

# COUNTY COUNCIL

Meeting date: 28 April 2022

From: Cabinet Member for Customers,  
Transformation and Fire and Rescue

## UPDATE REPORT OF THE CUMBRIA FIRE LOCAL PENSION BOARD – 2021/22

### PART A - RECOMMENDATION OF CABINET MEMBER

*This report presents the update of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board for the half year ending 30 September 2021.*

### PART B – ADVICE OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

#### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 *The Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board (Cumbria FLPB or ‘the Board’) is required to report twice yearly on its activities to the Council.*
- 1.2 *This is the update report for the first half of 2021/22, with the Annual Report of the Cumbria FLPB 2021/22 due to be presented to Council later in 2022.*

#### **2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 *The Council’s vision is to be “A Council that works with residents, businesses, communities and other organisations to deliver the best services possible within the available resources”. This report supports the priorities of the Council Plan, in particular ‘putting customers at the heart of everything we do’.*
- 2.2 *Good Governance and risk management will aid the Council in its role as Scheme Manager in ensuring its regulatory responsibilities are met, a good service is provided to scheme members and costs are controlled. Cost control will have a direct impact on revenue budgets.*
- 2.3 *There are no direct equality implications arising out of the recommendations in this report.*

#### **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

*Members are recommended to:*

- 3.1 *Note the update of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board for the half year ending 30 September 2021.*

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Cumbria FLPB is constituted under the Public Service Pension Act 2013 and the Fire Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2014. The role of the Cumbria FLPB is to assist Cumbria County Council (as the Scheme Manager of the Cumbria Firefighters' Pension Scheme):

(a) To secure compliance with:

- (i) the regulations covering administration of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS);
- (ii) other legislation in relation to the governance and administration of the FPS; and
- (iii) the requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the FPS.

and

(b) in ensuring the effective and efficient governance and administration of the FPS.

4.2 In its role in assisting the Scheme Manager the Cumbria FLPB is required to report twice yearly to Council on matters reviewed and suggestions for their consideration. Where the Cumbria FLPB is concerned that due consideration has not been given to matters of non-compliance, the Board may submit a report for consideration by the Audit and Assurance Committee as the body designated by the Scheme Manager with the capacity to investigate such matters on its behalf.

4.3 The Board has no such matters of non-compliance that are considered appropriate to raise with the Audit and Assurance Committee.

4.4 The terms of reference for the Cumbria FLPB state that "the Board will meet as a minimum twice a year", and it ordinarily holds quarterly meetings. Virtual Board meetings were held in April and July 2021, with all future planned meetings scheduled to take place 'in person'.

4.5 A summary of the activities of the Cumbria Local Pension Board during the period is included below:-

- Members continued to be advised of any material risk management, policy or governance issues and national regulatory changes relating to the Firefighters' pension schemes.
- Performance of the Local Pensions Partnership- Administration (LPPA), the Scheme's pensions' administration provider was closely monitored. Officers continued to meet at least quarterly with the Operations Director of LPPA to review performance standards. Performance has remained high despite the challenges of operating throughout the pandemic.
- The Board were pleased to note that pensions have continued to be paid on time each month, and Annual Benefit Statements were issued well ahead of the statutory deadline.

- The Board continued to focus on key areas identified by the Pensions Regulator and maintained an oversight of the key risks to the Scheme.
- There have been no membership changes.
- Members continue to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills to support their work on the Board.

## 5.0 OPTIONS

5.1 Members may either note the progress of the Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board in 2021/22 or request additional information relating to the activities of the Board.

## 6.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Firefighters' Pension Scheme is a national scheme with individual fire and rescue authorities being responsible for its administration.

6.2 The Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board is responsible for ensuring the effective governance of the scheme for the c.1,500 scheme members.

6.3 The scheme is a defined benefit pension scheme and employer and employee contributions are set nationally.

## 7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Under its terms of reference (Part 2Q of the Constitution) the Board must report twice yearly to Council on matters reviewed and suggestions for consideration (paragraph 2.3).

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 The Cumbria Fire Local Pension Board continued to progress its work to assist in the governance of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme during the six months to 30 September 2021.

**John Beard**  
**Chief Fire Officer**

*15 April 2022*

## APPENDICES

*None*

Electoral Divisions: All

Executive Decision

	No
--	----

Key Decision

	No
--	----

If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?			N/A*
Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?		No	
If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?			N/A
Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny? If so, give details below.		No	
Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?			N/A
Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?			N/A

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

*None*

**CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

*Not considered by Overview and Scrutiny.*

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

*No background papers.*

**RESPONSIBLE CABINET MEMBER**

***Janet Willis***

***Cabinet Member for Customers, Transformation and Fire & Rescue.***

**REPORT AUTHOR**

Contact: Gill Welbourn, Technical Finance Officer – Pensions

Tel: 07765 22152

E-mail: [gill.welbourn@cumbria.cov.uk](mailto:gill.welbourn@cumbria.cov.uk)