

SOUTH YORKSHIRE PENSIONS AUTHORITY

LOCAL PENSION BOARD

25 JULY 2019

PRESENT: N Gregory (Academy Representative) (Chair)

T Damms (Sheffield City Council), N Doolan-Hamer (Unison),
R Fennessy (South Yorkshire Police) and G Warwick (GMB)

Officers: J Bailey (Head of Pensions Administration),
G Graham (Fund Director), M McCarthy (Deputy Clerk) and
G Richards (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies for absence were received from A Gregory and
K Morgan

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Following the resignation of the previous Chair, Nicola Gregory agreed to chair the meeting.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

M McCarthy informed the Board that J Thompson had resigned from the Board for personal reasons.

The Board had been in a state of transition with several resignations over the previous months but Doncaster MBC and Sheffield CC had now appointed members to the Board and a new Scheme member representative had been recruited. It was hoped that all vacancies would be filled before the next meeting in October.

The Board recorded thanks to J Thompson for all her hard work for the Board.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL 2019

The Fund Director reminded members of the requirement to complete the Pensions Regulator's online public service toolkit; he had supplied members with a link to this after the last meeting.

The Regulator also had a separate assessment tool for assessing the Authority's governance and administration. It was noted that it would be useful for the Chair of the Board to work through this with either members or officers in the future.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 18 April 2019 be agreed as a true record.

5 MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRING ARRANGEMENTS

The Fund Director presented a report which sought approval to changes to the membership of the Board and to determine arrangements for Chairing the Board.

Members noted the recruitment of three new members to the Board since the last meeting. These were employer representatives Cllr Tony Damms from Sheffield CC, Cllr Tosh McDonald from Doncaster MBC and Andrew Gregory a Scheme Member representative.

In terms of the two remaining vacancies, it was recommended that the Board supported an amendment to the Constitution which would allow the remaining Scheme Member vacancy to be filled by any scheme member rather from the pensioner and deferred membership which had proved a bar to recruitment.

With regard to the employer vacancy, this had previously been seen as representing smaller employees but enquiries had failed to find anyone interested in the role. It was therefore proposed to identify a senior HR/Finance manager from one of the District Councils to fill the position for a three year term.

Members were reminded that the position of Chair was still vacant. At the last meeting members had indicated that they would prefer that the Chair came from amongst its members rather than being an independent. But at that stage no-one was prepared to undertake the role.

Members were invited to consider whether any of them were prepared to undertake the role. Should a member be prepared to do this, the Authority would appoint an Independent Advisor to the Board to work closely with the Chair in framing the agenda and work programme.

The Fund Director stated that should no member take on the role of Chair, the Authority as Scheme Manager would take steps to appoint an independent chair with the aim of having them in place for the next meeting of the Board.

G Warwick commented that he strongly believed that the Chair should come from within the Board's membership. He suggested that the decision be deferred until the October meeting of the Board and in the meantime the Board get together informally to discuss the matter.

Although stating that this was not an ideal situation, the Fund Director agreed. He would proceed to recruit an independent advisor and if the Board could not find a Chair from within their membership the advisor would become the Chair.

It was agreed to hold an informal meeting of the Board in early September which would begin with a member only discussion followed by an induction/refresher session.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Board support the proposed changes to the composition of the Board as set out in the report and the consequent changes to the Constitution of the board.
- ii) Note the appointment of the following Board Members
 - a) Cllr Tosh McDonald (Doncaster MBC) – Employer
 - b) Cllr Tony Damms (Sheffield CC) – Employer
 - c) Andrew Gregory – Scheme Member
- iii) Defer the decision on the appointment of Chair to the October meeting of the Board.
- iv) Arrange an informal meeting of the Board to discuss chairing arrangements.
- v) Note the intention of the Scheme Manager to appoint an Independent Advisor in the event a member of the Board agreed to undertake the role of Chair.
- vi) Should no member of the Board be willing to undertake the role of Chair, note the intention of the Scheme Manager to appoint an Independent Chair.

6 SOUTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL PENSION BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The Board considered its Annual Report of 2018/19.

The report contained the membership of the Board, member attendance, the work of the Board during the year, member learning and development and future plans.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted and the Board agree to it being published on the website.

7 QUARTERLY ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

The Head of Pensions Administration presented the Administration report to update members on administration performance and issues for the period 1st January 2019 to 30th June 2019.

The Board noted that the report covered two quarters to bring the timing of the report back into line with the Board's meeting cycle.

With regard to staffing issues, the Board noted that there had been two part-time new starters and five leavers. The leavers included one retirement, two voluntary redundancies, and two resignations.

Members were reminded that the administration service was currently in the middle of a consultation on a restructuring of the service designed to facilitate improved resource allocation to the key areas of customer focus. The future structure would be reported to the Board in the next quarterly update.

Members noted the sickness levels for the period. These were expected to fall as two long-term sickness absentees had returned to work.

With regard to casework performance, members noted that overall performance dipped slightly for Quarter 1 due to processing time lost because of some system issues.

Despite this the general direction of travel compared with past years was an upward trend; the report contained a table which provided a summary of performance against the main subject areas.

With regard to employer performance, the Board was informed that the submission of monthly returns remained high. Now that the monthly data file submission process was embedded with employers, a mechanism was being developed to report on employer responsiveness to monthly data queries. It was hoped that this could be reported on from Quarter 3.

The Board noted the results of the customer satisfaction survey which had surveyed members who retired in March, April and May 2019; overall satisfaction levels were high at 92%.

J Bailey reminded members that the annual benefit statements for 2019 would be issued online rather than paper based. An exercise had been carried out to encourage all scheme members to use the inline portal. Appendix A showed the numbers of members who had registered since April 2018.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

8 REVIEW OF BREACHES, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

A report was presented to update members on the latest available record of reported breaches and provide details of complaints and appeals for the period 1st January 2019 to 30th June 2019.

Members noted that there had been 5 reported breaches during the six month period. In the main, these were breaches by employers and were detailed at Appendix A to the report.

Appendix B was the Data Protection Assurance report which had resulted in a substantial assurance opinion in relation to the internal control framework.

There was one recommendation around GDPR requirements, statutory timeframes, investigation responsibilities, cyber incidents and when to notify the DPO and ICO.

Management had agreed that the existing breach management policy would be updated to explicitly reference the areas mentioned above. The updated policy would be presented to the Board at its next meeting.

With regard to complaints, there had been 11 during the six month period. These mainly were related to the aggregations backlog. The complaints and follow-up actions were at Appendix C to the report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CHAIR