



# Powys

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

### ADMINISTRATION STRATEGY STATEMENT

CYNGOR SIR *POWYS* COUNTY COUNCIL

Drafted February 2012  
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# **Administration Strategy Statement**

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# **Administration Strategy Statement**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Regulation 59 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 enables Pension Fund Administering Authorities to introduce an Administration Strategy (“the Strategy”) for the purpose of improving the administrative processes within their LGPS Funds. These regulations are quite specific regarding the disclosure of information and performance statistics as part of this process but provide less guidance in terms of strategy.

The Powys County Council Pension Fund (“the Fund”) has therefore developed this Strategy which recognises that both employing bodies participating in the Fund (“Employers”) and the Fund have a joint role in the delivery of an efficient service and that any overall improvements can only be achieved in partnership. This Strategy recognises the many administrative challenges faced by the Fund and Employers and contains proposals to streamline processes and improve the services to members of the LGPS, Employers and other stakeholders.

### **1. AIMS**

The aim of this Strategy is to move towards a seamless pension service, employing appropriate technology and best practice which both significantly improves the quality of information overall and the speed with which it is processed to provide better information for and a more efficient service to members of the LGPS, Employers and other stakeholders.

This Strategy also recognises the challenges inherent in recent major changes included in the new LGPS introduced from April 2014.

### **2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

The Fund and its Employers must have regard to this Strategy when carrying out their LGPS functions. This Strategy is made in accordance with Regulation 59 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 [SI. 2013 No. 2356] which enables administering authorities such as Powys County Council to prepare Pension Administration Strategy Statements following consultation with relevant Employers, to facilitate best practices and efficient customer service in respect of the following:

- the establishment of levels of performance which the administering authority and its Employers are expected to achieve in carrying out their Scheme functions
- ensuring the Fund and its Employers comply with statutory requirements in respect of those functions

- improving the communication between the administering authority and the Employers of information relating to those functions.

The Strategy can also set out circumstances in which the Fund may consider giving written notice to any of its Employers under regulation 70 for additional costs on account of that Employer's unsatisfactory performance in carrying out its Scheme functions.

Levels of performance achieved must be included within the Fund's Annual Report along with other matters arising from the Strategy that are considered appropriate. All relevant regulations are set out fully in Annex 1.

### **3. KEY OBJECTIVES**

The key objectives of this Strategy are to ensure that:

- The Fund and Employers are aware of and understand their respective roles and responsibilities under the LGPS Regulations and in the delivery of administrative functions
- Communication processes are in place to enable both the Fund and Employers to proactively and responsively engage with each other and relevant LGPS stakeholders
- Accurate records are maintained for the purpose of calculating pension entitlements and Employer liabilities, ensuring all information and data is communicated accurately, timely and in a secure manner
- The Fund and Employers have appropriate skills and that training is in place to deliver a high quality service and effectively contribute to the changing pensions agenda
- Standards are set and monitored for the delivery of specified activities in accordance with regulatory requirements and recognised best practice
- Potential risks to the Fund and Employers, in particular compliance risk, leading to financial penalties arising from poor administration, are identified, mitigated and monitored
- Effective governance arrangements are established for the monitoring and improvement of this Strategy
- Administrative services are delivered in a cost effective and efficient manner utilising appropriate technologies and best practice, in order to maintain costs at appropriate levels.

#### **4. ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES**

There are currently (February 2016) 18 Employers participating in the Fund with active members. These Employers differ in size, structure and capability which represents a logistical challenge to the management of information, processes and services within the Fund. It is clear that because of these differences a “one-size fits all” approach would be unlikely to deliver workable solutions; however standard ways of operating applicable to different employer groups would bring benefits. It is also clear that the number of Employers will continue to grow as will the demands for accurate information, to improve liability management at both the local and national level.

The Pensions Regulator has set national standards for the quality of pensions data held by pension schemes in both the private and public sectors. These standards require that pension data is 100% accurate, 100% of the time.

