

**Job Description: Firefighters’ Pension Adviser**

**Reports to:** SeniorFirefighters’ Pension Adviser

**Directorate/team:** Strategy and Reform / Pensions

**Grade: 5**

**Job Purpose:**

To work with fire and rescue authorities (FRAs), Home Office and where appropriate other Government departments in relation to the development, costs and administration of the Firefighters’ Pension Schemes (FPS) and related compensation matters

To provide effective and professional support for the governance arrangements of the Firefighters (England) Scheme Advisory Board (The Board) and its members. To support the Board through the active participation in, planning for, and co-ordination of Board meetings and its committees, including the drafting of technically proficient Board and committee papers.

To lead the development of national Firefighters pensions communications resources to a high standard.

To help the Firefighters’ Pensions Senior Adviser provide FRAs with the necessary specialist advice, training, and information to enable them to discharge their duties and achieve excellent standards in all areas related to the above pension schemes and compensation matters.

**Core Accountabilities:**

1. Work under the direction of the Firefighters’ Pensions Senior Adviser to help FRAs meet their challenges and priority outcomes.
2. Lead the Fire Communications Working Group (FCWG) and maintain the FPS websites: [www.fpsregs.org](http://www.fpsregs.org), and [www.fpsmember.org](http://www.fpsmember.org).
3. Contribute to the delivery of the FPS technical community work plan.
4. Contribute to the delivery of the Firefighters (England) Scheme Advisory Board work plan.
5. Lead the SAB committees and maintain the FPS SAB website: [www.fpsboard.org](http://www.fpsboard.org)
6. Contribute to the development of networks and partnerships that are of value to the LGA and work to maintain a positive reputation for the LGA with FRAs, central government, partners and stakeholders.
7. Work as part of a team, contributing towards building a culture of flexible and collaborative team working to ensure that the LGA meets its business objectives and responds effectively to new or changing requirements.
8. Model the LGA’s values and work in accordance with health and safety, equal opportunities and environmental policies.
9. Undertake any other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the post.

**Specific Accountabilities:**

1. To interpret the Firefighters’ Pension Schemes and Compensation Scheme, where necessary in the context of overriding legislation, in order to advise FRAs on complex technical queries to ensure they are able to discharge their duties in relation to the FPS in a correct and timely manner, including by:
   1. Monitoring the Bluelight inbox for technical queries and coordinating responses
   2. Facilitating the Knowledge Hub practitioners’ forum
2. To support FRAs as scheme managers and employers, through the development and communication of comprehensive and understandable guidance and delivery of training.
3. To help develop and provide advice to FRAs on best practice in relation to pensions, retirement, ill-health, and duty systems (pensionable pay).
4. To obtain data and information from FRAs, when required, to enable the Bluelight team to respond to Government requests or offer targeted support by, for example:

* Development and facilitation of surveys
* Data collation and analysis
* Production of clear and comprehensive research reports with recommendations

1. To lead the FCWG by the effective planning and running of meetings and in particular:

* The timely planning and notification of meetings including arranging suitable locations
* The timely agreement and notification of agendas
* Taking minutes of meetings, drafting and finalising actions and agreements
* Ensuring actions from meetings are followed up in a timely manner
* Direct the development of central FPS communications through the FCWG including procurement specifications for external resources.

1. To direct the development of central resources for the Firefighters Scheme Communications, in particular

* Develop and publish scheme guides
* Develop and publish a series of scheme factsheets
* Develop and publish administrator guidance

1. To contribute to the effective operation of the Firefighters’ Technical Community by the effective facilitation of meetings, in particular:

* The timely planning and notification of meetings including arranging suitable locations
* The timely agreement and notification of agendas
* Taking minutes of meetings, drafting and finalising actions and agreements
* Ensuring actions from meetings are followed up in a timely manner

1. To produce relevant content for FPS monthly bulletins.
2. To ensure that online resources available on [www.fpsregs.org](http://www.fpsregs.org), [www.fpsmember.org](http://www.fpsmember.org) and [www.fpsboard.org](http://www.fpsboard.org) are accessible and are maintained to a high standard and in a timely manner.
3. To attend regional pension officer groups to provide FPS updates on behalf of the Bluelight team.
4. To ensure the smooth operation of the Board and its committees by the effective planning and running of meetings and in particular:

