

**AWDURDOD TÂN AC ACHUB CANOLBARTH A GORLLEWIN  
CYMRU**



**MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**CYFARFOD O'R BWRDD PENSIWN LLEOL, A GYNHELIR  
MEETING OF LOCAL PENSION BOARD, HELD ON  
DYDD LLUN, 10 GORFFENNAF 2017  
MONDAY, 10 JULY 2017**

**PENCADLYS Y GWASANAETH TÂN AC ACHUB  
HEOL LLWYN PISGWYDD, CAERFYRDDIN  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,  
LIME GROVE AVENUE, CARMARTHEN**

**14:00 – 15:40**

**44% presenoldeb / attendance**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRPERSON: Mr G Moore

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cllr A Woolcock, ( Fire Authority memb  
and employer representative ),  
I Cray (employer representative), M  
Crennell (APFO representative),

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: S Bryant (employer representative),  
T Dicker (RFU), Mr A Hearne (FBU),  
A Sherman (FOA), Cllr C Mills (Fire  
Authority member and employer  
representative)

D Daycock, K Jones, M Miles,  
S Davidson, Mr M Prior

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from S Bryant (employer representative), T Dicker (RFU), A Hearne (FBU), A Sherman (FOA) and Cllr C Mills.

## **2 DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS**

Councillor A Woolcock declared a personal interest in any business relating to, or affecting Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

## **3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / PERSONAL MATTERS**

The Chair referred to the tragic Grenfell Tower incident and paid tribute to the sterling efforts and bravery of emergency services officers.

The Chair extended a very warm welcome to Mr M Prior, Chair of the Firefighters Pension Scheme Advisory Board for Wales.

The Chair referred to the attendance record of a Member Representative in line with section 8.3 of the Board's Terms of Reference. It was reported that although 3 consecutive meetings of the Board had been missed, and in the light of this the Chair expressed the view, supported by the other attendees that no further action was considered necessary given the extenuating circumstances surrounding the individual's absence.

The Chair reported that the Pension Regulator had recently published the results of a public service governance and administration survey and requested that this be considered at the next meeting of the Local Pension Board.

The chair referred to the EU General Data Protection Regulations which would be enforced on 25 May 2018. The Chair requested that the implications on the Authority and the Authority's Pension Scheme Administrators be reviewed to ensure compliance, as required.

## **4 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the Local Pension Board meeting held on 13 March 2017 were approved as a true record of proceedings. There were no matters arising.

## **5 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE REGARDING THE FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEME ADVISORY BOARD (WALES)**

Mr M Prior provided the Board with an overview of role, remit and structure of the Firefighters Pension Scheme Advisory Board for Wales which had been established to advise Welsh Ministers on the management of the scheme from the perspective of employers and scheme members.

Members of the Board were provided with an update on the Scheme Evaluation process carried out during 2016, the results of which would be available at the end of the year.

A discussion ensued regarding the importance of Board Members in attending meetings and being kept abreast of legislative updates which, in turn, would give Board Members the confidence and expertise to undertake their role effectively. It was suggested that a letter be issued to Board Members highlighting the importance of meeting attendance in light of the Board's forward work programme, and this was agreed.

Reference was made to the forthcoming training and development event scheduled for 29 September 2017 in Merthyr Tydfil whereby Mr M Prior encouraged attendance from all Local Pension Board and Scheme Advisory Board Members.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that Councillor Rowland Rees-Evans had been nominated to represent the Fire Authority on the Scheme Advisory Board and would be attending the training session on 29 September 2017.

## **RESOLUTION**

**It was *RESOLVED* to note the update from the Scheme Advisory Board, and that a letter be issued to all Board members highlighting the need to attend meetings.**

### **6 TO RECEIVE AND AGREE THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17**

The Chair presented a report to Members on the Local Pension Board Draft Annual Report, which outlined the work of the Board during the 2016/17 financial year. Board Members were informed that the Annual Report, once approved by Board Members, would be presented to the Fire Authority for approval at its meeting on the 18 September 2017.

Consideration was given to the Draft Annual Report (The Report) and a number of proposals to amend the report were made, as follows:

- Page 6:- Mr M Prior proposed that the Report specified the name of each Member of the Board.
- Page 6:- the Chair proposed that the Report incorporated individual member attendance into section 2.3.
- Page 8:- DCFO M Crennell proposed that section 4.2 of the Report be updated to report that the Annual Benefit Statements had not been issued within the required timescales.

The above proposals were agreed.

A discussion ensued regarding the structure of the report, whereby Mr M Prior advised that the formatting would be reviewed by the Scheme Advisory Board with a view to providing consistency across the Welsh Fire and Rescue Services.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the report on the Local Pension Board Draft Annual Report 2016/17, as amended above, be recommended for approval by the Fire Authority.***

### **7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TRAINING ANALYSIS AND TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Board Members gave consideration to the Training Needs Analysis and Training Programme. The Chair made reference to the external training received to date which had been well delivered, relevant and was considered value for money.

It was reported that each Member of the Board was responsible for ensuring that they had the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to exercise their role on the Local Pension Board effectively.

The Board felt that it was considered timely to consolidate training requirements with a view to reducing the skills gap and ensuring that Board Members were familiar with topics pertinent to the Local Pension Board.

It was agreed that the Head of Human Resources circulate the previous Training Needs Analysis documentation to Board Members to ensure that future training events would be centred around the areas where it was identified that there was less of an understanding by Board Members.

