



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE**

**Draft Minutes of the Local Pension Board meeting held at 14:00 hours on Thursday 27 April 2023 via Microsoft Teams**

These are draft minutes to be approved by the Board at their next meeting.

**Members present:**

Mr Ian Cotter	Employer Officer Representative (Chair)
AM Damien Bence	Employer Officer Representative
Cllr Richard Biggs	Employer Member Representative (Vice Chair)
Cllr Brian Ford	Employer Member Representative
Mr Gerard Senior	Scheme Member Retiree Representative
Mr Sean Frampton	Scheme Member Retiree Representative

**Other staff:**

Mrs Carol Swan – Head of HR  
Mr Mike Rees, Employee Relations Officer  
Ms Sadie Price - HR Business Partner and Employee Relations Manager

**Guest:**

Ms Helen Scargill, West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) – Administrator

**Minute taker:** David Shaw, Democratic Services Officer

**23/13 Welcome and introductions**

23/13.1 Ian Cotter, Employer Officer Representative and Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees, including Area Manager, Damien Bence who had replaced Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Andy Cole as an Employer Officer Representative on the Board.

**23/14 Apologies**

23/14.1 Apologies were received from Mr Allan Frias-Robles, Scheme Member Employee Representative, Mrs Jacqueline Blight, Employee Relations Advisor and Mrs Jacky White, HR Advisor Employee Relations Pensions.

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**23/15 Conflicts of Interest/Code of Conduct**

23/15.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any declarations of conflicts of interest. There were no disclosures.

**23/16 Minutes from the Local Pension Board meeting held on 1 February 2023**

23/16.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the meeting of 1 February 2023.

23/16.2 **RESOLVED: That subject to the reference in minute 23/08.4 to 21 October 2023 being amended to read 1 October 2023, the Minutes from the Local Pension Board meeting held on 1 February 2023 be agreed as a correct record.**

**23/17 Review actions from all Local Pension Board meetings**

23/17.1 The actions from the previous meetings were discussed and updated. Three actions remained open, numbers 43, 45 and 53.

23/17.2 For Action 43 the Chair explained that the future member training item had been ongoing for a considerable time and proposed that it be removed from the list of outstanding actions. This was supported by the Board.

23/17.3 Action 45, to arrange for an internal advert to Service staff to seek applications for the two vacant positions, was also ongoing. Sadie Price informed the meeting that the matter of appointment would be taken up with the Fire Brigade Union to encourage interest from scheme members.

23/17.4 In respect of action 53, that cyber security arrangements for West Yorkshire Pension Fund be provided to the Service's Cyber Security Manager for review and the outcome be reported to the next meeting of the Board, Mike Rees reported that the Service's Cyber Security Manager had confirmed that the West Yorkshire Cyber Security document met the Service's requirements

23/17.5 **RESOLVED: That the pending actions on number 45 be noted; that action number 53 was complete and that action 43 be removed from the list of outstanding actions.**

**23/18 Local Pension Board Risk Register**

23/18.1 The Chair informed the Board that, following a previous request from Cllr Richard Biggs, the risk register had not yet been updated to include risk descriptions, and this would be undertaken in association with Jill McCrae, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of Service Support, to be reported at a future meeting.

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23/18.5 **RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**23/19 Scheme Manager update**

23/19.1 Carol Swan, Head of HR, presented the Scheme Manager Update for April which covered Update on Pension Dashboards Programme (PDP); Consultations and Surveys; Internal Disputes Resolutions; Breaches; Communications; Pension Team – Ongoing Work/Projects and Meetings, Events and Training.

23/19.2 In reply to a question from Cllr Brian Ford regarding the PDP, Carol Swan stated that it was intended that private pensions would be included within the dashboard. It was noted that the connection deadlines set out in legislation would not be met and that a revised timeline was being considered by the PDP and the Department for Work and Pensions.

23/19.3 Reference was made to the consultation on the Firefighters Pension Scheme (Remediable Service) Regulations 2023 and that the close of consultation was on 23 May 2023. A further consultation had commenced on the 2006 Retained Firefighter Pension Scheme, and access to the modified scheme, with consultation closing on 9 June 2023.

23/19.4 There were two internal dispute resolutions ongoing. In respect of case 1, relating to access to the Firefighters Pension Scheme, the appeal had been considered by the Appointments and Disputes Committee on 19 April 2023 and the appeal had not been upheld. The appellant could now take the case to the Pensions Ombudsman. Regarding case 2, the claimant contended that the 20% day crewing allowance should all be pensionable, rather than the 5% element only. The Service would be seeking legal clarification on this matter before responding formally to the claimant with an outcome. An update would be provided to future Pension Board meetings.

23/19.5 In reply to a question from Sean Frampton, Carol Swan explained that there were previous ombudsman cases that were relevant to case 2, which had been passed to the Service's legal representative for clarification.

23/19.6 There had been no reported breaches.

