

**LOCAL PENSION BOARD**



**MEMBERS' KNOWLEDGE AND**  
**UNDERSTANDING POLICY**

## **Introduction**

1. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority's Local Pension Board was established on 1st April 2015 in accordance with statutory requirements set out in the [Public Service Pensions Act 2013](#).
2. The Fire and Rescue Authority is the **Scheme Manager**, and the Local Pension Board (LPB) is responsible for assisting the Scheme Manager in securing compliance with:
  - Scheme regulations;
  - Other governance and administration legislation;
  - Any requirements of [The Pensions Regulator](#) (TPR);
  - Additional matters, if specified, by Scheme regulations;

## **Board Membership**

3. The LPB is made up of the following:
  - Two Independent members (one of whom is Chair)
  - Two Employer representatives (South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue)
  - Three Employee representatives (Representative bodies – Fire Brigades' Union and Fire Officers' Association)
  - Advisor members (Pensions Administrator, Payroll and Pensions – SYFR)
  - One Lead Member representing the Scheme Manager

## **Legal requirements for Board members**

4. Under the legislation, it is the responsibility of LPB members to invest sufficient time to ensure they have the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to properly exercise their functions as a member of the LPB. They should be familiar with\*:
  - The rules of the Schemes;
  - Any policy document(s) about the administration of the Schemes;

They should also have knowledge and understanding\* of:

- The law relating to pensions;
- Any other matters which are set in regulations;
- How to report a breach of the law that is likely to be of material significance to The Pensions Regulator (TPR).

*\*The degree of knowledge and understanding should allow the individual to carry out the functions of a member of the LPB.*

## **Examples of Policies to be conversant with**

- Conflicts of interest and Declarations of Interest;
- Record-keeping;
- Internal dispute resolution;
- Reporting breaches;
- Maintaining contributions;
- Appointment of LPB members;
- Risk assessments and management (including the LPB's Risk Register);
- The exercise of discretionary functions.

And knowledge of:

- The responsibilities of the Scheme Manager (FRA) and the LPB;
- Scheme booklets, key staff communications and announcements;
- Terms of reference, structure and operational policies of the LPB;

*These examples are not intended to be exhaustive and LPB members should familiarise themselves with their own Schemes' documented policies and ensure they review them regularly.*

5. **Appendix A** provides a Learning Needs analysis provided by The Pensions Regulator that LPB members can use to assess their own knowledge and requirements.

## **LPB Responsibilities**

6. The legislative requirements detailed above apply to LPB members. However, the FRA – as Scheme Manager – will need to be aware of the LPB's role, responsibilities, work programme.
7. South Yorkshire's LPB has a Lead member from the FRA who is appointed at the Annual Meeting. The Lead member attends LPB meetings (and the annual Awareness Session delivered by the LGA) in the Autumn.
8. The host Authority will assist LPB members by providing them with access to useful websites as a source of research, reading as follows:

<http://www.fpsboard.org/index.php/local-pension-boards/resources>

[www.fpsboard.org](http://www.fpsboard.org)

[Monthly Bulletins](#)

[Scheme Advisory Board minutes](#)

[Firefighters' Pension Schemes Regulations and Guidance](#)

[GAD Guidance](#)

[The Pensions Regulator \(TPR\)](#)

9. The LGA will deliver an annual Awareness session for LPB members and the Scheme Manager in Autumn to cover the role and responsibilities of the Board, the FRA (as Scheme Manager), key topics, new legislation etc.

10. LPB members will be offered the opportunity to attend the LGA's Annual Firefighters' Pension Scheme Conference held in September each year in London. This will help develop knowledge and understanding around the pension schemes, and the governance and administration elements through the Local Pension Boards.
11. LPB members will be offered an annual Development Discussion (not mandatory) where they can discuss with the LPB's support officer any requirements they have to assist in fulfilling their role as an LPB member.
12. Any learning and development undertaken will be documented on an individual LPB Members' training record and held electronically by the host Authority. LPB members can request sight of / access to this record at any time.

### **Evaluation of Knowledge and Understanding**

13. There will be no formal evaluation of knowledge and understanding. LPB members will be expected to undertake reading and research to familiarise themselves with the role and responsibilities of the LPB, and of the Firefighters' Pensions Schemes.
14. The host authority (Barnsley MBC) will provide support for the LPB – including democratic services, policy and administrative support, along with arranging any learning and development LPB members may wish to attend.

### **Host Authority contacts**

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## Public service pension schemes: Learning needs analysis of certain governance and administration requirements

### Step 1 – Plan your learning

#### Learning needs analysis

#### Personal development

#### 1 – My role, responsibilities and duties as a pension board member

Do I know...?	Rate my skills 1 – no knowledge 5 – highly skilled	My objectives	Timescale	What learning am I planning to do?	Where to find information
Who The Pensions Regulator is What my role, responsibilities and duties are How the regulator's code of practice will support me in assisting the scheme manager with running an effective and efficient scheme	1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5				Introduction to public service pension schemes: <a href="http://www.tpr.gov.uk/PS-introduction">www.tpr.gov.uk/PS-introduction</a>

