

Fire Fighters Pension Board
12 February 2026 - 14.00 – 15.30
MS Teams & Room 2 Fire HQ

Meeting notes

Attendees:	
Glynn Luznyj, (GL), Chair	Nicola Daniels, (ND)
David Greensmith, (DG)	Louise Clayton, (LC)
James (Jim) Bywater, (JB)	Helen Scargill, (HS) - Teams
Richard Mortimer, (RM)	
Apologies:	
Irina Volka-Heath, (IVH)	

1. Attendance, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

2. Minutes and Actions Arising

RM advised that although the Minutes stated he was present, he had sent his apologies. GL acknowledged the omission in the attendee list from the previous meeting and confirmed that the record would be amended to include the correct participants. Other than this the Minutes were recorded as a true record of the meeting.

Action 63 – Items have been sent and checked with the Comms team, DG will continue to chase.

Compensatory Claims Communication: DG reported that while the compensation claim form and process exist, communication about them had not been adequately addressed; Nicola agreed to add communication improvements to their service action list, and the action was amended to focus on a broader communications update regarding pension matters.

Action 65 – DG not aware of any issues or concerns, a communication will be sent out with iNews **ONGOING**

3. Reports

West Yorkshire Pension Administration Update: HS provided a comprehensive update on West Yorkshire's pension administration, covering recruitment, event reporting, Matthews project status, and technical progress on remedy implementation, with questions and clarifications from board members.

- **Recruitment and Staffing:** HS explained ongoing recruitment challenges, including the appointment of Richard Quinn to a continuous improvement manager role, the induction and departure of new team members, and the need for continuous recruitment to fill gaps created by internal promotions.

- **Matthews Project Status:** HS reported no new updates on the Matthews project due to Laura's absence, but noted that minutes from a recent meeting would be circulated and that FRAs are being considered to help West Yorkshire accelerate progress.
 - **Event Reporting to HMRC:** HS confirmed timely completion of event reporting for unauthorised lump sum tax charge payments, annual allowance breaches, and new event 24 cases, with all relevant payments and notifications made to HMRC and details shared with DG.
 - **Remedy Implementation and Prioritisation:** HS described the prioritisation of ill health cases as directed by the LGA oversight board, the breakdown of cohorts, and the technical processes for rolling back records, bulk calculations, and addressing upload errors, with ongoing IT work to resolve deferred and active member processing.
 - **Questions on Timelines and Deferrals:** RM inquired about timelines for specific cases and the impact of deferred pension processing delays on Staffordshire; Helen Scargill clarified expected timeframes, the parallel processing of actives and pensioners, and the potential for internal fixes to resolve deferred issues.
4. **Governance and National Pension Board Chairs Group Update:** GL summarized recent developments from the National Pension Board chairs group, focusing on upcoming contribution changes, payroll readiness, and the need for local monitoring of membership impacts, with input from HS and other board members.
- **Contribution Changes Implementation:** GL discussed the shift from whole time equivalent pay to actual pay for pension contributions effective April, confirmed receipt of LGA guidance, and outlined steps to update payroll systems and communicate changes to stakeholders.
 - **Payroll and Data Interface:** HS clarified that the changes would not affect West Yorkshire's monthly postings upload, as the necessary data fields remain unchanged and any adjustments would be handled internally by payroll.
 - **Monitoring Membership Impact:** GL highlighted the importance of monitoring the impact of contribution changes on membership, particularly for managers, and suggested that JB keep track of promotion succession, and retirement profiles to assess any disincentives.
5. **Risk Register and Governance Changes:** GL and DG discussed the pension risk register, proposing the addition of governance changes related to the abolishment of PFCCs and the creation of a new police fire and crime board, with agreement to link this to the strategic risk register.
- **Governance Change Risk:** The board agreed to add the implications of governance changes, including the future role of the scheme manager and statutory duties, to the pension risk register and to connect this risk to the broader strategic risk register for ongoing monitoring.
6. **Pension Project Updates and Staffing Transitions:** DG and ND provided updates on the Matthews project and other pension initiatives, noting recent staffing changes, ongoing member inquiries, and improvements to administrative processes, with additional input from HS.
- **Matthews Project Progress:** DG reported that the Matthews project, focused on retained firefighters, resumed after a summer slowdown, with numbers largely unchanged since December and ongoing challenges related to resourcing and oversight board priorities.
 - **Staffing Changes:** The board was informed of Irina's upcoming retirement, Joanne Ashley's start as a new team member, and the impact of these transitions on

knowledge transfer and team structure, with some overlap planned to ease the transition.

