

# Firefighter Pensions Technical Community

## Terms of Reference

### Purpose

The purpose of the Firefighters' Pensions Technical Community is to work together with the Home Office, LGA and other fire service stakeholders to enable the effective facilitation of the administration of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

The particular outcomes sought are:

- Formulate administration guidance, with particular focus on legislation that is open to different interpretations. This will enable the Pensions Technical Community to share best practice and promote uniformity within pension administration.
- When required, to provide advice and guidance to the Scheme Advisory Board and any other bodies on technical matters concerning pension legislation.
- To develop administration standards to help with the improvement of the quality of information available to practitioners.
- To consider the general direction and content of the statutory framework of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.
- To provide the views of practitioners on the practical implications on when change to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes are being considered.
- To anticipate potential Scheme changes and to consider the effects on Fire and Rescue Authorities.
- To be able to provide feedback on the above outcomes to each Local Pension Board (LPB), to support the LPB function of assisting the scheme manager 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.

### Attendance

The Pensions Technical Community members will ideally be made up of a group of individuals who have significant experience of dealing with Firefighters' Pension Schemes administration. Typically this will be nominated members of the Regional Fire Pensions Officers Groups (POGs). Each group should determine their own process for nomination, however, as an example, the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) POGs operate a 2 year rolling attendance, allowing periodical changes to bring new thoughts and ideas to the group.

The members may nominate representative members to join the group who represent government departments or a local government body, such as the Home Office or the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Advisory Board.

When appropriate, the Pensions Technical Community members can invite ad-hoc members to enable the effective functioning of the group, for example actuaries, software companies and government departments.

The group will operate by consensus, when taking decisions in relation to adoption of best practice, guidance and advice in order to support Fire and Rescue Authorities in their application of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

### **Chair**

A chair will be nominated by the group to serve a term of 3 years. The same chair can be re-elected at the end of the 3 year period.

The chair of the Pensions Technical Community will also serve as the Technical Adviser to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England) in their capacity as a practitioner member.

### **Secretariat**

A secretary will be appointed to the Community, whose function will be to arrange the meetings with the volunteer Authority, invite external attendees and issue all meeting documents, in addition to providing the minutes. This function will be provided by LGA.

Draft minutes will be distributed no later than 10 days after the date of the meeting, for approval at the following meeting.

### **Sub-groups**

The Pensions Technical Community may, when required, set up and dissolve a sub-group. The Terms of Reference for the sub group will be agreed by the Pensions Technical Community at its inception.

Current sub-groups:

Fire Communications Working Group

### **Frequency and location of meetings**

The Pensions Technical Community should meet every four months, typically in February, June and October. The October meeting will typically take place the day before the Annual General Meeting in London.

Volunteers will be sought to host the meetings, which will ideally take place at locations across the country to support a good balance of national attendance.