GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FIREFIGHTER’S PENSION SCHEME

(1) History of Scheme

The first scheme for local authority firefighters was set out in the Fire Brigade Pensions Act 1925. During World War II, the National Fire Service was responsible for firefighters and their pensions. After the War, responsibility transferred back to local authorities. Section 26 of the Fire Services Act 1947, which became operative in 1948, enabled the Secretary of State to set up a new pension scheme for firefighters.

(2) Firemen’s Pension Scheme Order 1992

Since 1948 there have been many amendments to the Scheme. These are made as Statutory Instruments (SI) with the approval of Parliament. Occasionally all the SI are consolidated into one Statutory Instrument which makes a new Order for the Scheme. The last one was in 1992 and is known as the Firemen’s Pension Scheme Order 1992 (FPSO). The previous update was in 1973 and was known as the Firemen’s Pension Scheme Order 1973.

The FPSO is the authoritative ruling for the Firemen’s Pension Scheme. The Commentary on the Scheme is very helpful in understanding what is meant in the rules of the FPS but cannot be classed as the final authority on the rules. Ultimately if there are any disputes with the rules, the courts will have to make the final judgements.

(3) Administration of Scheme by Fire Authorities

Although the Firemen’s Pension Scheme is one Scheme with one set of rules, it is effectively administered as separate local schemes by the fire authorities. Each fire authority effectively manages their own scheme locally. Fire authorities are therefore responsible for administering the Scheme, collecting employee contributions, paying pensions and general day to day running of the Scheme.