

Meeting: **Local Pension Board**

Date/Time: **Friday, 9 October 2015 at 9.30 am**

Location: **Goscote Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield.**

Contact: **Matthew Hand (0116 305 6038)**

Email: **matthew.hand@leics.gov.uk**

AGENDA

<u>Item</u>	<u>Report by</u>	
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2015.		(Pages 3 - 6)
2. Question Time.		
3. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).		
4. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.		
5. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.		
6. Pension Fund Administration Report - April to June 2015 Quarter.	Director of Corporate Resources	(Pages 7 - 10)
7. Managing the Pension Section's Workload.	Director of Corporate Resources	(Pages 11 - 16)
8. Joint Administration and Communication Strategy.	Director of Corporate Resources	(Pages 17 - 52)
9. Reporting Breaches of the Law to the Pensions Regulator	Director of Corporate Resources	(Pages 53 - 132)



10. Risk Register

Director of
Corporate
Resources

(Pages 133 -
140)

11. Dates of Future Meetings.

12. Any other items which the Chairman has
decided to take as urgent.

TO:

Employer representatives

Mr. D. Jennings CC
Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC
Cllr. D. Alfonso

Employee representatives

Ms. D. Haller
Ms. D. Stobbs
Mr. C. Raymakers



Minutes of a meeting of the Local Pension Board held at County Hall, Glenfield on Friday, 19 June 2015.

PRESENT

Mr. D. Jennings CC
Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC

Ms. M. Hill
Ms. D. Haller

1. Election of Chairman.

That Mr. D. Jennings CC be appointed Chairman of the Local Pension Board for the period ending with the date of the Annual Council meeting in May 2016

2. Election of Vice Chairman.

That Mr. A.M Kershaw CC be appointed Vice Chairman of the Local Pension Board for the period ending with the date of the Annual Council meeting in May 2016

3. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

4. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

5. Urgent items.

There were no items for consideration.

6. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

7. The Role of the Local Pension Board

The Director of Corporate Resources presented a report and presentation concerning the role of the Local Pension Board. A copy of both are filed with these minutes, marked '7'.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- The Local Pension Board was not a decision-making committee and would instead be expected to assist the authority in securing compliance with Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and the requirements of the Pensions Regulator. It was acknowledged that other responsibilities could be added to its role, subject to the agreed terms of reference;
- Members of the Local Pension Board would continue to receive training in order for them to be able to fulfil their role. It would also be beneficial for Board members to attend meetings of the Local Pension Committee in order to gain a greater understanding of Pension Fund issues;
- The Board would be responsible for monitoring the administration of the Pension Fund which was overseen by the County Council's Pensions Section.

RESOLVED:

That the report and presentation be noted.

8. External Audit Plan.

The Board received a report by the Director of Corporate Resources alongside representatives from PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC), the purpose of which was to inform members of the Pension Fund External Audit Plan for the 2014/2015. A copy of the report marked '8' is filed with these minutes.

The Board noted that the external audit, which would commence in July, would follow a similar format to those undertaken previously by PwC and would be carried out using a risk based approach. The audit plan had identified the management override of controls, fraud and valuation of hard to value investments as key risk areas.

RESOLVED:

That the Pension Fund Audit Plan for 2014/2015 be noted.

9. Internal Audit Arrangements (Including Internal Audit Work Conducted During 2014-15 and the Internal Audit Plan 2015-16)

The Board received a report by the Director of Corporate Resources, the purpose of which was to inform members about the internal audit arrangements for the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund, summarise the outcomes of audits conducted during 2014-15 and outline the internal audit plan for 2015-16. A copy of the report marked '9' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- Under the terms stipulated by Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), the County Council was required to ensure that at the beginning of the audit year, an annual plan of audits was agreed with the Treasurer and noted by the Board;
- Prior to the 2015-16 financial year, the Fund's internal audit annual plans and reports were reported to the County Council's Corporate Governance Committee.

However the plans would now be considered by the Local Pension Board's which was responsible for ensuring effective and efficient governance of the Fund;

- It was a statutory requirement for the County Council to conduct an internal audit focusing on control requirements and procedures. There was also a requirement for an external audit of the financial statements. Historically, the external auditor had utilised the work of internal audit when forming its opinion and it was hoped this protocol would be re-established with the incoming external auditors.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

10. Quarterly Admin Report.

The Board received a report by the Director of Corporate Resources, the purpose of which was to inform members of relevant issues in the administration of fund benefits during January - March 2015. A copy of the report marked '10' is filed with these minutes.

The Director reported that the quarterly performance target results had remained very similar to the previous quarter. The amount of positive feedback received from customers remained high and business processes in the areas of pension payments made with 5 working days and death benefits sent within 10 working days had improved since the last quarter.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

11. Date of Next Meeting.

RESOLVED:

That officers be requested to determine an appropriate date and time for the next Local Pension Board meeting in October 2015 and publicise the date on the County Council's website.

9.30am – 10.55am

CHAIRMAN

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LOCAL PENSION BOARD – 9 OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

PENSION FUND ADMINISTRATION REPORT – APRIL TO JUNE 2015 QUARTER

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of relevant issues in the administration of Fund benefits, including the performance of the Pensions Section against its Performance Indicators.

Background

2. The Pensions Section is responsible for the administration of Local Government Pension Scheme benefits of the Leicestershire Pension Fund's 83,000+ members.

Performance Indicators

3. Attached as the appendix to this report are the performance indicators for the Pensions Section, which form part of the Section's Service Plan and have been agreed by the Assistant Director of Customer Services and Operations. These indicators are split into 2 broad categories – how quickly processes are carried out, and how customers feel they have been kept informed and treated by staff.

Performance of Pensions Section

4. In the April to June 2015 quarter, the performance target results have remained very similar to the previous quarter. The results are detailed in Appendix A.

The amount of Positive feedback received from customers remains high although there has been a slight decrease in, customers experience of dealing with the Section rated at least good or excellent. This is due to increasing timescales in dealing with individual's benefits. Business processes in the areas of pension payments made with 5 working days and death benefits remain areas for improvement. There is a separate report that details a plan for pension workloads.

Administration

Annual Benefit Statements

5. The change to Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) has caused significant challenges for employers providing year-end data to the Pension Section, despite them receiving year-end layout details and news about the CARE changes from the Pension Section in advance of year-end. The statutory deadline for the production of benefits statements reduced from 30 September to 31 August this year.
6. Both changes have caused issues for Pension Scheme administrators in producing annual benefit statements. 94% of Local Government pension scheme administrators have not achieved the 31 August deadline.
7. Given the issues nationally the Local Government Association have demonstrated to The Pensions Regulator the unique circumstances faced in undertaking this year's exercise. The Pensions Regulator was very grateful for the information and understood the teething problems the new CARE scheme has caused.
8. Active members annual benefit statements are added to our on-line system for members so they can run their own estimates. However, as this is the first year with CARE pay included paper versions are also available. This encourages members to register on-line for future statements where there is also a facility for members to run their own on-line estimates free of charge.
9. In future members will continue to receive an on-line annual benefit statement each year and they can also request one other estimate per year. Any further estimates will then be charged at £100 each.
10. The Pension Section is working on a number of improvement areas.
 - A list of employer issues have been collated by Pensions and colleagues will go out to individual employers to assist and educate them in submitting accurate and timely data. This should help employers provide the data next year.
 - The payroll reports developed by employers this year for CARE pay can be used again next year, so making next year's data more easily reportable and therefore more quickly provided to Pensions.
 - The Pension Section is working on developing a system for employers to submit data to pensions monthly or quarterly, thereby "spreading" year-end into 12 or 4 manageable periods to assist pension administration on the production of statements.

- During next year's year-end the Pension Section will provide updates on the annual benefit statements for the Local Board. The Local Board will be informed of any employers that fail to improve or provide accurate and timely data.

Partnership Working with Derbyshire County Council

11. The Leicestershire and Derbyshire Pension Sections organised a joint training session for their employers on the calculation of pay since CARE. This was beneficial for the employers who attended. Both Funds would like to develop more joint training to assist all employers with their responsibilities. There may be other opportunities to work closely in future.

Recommendation

12. The Board is asked to note this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None specific

Background Papers

Appendix A – Quarterly Results – April – June 2015

Officers to Contact

Ian Howe – telephone (0116) 305 6945

Chris Tambini – telephone (0116) 305 6199



LOCAL PENSION BOARD – 9 OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

MANAGING THE PENSION SECTION'S WORKLOAD

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the current workload in the Pension Section and the measures in place to address it.

Background

2. The Pensions Section is responsible for the administration of Local Government Pension Scheme benefits of the Leicestershire Pension Fund's 83,000+ members. The Section also provides the Fire-fighters pension administration for Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Fire Authorities.

Pension administration has become more complex over the last few years and the reasons for this are listed below.