23/19.7 In respect of communications, Local Government Association (LGA) Pension Bulletins 65 and 66 and Monthly Reports from West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) had been circulated to Pension Board Members since the last meeting in February.

23/19.8 In respect of pension team ongoing work/projects, reference was made to undertaking the financial part of the remedy work and collating pensionable pay, Continuing Professional Development and temporary promotion pay from April 2015 to March 2022. Carol Swan explained that this was a very

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manual task with over 850 records to review and to enter into a spreadsheet for WYPF. Mike Rees was liaising with WYPF on how timetables could be met and if work could be completed in batches.

- 23/19.9 In reply to a question from the Chair, Carol Swan explained that the figure of 850 contained all members past and present. Mike Rees added that in excess of 50% of cases would be ready by 30 June. Sean Frampton enquired if extra resources would be employed if targets would not be met and if Government funding was available. Carol Swan replied that extra internal staff resources could be employed if required and the Chair added that additional Government grant was unlikely. Helen Scargill explained that the date of 30 June was flexible, with a substantial part of the remedy work required to be submitted by this date, with the remainder to be ready by 31 July 2023. The data was required by the 1 October 2023 to enable individuals to consider their options. Mike Rees agreed that 31 July was reasonable to complete the task as the work for whole time was completed but required in-putting to the spreadsheet for WYPF. Four hundred whole time records could be completed by the end of May. The remaining 450 records for retained firefighters were more problematic to process but would be completed by the 31 July. Helen Scargill observed that the Service would be near the front of all 23 client Fire and Rescue services in providing its data.
- 23/19.10 The second options exercise would be undertaken when the remedy work was finished. The day crewing pension issue had been concluded with revised contracts issued by 30 April 2023 for 36 staff members. The Injury Award Pension Review and the recovery of overpayments and underpayments to be rectified was ongoing.
- 23/19.11 Carol Swan concluded by stating that the Fire Pensions Annual Conference would take place from 19 to 20 September and that the LGA Coffee Morning was held over MS Teams every second Tuesday. Helen Scargill added that the Pensions Data Conference would take place on 17 May.
- 23/19.12 **RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

## **23/20 West Yorkshire Pension Fund update**

- 23/20.1 Helen Scargill gave a verbal update based on the WYPF report.
- 23/20.2 The number of website registrations was continuing to increase over time. Approximately 50% were now registered. There were 968 active records, although some may be due to dual employment. There were 915 pensioners, not including beneficiaries.
- 23/20.3 The administration was up to date. The month 12 returns from DWFRS had been received and checked and had been completed without amendment, which was a good outcome.

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- 23/20.4 WYPF had contacted all of its client Fire and Rescue services to seek more up to date information on home addresses to complete the section on 'lost contact / deferred'.
- 23/20.5 It was requested that a paragraph be included in letters to leavers of the Service to make it clear that WYPF were the pension administrators, and that David Pennington at WYPF also be informed of the leavers.
- 23/20.6 There had been no data breaches and other matters were covered in the monthly bulletins.
- 23/20.7 Helen Scargill referred to a survey that WYPF was undertaking to assist them in resourcing for future work. Questions might include the number of those in arrears or early leavers, ill health cases who may be referred back and Matthew cases affected by the remedy.
- 23/20.8 Reference was made to communications regarding the Matthews remedy. This included providing estimates for leavers after October 2023 with a disclaimer that before legislation had been laid leavers would receive the Deferred Choice Underpin (DCU) options, with payment to be made after the legislation had changed. This included communications on Matthews at DWFRS service level with active members contacted and the member website to be updated with additional information.
- 23/20.9 Helen Scargill continued that communication on P60s had been undertaken on behalf of the Service and that the impact on allowances following changes in the last Chancellor's Budget were being processed and taken forward.
- 23/20.10 In reply to a question from the Chair regarding the remedy process, Helen Scargill stated that it was anticipated that the legislation would meet its timetable. WYPF was in a position to process new retirements and to process rollbacks from the 1 October. The timetable for active members was August 2024, and consideration was being given to the software supplied by Civica to assist in this process. The options for Immediate Choice pensioner members were retrospective, with most being manual calculations and WYPF was preparing to address this when it received the data. The situation on ill health was also being considered as some scheme members might qualify under the old scheme but not in the new. Spreadsheets were being prepared in advance, but calculations could not be undertaken until the data was received, which might be closer to 18 months. Although large, there was confidence that the task could be undertaken.
- 23/20.11 **RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**23/21 Training and development**

- 23/21.1 The training and development information detailed on the agenda was noted.

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**23/22 Local Pension Board work programme**

23/22.1 The work programme was noted.

**23/23 Items agreed with the Chair (AOB)**

23/23.1 There were no additional items of business.

**23/24 Date of Next Meeting**

23/24.1 The next Local Pension Board meeting would be held in person/hybrid at 10:00am on 12 July 2023 in Poundbury.

The meeting closed at 15.00pm