

ISLE OF WIGHT FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION BOARD

1. Terms of Reference and Delegated Authorities

1.1. Introduction

- i) The purpose of this document is to set out the terms of reference for the Firefighters' Pension Board of the Isle of Wight Council, as Fire Authority.

1.2. Role of the Firefighters' Pension Board

- i) The role of the Firefighters' Pension Board as defined by sections 5 (1) and (2) of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, is to –
 - Assist Isle of Wight Council as Scheme Manager; –
 - to secure compliance with the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS) regulations and any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the FPS.
 - to secure compliance with requirements imposed in relation to the FPS by the Pensions Regulator.
 - in such other matters as the FPS regulations may specify.
 - to secure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the FPS for the Isle of Wight Council.
 - Provide the Council with such information as it requires to ensure that any member of the firefighters pension board or person to be appointed to the board does not have a conflict of interest.
- ii) The Firefighters' Pension Board will ensure it effectively and efficiently complies with the code of practice on the governance and administration of public service pension schemes issued by the Pension Regulator.
- iii) The Firefighters' Pension Board will also help ensure that the FPS is managed and administered effectively and efficiently and the Scheme Manager complies with the code of practice on the governance and administration of public service pension schemes issued by the Pension Regulator.
- iv) The Firefighters' Pension Board shall meet sufficiently regularly to discharge its duties and responsibilities effectively.

1.3. Appointment of members of the Firefighters' Pension Board

- i) The process for selecting members of the Firefighters' Pension Board is set out below.
- ii) The Board shall consist of 4 members and be constituted as follows:
 - 2 employer representatives;
 - 2 scheme member representatives;
- iii) The employer representatives shall be elected members of the Isle of Wight Council as Fire Authority. One of the employer representatives shall be the Cabinet member with responsibility for Public Protection; the other shall be nominated by full council. Elected members of Isle of Wight Council with delegated responsibility

for discharging the scheme manager function of Isle of Wight Council may not serve as employer representatives.

- iv) The scheme member representatives shall be selected by requesting expressions of interest from all active, deferred and retired firefighters, followed by a ballot.
- v) The Chair of the local Board will be determined by the Board on an annual basis from among its own number.
- vi) It will be the role of the Chair to ensure that:
 - all members of the Board show due respect for process;
 - all meetings are productive and effective;
 - all views are fully heard and considered; and
 - where possible consensus has been met (or where not met that decisions are put to a vote).
- vii) Each employer representative and scheme member representative so appointed shall serve for a fixed 4 year period or until qualification for membership ceases. Where required, a shorter term of office may be decided upon, if it is necessary to prevent all members of the Board terminating their involvement at the same time.
- viii) Each Board member is expected to attend all Board meetings during the year. In the event of consistent non-attendance by any Board member, then the tenure of that membership should be reviewed by the other Board members in liaison with the council.
- ix) Other than by ceasing to be eligible as set out above, a Board member may only be removed from office during a term of appointment by the unanimous agreement of all of the other members.
- x) The Board may, with the approval of the council, co-opt persons who are not members of the Board to serve in a non-voting capacity on the Board itself, or on any sub committees it may deem necessary, particularly where this would add skills and experience.
- xi) Notwithstanding the appointment of co-opted members, the majority of the Board shall be comprised of employer and scheme member representatives, represented in equal number.
- xii) There will be no provision to allow for substitute members to be appointed to the Board.

1.4. Quorum

- i) The Board shall have a formal quorum of 3, requiring at least one employer representative and at least one scheme member representative to be present.
- ii) Advisers and co-opted persons do not count towards the quorum.

1.5. Conflicts of Interest

- i) The policy for identifying conflicts of interest will be based upon the Code of Conduct as contained in the Constitution of the Isle of Wight Council and relevant guidance issued by the Pensions Regulator.
- ii) No one may be appointed to the Board who has a conflict of interest that is considered to be prejudicial to the exercise of their functions as a member of the Pension Board. It is the responsibility of the board member to provide any information required by the council in order to determine whether such a conflict exists.
- iii) All members of the Board must declare at any such time as their circumstances change any potential conflict of interest that might arise as a result of their membership of the Pension Board.
- iv) Where any such conflict is identified the Board and the Scheme Manager shall ensure it is effectively managed in line with the Council's Code of Conduct. Where it is deemed impossible to manage any such conflict the Pension Board member may be required to stand aside in relation to any specific issue being considered or, if necessary, resign their position on the Board.

1.6. Board Review Process

- i) The Board will undertake each year a formal review process to assess how well it and its sub-committees, if any, and the members are performing with a view to seeking continuous improvement in the Board's performance.

1.7. Advisers to the Board

- i) The Board may be supported in its role and responsibilities through the appointment of advisers and shall, subject to any applicable regulation and legislation from time to time in force, consult with such advisers to the Board and on such terms as it shall see fit to help better perform its duties. Any cost associated with the use of advisers to the Board must first be agreed with the Council.
- ii) The Board shall ensure that the performances of the advisers so appointed are reviewed on a regular basis.