There are four key elements necessary to achieving the Fund’s administrative objectives:

- A Communications Strategy that:
  - (i) seeks to ensure pension Scheme members have accessible and timely information on all aspects of their pension benefits; and, informs and enables decisions in respect of those benefits
  - (ii) seeks to enable Scheme Employers to make effective decisions in the management of risks and liabilities as well as facilitating engagement in the wider pensions debate
- Investment in skills and knowledge development both within the Fund and as appropriate with Scheme Employers to ensure efficient administration and active engagement in the issues facing the LGPS in the future
- The effective use of technologies for accessing, storing and disseminating information between the Fund and Scheme Employers in a seamless and secure way
- Set performance standards which support the effective working of the Fund and Scheme Employers towards a higher standard of service and continuous improvement

## **(a) Communications**

Since 2005 the Fund has been required to produce a Communications Strategy Statement. The intention of the legislation is to ensure that LGPS Funds have effective communication processes in place for all LGPS stakeholders. To this end, the Fund's Communications Strategy is already well developed.

However, the introduction of significant Scheme design changes in April 2008 and April 2014 added layers of complexity to the LGPS benefit structure. These changes have given rise to a greater demand for information and engagement, from both Scheme members and Scheme Employers.

The following priorities for communication have been identified to complement the range of activities already in place;

- To develop secure web-based facilities to enable controlled access to information and data, sending and receiving data, providing greater self-service for Scheme Employers
- To further improve the content and timeliness of web-based information to raise the awareness of Scheme members and Scheme Employers on LGPS and wider pensions issues
- To continue to organise and develop an appropriate meetings structure to support the effective engagement of Scheme Employers in ongoing and emerging issues.
- To ensure the effectiveness of distributing the pensions message across the broad spectrum of stakeholders
- To maintain the level of investment in the full range of communication materials to ensure maximum stakeholder awareness, coverage and engagement
- To use feedback to identify areas for improvement.

The Communications Strategy Statement is attached as Annex 2.

## **(b) Training**

The Fund has always endeavoured to keep stakeholders informed of new developments providing training courses and workshops for Scheme Employers and the Fund's staff alike when new Regulations are implemented or are under consideration.

It is widely anticipated that there will continue to be periodic change to the LGPS and pensions in general over the coming years which will have wide-ranging implications for Scheme members, Scheme Employers and Fund staff administering the Scheme. With this in mind, it is important that both Scheme Employers and the Fund ensure that their staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge to support any changes, starting with a sound foundation of existing regulations and administrative processes.

Notwithstanding future change, there is an existing need to improve the quality of Scheme member data and the administrative processes by which information is received from some Scheme Employers.

The aims of the training strategy are therefore:

- to maintain a high standard of customer service for Scheme members and Scheme Employers
- to ensure that relevant staff within each Scheme Employer have appropriate knowledge and skills to effectively discharge administrative processes
- to ensure that Scheme Employers are fully aware of the risks involved in poor administration and maintenance of Scheme member pension records
- to support the implementation of new technologies within the Fund enabling greater self-service flexibilities for Scheme Employers and to help streamline administration processes
- to continually develop the technical skills and competencies of the Fund's staff
- to identify and develop a staff succession strategy for the Fund to ensure the future management and professionalism of Fund administration
- to ensure that members of both the Pensions & Investment Committee and the Pensions Board receive adequate training to properly discharge their responsibilities, in relation to the Fund.

To achieve these training aims, the Fund will:

- Organize workshops and forums for Scheme Employers to debate new issues as they emerge
- Continue to invest in specific technical training and professional development for Fund staff, trustees and Board members

This training strategy will ensure that both the Fund and Scheme Employers have a common understanding of their obligations under the LGPS, and that administrative processes are designed to maximize efficiency and to effectively manage risk.

### **(c) Embracing technology**

The Fund launched its' pensions website in summer of 2012 ([www.powyspensionfund.org](http://www.powyspensionfund.org)). This was followed in summer 2014 by 'My Powys Pension', an online self-service facility available to all active and deferred Scheme members.