- Increased complexity of pension calculations since the introduction of the new Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) since April 2014, especially around benefits and aggregation (combining of benefits). This has caused benefit calculations to take longer.
- The first year career average revalued earnings (CARE) benefit statements have coincided with a reduced statutory deadline for the production of annual benefit statements. The deadline has moved from 30 September to 31 August, impacting on the employer year-end processes and the resource in the Pensions Section dealing with year-end.
- Changes to national legislation have introduced new or increased complexity to work areas; Freedom and Choice transfer out enquiries and reducing tax thresholds for the annual allowance. Freedom and Choice has produced many enquiries and requests for information from both active and deferred members as well as private pension schemes.

- Introduction of a new Fire-fighters pension scheme since April 2015.
- 2 large "one off" Fire-fighter pension exercises. Retained Fire-fighters being able to backdate membership and recalculations of retired Fire-fighters lump sums in the period December 2001 and August 2006.
- Because of the scheme changes there are a number of known system errors which are requiring manual calculations and greater scrutiny of the results by the Pension Section.
- Given budgetary pressures being placed upon employers, there is an ever increasing number of section reviews and restructures from many fund employers, requiring estimates for both capital costs and individual member benefits.
- Lowering of the minimum retirement age from 60 to 55 in the LGPS since April 2014 has resulted in a large number of enquiries from affected scheme members requesting estimates.
- An increasing number of scheme employers due to outsourcing by scheme employers under Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) and the transfer of schools to academies.
- Ever increasing outsourcing of payroll and HR provision from the increasing number of fund employers
- New governance legislation – New Local Pension Board
- National guaranteed minimum pension (GMP) reconciliation exercise
- Pensions Section calculating or checking pay for the two largest employers, the County and City Councils.

Plan of Action

3. To address these pressures the Pensions Section has introduced a number of changes to assist in the shorter term and also developed a longer term plan.

Short term

4. A review of the Pension Section structure has been completed and additional posts have been authorised. Following a successful recruitment exercise the additional colleagues will join the team in October.

5. The three Fire Authorities are providing additional income to resource an additional post on the Pensions Fire Team. Recruitment for this post is on-going.
6. Colleagues in the Pensions Section are able to work overtime to assist with the current work pressures and a previous colleague is helping with certain areas of work. Colleagues are also working more flexibly, at home, outside office hours and at weekends.
7. Workloads are being regularly monitored and available resource is being directed at specific areas. Targets have been set to reduce some of the peak workloads and output is being recorded.
8. The Pensions Section is also investigating the opportunity to work in partnership with A level school students who may be interested in working on certain more basic calculations. The intention would be for the students to work after school as required.
9. A training session for Fund employers at both Derbyshire and Leicestershire has been completed to assist employers with the calculation of pay, which in turn helps the pension teams as the data received from employers is better quality and avoids queries. The Pension Section has set a target to continue providing training to employers each month and also to continue internal training for colleagues when possible.
10. The Pension Section will introduce a charging mechanism for estimates. A scheme member can have a number of estimates each year but further requests will be charged. This may reduce the number of estimate requests received.

Long Term

11. As the number of scheme employers continues to increase (now over 200) along with the reduced statutory timescale for annual benefit statements, the Pension Manager is looking to implement a new way for employers to submit data to the Pension Section. The new system would be the "link" between the employer's payroll system and the Pension Sections administration system. It will provide a secure, consistent and validated way of transmitting data to the Pensions Section.
12. Currently data is submitted at year-end and any queries are resolved at this time. The plan is to move towards 12 monthly or 4 quarterly submission of data per year (depending on the size of the employer) so allowing any queries to be addressed more quickly, reducing the year-end "peak" thereby spreading the work over the full year. This will make the statutory deadline for annual benefit statements more achievable.

13. A soft market test is underway to see what companies offer for this new system and the costs for this. Companies are invited to demonstrate their system solution in mid-October and following the results, the next step will be to initiate a tender process for the procurement of a system solution.
14. The Pensions Section has been working closely with the Derbyshire Pension Section in a collaborative and partnership approach which has already brought benefits to both.
15. The Pension Section does not receive a huge amount of phone calls but those it does can normally be split into two categories. Firstly, scheme members phone regarding individual correspondence they have received from Pensions and in these cases they speak to the person dealing with their individual case which is an efficient way to deal with these. The second group are calls from scheme members enquiring about the on-line system and the log-in procedure. The Pensions Section will look at developing the new colleagues so they can assist with these calls. In addition, the Pensions Manager is working with the on-line system provider to try and simplify the log-in process to reduce calls generally.
16. For many years the Pensions Section has provided pay calculations for the County which is a duty of the employer (not the Pension Section). This has developed over years and was viewed as the correct solution to deal with all scheme leavers and estimates. The intention is that this gradually moves back to the employer but this creates a number of implications that need to be worked through; employer resource implications, knowledge and training of colleagues, adaption of forms and processes.
17. The Pension Section is contracted with its current administration system until 2017/2018. The greatest innovation is to implement an "end to end" pension administration system that incorporates the process for employers to submit data, the database for calculations and the output into a pensioner payroll system. The Pension Section will work with relevant Sections on developing a tender document for this requirement.

Recommendation

18. The Board is asked to note this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None specific

Background Papers

None

Officers to Contact

Ian Howe – telephone (0116) 305 6945

Chris Tambini – telephone (0116) 305 6199

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LOCAL PENSION BOARD – 9 OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

JOINT ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with information concerning the draft joint administration and communication strategy.

Background

2. The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 enables the Pension Section to have administration and communication strategies.

The aim of the administration element of the strategy is to set out the quality and performance standards expected of Leicestershire County Council in its role as administering authority and the Fund's employer responsibilities.

3. The communication strategy element details how the Pension Section communicates with a number of different parties including; scheme members and employers.
4. Because areas in both strategies are sometimes interdependent of each-other, for ease, both strategies are included within the same document which is appended to this report marked Appendix A included as Appendix A. This is named the Leicestershire Local Government Pension Scheme Joint Administration and Communication Strategy.
5. At the end of the strategy document it includes the Pension Section performance targets and Service Level Agreement. The Service Level Agreement is especially important as it details timescales to be achieved by the Pension Section and Fund employers with potential financial implications if those timescales are not adhered to.

Consultation

6. A consultation exercise must take place with employers on the administration element given the nature of close working required between the Pension Section and Fund employers.

7. Given the introduction of the Local Pension Board and greater governance by The Pensions Regulator, this report proposes the attached Joint Pensions Administration and Communication Strategy is noted, in order for this document to then be consulted on with the Fund's employers. It is planned to have the final version in place for the 1 April 2016 and this will be brought to Local Pension Board.
8. Whilst employers are encouraged to sign up to the Service Level Agreement this is not mandatory requirement. .

Recommendation

9. The Board is asked to note this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None specific

Background Papers

Appendix A – Draft Joint Pensions Administration and Communication Strategy

Officers to Contact

Ian Howe – telephone (0116) 305 6945
Chris Tambini – telephone (0116) 305 6199



APPENDIX A

Leicestershire Local Government Pension Scheme

Joint Administration and Communication Strategy

Sections

- 1. Administration Strategy**
- 2. Communication Strategy**
- 3. Performance Targets**
- 4. Service Level Agreements**

This document details two strategies, the administration and communication strategies for Leicestershire Local Government Pension Scheme.

It also details the Pension Section performance targets and service level agreement for the Scheme's employers.

SECTION 1

ADMINISTRATION STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

An administration strategy, as allowed for by the Local Government Pension Scheme, is seen as one of the tools which can help in delivering a high quality administration service to the scheme member and other interested parties. Delivery of a high quality administration service is not the responsibility of one person or organisation, but is rather the joint working of a number of different parties.

This is the proposed pension administration strategy statement of the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund (LCCPF), administered by Leicestershire County Council (the administering authority). Employers in the Leicestershire Pension Fund will be consulted on regarding this document before the final version is prepared.

The aim of this strategy statement is to set out the quality and performance standards expected of Leicestershire County Council in its role of administering authority and scheme employer, as well as all other scheme employers within the Leicestershire Fund. It seeks to promote good working relationships, improve efficiency and enforce quality amongst the scheme employers and the administering authority.

BACKGROUND

The LGPS represents a significant benefit to scheme members. Much of the success in promoting the scheme amongst scheme members and ensuring a high quality service delivery depends upon the relationship between the administering authority and scheme employers in the day to day administration of the scheme. Good quality administration can also help in the overall promotion of the scheme and remind or alert employees to the value of the LGPS, thereby helping with recruitment, retention and motivation of employees.

The Fund comprises over 200 scheme employers with active members, and approximately 84,000 scheme members in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The efficient delivery of the benefits of the LGPS is dependent on sound administrative procedures being in place between a number of interested parties, including the administering authority and scheme employers.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Pension Section proposes for this strategy to apply to all employers to the LCCPF from 1 April 2016. This strategy statement sets out the expected levels of performance of both the administering authority and the scheme employers within the Leicestershire Fund, as well as details on how performance levels will be monitored and the action that might be taken where persistent failure occurs.

Any enquiries in relation to this pension administration strategy statement should be sent to:

Ian Howe - Pension Manager

Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund

County Hall

Glenfield

Leicester LE3 8RB

ian.howe@leics.gov.uk

Telephone: 0116 305 6945

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The implementation of an Administration Strategy has regulatory backing in the form of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. These provide the conditions and regulatory guidance surrounding the production and implementation of an Administration Strategy.

