



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

PENSIONS BOARD

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 27 February 2015

Purpose of Report:

To inform Members of the Authority's obligations under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 to form a pensions board.

To request that powers are delegated to the Chair, Vice-Chair and Opposition Spokesperson to enter into an agreement with Leicestershire and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Services for a joint pensions board to be formed and to approve the governance arrangements for such a board.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 sets out requirements for the governance and administration of public service pension schemes and provides for explicit regulatory oversight of these schemes.
- 1.2 These schemes principally cover civil servants, the judiciary, local government workers, teachers, health service workers, fire and rescue workers, members of police forces and the armed forces.
- 1.3 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service offers pension schemes to two sets of employees the first of which is the Local Government Pension Scheme which is managed and administered by Nottinghamshire County Council as the Pensions Authority.
- 1.4 The Fire Fighters Pension Schemes are national schemes but are managed and administered locally by fire and rescue authorities.
- 1.5 Whilst the provisions of the Public Serviced Pensions Act (The Act) apply to both types of scheme, the obligations under the Act in respect of the Local government scheme are discharged fully by the County Council in its capacity as scheme manager.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Key to the Act is the establishment of a number of roles within the fire fighters pension scheme:
 - i) The Pensions Advisory Board
 - ii) The Local Pensions Board
 - iii) The Scheme Manager
 - iv) The scheme administrator
- 2.2 The Pensions Advisory Board is a national body convened by DCLG to advise on matters relating to the fire fighters pension scheme. This body is composed of both employer and employee representatives.
- 2.3 The local pensions board is a board which consists of employer and employee representatives in equal number and is established to assist the scheme manager in the administration of the pension scheme. It is not a decision making body but scrutiny role.
- 2.4 The scheme manager is the Fire Authority which will discharge this function through a nominated officer. This is currently the Director of Finance and Resources.
- 2.5 The scheme manager may appoint a scheme administrator to effectively run the pension scheme at a local level.

- 2.6 Discussions have been held with officers at Leicestershire and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Services with a view to sharing a pensions board. This would be convenient as all three services including Nottinghamshire share the same pensions administrator. As it is the main purpose of the board to oversee the work of the pensions administrator there are obvious benefits from sharing a board.
- 2.7 Guidance on how to set up a board and its governance arrangements have been slow in production and even at this late stage there is a lack of useful detail. However, the Authority still needs to establish a board before 1 April 2015.
- 2.8 There is a requirement for the board to be adequately trained but there is an acceptance that as yet no boards are appointed nationally there has been little or no opportunity for training to take place. It is important however, that a training programme is devised for board members to ensure that they are fully aware of the operation of the pension schemes. This will be developed once guidance is received.
- 2.9 It is important therefore that the Authority acts quickly in setting up a board and it is proposed that the Authority should delegate the responsibility of doing so to the Chair, the Vice Chair and the Opposition Spokesperson with appropriate support from officers.
- 2.10 It is envisaged that there will be a “joint” board for all three services but in the event that this cannot be achieved then other arrangements will need to be made. Key decisions that will need to be made are:
- What will the constitution of the board be in terms of representation?
 - What will governance arrangements be?
 - Where will the board get its support and administration it?

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications are not known at the present time, but it is possible that there might be a small cost for the administration of the board.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific human resources or learning and development implications which arise directly from this report aside from the requirement for employees to be represented on the board.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

This is not a new policy or service, so no initial assessment has been completed.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific crime and disorder implications which arise directly from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 requires that a local pensions board is set up by 1 April 2015.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Members approve the creation of a joint pensions board with Derbyshire and Leicestershire if possible.
- 9.2 That Members delegate the responsibility for agreeing the constitution and governance of the board to the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER