

FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION COMMITTEE 2015 SCHEME REGULATIONS: TIMETABLE AND PROCESS

Issue

- This paper sets out the proposed arrangements to ensure that the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (the "2015 Scheme"), to be introduced from April 2015, is finalised by April 2014.

Recommendation

- That the Committee notes the proposed timetable and process.

Background

- The Public Service Pensions Bill, currently at Committee stage in the House of Lords, sets out the new arrangements for the creation of public service pension schemes under a common framework of requirements. Secondary legislation for the 2015 Scheme will need to take account of these framework requirements and also the main scheme design as set out in the Proposed Final Agreement published on 24 May 2012.
- The intention is that the 2015 Scheme legislation will be made by April 2014. This is to allow fire and rescue authorities, and their software providers, sufficient time to put the necessary arrangements in place before the Scheme comes into force in April 2015.

Process and Timetable

i) Pre-Consultation: January 2013 – August 2013

- The Department is drafting a blue-print for the 2015 Scheme. The New Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 (the "2006 Scheme") will be used to form the basis for developing the 2015 scheme regulations. This will be drafted in stages, and will take account of the following:
 - The new requirements of the 2015 Scheme including defining how various new arrangements will work including Career Average Revaluation Earnings, Governance, employer cost cap, transitional protections, Normal Pension Age arrangements and scheme valuations.
 - Consideration of the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 and the 2006 Scheme rules that could be replicated in the 2015 Scheme.
 - Which 2006 scheme rules could be adapted to work with the CARE requirements.
- The blue-print will be shared at various stages with the Firefighters' Pension Committee for comment.

- The Department proposes to arrange regular meetings in order to give employers and unions an opportunity to discuss any aspects of the detailed scheme design and the draft legislation.

ii) Consultation: September/October 2013 – November/December 2013, and following

- The intention is that the Department will consult on the 2015 Scheme legislation for three months, starting in Autumn 2013. This will allow time for consideration of the responses and any further changes required to the legislation, prior to April 2014.

***DCLG
January 2013***