### **(d) Performance**

The development of an Administration Strategy carries with it a legislative requirement to set performance standards and publish both the targets and achievement against those targets. The purpose of doing so is to secure continuous improvement of the administration function. Annex 3 details the performance measures and proposed targets which will be monitored and reported to the Council's Pensions & Investment Committee. It should be noted that many of these targets are set to ensure compliance with statutory benchmarks.

In addition, it is anticipated that Service Level Agreements ("SLAs") will be agreed with principal Scheme Employers during 2016/17 to set and monitor performance at the local level and will include all the targets for both the Fund and the Scheme Employer. The aggregated performance will be reported to the Council's Pensions & Investment Committee on an annual basis.



## **Role of the Pensions & Investment Committee**

The Council's Pensions & Investment Committee is representative of all the Scheme Employers in the Powys Pension Fund (reflecting best practice) and as such has a duty to ensure that the management and administration of the Fund is carried out efficiently, cost effectively and in compliance with statutory obligations. The Committee's roles and responsibilities are set out in the Fund's Governance Compliance Statement which is available on request.

## **5. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

This Strategy sets out the key objectives of all the major areas of pension administration within the Fund and takes effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016. Prior to implementation, Scheme Employers have been invited to comment on this Strategy.

This Strategy will be subject to a full review after an initial period of 2 years. When the Strategy is reviewed, further consultation with Scheme Employers will be considered where appropriate.

## **Annex 1**

### **Legislative Framework for this Statement Regulation 59 of The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013**

#### **Pension Administration Strategy**

59.—(1) An administering authority may prepare a written statement of the authority's policies in relation to such of the matters mentioned in paragraph (2) as it considers appropriate ("its pension administration strategy") and, where it does so, paragraphs (3) to (7) apply.

(2) The matters are—

- (a) procedures for liaison and communication with Scheme employers in relation to which it is the administering authority ("its Scheme employers");
- (b) the establishment of levels of performance which the administering authority and its Scheme employers are expected to achieve in carrying out their Scheme functions by—
  - (i) the setting of performance targets,
  - (ii) the making of agreements about levels of performance and associated matters, or
  - (iii) such other means as the administering authority considers appropriate;
- (c) procedures which aim to secure that the administering authority and its Scheme employers comply with statutory requirements in respect of those functions and with any agreement about levels of performance;
- (d) procedures for improving the communication by the administering authority and its Scheme employers to each other of information relating to those functions;
- (e) the circumstances in which the administering authority may consider giving written notice to any of its Scheme employers under regulation 70 (additional costs arising from Scheme employer's level of performance) on account of that employer's unsatisfactory performance in carrying out its Scheme functions when measured against levels of performance established under sub-paragraph (b);
- (f) the publication by the administering authority of annual reports dealing with—
  - (i) the extent to which that authority and its Scheme employers have achieved the levels of performance established under sub-paragraph (b), and
  - (ii) such other matters arising from its pension administration strategy as it considers appropriate; and
- (g) such other matters as appear to the administering authority after consulting its Scheme employers and such other persons as it considers appropriate, to be suitable for inclusion in that strategy.

Where an administering authority determines to have a pension administration strategy, the following paragraphs apply.

- An administering authority must keep its pension administration strategy under review; and make such revisions as are appropriate following a material change in its policies in relation to any of the matters contained in the strategy.
- In preparing or reviewing and making revisions to its pension administration strategy, an administering authority must consult its Scheme employers and such other persons as it considers appropriate.
- An administering authority must publish its pension administration strategy; and where revisions are made to it, the strategy as revised.
- When an administering authority publishes its pension administration strategy, or that strategy as revised, it must send a copy of it to each of its Scheme employers and to the Secretary of State.
- An administering authority and its Scheme employers must have regard to the current version of any pension administration strategy when carrying out their Scheme functions.