* The timely planning and notification of meetings including arranging suitable locations
* The timely agreement and notification of agendas
* The drafting and/or co-ordination of papers for meetings together with their timely dispatch to members
* The co-ordination and recording of attendance of members and arrangement of substitutes as required
* Taking notes of meetings, drafting and finalising actions and agreements
* Ensuring actions from meetings are followed up in a timely manner

1. To ensure that the constitution of the Board is legally compliant, up to date, reflects statutory requirements and is operationally both promoted and understood widely across the Fire pensions stakeholder community.
2. Ensure that all drafting of reports and supporting information and/or arranging for the drafting of the same by third parties are technically correct.
3. To ensure that all statutory information in relation to members of the Board is kept up to date and publicised appropriately on [www.fpsboard.org](http://www.fpsboard.org).
4. To maintain and develop a Board communications plan in order to ensure that the work of the Board and the role of its members is understood by the Fire community. In particular to develop the design, scope and content of a Board website.
5. Have responsibility for raising purchase orders and invoices to collect monies and to ensure invoices are paid in a timely manner.
6. Manage the payments in relation to the Scheme Advisory Board so that these are made in a timely manner and in accordance with LGA budget management policy and practice, including payment of expenses and managing the annual levy process
7. Ensure that a comprehensive service is provided to the Board and committee members to allow them to deliver and discharge their responsibilities to include at least:

* Training and other programmes that support Local Pension Boards and Scheme Managers.
* The provision of timely and efficient information and data.
* Advice and guidance on the legislative and other requirement of members whilst serving on the Board
* General administrative systems that allow access to information and items needed in support of the member role.

1. To support Local Pension Boards, through the development and communication of comprehensive and understandable guidance and delivery of training.
2. To deputise for the Firefighters’ Pensions Senior Adviser where appropriate.
3. To liaise with external suppliers of pension related services to the FPS (e.g. administration software suppliers, Government Actuary’s Department, pensions legal firms) as required.
4. To liaise with LGA Local Government Pension Scheme technical/SAB teams to ensure FRAs and the FPS SAB are provided with a comprehensive and integrated pensions technical and SAB service
5. To assist in the planning and facilitation of national events and training.
6. To attend external meetings and speak at relevant events where appropriate.

**Relevant Contacts:**

Firefighters’ Pensions Senior Adviser  
LGA Head of Pensions

LGA Pensions team

LGA Workforce team

Home Office and devolved government officers

Chair of Firefighters (England) Scheme Advisory Board

Members of Firefighters (England) Scheme Advisory Board and sub-committees

Local Pension Board Chairs

Communications Group

FPS Technical Community

Elected members / councillors

**Person Specification: Firefighters’ Pension Adviser**

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| **Qualifications** |  |
| **Knowledge and experience** | * Excellent knowledge of the Firefighters’ Pension Schemes’ Regulations, and related compensation regulations. * Knowledge of the Firefighters’ Pension Schemes’ governance regulations and overriding legislation. * A good understanding of the operational and political governance structure of FRAs in relation to the pension scheme. * Experience of drafting and/or arranging for the drafting of reports and supporting papers to a high technical level within strict deadlines. * Experience of managing relationships and dealing effectively with internal and external customers, advising senior officers on a range of issues in a complex and political environment. * Experience in providing clear and accurate communications on the work of committees to the public and other interested parties. * Knowledge of ICT resources required to fulfill the role including the use of website content management systems as well as accessibility standards. * Experience of preparing comprehensible communication materials on complex pension and compensation matters to a variety of audiences. |
| **Skills and abilities** | * Able to manage own workload and priorities in order to meet deadlines and respond to changing priorities. * Ability to understand and interpret a wide range of complex legislation. * Ability to gain credibility and manage relationships with key stakeholders. * Ability to demonstrate skill, sensitivity, discretion, tact and diplomacy in working in a political environment. * Strong analytical, research and problem-solving skills, with ability to collect and integrate many sources of information to identify and develop appropriate solutions. * The confidence to represent the LGA when providing advice and information to a wide range of audiences including government bodies, pensions practitioners and employers. * Excellent organisational skills and planning ability. * Excellent written and oral presentation skills. * An aptitude to learn new skills particularly with regard to the specification and development of websites and other online tools * Able to work as part of a team and make a positive and constructive contribution to the development and capacity of the team. * Demonstrable commitment to personal and professional development. |

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| **Other considerations** | * As the job may involve attending meetings outside normal office hours and outside London a flexible attitude to working hours and working away from the office and/or home is essential |