the procedures, set out in the Standing Orders for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority. This was an open and transparent method of dealing with meeting papers, which would be available on the Service's website, unless they were classed as exempt or confidential.

If requested by a Board member, meeting papers could be sent via email, to the email address specified by them, rather than by post to their home address. James Walton requested that papers be sent to him only via email. Matt Lamb asked that they be sent to him by both email and post.

It was proposed by Tony Talbot, seconded by Rod Hammerton and

Resolved that the Board:

- a) Formally adopt the Terms of Reference, set out at the appendix to the report;
- b) Hold two meetings per year, the next one to be arranged for January 2016, and agree that the quorum for meetings be four;
- c) Include in the Terms of Reference the wording, set out in section 4 of this report, regarding the administration of Board meetings;
- d) Make recommendations accordingly to the Fire Authority

Committee Clerk's Note

At its October meeting the Fire Authority considered and ratified the terms of reference of the Board, **with the exception that** the quorum has been set at three, to allow for occasions when a Board member might be conflicted out. The Fire Authority also agreed that the Board should be given authority to appoint its Chair.

7 Code of Conduct

This report asked the Pension Board formally to adopt the Code of Conduct, to which its members were subject.

It was proposed by Matt Lamb, seconded by Rod Hammerton and

Resolved that the Board formally adopt the Code of Conduct

8 Training and Liaison

This report asked the Pension Board to designate:

- An officer of the Fire Authority to take responsibility for developing and implementing a knowledge and understanding framework to ensure that Board members are able to fulfil their role effectively; and

- An officer of the Fire Authority to liaise with the Scheme Advisory Board and the Local Government Association.

It was proposed by Rod Hammerton, seconded by Matt Lamb and

Resolved that:

- The Development Officer be designated to take responsibility for developing and implementing a knowledge and understanding framework to ensure that Board members were able to fulfil their role effectively; and
- The Human Resources Manager be designated to liaise with the Scheme Advisory Board and the Local Government Association

9 Date of Next Meeting

The Corporate Support Manager advised that the Board had agreed in its Terms of Reference to meet every six months. In light of this, she recommended that the next Board meeting take place in January 2016. If the Board needed to consider any business prior to that, a meeting would be arranged accordingly.

It was proposed by Rod Hammerton, seconded by Matt Lamb and

Resolved that the next meeting of the Board take place in January 2016.

The meeting closed at 15.33 pm.

These minutes were agreed by the Pension Board and signed as a correct record by the:

Chair.....

on

Date.....