

Scheme Manager

Introduction

This factsheet has been prepared to give guidance on the role of the scheme manager for the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

Who is the scheme manager?

The Scheme Manager is defined under rule 3 and 4 of the 2014 regulations¹ as being the Fire and Rescue Authority as determined under section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

The scheme manager is responsible for managing and administering this scheme and any statutory pension scheme that is connected with it.

If, under statutory amendment, the functions of the Fire and Rescue Authority are transferred to the mayor's office or the Police and Crime Commissioner, becoming a Police and Fire Crime Commissioner (PFCC), the mayor's office or PFCC will become the scheme manager. So it is important they understand the duties of the scheme manager and ensure appropriate delegation is in place.

Delegation and Management

The scheme regulations allow for the scheme manager to be delegated under rule 5 of the 2014 regulations², to such persons or employees of such person as may be authorised in that behalf by the scheme manager.

However, it is important to note that the power to delegate does not absolve the Fire Authority of the responsibility of the pension scheme. The responsibility to ensure the scheme is managed within the rules of the scheme rests with the Fire Authority, and any fines resulting from errors will be the responsibility of the Fire Authority.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/2848/regulation/4/made>

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/2848/regulation/5/made>

It is therefore important to ensure that where the scheme manager delegation has been made to a person or persons, this is managed appropriately.

You may wish to consider the following questions when assessing the management of the delegation.

- **Who owns pensions**

Is there a natural home for pensions within your organisation?

Is this part of the senior management team responsibilities?

Is this one person's responsibility?

- **Who monitors**

Are there regular reports to the fire authority and from whom?

Is there a full understanding of risk?

Does the Local Pension Board report directly to the Fire Authority?

What escalation procedures are there?

Local Pension Board role

The role of the Local Pension Board is to assist the scheme manager. One of the ways they can assist the scheme manager is to ensure that any delegation in place is managed appropriately and that the scheme is in compliance with the regulations and relevant legislation.

Any change to the governance of the Fire and Rescue Authority may affect the employer membership of the Local Pension Board if elected members are members on the board. However, there would no other change to the Local Pension Board arrangements.

Further Guidance

The LGA offer a free scheme manager training session under the SAB levy. Please email bluelight.pensions@local.gov.uk to arrange a session.

This factsheet has been prepared by LGA to give some guidance on the rules of the pension scheme using the regulations as they stand at January 2019, however they should be used only as an informal view of the interpretation of the firefighters' pension scheme as only a court can provide a definitive interpretation of legislation. This factsheet should not be interpreted as legal advice

Please address any queries on the content of this factsheet to bluelight.pensions@local.gov.uk

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