### **Pension fund annual report**

57(1) An administering authority must, in relation to each year beginning on 1st April 2014 and each subsequent year, prepare a document ("the pension fund annual report") which contains—

- a report about the management and financial performance during the year of the pension fund;
- a report explaining the investment policy of the pension fund and a review of the fund's investment performance during the year;
- a report explaining the arrangements for the administration of the pension fund;
- a statement by the actuary who carried out the most recent valuation of the assets and liabilities of the pension fund of the level of funding disclosed by the valuation;
- the current version of the pension fund's governance compliance statement;
- the fund account and net asset statement together with supporting notes and disclosures;
- an annual report dealing with the extent to which the administering authority and Scheme employers have achieved

any levels of performance as set out in the pension administration strategy;

- such other matters arising from the pension administration strategy as the fund considers appropriate;
- the current version of the funding strategy statement;
- the current version of the statement of investment principles;
- the current version of the communications strategy;
- any other material that the fund considers appropriate.

(2) The annual report is to be completed and published on or before 1<sup>st</sup> December following the end of the scheme year.

(3) In the preparation and publication of the annual report the fund must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

### **Additional costs arising from Scheme employer's level of performance**

70.—(1) This regulation applies where, in the opinion of an administering authority, it has incurred additional costs which should be recovered from a Scheme employer because of that employer's level of performance in carrying out its functions under these Regulations.

(2) The administering authority may give written notice to the Scheme employer stating—

- (a) the administering authority's reasons for forming the opinion mentioned in paragraph (1);
- (b) the amount the authority has determined the Scheme employer should pay in respect of those costs and the basis on which the specified amount is calculated and;
- (c) where the administering authority has prepared a pension administration strategy, the provisions of the strategy which are relevant to the decision to give the notice and to the matters in subparagraph (a) and (b).

### **Statements of policy about exercise of discretionary functions**

60.—(1) A Scheme employer must prepare a written statement of its policy in relation to the exercise of its functions under regulations 16(2)(c) and 16(4)(d) (funding of additional pension); 30(6) (flexible retirement); 30(8) (waiving of actuarial reductions); and, 31 (award of additional pension). An administering authority must prepare such a statement in relation to the exercise of the functions under regulation 30(8) in cases where a former employer has ceased to be a Scheme employer.

- (2) Each Scheme employer must send a copy of its statement to each relevant administering authority before 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014 and must publish its statement.
- (3) A body required to prepare a statement under paragraph (1) must—
- (a) keep its statement under review; and
  - (b) make such revisions as are appropriate following a change in its policy.
- (4) Before the expiry of a month beginning with the date any such revisions are made, each Scheme employer must send a copy of its revised statement to each relevant administering authority, and must publish its statement as revised.
- (5) In preparing, or reviewing and making revisions to its statement, a body required to prepare a statement under paragraph (1) must have regard to the extent to which the exercise of the functions mentioned in paragraph (1) in accordance with its policy could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service.
- (6) In this regulation, a relevant administering authority, in relation to an employing authority, is any authority which is an appropriate administering authority for that employer's employees.

## **Statements of policy concerning communications with members and Scheme employers**

61.—(1) An administering authority must prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out its policy concerning communications with members; representatives of members; prospective members; and Scheme employers.

(2) In particular the statement must set out its policy on the provision of information and publicity about the Scheme to members, representatives of members, and Scheme employers; the format, frequency and method of distributing such information or publicity; and the promotion of the Scheme to prospective members and their employers.

(3) The statement must be revised and published by the administering authority following a material change in their policy on any of the matters referred to in paragraph (2).

