

PENSION BOARD OF MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY (MFRA)

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Statement of purpose

1. The purpose of the Board is to assist MFRA or its nominated officer in its role as a scheme manager of the Fire Fighters Pension Scheme. Such assistance is to:
 - (a) secure compliance with the Regulations, any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme, and requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the Scheme and';
 - (b) ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme.

Duties of the Board

2. The Board should at all times act in a reasonable manner in the conduct of its purpose. In support of this duty Board members should:
 - (a) act always in the interests of the scheme and not seek to promote the interests of any stakeholder group above another.
 - (b) be subject to and abide by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority's Elected Members' Code of Conduct.

Membership

The Board will comprise an equal number of employer and member representatives with a minimum requirement of no less than four in total.

Member representatives

3. Three member representatives shall be appointed to the Board.
4. Member representatives should be able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and complete the necessary preparation for meetings and participate in training as required.

Employer representatives

8. Three employer representatives shall be appointed to the Board

9. Two employer representatives shall be office holders or senior employees of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority or have experience of representing scheme employers in a similar capacity. Office holders or employees of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority with delegated responsibility for discharging the scheme manager function of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority may not serve as employer representatives.
10. One Authority member, but that member must not participate or vote on any pension matters being considered by any Authority meetings
11. Employer representatives should be able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and complete the necessary preparation for meetings and participate in training as required.
12. Employer representatives shall be appointed by the firefighter Scheme Manager in a manner which best promotes the purpose of the Board.

Other members

13. No other members shall be appointed to the Board unless the Scheme Manager brings a report to the Authority requesting such an appointment
14. Any appointments of other members shall have regard to the best interests of the purpose of the Board

Appointment of chair

16. At the first meeting of the Board it shall appoint a chair from one of the six Board members. The appointment shall last until the first meeting of the Board in each new financial year (April – March), at which point the Board will elect a chair.
17. The duties of the chair should be in accordance with the duties of a chair within Merseyside Fire & Rescue.

Conflicts of interest

19. All members of the Board must declare to Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority on appointment and at any such time as their circumstances change any potential conflict of interest arising as a result of their position on the Board.
20. On appointments to the Board and following any subsequent declaration of potential conflict Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority shall ensure that any potential conflict is effectively managed in line with both the internal procedures of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority and the requirements of the Pensions Regulators codes of practice on conflict of interest for Board members.

Knowledge and understanding (including Training)

21. Knowledge and understanding must be considered in light of the role of the Board to assist Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority in line with the requirements outlined in section 2 above. The Board should establish and maintain a policy and framework to address the knowledge and understanding requirements that apply to Board members. That policy and framework shall set out the degree of knowledge and understanding required as well as how knowledge and understanding is acquired, reviewed and updated.
22. Board members shall attend and participate in training arranged in order to meet and maintain the requirements set out in the Board's knowledge and understanding policy and framework.
23. Board members shall participate in such personal training needs analysis or other processes that are put in place in order to ensure that they maintain the required level of knowledge and understanding to carry out their role on the Board.

Term of office

24. Term of Office should be in accordance with the committee cycle in Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority.
25. Board membership may be terminated prior to the end of the term of office due to:
 - (a) A member representative appointed on the basis of their membership of the scheme no longer being a member of the scheme
 - (b) A member representative no longer being a member of the body on which their appointment relied
 - (c) An employer representative no longer holding the office or employment or being a member of the body on which their appointment relied
 - (d) The representative no longer being able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and prepare for meetings or to participate in required training.

Meetings

26. The Board shall as a minimum meet two times per year. Meetings shall normally take place between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm.
27. The chair of the Board with the consent of the Board membership may call additional meetings. Urgent business of the Board between meetings may, in exceptional circumstances, be conducted via communications between members of the Board including telephone conferencing and e-mails.

Quorum

28. A meeting will be quorate when at least one of both member and employer representatives are present plus the chair or deputy chair (if applicable).

Voting

30. The Chair shall determine when consensus has been reached.

31. Where consensus is not achieved this should be recorded by the Chair.

32. In support of its core functions the Board may make a request for information to the Scheme Manager (nominated officer) with regard to any aspect of the scheme manager function. Any such a request should be reasonably complied with in both scope and timing.

33. In support of its core functions the Board may make recommendations to the Scheme Manager (nominated officer) which should be considered and a response made to the Board on the outcome within a reasonable period of time.

Interpretation

34. In these terms 'the Scheme' means the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

35. In these terms Regulations means the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992, as amended, the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006, as amended and the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014 as amended.

36. In these terms 'regulations' include the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992, as amended, the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006, as amended, the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014 as amended, , the Pension Regulators Codes of Practice as they apply to the scheme manager and pension board and any other relevant legislation applying to the Scheme.