- **Administrative Process Improvements:** HS and ND discussed the shift from large retirement spreadsheets to streamlined web forms for leaver and retirement notifications, reducing administrative workload and improving efficiency for both the pension team and West Yorkshire.
- **Member Inquiries and Timetables:** The board addressed ongoing member inquiries about project progress, with HS confirming that timetables for both the age discrimination and Matthews projects would be communicated once finalized, allowing for better member updates.
- **Questions from Ben Adams:** LC mentioned that since SGB Ben Adams had some questions which she would put in an email and circulate.

7. Communications, Bulletins, and Data Collection: GL, ND and HS reviewed recent pension bulletins, discussed the introduction of formal opt-out data collection, and noted improvements in Scheme Advisory Board communications.

- **Bulletin Review:** The board confirmed that there were no urgent issues arising from the December and January bulletins, with routine actions such as data checks and event updates being addressed as standard practice.
- **Opt-Out Data Collection:** ND reported the implementation of a new system for tracking pension opt-outs, in response to government interest in monitoring opt-out trends, with payroll engaged to support the process.
- **Scheme Advisory Board Updates:** GL and HS noted that the Scheme Advisory Board has improved its communication frequency, now issuing quarterly updates after each meeting, making information more accessible to stakeholders.

8. Training and Development Planning: GL proposed a review of training and development needs for board members in light of upcoming changes, with plans to coordinate with ND and seek LGA support for bespoke and refresher training.

- **Future Training Plans:** The board agreed to revisit training requirements once new board members are identified, with the intention to arrange tailored and refresher sessions, leveraging LGA resources to ensure ongoing competence.
- **Oversight Board and Escalation Procedures:** GL and HS discussed the opening of the oversight board, the appointment of regional representatives, and the introduction of new escalation and estimate guidance, with plans to standardize communication and develop supporting flowcharts.
 - **Oversight Board Structure:** The board acknowledged the establishment of the oversight board, the sharing of terms of reference, and the appointment of Martin Rehorn as the regional representative, providing a direct communication channel for scheme managers.
 - **Escalation and Estimate Guidance:** New guidance documents were circulated, clarifying escalation procedures for prioritizing retirements due to serious ill health and setting expectations for estimate processing, with the aim of improving transparency and prioritization.
 - **Standardized Communication Tools:** HS reported that a flowchart is being developed to illustrate the new processes, which will be finalised and distributed to all clients after oversight board approval, ensuring consistent messaging across authorities.
- **Development of Member Self-Serve Pension Estimates:** RM raised the possibility of a national pension calculator, to which HS responded that West Yorkshire is developing a member self-serve estimate tool for their portal, targeted for release by year-end pending technical feasibility.

- **Self-Serve Estimate Tool:** HS explained that while a national calculator is unlikely, West Yorkshire's IT team is working on a member portal feature to allow individuals to generate their own pension estimates, with a projected completion by the end of the year, subject to IT integration and security considerations.

9. AOB: Surveys, Apologies, and Board Transitions: GL, LC and DG addressed miscellaneous items including apologies for previous meeting logistics, completion of the TPR survey, and upcoming board leadership changes, with acknowledgments for departing staff.

- **TPR Survey Completion:** DG and ND confirmed that they have reviewed the TPR survey and will consult with GL before submitting the final response.
- **Board Leadership Transition:** GL advised the possibility of a change in board chair for the next meeting, depending on senior team developments, and expressed willingness to remain if needed.
- **Acknowledgment of Departing Staff:** The board formally recognised and thanked David and Irena for their service and contributions to the pension board over the past decade.