Regulation 59(1) enables an LGPS administering authority to prepare a document ("the pension administration strategy") which contains such of the matters mentioned below as they consider appropriate:-

- Procedures for liaison and communication with their relevant employing authorities.
- The establishment of levels of performance which the administering authority and the relevant employing authorities are expected to achieve in carrying out their functions under the LGPS 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 consider appropriate;
- Procedures which aim to secure that the administering authority and the relevant employing authorities comply with the statutory requirements in respect of those functions and with any agreement about levels of performance.
- Procedures for improving the communication by the administering authority and the relevant employing authorities to each other of information relating to those functions.
- The circumstances in which the administering authority may consider giving written notice to a relevant employing authority on account of that employer's unsatisfactory performance in carrying out its functions under these Regulations when measured against levels of performance.
- Such other matters as appear to the administering authority to be suitable for inclusion in that strategy.

In addition, regulation 59(6) of the Administration Regulations also requires that, where a pension administration strategy is produced, a copy is issued to each of their relevant employing authorities as well as to the Secretary of State. Similarly, when the strategy is revised at any future time the administering authority (after say a material change to any policies contained within the strategy) must notify all of its relevant employing authorities and also the Secretary of State.

It is a requirement that, in preparing or revising any pension administration strategy, that the administering authority must consult its relevant employing authorities and such other persons as it considers appropriate.

Regard must be had by both the administering authority and employing authorities to the current version of any pension administration strategy when carrying out their functions under the LGPS Regulations.

In addition, regulation 70 of the Administration Regulations allows an administering authority to recover additional costs from a scheme employer where, in its opinion, they are directly related to the poor performance of that scheme employer. Where this situation arises the administering authority is required to give written notice to the scheme employer, setting out the reasons for believing that additional costs should be recovered, the amount of the additional costs, together with the basis on which the additional amount has been calculated.

The following strategy statement, therefore, sets out the information required in accordance with regulation 59(1) and forms the basis of the day to day relationship between Leicestershire County Council as the administering authority and the employing authorities of the Leicestershire Pension Fund. It also sets out the circumstances under regulation 70 where additional costs are incurred as a result of the poor performance of a scheme employer, together with the steps that would be taken before any such action were taken.

Leicestershire Local Pension Board

Pension governance rules introduced Pension Boards from April 2015.

The Leicestershire Local Pension Board is a statutory committee of the County Council appointed to assist the County Council, as administering authority, in securing compliance with legislation and any requirements imposed by The Pensions Regulator. It also assists in ensuring effective and efficient governance and administration of the scheme.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

Procedures for liaison and communication with employers

The delivery of a high quality administration service is not the responsibility of just the administering authority, but depends on the joint working of the administering authority with a number of individuals in different organisations to ensure scheme members, and other interested parties, receive the appropriate level of service or ensure that statutory requirements are met.

This strategy statement is being developed following consultation with scheme employers and other interested parties. It takes account of scheme employers' current pension

knowledge, perception of current administration standards and specific training needs to ensure the level of service can be delivered to the required standard.

Establishing levels of performance

Performance standards

The LGPS prescribes that certain decisions be taken by either the administering authority or the scheme employer, in relation to the rights and entitlements of individual scheme members. In order to meet these obligations in a timely and accurate manner, and also to comply with overriding disclosure requirements, the Leicestershire Pension Fund should agree levels of performance between itself and the scheme employers which are set out in the service level agreement included in this strategy statement.

Quality

Overriding legislation

In carrying out their roles and responsibilities in relation to the administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme the administering authority and scheme employers will, as a minimum, comply with overriding legislation, including:

- Pensions Act 1995 and associated disclosure legislation;
- Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- Age Discrimination Act 2006;
- Data Protection Act 1998;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- Finance Act 2004; and
- Health and Safety legislation.

Where agreed, the administering authority and scheme employers will comply with local standards which go beyond the minimum requirements set out in overriding legislation. Such best practice standards are outlined in the section on timeliness set out below.

Internal standards

The administering authority and scheme employers will ensure that all functions/tasks are carried out to agreed quality standards. In this respect the standards to be met are:

- compliance with all requirements set out in the on line employer procedural guide;

- work to be completed in the required format and/or on the appropriate forms contained within the on line employer procedural guide;
- information to be legible and accurate;
- communications to be in a plain language style
- information provided to be checked for accuracy by an appropriately trained member of staff;
- information provided to be authorised by an agreed signatory; and
- actions carried out, or information provided, within the timescales set out in this strategy document.

Timeliness and accuracy

Overriding legislation dictates minimum standards that pension schemes should meet in providing certain pieces of information to the various parties associated with the scheme. The scheme itself sets out a number of requirements for the administering authority or scheme employers to provide information to each other, scheme members and prospective scheme members, dependants, other pension arrangements or other regulatory bodies. Locally agreed performance standards have been proposed which cover all aspects of the administration of the scheme, where appropriate going beyond the overriding legislative requirements. These locally agreed standards for the Leicestershire Pension Fund are attached to this strategy.

For the avoidance of doubt “accuracy” in this Strategy is defined as when we have received a completed form with no gaps in mandatory areas and with no information which is either contradictory within the document or which we need to query.

The timeliness relates to a date of event being either the date the member started or left the LCCPF or when relevant details changed such as their hours worked per year.

Procedures for ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and levels of performance

Ensuring compliance is the responsibility of the administering authority and scheme employers. We will work closely with all scheme employers to ensure compliance with all statutory requirements, whether they are specifically referenced in the LGPS Regulations, in overriding legislation, or in this Administration Strategy. We will also work with employers to ensure that overall quality and timeliness is continually improved. Various means will be employed, in order to ensure such compliance and service improvement, seeking views from as wide an audience as possible. These include:

Audit

The Leicestershire Pension Fund will be subject to annual audit of its processes and internal controls. The Leicestershire Pension Fund and scheme employers will be expected to fully comply with any requests for information from both internal and approved external auditors. Any subsequent recommendations made will be considered by Leicestershire County Council and where appropriate duly implemented (following discussions with scheme employers where necessary).

Performance monitoring

The Employing Authority will monitor performance against specific tasks set out in the service level agreement and return the information to the Leicestershire Local Pension Board on a quarterly basis.

Leicestershire County Council will monitor its own performance of the administering authority in carrying out its responsibilities in relation to the scheme.

Employer liaison meetings

Meetings will take place with representatives of the administering authority and the scheme employer to monitor and review performance against targets, the quality of information exchange and ensure compliance with statutory obligations.

Employer liaison officers

Each scheme employer will designate a named individual to act as a scheme liaison officer; being the main contact with regard to any aspect of administering the LGPS. Similarly, the Leicestershire Pension Fund will designate named individuals within the pension services team for each scheme employer, to act as the pension liaison officers for each scheme employer.

The Leicestershire Pension Fund pension liaison officers will contact the scheme employer representative to discuss any issues relating to the LGPS and/or raise any issues around the performance of the scheme employer or services provided by the administering authority. More frequent meetings will be arranged if necessary (particularly if issues around the performance of the scheme employer arise).

Improving employer performance (where necessary)

The Pension Section will seek, at the earliest opportunity, to work closely with employers in identifying any areas of poor performance, provide the opportunity for necessary training and development and put in place appropriate processes to improve the level of service delivery in the future.

Where persistent and ongoing failure occurs and no improvement is demonstrated by an employer, and /or unwillingness is shown by the employer to resolve the identified issue, the following sets out the steps we will take in dealing with the situation in the first instance;

- LCC Pensions will write to the liaison officer of the scheme employer, setting out the area(s) of poor performance.
- LCC Pensions will meet with the employer to discuss the area(s) of poor performance and how they can be addressed.
- Where no improvement has been demonstrated by the employer, or where there has been a failure to take agreed action by the employer, LCC Pensions will issue a formal written notice to the employer setting out the area(s) of poor performance that has been identified, the steps taken to resolve those area(s) and giving notice that the additional costs may now be reclaimed.
- LCC Pensions will clearly set out the calculations of any loss or additional costs resulting to the LCCPF/Administering authority, taking account of time and resources in resolving the specific area of poor performance; and
- LCCPF make a claim against the scheme employer, setting out the reasons for doing so, in accordance with the Regulations.

CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY MAY LEVY COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EMPLOYING AUTHORITIES POOR PERFORMANCE

Regulation 70 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 provides that an administering authority may recover from an employing authority any additional costs associated with the administration of the scheme incurred as a result of the poor level of performance of that employing authority. Where an administering authority wishes to recover any such additional costs they must give written notice stating:-

- The reasons in their opinion that the scheme employer's poor performance contributed to the additional cost;

- The amount of the additional cost incurred;
- The basis on how the additional cost was calculated; and
- The provisions of the pension administration strategy relevant to the decision to give notice.

CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE COSTS MIGHT BE RECOVERED

Any additional costs to the Leicestershire Pension Fund in the administration of the LGPS that are incurred as a direct result of poor performance will be recovered from the scheme employer or third party service provider, depending on the party which is responsible. The circumstances where such additional costs will be recovered from the employing authority are:

- persistent failure to provide relevant information to the administering authority, scheme member or other interested party in accordance with specified performance targets (either as a result of timeliness of delivery or quality of information);
- failure to pass relevant information to the scheme member or potential members, either due to poor quality or not meeting the agreed timescales outlined in the performance targets;
- failure to deduct and pay over correct employee and employer contributions to the Leicestershire Fund within the stated timescales;
- instances where the performance of the scheme employer results in fines being levied against the administering authority by the Pension Regulator, Pensions Ombudsman or other regulatory body.

CALCULATION OF COSTS INCURRED

For a persistent failure to resolve an isolated case satisfactorily the Fund will recharge costs from the point in time at which we write a formal letter to the scheme employer until the case is resolved, at a rate of £50 for each hour an officer spends trying to resolve the matter.

For persistent and ongoing failure to meet targets, following the intervention to assist the employer concerned, the Fund will recharge the additional costs due to the employer's poor performance at the rate of £50 per hour spent, from the point in time that the formal letter was sent, until performance improves.

Where the performance of the scheme employer results in fines or additional costs being levied against the Fund will recharge the full costs it has incurred to the relevant employer.

REVIEW PROCESS

We will review our administration strategy to ensure it remains up to date and meets the necessary regulatory requirements at least every two years.

CONSULTATION

In preparing this pension administration strategy we will consult with the relevant employing authorities and other persons considered appropriate. Where it is necessary to revise the pension administration strategy the relevant employing authorities will be notified in writing of the final changes and where a copy of the revised strategy may be obtained.

SECTION 2

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

This is the Communications Policy Statement of the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund.

The Fund liaises with over 200 employers and approximately 84,000 scheme members in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme. The delivery of the benefits involves communication with a number of other interested parties. This statement provides an overview of how we communicate and how we intend to measure whether our communications are successful.

It should become effective from April 2016. Any enquiries in relation to this Communication Policy Statement should be sent to:

Pensions Manager
Leicestershire County Council
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicester
LE3 8RB

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy statement is required by the provisions of Regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. The provision requires us to:

"...prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out their policy concerning communications with:

- (a) members;*
- (b) representatives of Members;*
- (c) prospective Members;*
- (d) employing Authorities."*

In addition it specifies that the statement must include information relating to:

- "(a) the provision of information and publicity about the Scheme to members, representatives of members and employing authorities;*

- (b) *the format, frequency and method of distributing such information or publicity; and*
- (c) *the promotion of the Scheme to prospective members and their employing authorities."*

Responsibilities and Resources

Within the County Council's Pensions Section the responsibility for communication material is performed by the Pension Manager with the assistance of one or more senior pensions officers.

The team write and design all communications including any web based or electronic material. They are also responsible for arranging all forums, workshops and meetings covered within this statement. Though we write all communication within the section, all design work is carried out by the Council's publications team. We also carry out all the arrangements for forums, workshops and meetings covered within this statement.

Printing is carried out internally by the Council's printing department or externally where this is more cost effective.

COMMUNICATION WITH KEY AUDIENCE GROUPS

Our audience

We communicate with a number of stakeholders. For the purposes of this communication policy statement, we are considering our communications with the following audience groups:

- active members;
- deferred members;
- pensioner members;
- prospective members;
- employing authorities (scheme employers and admission bodies);
- union representatives;
- elected members/the Pension Fund Committee;
- media, and
- other stakeholders.

In addition there are a number of other stakeholders with whom we communicate on a regular basis, such as Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs, the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Pensions Advisory Service, and other pension providers. We also consider as part of this policy how we communicate with these interested parties.

General communication

General day to day communication will continue to use paper based, for example, by sending letters to our scheme members. However, we will complement this by use of electronic means such as e-mail and our website www.leics.gov.uk/pensions In addition, annual benefit statements will generally be on-line with a modeller for scheme members to run their own estimates.

Branding

As the Pension Fund is administered by Leicestershire County Council, literature and communications will conform with the branding of the Council.

Accessibility

We recognise that individuals may have specific needs in relation to the format of our information or the language in which it is provided. Demand for alternative formats/languages is not high enough to allow us to prepare alternative format/language material automatically.

POLICY ON COMMUNICATION WITH ACTIVE, DEFERRED AND PENSIONER MEMBERS

Our objectives with regard to communication with members are:

- for the LGPS to be used as a tool in the attraction and retention of employees.
- to better educate and explain to members the benefits of the LGPS.
- to provide more opportunities for face to face communication.
- as a result of improved communication, for queries and complaints to be reduced.
- for our employers to be employers of choice.
- to improve the take up of the LGPS by employees.
- to reassure stakeholders.

Our objectives will be met by providing the following communications, which are over and above individual communications with members (for example, the notifications of scheme benefits or responses to individual queries). The communications are explained in more detail beneath the table:

Type	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group (Active, Deferred, Pensioner or All)
Scheme booklet	Paper based and on website	At joining and major scheme changes	Post to home address/via employers	Active
Pension Fund Report and Accounts	On Pensions website	Annually	On request	All
Annual Benefit Illustrations	Generally on-line but paper still available	Annually	On-line or posted to home address.	Active and Deferred.
Factsheets	On Pensions website	On request	On request	Active and deferred
Roadshows	Face to face	As and when required	Advertised in newsletters and pensioners payslips	All
Face to face education sessions	Face to face	On request	On request	All

Explanation of communications

Scheme guidance – On line guidance providing a relatively detailed overview of the LGPS, including who can join, how much it costs, the retirement and death benefits and how to increase the value of benefits.

Pension Fund Report and Accounts – Details of the value of the Pension Fund during the financial year, income and expenditure as well as other related details, for example, the current employing authorities and scheme membership numbers.

Pension Fund Report and Accounts Summary – provides a handy summary of the position of the Pension Fund during the financial year, income and expenditure as well as other related details.

Annual Benefit Illustrations – For active members these include the current value of benefits. The associated death benefits are also shown and whether the member has nominated person(s) to receive the lump sum death grant. In relation to deferred members, the benefit statement includes the current value of the benefit.

Factsheets – These are leaflets that provide some detail in relation to specific topics, such as increasing pension benefits, transfer values, death benefits and for pensioners, annual pensions increases.

Website – The LCC has a designated Leicestershire County Council Pensions website www.leics.gov.uk/pensions this is complemented by a national Local Government Pension Scheme website freely available www.lgps.org.uk which will provide scheme specific information, frequently asked questions and answers, links to related sites etc.

Roadshows – Every year, normally after the Annual Benefit Illustrations are produced, scheme employers are able to contact the Pensions Section to arrange a visit to their workplace.

The roadshows provide the opportunity to have a face to face conversation about your pension rights, it is expected that employers will allot specific times for members.

Face to face education sessions – These are education sessions that are available on request for small groups of members. For example, where an employer is going through a restructuring or review, it may be beneficial for the employees to understand the impact any pay reduction may have on their pension rights.

POLICY ON PROMOTION OF THE SCHEME TO PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS AND THEIR EMPLOYING AUTHORITIES

Our objectives with regard to communication with prospective members are:

- to improve take up of the LGPS.
- for the LGPS to be used as a tool in the attraction of employees.

As we, in the County Council's Pension Section, do not have direct access to prospective members, we will work in partnership with the employing authorities in the Fund to meet these objectives. We will do this by providing the following communications:

Method	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group
Overview of the LGPS leaflet	Paper based and on Pensions website	On commencing employment	Via employers	New employees
Auto enrolment information	Template letters for employers to use for auto enrolment	Employers trigger points	Letters from employers	Non pensionable employees

Method	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group
Educational sessions	As part of induction workshops	On request	Face to face	New employees

Explanation of communications

Overview of the LGPS leaflet - A short leaflet that summarises the costs of joining the LGPS and the benefits of doing so.

Auto enrolment – Template letters that comply with auto enrolment legislation.

Educational sessions – A talk providing an overview of the benefits of joining the LGPS.

POLICY ON COMMUNICATION WITH EMPLOYING AUTHORITIES

Our objectives with regard to communication with employers are:

- to strengthen relationships.
- to assist employers in understanding costs/funding issues.
- to work together to maintain accurate data.
- to ensure smooth transfers of staff.
- to ensure they understand the benefits of being an LGPS employer.
- to assist them in making the most of the discretionary areas within the LGPS.

Our objectives will be met by providing the following communications:

Method	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group
Employers' Guide	Pensions website	At joining and updated as necessary	www.leics.gov.uk/pensions	Main contact for all employers
Bulletins	Electronic (e-mail)	Quarterly or more frequent if necessary	E-mail	All contacts for all employers
Valuation meeting	Face to face	Tri- Annually	Invitations by e-mail/post	All contacts for all employers
Employers focus groups	Face to face	As requested.	Invitations by e-mail/post	Either main contacts or specific groups (e.g. HR or payroll) depending on topics
Pension Fund Report and Accounts	Paper based and on Pensions website	Annually	Post	Main contact for all employers

Method	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group
Meeting with Managers	Face to face	On request	Invitations by post or email	Senior management involved in funding and HR issues.

