

BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
SERVICE ORDER  
VOLUME 09 : TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

**V09 03        OTHER TRAINING**

**V09 03/02     LOCAL PENSION BOARD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 A Local Pension Board (the Board) member should be aware that their legal responsibilities begin from the date they take up their role on the Board and so should immediately start to familiarise themselves with the documents relevant to their role and the law relating to pensions.
- 1.2 This promulgation describes how learning and development is organised within Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) to support the Board members to gain and retain the knowledge and understanding needed to enable them to undertake their role and meet their legal obligations.
- 1.3 The legal requirements related to the understanding and knowledge requirements of Board members are set out below.

**2. Legal Requirements**

- 2.1 In accordance with section 248A of the 2004 Act (as amended by the 2013 Act), every individual who is a member of a Local Pension Board must:
- 2.2 Be conversant with:
  - the rules of the Scheme, in other words the Regulations and Connected Scheme regulations: and
  - any document recording policy about the administration of the Scheme which is for the time being adopted in relation to the Scheme.
- 2.3 Have knowledge and understanding of:
  - the law relating to pensions; and
  - such other matters as may be prescribed.

**3. Responsibility for identifying and meeting knowledge and understanding needs**

- 3.1 All Board members should take responsibility to undertake the learning and development which is needed to enable them to undertake their role.
- 3.2 Each **Board Member** should:
  - Notify the Chair of the Board if they have identified a learning and development need to fill a gap in their knowledge and understanding and consider ways in which this need should be addressed;
  - Be committed to undertake the necessary knowledge and understanding training;

- Ensure that their knowledge and understanding log is updated as and when learning and development activity is updated;
  - Review their learning and development needs once a year by undertaking a personal training needs analysis;
  - Read all documentation provided in advance of Pension Board meetings, and identify any areas where there is a knowledge gap;
  - Have a breadth of knowledge and understanding that is sufficient to allow them to understand fully any professional advice they are given; and
  - Seek support as and when needed to enable them to undertake their role.
- 3.3 The **Scheme Manager** will ensure that Local Pension Board members have access to high quality induction and on-going training.
- 3.4 The **Pensions Board Chair** will ensure that a Board member is appointed as lead for learning and development for the Local Pension Board and will ensure that:
- Learning and development needs identified by Board members are met in a timely and flexible way;
  - Records of Learning and Development undertaken are maintained for each Board member and the Board as a whole; and
  - Develop a personalised training plan for each Board member and the Board as a whole following the completion of a training needs analysis.

#### **4. Degree of knowledge and understanding**

- 4.1 Being conversant with the rules of the Scheme and any document recording policy about the administration of the Scheme means having a working knowledge (i.e. a sufficient level of familiarity) of them so that members of a Local Pension Board can use them effectively when carrying out their role of assisting the Scheme Manager.
- 4.2 In particular members of a Local Pension Board should understand the rules and documents in enough detail to know where they are relevant to an issue and where a particular provision or policy may apply.
- 4.3 In order to assist the Scheme Manager, it is implicit that members of a Local Pension Board understand the duties and obligations that apply to the Scheme Manager as well as to themselves.

## 5. Meeting learning and development needs

- 5.1 The table below provides detail of training materials that could support Board members.
- 5.2 A record of training will be maintained and updated by Board members and progress will be reviewed as a standard agenda item within Board meetings.

Method	
The Pension Regulator	<p>The Regulator has provided an e-learning programme which has been developed to meet the needs of all members of public sector scheme pension Boards, whether or not they have access to other learning.</p> <p>The toolkit is an easy to use resource and covers seven short modules. There are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflicts of interest</li> <li>• Managing risks and internal controls</li> <li>• Maintaining accurate member data</li> <li>• Maintaining member contributions</li> <li>• Providing information to members and others</li> <li>• Resolving internal disputes, and</li> <li>• Reporting breaches of the law</li> </ul> <p>Board members will be expected to complete all seven modules as the foundation of their knowledge and understanding requirements.</p>
Mentoring	<p>Once a Local Pension Board is in operation and new appointments are made in the future, mentoring by existing members could also be considered. This can also help to ensure that historical and scheme specific knowledge is retained when members of a Local Pension Board change.</p>
Internal training and regular updates from advisers	<p>Internal development training sessions will be organised / facilitated by advisors to the Board as necessary to maintain currency.</p>
Shared learning with other Pension Boards	<p>Shared learning events may be organised with other FRAs to meet learning needs across Board members from a range of Authorities.</p>
External learning and Development programmes	<p>Members of a Local Pension Board should also investigate what other third party learning tools and courses may be available.</p>
Circulated reading material and familiarisation with regulations and documents	<p>A range of documents will be made available to Board Members to support them to understand their role.</p>