## **Annex 2**

### **COMMUNICATIONS POLICY STATEMENT**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Scheme 2013 (as amended) [SI 2013 No. 2356] requires an administering authority to prepare, publish and maintain a statement that sets out strategy for communication and promotion of the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 1.2 The Statement is required to include details of policy for communicating with Scheme members and their representatives; prospective Scheme members; and Scheme employers.
- 1.3 In particular, the Statement must set out policy on the provision of information and publicity about the Scheme to Scheme members, their representatives and Scheme employers; the format, frequency and method of distributing such information or publicity; and the promotion of the Scheme to prospective members and their employers.
- 1.4 The Statement must be reviewed and published following any material change relevant to the policy.
- 1.5 An effective communications strategy is vital for any organisation that strives to provide a high quality and consistent service to its customers. The complexity of pensions in general and the LGPS in particular, places communications at the heart of a high quality service provision.
- 1.6 There are six distinct groups with whom Powys Pension Fund needs to communicate:
  - Pension Fund Trustees
  - Scheme Members
  - Prospective Scheme Members
  - Scheme Employers
  - Pension Fund Officers and Staff
  - Other Stakeholders
- 1.7 Set out in this Statement are the mechanisms which are used to communicate with each of these groups, together with a strategy for widening and improving communications and to promote the Scheme amongst non-members.

#### **2. Pension Fund Trustees**

- 2.1 The Trustees of Powys Pension Fund (the members of the Pensions & Investment Committee - five Powys County Council Elected Members plus two non-voting members representing other participating Scheme employers and Scheme members) receive information, primarily in the form of written reports and correspondence, that cover investment, actuarial and administration issues. Committee members also attend conferences and seminars on the LGPS.
- 2.2 Completion of appropriate training for Pension Fund Trustees is a mandatory requirement for new members of the Committee. Additional knowledge and training is to be provided via Pension Fund Officers and advisers. Full details are set out in the Knowledge & Skills Framework Policy appended to the Pension Fund's Governance Policy & Compliance Statement.

### **3. Scheme Members**

- 3.1 Newsletters – are sent out to all active and pensioner members covering LGPS and related issues, as and when required.
- 3.2 Benefit Statements – sent to all active and deferred members (where a current home address is held) annually. Statements include State Scheme benefits and are produced in conjunction with the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 3.3 Scheme Literature – A range of Scheme literature and information covering many aspects of the LGPS is produced by Powys Pension Fund and is supplied direct to employers and Scheme members, as required.
- 3.4 Pay Advices – Powys Pension Fund issues pay advices to all its Fund pensioners twice per year, or more often where pay amounts vary from month-to-month.
- 3.5 Pensions Increases – all Fund pensioners are advised of their annual pension increase via a personalised letter sent in April each year.
- 3.6 Correspondence – the Pension Fund utilises both surface mail and email to send and receive correspondence with Scheme members.
- 3.7 Telephone – much of the Pension Fund's communication with individual Scheme members is conducted by telephone.
- 3.8 Pensions Clinics – The Pension Fund provides a periodic clinic service where Scheme members have the opportunity to discuss their individual pension issues on a face-to-face basis.
- 3.9 Welsh Language – wherever possible the Pension Fund provides access to Scheme documents in the medium of Welsh.



- 3.10 Website - a full range of Pension Fund and LGPS information is available via the Pension Fund's dedicated bespoke website at [www.powyspensionfund.org](http://www.powyspensionfund.org).
- 3.11 My Powys Pension – an online system that is available to all active and deferred Scheme members. It enables members to interact with their pension records; log changes to basic data (eg changes to address etc.); and perform pension benefit forecasts.
- 3.12 Powys Pension Fund has both facebook and twitter accounts through which it is able to communicate further with Scheme members who prefer to receive information via these media platforms.

#### **4. Prospective Scheme Members(next)**

- 4.1 Scheme Guide – All prospective Scheme members are provided with Scheme information on being appointed to their employments.
- 4.2 Website - a full range of Pension Fund and LGPS information is available via the Pension Fund's dedicated bespoke website at [www.powyspensionfund.org](http://www.powyspensionfund.org).
- 4.3 The Pension Fund's intention is to request formal notification of non-joiners from Scheme employers. The information will be used to market the Scheme with dedicated literature. (Targeted for implementation by March 2017).
- 4.4 Pensions Clinics – The Pension Fund provides a periodic clinic service where prospective Scheme members have the opportunity to discuss their individual pension issues on a face-to-face basis.