Explanation of communications

Employers' Guide - A detailed guide that provides guidance on the employer responsibilities including the forms and other necessary communications with the Pension Section and scheme members.

Bulletin – A technical briefing that will include recent changes to the scheme, the way the Pension Section is run and other relevant information so as to keep employers fully up to date.

Valuation meeting – A formal seminar style event with a number of speakers covering topical LGPS issues.

Employers' focus groups – Generally workgroup style sessions set up to debate current issues within the LGPS.

Pension Fund Report and Accounts – Details of the value of the Pension Fund during the financial year, income and expenditure as well as other related details, for example, the current employing authorities and scheme membership numbers.

Manager meeting – Gives employers the opportunity to discuss their involvement in the scheme with Pension staff.

POLICY ON COMMUNICATION WITH UNION REPRESENTATIVES

Union representatives sit on the Local Pension Board.

Our objectives with regard to communication with union representatives are:

- to foster close working relationships in communicating the benefits of the scheme to their members
- to ensure they are aware of the Pension Scheme regulations
- to engage in discussions over the future of the scheme
- to provide opportunities to educate union representatives on the provisions of the scheme benefits

Our objectives will be met by providing the following communications:

Method	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group
Face to face education sessions	Face to face	When Local Pension Board meets and as and when required	Face to face or via the Local Government Employers organisation	All members of the Local Pension Board
Local Pension Board meetings	Meeting	Quarterly or as required	Attendees of the Board	All

Explanation of communications

Face to face education sessions – these are education sessions that are available on request for union representatives on the Local Pension Board, for example to improve their understanding of the basic principles of the scheme, or to explain possible changes to policies.

Local Pension Board meetings – a formal committee of the County Council, consisting of elected members and employee representatives, attended by senior managers, at which pension administration issues are discussed.

POLICY ON COMMUNICATION WITH ELECTED MEMBERS

Elected Members sit on both the Local Pension Board and Pension Board.

Our objectives with regard to communication with elected members:

- to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the scheme
- to seek their approval to the development or amendment of discretionary policies, where required
- to seek their approval to formal responses to government consultation in relation to the scheme

Our objectives will be met by providing the following communications:

Method	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group
Face to face education sessions	Face to face	When Pension Board or Local Pension Board meet and as and when required	Face to face or via the Local Government Employers organisation	All members of the Pension Boards
Local Pension Board and Pension Board Meetings	Meeting	Quarterly or as required	Attendees of the Boards	All

Explanation of communications

Training Sessions – that provide a broad overview of the main provisions of the LGPS, and elected member's responsibilities within it.

Local Pension Board and Pension Board meetings - formal meetings of the County Council, consisting of elected members, union representatives [Local Pension Board], attended by senior managers, at which local decisions in relation to the scheme (policies, etc) are taken.

POLICY ON COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS/INTERESTED PARTIES

Our objectives with regard to communication with other stakeholder/interested parties are:

- to meet our obligations under various legislative requirements
- to ensure the proper administration of the scheme
- to deal with the resolution of pension disputes
- to administer the Fund's AVC scheme

Our objectives will be met by providing the following communications:

Method	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group
Pension Fund valuation reports	Hard copy	Every three years	Post	Department for Communities and Local Government(DCLG)/Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC)/all scheme employers

Method	Media	Frequency	Method of Distribution	Audience Group
Formal resolution of pension disputes	Hard copy or electronic	As and when a dispute requires resolution	Via email or post	Scheme member or their representatives, the Pensions Advisory Service/the Pensions Ombudsman
Completion of questionnaires	Electronic or hard copy	As and when required	Via email or post	DCLG/HMRC/the Pensions Regulator

Explanation of communications

Pension Fund Valuation Reports – a report issued every three years setting out the estimated assets and liabilities of the Fund as a whole, as well as setting out individual employer contribution rates for a three year period commencing one year from the valuation date

Resolution of pension disputes – a formal notification of pension dispute resolution, together with any additional correspondence relating to the dispute

Completion of questionnaires – various questionnaires that may be received, requesting specific information in relation to the structure of the LGPS or the make up of the Fund

SECTION 3

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

So as to measure the success of our communications with active, deferred and pensioner members, we will use the following key performance indicators:

Timeliness

We will aim to meet the following target delivery timescales:

Communication	Audience	Target delivery period
Benefit Statements as at 31 March	Active members	31 August each year
Pension Saving Statements as at 31 March	Active members who breach the Annual Allowance pension growth tax threshold	6 October each year
Issue of retirement benefits	Active members retiring	92% of retirement benefits to be issued within 10 working days of receiving all the necessary information.
Payment of pension benefits	Active members retiring	92% paid within five working days of receiving election.
Notification of death related benefits	Dependants of scheme members	90% within 10 days of death notification paperwork.

Customer experience

Feedback media	Perspective	Target
Paper questionnaire issued	Establish members understanding of information provided – rated at least mainly ok or clear	95%

Paper questionnaire issued	Experience of dealing with Section – rated at least good or excellent	92%
Paper questionnaire issued	Establish members thoughts on the amount of info provided – rated as about right	92%
Paper questionnaire issued	Establish the way members are treated – rated as polite or extremely polite	97%
Email survey	Rated as understandable (good or above)	95%
Email survey	Detail of content (good or above)	92%
Email survey	Timeliness of response (good or above)	92%

Results

We will publish an overview of how we are performing within our annual report and accounts. Full details will be reported to our Local Pension Board and will be available for viewing on our website.

REVIEW PROCESS

We will review the performance targets annually.

SECTION 4

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS**BY THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY**

Function / Task	Performance target
LIAISON AND COMMUNICATION	
Confirm nominated employer liaison officer	30 working days of employer joining fund or change to nominated officer
Publish and keep under review the Leicestershire Pension Fund administration strategy	Within one month of any changes being agreed with scheme employers
Issue and keep up to date web based employer guide to employer	30 working days from admission of new employer or date of change/amendment
Issue and keep up to date scheme guide and all other literature for issue to scheme members	30 working days from admission of new employer or date of change/amendment
Issue and keep up to date all forms required for completion by either scheme members, prospective scheme members or scheme employers	30 working days from admission of new employer or date of change/amendment
Formulate and publish policies in relation to all areas where the administering authority may exercise a discretion within the scheme	Within 30 working days of policy being agreed by the related Board
Deliver training sessions for scheme employers	Upon request from scheme employers, or as required
Notify scheme employers and scheme members of changes to the scheme rules	Within 30 working days of the change(s) coming into effect
Notify scheme employer of issues relating to scheme employer's poor performance (including arranging meeting if required)	Within 10 working days of performance issue becoming apparent
Notify scheme employer of decision to recover additional costs associated with the scheme employer's poor performance (including any interest that may be due)	Within 10 working days of scheme employer failure to improve performance, as agreed
Issue annual benefit statements to active members as at 31 March each year	By the following 31 August

Function / Task	Performance target
Issue pension saving statements to active members who breach the Annual Allowance pension growth tax threshold as at 31 March each year	By the following 6 October
Issue annual benefit statements to deferred benefit members as at 31 March each year	By the following 31 August

FUND ADMINISTRATION	
Issue formal valuation results (including individual employer details)	10 working days from receipt of results from fund actuary (but in any event no later than 31 March following the valuation date)
Carry out interim valuation exercise on cessation of admission agreements or scheme employer ceasing participation in the Leicestershire Pension Fund	Upon each cessation or occasion where a scheme employer ceases participation on the Leicestershire Pension Fund
Arrange for the setting up of separate admission agreement funds, where required (including the allocation of assets and notification to the Secretary of State)	Within 3 months of agreement to set up such funds
All new prospective admitted bodies to undertake, to the satisfaction of the Leicestershire Pension Fund, a risk assessment of the level or bond required in order to protect other scheme employers participating in the pension fund	To be completed before the body can be admitted to the Leicestershire Pension Fund
All admitted bodies to undertake a review of the level of bond or indemnity required to protect the other scheme employers participating in the fund	Annually, or such other period as may be agreed with the administering authority
Publish, and keep under review, the fund's governance policy statement	Within 30 working days of policy being agreed by the relevant Board
Publish and keep under review the Pension Fund's funding strategy statement	To be reviewed at each triennial valuation, following consultation with scheme employers and the fund's actuary. Revised statement to be issued with the final valuation report

