Information for Candidates

Fire Fighter Pensions Scheme
Advisory Board for Wales

Appointment of a Chair
Background

Section 7 of the Public Services Pension Act 2013 (PSPA 2013) requires the establishment of a Scheme Advisory Board in each pension scheme and it is proposed that this new scheme will be in place from April 2015 onwards. The Scheme Advisory Board will be distinct from the pension board.

Scheme Advisory Board’s Role

The role of the Scheme Advisory Board will be to:

- Advise the Responsible Authority (Welsh Ministers) on the desirability of changes to the scheme;
- The Responsible Authority may commission the scheme advisory board to advise on any matter in relation to the scheme that the Responsible Authority considers appropriate;
- The Scheme Advisory Board has responsibility to advise the local pension boards on the effective and efficient administration and management of the scheme, any connected scheme and any pension fund;
- Scheme Managers and Local Pension Boards must have regard to the advice of the board and be able to justify taking a different approach if appropriate.

Role Description

The role of the Chair will be to advise Welsh Ministers on future Scheme changes; liaise with Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities’ Local Pension Boards, and other Scheme interests; to appoint specialist advisers to the Advisory Board and set up a clear programme of future work for the Board to maintain the cost effectiveness of the Scheme, its efficiency and new governance responsibilities which take effect from 1 April 2015.

The Chair of the Pension Scheme Advisory Board will act as an effective board member and will advise Ministers and represent the diverse views of employers (Fire and Rescue Authorities) and employee representatives (Trade Union Side and Fire professional bodies) on the national stewardship and governance of the Fire Fighters’ Pension Schemes.

Person Specification

The Chair will need to have the ability to act as an effective board member with an understanding of the role and function of Fire and Rescue Authorities, their funding and of their fire safety responsibility generally, and their on going statutory stewardship of the Fire-fighter’ Pension Schemes 1992, 2007 and the proposed 2015 scheme.

As well as skills and experience required to undertake the role, the following criteria will need to be included:

- a clear understanding and commitment to equality issues and challenging discriminatory practices when appropriate;
Fire Fighter Pensions Scheme Advisory Board for Wales

- an effective and persuasive communicator capable of making relevant and appropriate contributions to meetings;
- Ability to work effectively with a range of partners and draw together differing perspectives to present nuanced insight into complex issues;’
- Ability to provide balanced, insightful advice to inform Ministers’ decisions;
- Ability to maintain trust and respect the confidentiality of access to early stage policy development work;
- Strong communication skills;
- To have a clear understanding and commitment to Nolan’s ‘Seven Principles of Public Life’ and have an understanding of the importance of high standards in public life.

Eligibility

Applicants should be persons who conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will maintain public confidence.

In particular applicants are required to declare whether they are aware of anything in their private or professional life that would be an embarrassment to themselves or to the Welsh Government if it became known in the event of appointment.

By law, no person with a conflict of interest may be appointed as the chair or as a member of the Board. Applications from anyone with such a conflict of interest (for instance, anyone who is, or is closely related to, a member of a firefighters’ pension scheme in Wales) will not be considered.

Board Membership

Chair
North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Mid & West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Government Actuary’s Department
Welsh Local Government Association
Fire Brigades Union
HR and Finance representatives
Chief Fire Officers Association
Retained Firefighters’ Union
Fire Officers Association
Association of Principal Fire Officers

Chair
To be appointed
Fire Fighter Pensions Scheme Advisory Board for Wales

Secretariat

Welsh Government

Terms of Appointment

Appointments will be made by the Minister for Public Services.

Duration of Appointment

The appointment will be for an initial period of 3 years, with successive terms of office reviewed at the appropriate time.

Time Commitment

The Fire Fighter Pensions Scheme Advisory Board for Wales will meet 3 times a year and therefore the Chair will be expected to be available for these meetings.

Location of Meetings

The Pensions Scheme Advisory Board will hold its meetings at different locations across Wales.

Remuneration

The post of Chair will be paid at £394 per day. The Chair of the Pensions Advisory Board is regarded as a holder of an office for tax and National Insurance purposes. Fees payable will, as a result, be chargeable to tax under Schedule E of the Taxes Act and subject to Class 1 National Insurance contributions. These liabilities will be deducted via the Welsh Government payroll system and the net fee paid to the office holder.

It is not possible or lawful for these fees to be paid to or via a corporate entity, so as to change this tax liability, or for any other purpose.

Travel and other reasonable expenses which might be incurred in carrying out work on the Pensions Scheme Advisory Board can be claimed from the Welsh Government within the recognised limits. You may also be eligible to claim reimbursement for costs in relation to child care/care of the elderly/assistant carer, whilst carrying out work on behalf of the Pensions Scheme Advisory Board.

Assistance for Disabled Members

Where appropriate all reasonable adjustments will be made to enable members to effectively carry out their duties.

Induction Training

Successful candidates will be required to attend induction sessions to be confirmed following appointment.
Selection Process

Although appointments to the Fire Fighter Pensions Scheme Advisory Board for Wales do not come within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments these appointments are made using a process which takes into account the Commissioner’s Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies as best practice.

It is the policy of the Welsh Government to promote and integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of its business including appointments to public bodies. Applications are welcomed and encouraged from all groups and we ensure that no eligible candidate for public office receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, or pregnancy and maternity. The principles of fair and open competition will apply and appointments will be made on merit.

Starting date

27 May 2015

Further Information and Queries

For further information on the application process and to apply, please visit http://wales.gov.uk/publicappointments or for queries contact the HR Helpdesk on 029 2082 5454 / hr-helpdesk@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

For further information about the Fire Fighter Pensions Scheme Advisory Board for Wales, email Helen Griffiths helen.griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk or telephone 0300 062 8221.

Application

To apply you will need submit two supporting documents. The first a full CV and the second a personal statement (no more than one page of A4), detailing your experience, how you meet the role description and person specification and how you could contribute to the Firefighter Pensions Scheme Advisory Board for Wales. The two documents should be uploaded to the “Attach Supplementary Document(s)” section of the online application form.

If you are unable to apply online please contact the HR Helpdesk on 029 2082 5454 who will be able to provide a copy of the application pack in an alternative format.

Closing Date and Key Decision Dates

The closing date for applications is 2 February 2015. We will not be able to consider your application if it is received after this date. You will be informed whether or not you are being invited to interview at least two weeks before the interviews which are expected to be held during March 2015. The Minister’s decision on this appointment is expected around 10 April 2015.