#### **5. Scheme Employers**

- 5.1 Employers' Guide – An Employers' Guide is issued to each employer to assist them in the administration associated with participation in the Scheme.
- 5.2 Ill Health Retirements – The Pension Fund has made available to all participating employers access to the Pension Fund's approved Occupational Health Physician for the purposes associated with ill health benefits.
- 5.3 Employer Meetings and Reports – Periodic Employer meetings are held at least annually. Typically these are used to communicate a variety of Pension Fund matters of specific interest to employers, such as the results of triennial valuations. In addition, employers receive copies of the Pension Fund's Annual Report & Accounts, Statement Of

Investment Principles, Funding Strategy Statement and Governance Policy & Compliance Statement.

- 5.4 Technical Updates – These are sent to employers from time to time to advise them of significant changes to the Scheme and associated legislation.
- 5.5 Website - a full range of Pension Fund and LGPS information is available via the Pension Fund's dedicated bespoke website at [www.powyspensionfund.org](http://www.powyspensionfund.org).
- 5.6 It is envisaged that technical updates for employers will be regularised in the form of a quarterly briefing paper, to include, in addition to Scheme changes, matters of national debate and interest on the future development of pensions in general and the LGPS in particular. (Targeted for implementation by March 2017).
- 5.7 Powys Pension Fund has both facebook and twitter accounts through which it is able to communicate further with employers who prefer to receive information via these media platforms.

## **6. Pension Fund Officers and Staff**

- 6.1 Team Meetings – Pensions Administration meets quarterly at which team members consider procedural issues; plan work and developments for the coming quarter and beyond; and, at which the team is kept abreast of Scheme developments and changes.
- 6.2 Technical Information – Bulletins and Circulars issued by the Local Government Association together with guidance and consultation documents from the Department for Communities and Local Government are available to all Pension Fund Officers and Staff for information. In addition, periodic in-house procedural guidance, procedure notes and technical explanations are provided, as required.
- 6.3 Intranet and Internet – All staff have been enabled to use the corporate network in order to access both the Powys Intranet and the internet.
- 6.4 E-mails – All staff have access to email facilities.
- 6.5 Pension Fund Manager – The Pension Fund Manager maintains an open-door policy and attempts to make himself available to all staff at all times.

## **7. Other Stakeholders**

- 7.1 All Wales Pension Officers' Group – Pension Officers from the 8 administering authorities in Wales meet regularly in order to ensure

uniform interpretation of the LGPS and other associated regulations. The group's views are passed up to the national level via the Local Government Pensions Committee's Technical Group Meetings (an arm of the Local Government Association) that are held quarterly.

- 7.2 All Wales Communications Group – Pensions Officers from the 8 administering authorities in Wales meet periodically in order to devise, develop and promote the use of common Scheme literature.
- 7.3 CLASS Group – As a user of the Altair Pensions Administration System, the Pension Fund is a member of the local authority CLASS Group and attends both regional user groups and national meetings.
- 7.4 National Fraud Initiative – The Pension Fund has participated in the National Fraud Initiative since 1998 and continues to do so. This has helped to avoid the overpayment of pension benefits to both deceased and re-employed pensioners.
- 7.5 Taxpayers and the General Public – all the principal Pension Fund documents including the Annual Report & Accounts, Actuarial Valuation Reports, Statement of Investment Principles, Funding Strategy Statement, Governance Policy & Compliance Statement and this Statement, are available to the public via the Pension Fund's website at [www.powyspensionfund.org](http://www.powyspensionfund.org) or on request.

## 8. Contacts

- 8.1 Any questions, queries or observations on this Statement; or, on matters relating to the investment of the Powys Pension Fund; or, on the governance of the Pension Fund, should be addressed to:

Mr J Rollin  
Pension Fund Manager  
Powys County Council  
County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys LD1 5LG

Tel: 01597 827641

Email: [joe.rollin@powys.gov.uk](mailto:joe.rollin@powys.gov.uk)

- 8.2 Questions or queries concerning membership, benefits or information in respect of the Local Government Pension Scheme, should be directed to:

Mr C Hurst  
Pensions Administration Manager  
Powys County Council  
County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys LD1 5LG

