

*These notes refer to the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (c.2) which received Royal Assent on 11 March 2014*

# Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS**

#### *Procedure for scheme regulations*

##### *Section 21: Consultation*

Section 21 obliges the responsible authority to consult those likely to be affected before making or changing scheme regulations. The current procedures for making changes to current public service pension schemes vary from scheme to scheme. The section provides a standard requirement for those responsible for making schemes to consult before doing so.

Subsection (1) requires the responsible authority to consult the persons (or their representatives) who it considers are likely to be affected by the proposed change before any change is made.

Subsection (2) requires the responsible authority to publish a statement of those people and organisations that the authority anticipates would normally be consulted as part of the obligation under subsection (1). This statement must be kept up to date. The purpose of the statement is to make the consultation process more transparent by providing an indication of the organisations and people with whom consultations within a particular scheme are likely to be conducted.

Subsection (3) allows any consultation that took place before the commencement of this section to satisfy the requirements of subsection (1). It is a permissive rather than mandatory provision. It means that schemes do not need to wait until this section is brought into force before they consult on making scheme regulations, because a consultation carried out before the section comes into force will satisfy its requirements (provided it is compliant in all other respects).