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer requested that a training event on Data Protection be incorporated into the Programme. This was agreed.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that ;***

***1.the update on the Training Needs Analysis and Training Programme be noted,***

***2. the Head of Human Resources circulate the previous training needs Analysis documentation.***

***3. a training event on Data protection be incorporated into the programme***

### **8 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER A REPORT ON THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD – RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

Consideration was given to the Risk Assessment Policy document attached at Appendix 1 of the report which comprised Operations, Financial, Funding and Regulatory & Compliance areas of risk.

Of particular importance to Board Members were the risks in terms of cyber-crime and the Board agreed that the Scheme Administrators attend the next meeting of the Local Pension Board to provide assurances surrounding business continuity and data integrity. This step would then provide sufficient information to enable the Board to accurately record 'cyber-crime' as a separate category within the risk assessment form.

Reference was made to Risk Area 1 relating to 'Administration process failure' whereby it was agreed that the comments section would be amended to reflect that the Service Level Agreement had been updated in April 2017.

A discussion ensued on Risk Area 4, namely 'the failure to interpret rules or legislation correctly', which had been categorised as the highest area of risk for the Scheme Advisory Panel. It was accordingly agreed that the next update provided by the Scheme Administrators include an outline of the specialist skills needed of employees to provide the pension services in accordance with the Service Level Agreement. It was further agreed that an update on the number of complaints received and dealt with in respect of pension matters be provided to the Board.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that;*

- 1. The scheme administrators attend the next meeting to provide assurances on business continuity and data integrity;*
- 2. Risk area 1 be amended as agreed;*
- 3. The next update from the scheme administrators include an outline of specialist skills needed of employees, and an update regarding complaints received and dealt with regarding pension matters;*
- 4. The Risk Assessment be amended as set out above, and be recommended to the Fire Authority for adoption.*

## **9 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD BUDGET**

**The Chair declared a personal interest in the Local Pension Board Budget.**

The Chair provided an overview of the Local Pension Board Budget, which was projected at £9,637 for 2017/18 and compared against an actual expenditure of £9,413 for 2016/17. The Board were informed that costings in respect of training had been adjusted to reflect the services provided by external training providers, which had proven to be excellent value for money.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the update on the Pension Board Budget be noted.***

**10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEME ACTIVITY**

The Human Resources Officer introduced a report to Board Members on the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Activity for the period 1 March 2017 to 30 June 2017.

Board Members were informed of the number of scheme members across the various pension schemes, together with the number of pensioner members of each scheme, and the number of deferred members of each scheme.

Board Members were made aware that 18 pension benefit estimates had been provided during the reporting period with an average turnaround time of 16 working days to provide the pension illustrations.

Furthermore, it was confirmed that no new Internal Disputes Resolution Procedures applications or complaints had been received.

In response to a query, the Head of Human Resources clarified that the number of new employees who had joined the Pension Scheme during the reporting period could be attributed to the turnover rate within the on-call sector of 70-80 employees per annum.

The Human Resources Officer provided Board Members with an overview of 2 complaints which had previously been reported to the Pension Board but remained ongoing with the Pensions Ombudsman and therefore in the light of this further determination was awaited in this regard.

The Chair thanked the Human Resources Officer for the update and reported that the information had been valuable for Board Members. The Chair looked forward to receiving regular updates of this nature.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the report on the Firefighters Pension Scheme Activity be noted.***

**11 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT ON THE ANNUAL BENEFIT STATEMENTS 2016/17**

The Human Resources Officer presented the report on the provision of Annual Benefit Statements for 2016/17 and provided Board Members with an update on the end of year pension contribution data reconciliation process.

The Board were assured that all data files for the Firefighter Pension Schemes had been submitted to the Administrators by the required deadline of 30 April 2017, which would allow sufficient time for any discrepancies to be resolved and ensure that the Annual Benefit Statements would be issued by the statutory timeframe.

In response to a query from the Chair, the Head of Human Resources confirmed that the Service was exploring the introduction of an 'i-connect system' which would enable the secure monthly transfer of payroll data to the Administrators, however this would incur a 12-18month lead time.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.*

### **12 TO RECEIVE AN NOTE A REPORT ON THE SCHEME ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE**

The Chair presented an update report submitted by the Scheme Administrators on a number on various ongoing work-streams. Board Members were provided with a summary of the information contained within the report, which comprised progress relating to the Annual Benefit Statements and the support provided to the Service to ensure the extraction of end of year data in the specified format. An update on the e-communication 'My Pension online' facility was provided, which showed that 9 scheme members had elected to continue to receive paper statements, together with a synopsis of the Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) reconciliation process and the redevelopment of the website by external programmers which would be live in August 2017. In respect of the pension increases and revaluation of benefits, it was confirmed that CARE revaluation for all active members would be applied following completion of the end of year exercise.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.*

### **13 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair provided an overview of the Local Pension Board Forward Work Plan for July 2017- March 2018.

It was requested that any suggestions for inclusion in the Forward Work Plan be submitted to the Chair for consideration.

The Chair requested that a 30 minute pre-meeting be scheduled for Board Members prior to each meeting. This was agreed.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that the Forward Work Plan be noted, and that a 30 minute pre meeting be scheduled prior to each future meeting.*

There were no other items of urgent business. Mr M Prior did however request that the three Welsh Fire Authorities discuss a consistent approach to the provision of updates to the Scheme Advisory Board. The Director of Resources agreed to liaise with North and South Wales Fire Authorities in this regard.

The meeting closed at 15:40.