Publish the Pension Fund annual report and any report from the auditor	By 31 December following the year end
SCHEME ADMINISTRATION	
Make all necessary decisions in relation to a scheme member and issue combined statutory notification to new scheme member (including aggregation of previous LGPS membership)	1 month from receipt of all necessary information
Provide responses to scheme members/scheme employers/personal representatives/dependents and other authorised persons	10 days from receipt of all necessary information
Provide transfer-in quote to scheme member	1 month from receipt of all necessary information
Confirm transfer-in payment and membership change to scheme member	10 days from receipt of all necessary information
Arrange for the transfer of scheme member additional voluntary contributions into in-house arrangement	10 days from receipt of all necessary information
Calculate cost of additional pension contributions, and notify scheme member	1 month from receipt of all necessary information
Notify scheme employer of scheme member's election to pay/cease/amend additional pension contributions and/or additional voluntary contributions	10 days from receipt of all necessary information
Provide requested estimates of benefits to employees / employers including any additional fund costs in relation to early payment of benefits from ill health, flexible retirement, redundancy or business efficiency	1 month from receipt of all necessary information
Notify leavers of deferred benefit entitlements	Within 2 months of receipt of all necessary information
Provide details of estimated Transfers Out	Within 1 month of receipt of all necessary information
Payment of Transfers Out	10 working days of receipt of all necessary information
Notify retiring employees of options, enclosing appropriate forms	10 working days of receipt of all necessary information KPI

Payment of retirement Lump Sum and pension	Lump sum-5 working days of receipt of all necessary information after retirement Pension – Paid in the next available pay run, thereafter the last banking day of each month KPI
Death notifications – issue initial letter requesting certificates	5 working days following notification of death
Notification of survivor benefits	10 working days of receipt of all necessary information KPI
Pay balance of deceased's pension and any death grant due	5 working days of receipt of all necessary information KPI
Appoint stage 2 "appointed person" for the purposes of the pension dispute process and notify all scheme employers of the appointment	Within 30 working days following the resignation of the current "appointed person"
Process all stage 2 pension dispute applications	Within two months of receipt of the application, or such longer time as is required to process the application where further information or clarification is required.
Publish and keep under review the Leicestershire Pension Fund policy on the abatement of pension on re-employment	Notify scheme employers and publish policy within one month of any changes or revisions to the policy

BY THE SCHEME EMPLOYER

Function / Task	Performance Target
LIAISON AND COMMUNICATION	
Confirm nominated representative	30 working days of employer joining fund or change to nominated representative
Formulate and publish policies in relation to all areas where the employing authority may exercise a discretion within the scheme (including providing a copy of the policy decision(s) to the Leicestershire Pension Fund	Within 30 working days of policy being formally agreed by the employer. Review these annually by 30 June.
Remit and provide details of total employer/employee contributions	9 th working day of month after deduction
Respond to enquiries from administering authority	10 working days from receipt of enquiry
Provide year end information required by the Leicestershire Pension Fund for valuation purposes and for individual scheme members annual benefit statements, annual allowance and lifetime allowance calculations, in a format agreed with the Leicestershire Pension Fund	By 19 th May following the year end
Ensure payment of additional costs to the Leicestershire Pension Fund associated with the poor performance of the scheme employer	Within 30 working days of receipt of invoice from the Leicestershire fund
Distribute any information provided by Leicestershire Pension Fund to scheme members/potential scheme members	Within 15 days of its receipt
Notification to the Leicestershire Pension Fund (so they can liaise with actuary) of material changes to workforce/assumption related areas (e.g. restructurings/pay reviews/employer going to cease/ contracting out of services).	No later than 10 working days after material change / formal employer agreement on assumption related areas
Provide new/prospective scheme members with scheme information and new joiner forms	5 working days of commencement of employment or change in contractual conditions

Function / Task	Performance Target
Inform LCCPF of all cases where a prospective new employer or admitted body may join the fund	Notify LCCPF at least 3 months before the date of transfer
FUND ADMINISTRATION	
Payment of additional fund payments in relation to early payment of benefits from ill health, flexible retirement, redundancy or business efficiency retirement	Within 30 working days of receipt of invoice from the Leicestershire Pension fund / within timescales specified in each case

EMPLOYER ADMINISTRATION	
<p>New Starter Make all necessary decisions in relation to new scheme members in the LGPS (whether full or part time, pensionable pay, appropriate contribution rate band, etc)</p>	10 working days of scheme member joining
<p>New Starter Provide administering authority with scheme member details on appropriate form/via electronic interface. Issue starter form to new employee.</p>	10 working days of scheme member joining/from month end of joining
<p>Pension Contributions Arrange for the correct deduction of employee contributions from a scheme members pensionable pay on becoming a scheme member</p>	Immediately on joining the scheme, opting in or change in circumstances
<p>Pension Contributions Ensure correct employee contribution rate is applied and arrange for reassessment of employee contribution rate in line with employer's policy</p>	Immediately upon commencing scheme membership, reviewed as per policy
<p>Pension Contributions Ensure correct rate of employer contribution is applied</p>	Immediately following confirmation from the administering authority of appropriate employer contribution rate

<p>Pension Contributions Ensure correct deduction of pension contributions during any period of child related leave, trade dispute or other forms of leave of absence from duty</p>	<p>Immediately, following receipt of election from scheme member to make the necessary pension contributions</p>
<p>Pension Contributions Commence/amend/cease deductions of additional regular contributions</p>	<p>Commence/amend in month following election to pay contributions or notification received from administering authority, cease immediately following receipt of election from scheme member</p>
<p>Pension Contributions Arrange for the deduction of AVCs and payment over of contributions to AVC provider(s)</p>	<p>Commence deduction of AVCs in month following the month of election Pay over contributions to the AVC provider(s) by the 19th of the month following the month of election</p>
<p>Pension Contributions Refund any employee contributions when employees opts out of the pension scheme before 3 months</p>	<p>Month following month of opt out</p>
<p>Pension Contributions Cease deduction of employee contributions where a scheme member opts to leave the scheme</p>	<p>Month following month of election, or such later date specified by the scheme member</p>
<p>End of year Send a completed end of year detailed contribution spreadsheet used for valuation purposes and for individual scheme members annual benefit statements, annual allowance and lifetime allowance calculations, in a format agreed with the Leicestershire Pension Fund</p>	<p>By the 19th May of each year</p>
<p>Change of details Provide administering authority with details of all material changes in employee's circumstances (e.g. marital or civil partnership status), contractual changes to a scheme members hours and/or weeks via appropriate form/electronic interface</p>	<p>By the 10th of the month following the change</p>

<p>Change of details Leave of absence with permission (maternity / paternity / secondment) without pay etc. (communications with employee and confirmation to pension fund)</p>	<p>Within 10 working days of notice from employee / HR / payroll</p>
<p>Leavers Determine reason for leaving and provide notification to administering authority of scheme leavers</p>	<p>By the end of the month the member left scheme.</p>
<p>Retirement Determine reason for retirement and provide notification to administering authority of retiree</p>	<p>Within 10 working days of notification of intention to retire</p>
<p>Final Pay Provide CARE and final pay information for each scheme member who requires an estimate, leaves/retires/dies and forward to Leicestershire Pension Fund on appropriate form/via electronic interface</p>	<p>Within 10 working days following date of estimate request/leaving/retirement/death</p>
<p>Employer appointments Appoint an independent medical practitioner qualified in occupational health medicine, in order to consider all ill health retirement applications and agree appointment with Leicestershire Pension Fund</p>	<p>Within one month of commencing participation in the scheme or date of resignation of existing medical adviser</p>
<p>Employer appointments Appoint person for stage 1 of the pension dispute process and provide full details to the administering authority</p>	<p>Within 30 working days following the resignation of the current "appointed person"</p>



**SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT
PENSIONS ADMINISTRATION**

This service level agreement has been produced by the Leicestershire County Council as the administering authority for the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund

It is an agreement between the Leicestershire County Council and participating bodies in the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund.

It is understood that the Administering authority shall monitor the requirements of this agreement and report its findings to the Local Pension Board.

It is hereby agreed that each of the parties as defined in this agreement and the scheme regulations shall abide by the requirements of this agreement.

Signed as a deed by the parties hereto:

.....Leicestershire County Council

.....

Name

Employing body

Please return to: The Pensions Manager
Leicestershire County Council, County Hall, Glenfield
Leicester, LE3 8RB

Your signed agreement will then be counter signed by The Pensions Manager and returned to you to add to your file.



LOCAL PENSION BOARD – 9 OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

REPORTING BREACHES OF THE LAW TO THE PENSIONS REGULATOR

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform the Board on reporting breaches of the law to The Pensions Regulator.

Background

2. The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 introduced a framework for the regulatory oversight of governance and administration of public service pension schemes by The Pensions Regulator (TPR).
3. In April 2015 TPR published its draft Code of Practice on Governance and administration of public service pension schemes. This is not a statement of law, but nonetheless it carries weight and pension funds are strongly advised to follow the code.
4. The code covers a number of areas of pension administration. A copy of the code is attached as Appendix A. Within sections 241 to 262 it states that a procedure should be established to ensure that those with a responsibility to report on breaches of the law are able to meet their legal obligations. Certain people are required to report breaches of the law to the Regulator where they have reasonable cause to believe that;
 - a legal duty which is relevant to the administration of the scheme has not been, or is not being, complied with and;
 - the failure to comply is likely to be of material significance to the Regulator in the exercise of any of its functions.
5. Attached as Appendix B is the procedure, which relates to all the Fund's areas of operations.

Legal Requirements

6. Within the procedure it details who are required to report breaches. This includes members of the Local Pension Board.