#### 2 – The knowledge and understanding I need as a pension board member

Do I know...?	Rate my skills	My objectives	Timescale	What learning am I planning to do?	Where to find information
What I need to know about my scheme as a pension board member What I need to know about pensions law as a pension board member How to plan, follow and record my training, knowledge and understanding	1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5				Knowledge and understanding duty on pension board members: <a href="http://www.tpr.gov.uk/PS-knowledge">www.tpr.gov.uk/PS-knowledge</a>

### 3 – Conflicts of interest

Do I know...?	Rate my skills	My objectives	Timescale	What learning am I planning to do?	Where to find information
What information I need to provide to the scheme manager	1 2 3 4 5				'Conflicts of interest' course in the Public Service toolkit: <a href="http://www.pensionseducationportal.com">www.pensionseducationportal.com</a>
How to disclose potential or actual conflicts of interest	1 2 3 4 5				
How to monitor and discuss the risk of potential or actual conflicts of interest	1 2 3 4 5				

### 4 – Publishing scheme information

Do I know...?	Rate my skills	My objectives	Timescale	What learning am I planning to do?	Where to find information
What information needs to be published about the pension board	1 2 3 4 5				Publishing scheme information: <a href="http://www.tpr.gov.uk/PS-publishing">www.tpr.gov.uk/PS-publishing</a>
How that information is to be recorded and published	1 2 3 4 5				
What the pension board's role is regarding the publication of that information	1 2 3 4 5				

### 5 – Risk management and internal controls

Do I know...?	Rate my skills	My objectives	Timescale	What learning am I planning to do?	Where to find information
How risks will be identified and assessed	1 2 3 4 5				'Managing risk and internal controls' course in the Public
How internal controls will be set up	1 2 3 4 5				
How risk assessments will be documented	1 2 3 4 5				

How possible fraudulent activity will be identified and dealt with	1 2 3 4 5				Service toolkit: <a href="http://www.pensionseducationportal.com">www.pensionseducationportal.com</a>
Who is involved in internal controls and risk management and their role	1 2 3 4 5				
What the pension board's role is in internal controls and risk management	1 2 3 4 5				
<b>6 – Record-keeping</b>					
<b>Do I know...?</b>	<b>Rate my skills</b>	<b>My objectives</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>What learning am I planning to do?</b>	<b>Where to find information</b>
How an effective scheme record-keeping process will be set up	1 2 3 4 5				'Maintaining accurate member data' course in the Public Service toolkit: <a href="http://www.pensionseducationportal.com">www.pensionseducationportal.com</a>
How the required records of scheme members' data, transactions and pension board decisions will be kept	1 2 3 4 5				
Who is involved in record-keeping and their role	1 2 3 4 5				
What the pension board's role is in record-keeping	1 2 3 4 5				
<b>7 – Maintaining contributions</b>					
<b>Do I know...?</b>	<b>Rate my skills</b>	<b>My objectives</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>What learning am I planning to do?</b>	<b>Where to find information</b>
How employer and employee payment contributions will be monitored and recorded	1 2 3 4 5				'Maintaining member contributions' course in the Public Service toolkit: <a href="http://www.pensionseducationportal.com">www.pensionseducationportal.com</a>
How late or failed payments which are likely to be of material significance to the regulator will be reported to the regulator	1 2 3 4 5				
	1 2 3 4 5				

What the pension board's role is in maintaining contributions and notifying the regulator of late or failed payments					
<b>8 – Communicating with members</b>					
<b>Do I know...?</b>	<b>Rate my skills</b>	<b>My objectives</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>What learning am I planning to do?</b>	<b>Where to find information</b>
What information must be provided to members about the administration of the scheme and their benefits	<b>1 2 3 4 5</b>				'Providing information to members and others' course in the Public Service toolkit: <a href="http://www.pensionseducationportal.com">www.pensionseducationportal.com</a>
How that information will be provided to members	<b>1 2 3 4 5</b>				
Who is involved in member communications	<b>1 2 3 4 5</b>				
What the pension board's role is in member communications	<b>1 2 3 4 5</b>				
<b>9 – Resolving disputes</b>					
<b>Do I know...?</b>	<b>Rate my skills</b>	<b>My objectives</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>What learning am I planning to do?</b>	<b>Where to find information</b>
How disputes within my scheme will be resolved	<b>1 2 3 4 5</b>				'Resolving internal disputes' course in the Public Service toolkit: <a href="http://www.pensionseducationportal.com">www.pensionseducationportal.com</a>
How disputes within my scheme and their resolutions will be documented	<b>1 2 3 4 5</b>				
What the pension board's role is in the resolution of issues and disputes	<b>1 2 3 4 5</b>				
<b>10 – Reporting breaches of the law</b>					



Do I know...?	Rate my skills	My objectives	Timescale	What learning am I planning to do?	Where to find information
How to identify breaches of the law How breaches of the law will be assessed How breaches of the law likely to be of material significance to the regulator will be reported What my responsibility is to report breaches Who else is under a duty to report breaches	<b>1 2 3 4 5</b> <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> <b>1 2 3 4 5</b>  <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> <b>1 2 3 4 5</b>				'Reporting breaches of the law' course in the Public Service toolkit: <a href="http://www.pensionseducationportal.com">www.pensionseducationportal.com</a>