

Local Government Association's Proposal for the Firefighters' Pensions Committee's Review of Normal Pension Age for Firefighters

Introduction

1. DCLG's Firefighters' Pension: Heads of Agreement was published on 9 February 2012. It included a commitment to regularly review the normal pension age and that these reviews would be informed by research carried out by the Fire Pensions Committee (FPC).¹
2. In the view of the Local Government Association (LGA), a review of the NPA, carried out under the auspices of the Fire Pensions Committee, should be undertaken now. This report sets out the LGA's proposal for the review which includes:
 - 2.1. Terms of reference for the review
 - 2.2. Indicative timescales for the review
 - 2.3. A proposed person specification for the Chair of the review.

Terms of Reference

3. The proposed terms of reference for the review are:
 - 3.1. To conduct a review of Normal Pension Age (NPA) in accordance with section 3 (h) and (i) of the Heads of Agreement for those eligible to become members of the proposed firefighters pensions scheme which shall replace the Firefighters Pensions Scheme and New Firefighters Pensions Scheme and to make recommendations to Ministers on NPA arrangements that are appropriate to this occupational group
 - 3.2. The review will commence as soon as practicable and the final report will be published by the end of 2012.
 - 3.3. This shall be an objective review to consider the evidence to support the appropriate NPA for firefighters and the structural implications for the proposed scheme of such recommendations. In reaching its recommendations the review will want to be mindful of the reasonable expectation that scheme members will be able to work to, and retire at, the Normal Pension Age.

¹ FireFighters' Pension Schemes: Heads of Agreement, Department of Communities and Local Government, paragraphs 3h and 3i

Review Chairman

4. The review will need to be led by a credible Chairman. The proposed person specification for review Chairman is:
 - 4.1. Excellent understanding of the political and economic context of public sector pension reform including the occupational nature of such schemes
 - 4.2. Evidence of high level financial and political awareness
 - 4.3. Experience of delivering a complex service review
 - 4.4. Ability to work with and bring together potentially conflicting stakeholder objectives
 - 4.5. Ability to deliver outcomes in short time frames

Financial Implications

5. A competent and influential review is likely to cost a substantial amount of money. Members of the FPC are asked to identify potential sources of funding.

Conclusion

5. Members of the FPC are asked to consider the LGA's proposal for the Fire Pensions Committee's review of NPA for firefighters.