Recommendation

7. The Board is asked to note this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None specific

Background Papers

Appendix A - Draft Code of Practice Number 14 – Governance and administration of public service pension schemes

Appendix B – The Fund’s procedure for reporting breaches to The Pensions Regulator.

Officers to Contact

Ian Howe – telephone (0116) 305 6945

Chris Tambini – telephone (0116) 305 6199

Draft code of practice no. 14

Governance and administration of public service pension schemes

Draft code of practice no. 14

Governance and administration of public service pension schemes

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 91(5) of the Pensions Act 2004

Draft to lie before Parliament for forty days, during which time either House may resolve that the code be not made.

Presented to the Northern Ireland Assembly pursuant to Article 86(5) of the Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 2005

Draft to lie before the Northern Ireland Assembly for ten days on which the Assembly has sat or thirty calendar days whichever period is the longer, during which time the Assembly may resolve that the code be not made.

12 January 2015

Draft code of practice no. 14

Governance and administration of public service pension schemes

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Any enquiries related to this publication should be sent to us at:
customersupport@tpr.gov.uk

We can produce it in Braille, large print or on audio tape. We can also produce it in other languages.

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Introduction

1. This code of practice is issued by The Pensions Regulator ('the regulator'), the body that regulates occupational and personal pension schemes provided through employers.
2. The regulator's statutory objectives¹ are to:
 - protect the benefits of pension scheme members
 - reduce the risks of calls on the Pension Protection Fund (PPF)
 - promote, and improve understanding of, the good administration of work-based pension schemes
 - maximise compliance with the duties and safeguards of the Pensions Act 2008
 - minimise any adverse impact on the sustainable growth of an employer (in relation to the exercise of the regulator's functions under Part 3 of the Pensions Act 2004 only).
3. The regulator has a number of regulatory tools, including issuing codes of practice, to enable it to meet its statutory objectives.
4. Codes of practice provide practical guidance in relation to the exercise of functions under relevant pensions legislation and set out the standards of conduct and practice expected from those who exercise those functions².

Status of codes of practice

5. Codes of practice are not statements of the law and there is no penalty for failing to comply with them. It is not necessary for all the provisions of a code of practice to be followed in every circumstance. Any alternative approach to that appearing in the code of practice will nevertheless need to meet the underlying legal requirements, and a penalty may be imposed if these requirements are not met. When determining whether the legal requirements have been met, a court or tribunal must take any relevant provisions of a code of practice into account³.
6. If there are grounds to issue an improvement notice⁴, the regulator may issue a notice directing a person to take, or refrain from taking, such steps as are specified in the notice. These directions may be worded by reference to a code of practice issued by the regulator⁵.

This code of practice

7. The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 (the 2013 Act) introduces the framework for the governance and administration of public service pension schemes and provides an extended regulatory oversight by the regulator.

¹ Section 5(1) of the Pensions Act 2004.

² Section 90A(1), *ibid.*

³ Section 90A(5), *ibid.*

⁴ Where the regulator considers that legal requirements are not being met, or have been contravened in circumstances which make it likely that the breach will continue or be repeated, it may issue an improvement notice under s13 of the Pensions Act 2004.

⁵ Section 13(3) of the Pensions Act 2004.

8. The regulator is required to issue one or more codes of practice covering specific matters relating to public service pension schemes⁶. This code of practice sets out the legal requirements for public service pension schemes in respect of those specific matters. It contains practical guidance and sets out standards of conduct and practice expected of those who exercise functions in relation to those legal requirements.
9. The practical guidance sections in this code are not intended to prescribe the process for every scenario. They do, however, provide principles, examples and benchmarks against which scheme managers and members of pension boards can consider whether or not they have understood their duties and obligations and are reasonably complying with them.
10. If scheme managers and the members of pension boards are, for any reason, unable to act in accordance with the guidance set out in this code, or an alternative approach that meets the underlying requirements, they should consider their statutory duty under section 70 of the Pensions Act 2004 to assess and if necessary report breaches of the law⁷. For further information, see the section of this code on 'Reporting breaches of the law'.

At whom is this code directed?

11. This code relates to public service pension schemes within the meaning of the Pensions Act 2004⁸. These are schemes established under the 2013 Act, new public body pension schemes and other statutory pension schemes which are connected to those schemes. It does not apply to schemes in the wider public sector, nor to any scheme which is excluded from being a public service pension scheme within the meaning of the Pensions Act 2004.
12. This code is particularly directed at scheme managers and the members of pension boards of public service pension schemes and connected schemes. Scheme managers must comply with various legal requirements relating to the governance, management and administration of public service pension schemes. Pension boards must also comply with certain legal requirements, including assisting scheme managers in relation to securing compliance with scheme regulations and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the scheme, any requirements of the regulator and with any other matters specified in scheme regulations. The role, responsibilities and duties of pension boards will vary. Where pension boards are not directly responsible for undertaking particular activities, they remain accountable for assisting the scheme manager in securing compliance with the scheme regulations and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the scheme, any requirements of the regulator and with any other matters for which they are responsible under the scheme regulations⁹.

⁶
Section 90A(2) of the Pensions Act 2004.

⁷
Section 70, *ibid.*

⁸
Section 318, *ibid.*

⁹
Section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013.

13. In addition, the legal requirement to report breaches of the law under section 70 of the Pensions Act 2004 applies to other persons involved in public service pension schemes, so this code is also directed at them.
14. Scheme managers and pension boards (where relevant) may be able to delegate some activities to others, or outsource them, although they will not be able to delegate their accountability for complying with a legal requirement imposed on them. This code should therefore be followed by anyone to whom activities relating to the legal requirements covered by this code have been delegated or outsourced.
15. Employers participating in public service pension schemes will also find the code a useful source of reference. The role and actions of employers can be critical in enabling scheme managers to meet certain legal requirements¹⁰.
16. Public service pension schemes are established primarily as defined benefit (DB) schemes. Some of these schemes also enable members to make additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) on either a DB basis or to a separate defined contribution (DC) scheme. There are also some DC schemes which are offered as alternatives to the DB schemes. This code applies to any DC scheme which is a public service pension scheme within the meaning of the Pensions Act 2004.

Terms used in this code

17. **The 2013 Act** – the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, which sets out the arrangements for the creation of schemes for the payment of pensions and other benefits. It provides powers to ministers to create such schemes according to a common framework of requirements.
18. **Public service pension schemes**¹¹ – these are (a) new public service pension schemes set up under section 1 of the 2013 Act (including any scheme which has effect as such a scheme¹²); (b) new public body pension schemes (within the meaning of the 2013 Act) and (c) any statutory pension schemes connected with a scheme described in (a) or (b). Substantially, these are the schemes providing pension benefits for civil servants, the judiciary, local government workers, teachers, health service workers, fire and rescue workers, members of police forces and the armed forces. Except where specified otherwise, the legal requirements and practical guidance set out in this code apply to any kind of public service pension scheme within the meaning of the Pensions Act 2004, whether it is a scheme established under section 1 of the 2013 Act, a new public body scheme or a connected scheme.

10

Employers participating in occupational public service pension schemes are under a statutory duty to report breaches of the law under s70 of the Pensions Act 2004.

11

As defined in s318 of the Pensions Act 2004. Under s318(6) of that Act, a scheme which would otherwise fall within the definition of 'public service pension scheme' in the Pensions Act 2004 does not do so if it is a scheme providing only for injury or compensation benefits (or both), or if it is specified in an order made under that section.

12

Section 28 of the 2013 Act.

19. **Connected scheme** – a scheme established under section 1 of the 2013 Act and another statutory pension scheme, or a new public body pension scheme and another statutory pension scheme are connected if and to the extent that the schemes make provision in relation to persons of the same description. Scheme regulations may specify exceptions¹³.
20. **Responsible authority** – the 2013 Act identifies secretaries of state/ ministers, each being the responsible authority for their schemes, who have power to make the scheme regulations for the relevant schemes¹⁴. The responsible authority may also be the scheme manager¹⁵. In relation to a public body pension scheme, references in the code to the responsible authority are to be read as references to the public authority which established the scheme.
21. **Scheme regulations** – each new scheme made under section 1 of the 2013 Act has scheme regulations which set out the detail of the membership and benefits to be provided under the scheme¹⁶. The regulations must identify scheme managers and provide for the establishment of pension boards and scheme advisory boards. These regulations constitute the main rules of the scheme. In addition to the scheme regulations, the rules of a scheme include:
- certain legislative provisions, to the extent that they override provisions of the scheme regulations, or which have effect in relation to a scheme and are not otherwise reflected in the scheme regulations, and
 - any provision which the scheme regulations do not contain but which the scheme rules must contain if it is to conform with the requirements of Chapter 1 of Part 4 of the Pension Schemes Act 1993 (preservation of benefit under occupational pension schemes)¹⁷.
- Some connected schemes and new public body pension schemes will not be established by regulations, so references in the code to scheme regulations should be read as references to the rules of the scheme in these cases.
22. **Scheme manager** – each public service pension scheme has one or more persons responsible for managing or administering the scheme¹⁸. Public service pension schemes can have different persons acting as scheme manager for different parts of the pension scheme. For the locally administered schemes¹⁹, the scheme managers may be the local administering authorities or a person representing an authority or police force.