## 6. Reference sources and documents

<b>The Pension Regulator</b>	The Pensions Regulator's Code of Practice note 14
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	<p>Governance and Administration of Public Service Pension Schemes:  <a href="http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/code-14-publicservice.pdf">http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/code-14-publicservice.pdf</a></p> <p>The Pensions Regulator's website:  <a href="http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/public-serviceschemes/introduction-to-public-service-pensionschemes.aspx">http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/public-serviceschemes/introduction-to-public-service-pensionschemes.aspx</a></p> <p>Toolkit: <a href="http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/public-service-schemes.aspx">http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/public-service-schemes.aspx</a></p>
<b>CIPFA</b>	<p>CIPFA Knowledge and Skill framework.</p> <p>This was extended in August 2015 to specifically include members of Local Pension Boards.</p> <p>The guidance is set in the context of LGPS Pension Boards in England and Wales however pension Boards in other sectors and jurisdictions may find the frameworks of use in determining their own training programmes for pension Board members:</p> <p><a href="http://www.cipfa.org/policy-and-guidance/publications//Local-pension-Boards-a-technical-knowledge-and-skills-framework-pdf">http://www.cipfa.org/policy-and-guidance/publications//Local-pension-Boards-a-technical-knowledge-and-skills-framework-pdf</a></p>
<b>The Knowledge Hub</b>	<p><a href="#">Firefighters Pension Scheme Local Pension Board Members Group Forum</a></p> <p>Once Members are registered they will then get any postings that are made to the Forum sent to their email inbox.</p>
<b>Pensions Website</b>	<a href="http://www.FPSregs.org">www.FPSregs.org</a>

Examples of areas of knowledge and understanding that a member of a Local Pension Board might be expected to have. These examples may assist a member in undertaking a personal training needs analysis.

There will be additional knowledge and understanding requirements for Board members which will be assessed for priority as and when needed.

### **1. Background and Understanding of the Legislative Framework of the Scheme**

- Differences between public service pension schemes like the Scheme and private sector trust-based schemes
- Independent Public Service Pensions Commission and recommendations
- Key provisions of the 2013 Act
- The structure of the Scheme and the main bodies involved including the Responsible Authority, the Scheme Manager, the Scheme Advisory Board, the Local Pension Board and the Scheme employers
- An overview of public law and how Scheme Managers are constituted and operate
- Scheme and Connected Scheme rules overview (including the Regulations)

### **2. General pensions legislation applicable to the Scheme**

An overview of wider legislation relevant to the Scheme including:

- Automatic Enrolment (Pensions Act 2008)
- Contracting out (Pension Schemes Act 1993)
- Data protection (Data Protection Act 1998)
- Employment legislation including anti-discrimination, equal treatment, family related leave and redundancy rights
- Freedom of Information (Freedom of Information Act 2000)
- Pensions sharing on divorce (Welfare Reform and Pensions Act 1999)
- Tax (Finance Act 2004)

### **3. Role and responsibilities of the Local Pension Board**

- Role of the Local Pension Board
- Conduct and conflicts
- Reporting of breaches
- Knowledge and understanding

### **4. Role and responsibilities of the Scheme Manager**

- Membership and eligibility
- Benefits and the payment of benefits
- Decisions and discretions
- Disclosure of information
- Record keeping
- Internal controls

- Internal dispute resolution
- Reporting of breaches
- Statements, reports and accounts

## **5. Funding and Investment**

- Requirement for triennial and other valuations

## **6. Role and responsibilities of Scheme Manager**

- Automatic Enrolment
- Deduction and payment of contributions
- Special contributions
- Employer decisions and discretions

## **7. Tax and Contracting Out**

- Finance Act 2004
- Role of HMRC
- Registration
- Role of 'scheme administrator'
- Tax relief on contributions
- Taxation of benefits
- Annual and lifetime allowances
- Member protections
- National Insurance
- Contracting out (Pensions Scheme Act 1993)
- Impact of abolition of contracting out in 2016

## **8. Role of advisors and key persons**

- Officers of the Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Auditor
- Lawyers
- Administrators – in house v. third party
- Procurement of services
- Contracts with third parties

## **9. Key Bodies connected to the Scheme**

An understanding of the roles and powers of:

- HMRC
- Information Commissioner
- Pensions Advisory Service
- Pensions Ombudsman
- The Pensions Regulator (including powers in relation to Local Pension Boards)

<b>Document Audit Information</b>	
Senior Officer Accountable	ACO
Author	HSDA
Direct enquiries to	HSDA
Date Issued	28/02/2019
Review by	01/03/2022
Instructions	File in numerical sequence Insert title and issue date in VIndex. NB. This is a new Service Order
References/related documents	
Comments	