



11 January 2018

Agenda Item: 5

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS AND HUMAN
RESOURCES**

PENSION FUND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Purpose of the Report

1. The Purpose of this report is to update the committee on the Pension Fund Communication Strategy, and seek approval to the updated strategy and communications schedule.

Information and Advice

Background

2. The aim of this communications strategy is to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed of current, and future developments within the Pension Fund and that our communications are clear, concise and accessible to all.
3. The Local Government Pension Scheme is one of the important benefits an employer may offer, and the providing of information and its feedback enhances the operation of the fund. An effective communications strategy is therefore vital for the pension fund to provide a high quality, cost effective and consistent service to members and stakeholders of the Pension Fund.
4. The regulations require the Pension Fund to prepare and update a communication strategy which sets out how the Fund will communicate with members, members' representatives, prospective members and employing authorities; and relevant groups and organisations.
5. The key objectives of the strategy are to:
 - Provide clear, and timely communication to its members and stakeholders
 - Recognise the requirement for different methods of communication for different members and stakeholders
 - Ensure continuous improvement in the way the Fund communicates
 - Inform members and stakeholders to enable them to make decisions regarding pensions matters
 - Inform members and stakeholders about the management and administration of the fund
 - Consult major stakeholders about the management and administration of the fund

- Promote the LGPS as an attractive benefit to scheme members and an important tool in recruitment to employers
- Support employers to enable them to fulfil their responsibility to communicate and share information with members in relation to the scheme.
- Ensure information security and in line with the current data protection legislation. A separate report will be presented to the Pension Committee in March regarding General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Strategy

6. The strategy outlines the scope of the communications, and sets out the mechanisms which are to be used to meet those communication needs. The Pension Fund will use the most appropriate communication medium for the audiences receiving information. This may involve using more than one method of communication.
7. There are a number of distinct groups with whom the Pension Fund needs to communicate:
 - a) Trustees, including the Pensions Committee and the Pensions Board
 - b) Scheme Members
 - c) Prospective Scheme Members
 - d) Scheme Employers
 - e) Pension Fund Staff
 - f) Other Bodies
8. The main communication method set out in the document relates to the use of the Pension Fund website as a main communication tool for both members of the scheme and employers. The website contains scheme details, scheme leaflets, scheme literature and administration forms. In addition there are links to other organisations relevant to scheme members, e.g. Employers, AVC Providers, Employers' Organisations, etc.
9. In addition there are a number of statutory requirements on the Fund to communicate certain information
10. The Pension Administration Office uses the 'CIVICA UPM' database to hold member records. An employer portal has now been developed which will allow employers secure access through the internet to pension records of their employees, this will help employers and the Fund securely transfer members' data.
11. The Pensions Office operates a helpline, which is widely publicised in scheme literature, and enables members to contact the Pensions Team to ask questions in relation to their pension records and benefits. In addition the Employer Support and Compliance team provide a telephone helpline for employers, along with an employer's login page on the website which provides additional information to support employers.
12. The strategy is set out in the attached document in Appendix 1 of this report.

Communication Plan

13. In order to ensure the relevant communications are issued at appropriate times of the year a schedule of communications actions dates has also been drawn up and is attached in Appendix 2. The strategy and the communications schedule will be reviewed annually.

Statutory and Policy Implications

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

15. The data in this report and the Appendices cannot be attributed to individual LGPS members. A number of Scheme members are potentially impacted across a number of Scheme Employers within the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that members:

1. Approve the updated Communications Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1 from the date of this report.
2. Approve the communications schedule, as detailed in Appendix 2, and that the schedule is reviewed annually and updated on an ad hoc basis as necessary.

MARJORIE TOWARD
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For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (KK 11/12/2017)

The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Nottinghamshire Pensions Committee.

Financial Comments (KRP 08/12/2017)]

There are no financial implications arising from the contents of the report

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.