1.8. Knowledge and Skills

- i) A member of the Pension Board must be conversant with –
 - The legislation and associated guidance of the FPS.
 - Any document recording policy about the administration of the FPS which is for the time being adopted by the Council, as Fire Authority.
- ii) A member of the Pension Board must have knowledge and understanding of –
 - The law relating to pensions;
 - The Pension Regulator's code of practice 14 and any other codes of practice that may at any time apply to public sector schemes; and
 - Any other matters which are prescribed in regulations.
- iii) It is for individual Pension Board members to be satisfied that they have the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to properly

exercise their functions as a member of the Pension Board and to be able to demonstrate this to the Scheme Manager.

- iv) In line with this requirement Pension Board members are required to be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and to refresh and keep their knowledge up to date. Pension Board members are therefore required to maintain a written record of relevant training and development, in a format consistent with the council's pensions training policy.
- v) Pension Board members will undertake a personal training needs analysis facilitated by the Scheme Manager and regularly review their skills, competencies and knowledge to identify gaps or weaknesses.
- vi) Pension Board members will comply with the council's pensions training policy.
- vii) Members of the Pension Board will be expected to attend training sessions held to support the development of their knowledge and skills, as well as any other training sessions held specifically for Board members.

1.9. Board Meetings – Notice and Minutes

- i) The council shall give notice to all Pension Board members of every meeting of the Pension Board. The council shall ensure that a formal record of Pension Board proceedings is maintained. Following the approval of the minutes by the Chair of the Board or Board committee, they shall be circulated to all members and posted on the Isle of Wight Council's website.
- ii) There will be at least 4 Pension Board meetings a year. Other meetings may be convened with due notice as the Board determines.

1.10. Remit of the Board

- i) The Pension Board must assist the council, as fire authority, with such other matters as the scheme regulations may specify. It is for scheme regulations and the council to determine precisely what the Pension Board's role entails.

1.11. Standards of Conduct

- i) The role of Pension Board members requires the highest standards of conduct and therefore the "seven principles of public life"¹ will be applied to all Pension Board members together with the code of conduct as contained within the constitution of the Isle of Wight Council.

1.12. Decision making

- i) Each member of the Pension Board will have an individual voting right but it is expected the Pension Board will as far as possible reach a consensus. If there are equal numbers of votes for and against the Chair of the Pension Board will have a second or casting vote which will be reported to the council.

1.13. Publication of Pension Board information

- i) Up to date information will be posted on the section relating to the Isle of Wight Fire Authority on the Isle of Wight Council's website showing:

¹ Standards Matter: a review of best practice in promoting good behaviour in public life", Committee on Standards in Public Life, January 2013

- The names and information of the Firefighters Pension Board members
 - How the scheme members are represented on the Pension Board
 - The responsibilities of the Pension Board as a whole
 - The full terms of reference and policies of the Pension Board and how they operate
 - The Pension Board appointment process
 - Who each individual Pension Board member represents
 - Any specific roles and responsibilities of individual Pension Board members
 - The Pension Board’s training and attendance log.
- ii) Pension Board papers, agendas and minutes of meetings will be published on the Isle of Wight Council website. These may at the discretion of the council be edited to exclude items on the grounds that they would either involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act and/or they represent data covered by the Data Protection Act 1998.
- iii) The Pension Board will also publish an Annual Report of its activities carried out over the previous scheme year, which will be published on the council’s website.
- iv) The council will also consider requests for additional information to be published or made available to individual scheme members to encourage scheme member engagement and promote a culture of openness and transparency.

1.14. Accountability

- i) The Pension Board will be collectively and individually accountable to the Scheme Manager and to the Pensions Regulator.

1.15. Expense Reimbursement

- i) Only expenses incurred by a Board member in attending an activity approved by the Board will be paid by the Council.

1.16. Reporting Breaches

- i) Any breach brought to the attention of the Pension Board, whether potential or actual, shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out in the Scheme Manager’s published Reporting Breaches of the Law to the Pensions Regulator Policy.

1.17. Definitions

- i) The undernoted terms shall have the following meaning when used in this document:

<i>“Chair”</i>	Reference to duties to be performed, or authorities exercised, by the Chair
<i>“Elected member”</i>	A councillor of the Isle of Wight Council as the Fire Authority, elected by due democratic process.
<i>“FPS”</i>	The Firefighters Pension Scheme as constituted by the Firefighters Pension Scheme (England) Regulations 2014
<i>“Pension Board” or “Board”</i>	Means the local Firefighters Pension Board for the Isle of Wight Council, as Fire Authority as required under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013
<i>“Qualification for membership”</i>	Requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each member representative being appointed on the basis of their membership of the FPS;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each employer representative to hold office the scheme employer; • each Pension Board member to be able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and prepare for meetings or to participate in required training. • each Pension Board member not having a conflict of interest which cannot be managed in accordance with the Scheme Manager’s conflict of Interest policy. • any Pension Board member who is an elected member not being a member of the Pension Committee; and • any Pension Board member who is an officer of the Scheme Manager not being responsible for the discharge of any function of the Scheme Manager under the Scheme.
<i>“Scheme”</i>	Means the Firefighters Pension Scheme as defined under “FPS”
<i>“Scheme Manager”</i>	Means the Isle of Wight Council, as Fire Authority
<i>“Scheme member”</i>	A person who has been admitted to membership of the FPS and is entitled to benefit under the scheme.

1.18. Interpretation

- i) Any uncertainty or ambiguity or interpretation required relating to any matters contained in this document shall be resolved by reference to the council.