

## Local Pension Board

Virtual meeting held on 28 March 2022

Present: Pete Rickard, Tara Atkins, Dave Bray, Jon Simpson, Giles Sparkes, Joe Weir, Andrew Lowe, James Diston, Ali Thompson (notes)

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### 1. Apologies

Lee Spencer-Smith and Steve Ash.

### 2. Declaration of Interests & Gifts and Hospitality

None raised.

### 3. Urgent Matters

PR has forwarded an email to TA about the comms regarding Pension opt out scheme. Our Comms team will put something out to 'All FRS email list' regarding opting back in by 31 March 2022.

- **Action PR** to share his email with the Board
- **JW** – this has been communicated to WSFRS with a very short timescale. How has this been discussed within the FRS and what measures will be taken to reach people who are off sick or on leave?
- **TA** – this has been raised with the Chief hence the urgent comms going out from us. Numbers who have opted out are relatively low it is recognised that they do need to have the information as quickly as possible.
- **Action PR/TA** – pick up with Chief about this in terms of making sure no one misses the information.
- **TA** - LGA confirmed on Friday that they are in conversation with FBU regarding the framework and something will come out shortly in terms of an update. Our position is that the process is paused until we obtain further information. At that point we will review our position.

### 4. Minutes from the meeting held on 13 December 2021 and Action report

No issues raised so minutes approved in full.

### 5. Administration Procedures and Performance

Administration Procedures and Performance Report - by Chief Fire Officer

- **TA:** as a quarter it has been busy in content but not been particularly busy in terms of updates. The Home Office consultation has been significant which is how the Pension Opt Out issue has arisen.

### Appendix E: self-assessment benchmarking results

- Discussion of report. TA confirmed that the LGA are aware and are working together with FRS who don't hold data going back far enough.

## **6. Communication Strategy**

TA gave an overview of report.

- **JW:** Will communications go out regarding the O'Brien case?
- **TA:** This action sits with me to look at what would be appropriate to send on communications. Timeline is within the next week or so. We know that within the next 18 months the Home Office needs to consult on the legislation.
- **JW:** Have we started identifying those are affected? Have we got the resources to undertake this work?
- **TA:** I am a team of one at the moment, which has been identified as a risk. I will develop a proposal for what is needed in terms of resourcing and identifying those affected and will liaise with Andrew's team and the Unions to shape this. TA confirmed that this risk is being recorded within the risk log for the scheme.
- **JD:** How are the communications being developed for wider groupings and those who do not see standard communications, such as people who have left the service or have moved to another service?
- **TA:** We are constantly looking at this - developing social media platforms, finding other ways to reach people, talking to other FRS to see what types of comms are working in their areas. There are people whose data we do not hold so we are always looking for other ways of utilising other forms of comms.
- **Ideas** - Could we have another one-hour workshop with questions from the attendees? Agreed - when we are further along the line.  
Can the Board take more of an active role in communicating and interacting on the issue?  
Suggestion to have specific people who are like Pension Champions.
- **PR:** any ideas gratefully received.

## **7. Confidential Items for discussion**

Nil to note.

## **8. Training Schedule Review**

**Action PR:** Training invitation to be sent to Dave Bray.

## **9. Future Pension Board Chair**

Agreed that PR will remain as Chair.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Monday, 27 June 2022 at 11.30 am.