



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# JOINT PENSION BOARD

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 15 December 2017

**Purpose of Report:**

To consider the amalgamation of Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Derbyshire Pension Boards to create an East Midlands Joint Pension Board.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Since April 2015, the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 required that the Authority has a local Pension Board for the fire fighters' pension schemes. The Board 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 holds a scrutiny role.
- 1.2 The Scheme Manager is responsible for the governance and administration of the scheme. This role is held by the Fire Authority. The function is discharged to a nominated officer, currently the Head of Finance.
- 1.3 Whilst the provisions of the Public Service Pensions Act apply to both the fire fighters' pension schemes and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), the obligations for the LGPS are discharged to the County Council in its capacity as Scheme Manager.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 27 February 2015, the Fire Authority gave approval for the creation of a Joint Pension Board with Leicestershire and Derbyshire Fire Authorities.
- 2.2 However, it became apparent that the legislation required joint boards to have the approval of the Secretary of State, and that this would not be possible within the required timescales. Consequently, each authority set up their own interim boards.
- 2.3 Initially, the Secretary of State appeared reluctant to consider joint boards. However, it is understood that this has now changed and there is some momentum between the three authorities to once again move forward with the joint board proposal.
- 2.4 Officers within the three authorities believe that the time is now right to move forward in the creation of an East Midlands Joint Board. The Local Government Association's fire fighter pension specialists (Scheme Advisory Board) have offered to assist in the process of gaining the approval of the Secretary of State and getting the joint board set up. Derbyshire and Leicestershire Fire Authorities have already given approval to setting up the joint board.
- 2.5 There are many benefits to be achieved from operating a joint board, especially since the three authorities share the same pension administrator and are dealing with common pension issues. It would be an opportunity to develop best practice and contributes to the collaboration agenda.

- 2.6 If a joint board were to be created it would be anticipated that members from the three interim boards would be retained. This would mean that there would be a total of six employee representatives and six employer representatives, with the chair probably rotating between the three Fire Authorities. The final governance arrangements would be subject to consideration by individual Fire Authorities.
- 2.7 The Pension Board has received a report on this issue are fully supportive of the proposal. However, given that it is almost three years since the Fire Authority initially approved the creation of a Joint Pension Board it was thought appropriate to request the Fire Authority to reconsider its decision at its meeting on 15 December 2017.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are human resources implications arising directly from this report, in that pension matters affect most employees. Human resources department staff are fully involved in pension issues to ensure that human resources implications are considered.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this is not a new policy.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 introduced a framework for the governance and administration of public service pension schemes. This report aims to fulfil the requirement for Pension Board members to assist the Scheme Manager in ensuring that effective administration arrangements are in place.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Pensions Risk Register identifies the high turnover of members of the Pension Board as a risk due to the loss of knowledge and experience. The creation of a Joint

Pension Board will expand on the number of members on the Board and therefore help to develop a depth of knowledge and experience.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

The creation of the East Midlands Joint Pension Board meets the collaboration agenda. If successful it will be the first Joint Pension Board to be created in the country.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members approve:

- 10.1 The creation of an East Midlands Joint Pension Board.
- 10.2 A joint request be submitted to the Secretary of State to gain approval for the creation of an East Midlands Joint Pensions Board.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**