Tel: 01597 827640

Email: [chris.hurst@powys.gov.uk](mailto:chris.hurst@powys.gov.uk)

- 8.3 All other enquiries should be addressed to:

The Pensions Section  
Powys County Council  
County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys LD1 5LG

Email: [pensions@powys.gov.uk](mailto:pensions@powys.gov.uk)

## Annex 3

### Performance Criteria - Joint Delivery to Members

#### Employer Service Information and Performance Standards – OPERATIONAL & FINANCIAL

Element	Employer	Target (working days)	The Fund	Target (working days)	Average % within target
Early leavers	To send completed leaver form.	30 days after month end in which left	Advise member of scheme benefits	Within 30 days of receipt of all data	
Retirement	To send completed leaver form	On or before retirement date	Pay benefits to member	Within 10 days of receipt of all data	
Death in service	To send completed leaver form	Within 5 days of being notified	Advise partner / children of benefits	Within 10 days of receiving all data	
Year End – data submission	Employer to supply electronic schedule of individual member contributions, pay and hours, in format specified by Fund	By 31 <sup>st</sup> May (ie within 8 weeks of year end)			
Year End – data queries	Respond to queries arising from reconciliation of year end data	Within 1 month of being raised			
Annual Benefit Statements – active members			Issue benefit statements where member records have been updated	By 31 <sup>st</sup> October each year	

Annual Benefit Statements – deferred members			Issue annual benefit statements to all deferred members for whom a current address is held	By 31st October each year	
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## Annex 4

### SERVICE CHARTER

#### OUR STANDARDS OF SERVICE TO MEMBERS

##### New Active Members

- **Membership Certificate**  
We aim to issue a Membership Certificate to a new member within one month of receiving a completed notification from the Member's Employer.
- **Transfers In**  
We aim to acknowledge the Member's request for transfer details and calculate the estimated benefits that a transfer value will buy and issue a quotation within 10 days of receiving details from the Member's previous scheme and any additional essential information required from HMRC. We aim to request payment of the transfer value within 5 days of receiving confirmation from the Member that the transfer is to proceed. We aim to confirm the actual benefits purchased by the transfer value within 10 days of receiving payment from the Member's previous scheme.

##### Existing Active Members

- **Annual Benefit Statement**  
Provided pay details are received from employers promptly after the year end and provided we hold all of the relevant information, we will send each year an Annual Benefit Statement to each Member at their last known home address showing the estimated current value of their accrued benefits, the value of their prospective benefits at normal retirement age, the estimated current value of their death-in-service benefits and, the amount of Annual Allowance used by the change in benefit value since the previous year, for tax purposes..
- **Paying Extra Contributions**  
We aim to provide information within 10 days of receiving a request from a Member wishing to pay extra contributions.
- **Retirements**  
We aim to send details of the benefits payable and pay the member's tax-free cash lump-sum within 10 days of receiving all of the information required from the Member's Employer and/or the Member.
- **Deaths**  
We aim to send details of the benefits payable within 10 days of receiving all of the information required from the late Member's employer and we will pay the lump-sum death grant within 10 days

of receiving Grant of Probate (or other appropriate documentation) or authorisation from two delegated officers.

- **Early Leavers**

We aim to send details of the benefit options available within 30 days of receiving all of the information required from the Employer.

- **Refunds**

We aim to pay a refund by the end of the month following receipt of the Member's formal request for payment.

- **Transfers Out**

We aim to issue a quotation, guaranteed for 3 months, within 10 days of receiving the Member's request and confirmation of the Member's contracted-out rights from Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs. We aim to pay a transfer value within five days of receiving confirmation from the Member that the transfer is to be made and all of the information we require to make payment.

## **Deferred Members**

- **Annual Benefit Statement**

We aim to provide each deferred member (for whom we hold a valid current address) with a Benefit Statement annually, showing the current value of their preserved benefits.

- **Deferred Benefits into Payment**

Provided we hold an address which has been confirmed we will write to the Deferred Member setting out the benefit options, at least 30 days prior to the date benefits become payable.