13
Section 4(6) and (7) of the 2013 Act.

14
Section 2 and Schedule 2, *ibid.*

15
Section 4(3), *ibid.*

16
Section 3 and Schedule 3, *ibid.*

17
Section 318(2) of the Pensions Act 2004.

18
Section 4 and s30 of the 2013 Act.

19
Locally administered schemes include the schemes for England, and Wales, and Scotland for local government workers, and England and Wales for fire and rescue workers and members of police forces.

23. **Pension board** – the scheme manager (or each scheme manager) for a scheme has a pension board²⁰ with responsibility for assisting the scheme manager to comply with the scheme regulations and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the scheme and any requirements imposed by the regulator. The pension board must also assist the scheme manager with such other matters as the scheme regulations may specify. It will be for scheme regulations and the scheme manager to determine precisely what the pension board’s role, responsibilities and duties entail.
24. **Scheme advisory board** – each DB public service pension scheme has a scheme advisory board²¹ with responsibility for providing advice on the desirability of changes to the scheme, when requested to do so by the responsible authority (or otherwise, in accordance with scheme regulations). Where there is more than one scheme manager the scheme regulations may also provide for the scheme advisory board to provide advice (on request or otherwise) to the scheme managers or the scheme’s pension boards on the effective and efficient administration and management of the scheme or any pension fund of the scheme.
25. **Schemes** – in this code the term ‘schemes’ is used throughout where actions to comply with a legal requirement, standard or expectation may be carried out by the scheme manager, pension board or by another person(s) including those to whom activities have been delegated or outsourced. The scheme manager or pension board will be ultimately accountable, depending upon to whom the legal obligation applies under the legislation.
26. **Must** – in this code the term ‘must’ is used where there is a legal requirement.
27. **Should** – in this code the term ‘should’ is used to refer to practical guidance and the standards expected by the regulator.

How to use this code

28. The code is structured as a reference for scheme managers and pension boards to use to inform their actions in four core areas of scheme governance and administration: governing your scheme, managing risks, administration and resolving issues.
29. Each core section includes practical guidance to help scheme managers and pension boards to discharge their legal duties. The regulator recognises that there may be alternative and justifiable actions or approaches that scheme managers or pension boards may wish to adopt, provided these meet the minimum legal requirements.
30. Schemes will need to consider and apply the practical guidance to suit their own particular characteristics and arrangements.

20
Section 5 and s30(1) of the 2013 Act (in the case of new public body schemes, if the scheme has more than one member).

21
Section 7, *ibid*. This requirement only applies to schemes set up under s1 of the 2013 Act.

Northern Ireland

31. References to the law that applies in Great Britain should be taken to include corresponding legislation in Northern Ireland. References to HM Treasury directions should be taken to be directions by the Department of Finance and Personnel. The responsible authority for each scheme is the relevant government department²².
32. The appendix to this code lists the corresponding references to Northern Ireland legislation.

²²
Section 2 and Schedule 2 of the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Governing your scheme

33. This part of the code covers:

- knowledge and understanding required by pension board members
- conflicts of interest and representation, and
- publishing information about schemes.

Knowledge and understanding required by pension board members

Legal requirements

34. A member of the pension board of a public service pension scheme must be conversant with:

- the rules of the scheme²³, and
- any document recording policy about the administration of the scheme which is for the time being adopted in relation to the scheme.

35. A member of a pension board must have knowledge and understanding of:

- the law relating to pensions, and
- any other matters which are prescribed in regulations.

36. The degree of knowledge and understanding required is that appropriate for the purposes of enabling the individual to properly exercise the functions of a member of the pension board²⁴.

Practical guidance

37. The legislative requirements about knowledge and understanding only apply to pension board members. However, scheme managers should take account of this guidance as it will support them in understanding the legal framework and enable them to help pension board members to meet their legal obligations.

38. Schemes²⁵ should establish and maintain policies and arrangements for acquiring and retaining knowledge and understanding to support their pension board members. Schemes should designate a person to take responsibility for ensuring that a framework is developed and implemented.

39. However, it is the responsibility of individual pension board members to ensure that they have the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to properly exercise their functions as a member of the pension board.

23

See paragraph 21 for the definition of the 'rules of the scheme'.

24

Section 248A of the Pensions Act 2004.

25

See paragraph 25 for the definition of 'schemes'.

Areas of knowledge and understanding required

40. Pension board members must be conversant with their scheme rules, which are primarily found in the scheme regulations²⁶, and documented administration policies currently in force for their pension scheme²⁷. Being 'conversant' means having a working knowledge of the scheme regulations and policies, so that pension board members can use them effectively when carrying out their duties.
41. They must also have knowledge and understanding of the law relating to pensions (and any other matters prescribed in legislation) to the degree appropriate for them to be able to carry out their role, responsibilities and duties.
42. In terms of documented administration policies, specific documents recording policy about administration will vary from scheme to scheme. However, the following are examples of administration policies which the regulator considers to be particularly pertinent and would expect to be documented where relevant to a pension scheme, and with which pension board members must therefore be conversant where applicable²⁸. This list is not exhaustive and other documented policies may fall into this category:
- any scheme-approved policies relating to:
 - conflicts of interest and the register of interests
 - record-keeping
 - internal dispute resolution
 - reporting breaches
 - maintaining contributions to the scheme
 - the appointment of pension board members
 - risk assessments/management and risk register policies for the scheme
 - scheme booklets, announcements and other key member and employer communications, which describe scheme policies and procedures
 - the roles, responsibilities and duties of the scheme manager, pension board and individual pension board members
 - terms of reference, structure and operational policies of the pension board and/or any sub-committee
 - statements of policy about the exercise of discretionary functions

²⁶
See paragraph 21 for the definition of the 'rules of the scheme'.

²⁷
Section 248A(2) of the Pensions Act 2004.

²⁸
Section 248A(2)(b) of the Pensions Act 2004.

- statements of policy about communications with members and scheme employers
 - the pension administration strategy, or equivalent²⁹, and
 - any admission body (or equivalent) policies.
43. For pension board members of funded pension schemes, documents which record policy about the administration of the scheme will include those relating to funding and investment matters. For example, where relevant they must be conversant with the statement of investment principles and the funding strategy statement³⁰.
44. Pension board members must also be conversant with any other documented policies relating to the administration of the scheme. For example, where applicable, they must be conversant with policies relating to:
- the contribution rate or amount (or the range/variability where there is no one single rate or amount) payable by employers participating in the scheme
 - statements of assurance (for example, assurance reports from administrators)
 - third party contracts and service level agreements
 - stewardship reports from outsourced service providers (for example, those performing outsourced activities such as scheme administration), including about compliance issues
 - scheme annual reports and accounts
 - accounting requirements relevant to the scheme
 - audit reports, including from outsourced service providers, and
 - other scheme-specific governance documents.
45. Where DC or DC AVC options are offered, pension board members should also be familiar with the requirements for the payment of member contributions to the providers, the principles relating to the operation of those arrangements, the choice of investments to be offered to members, the provider's investment and fund performance report and the payment schedule for such arrangements.
46. Schemes should prepare and keep an updated list of the documents with which they consider pension board members need to be conversant. This will enable them to effectively carry out their role. They should make sure that both the list and the documents are available in accessible formats.

²⁹
For the local government pension schemes, this might include information about the setting of performance targets or making agreements about levels of performance.

³⁰
Section 248A(2)(b) of the Pensions Act 2004.

Degree of knowledge and understanding required

47. The roles, responsibilities and duties of pension boards and their individual members will vary between pension schemes. Matters for which the pension board is responsible will be set out in scheme regulations³¹. Clear guidance on the roles, responsibilities and duties of pension boards and the members of those boards should be set out in scheme documentation.
48. Schemes should assist individual pension board members to determine the degree of knowledge and understanding that is sufficient for them to effectively carry out their role, responsibilities and duties as a pension board member.
49. Pension board members must have a working knowledge of their scheme regulations and documented administration policies. They should understand their scheme regulations and policies in enough detail to know where they are relevant to an issue and where a particular provision or policy may apply.
50. Pension board members must have knowledge and understanding of the law relating to pensions (and any other prescribed matters) sufficient for them to exercise the functions of their role. Pension board members should be aware of the range and extent of the law relating to pensions which applies to their scheme, and have sufficient understanding of the content and effect of that law to recognise when and how it impacts on their responsibilities and duties.
51. Pension board members should be able to identify and where relevant challenge any failure to comply with:
 - the scheme regulations
 - other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the scheme
 - any requirements imposed by the regulator, or
 - any failure to meet the standards and expectations set out in any relevant codes of practice issued by the regulator.
52. Pension board members' breadth of knowledge and understanding should be sufficient to allow them to understand fully and challenge any information or advice they are given. They should understand how that information or advice impacts on any issue or decision relevant to their responsibilities and duties.

³¹ Section 5(2) of the 2013 Act.

53. Pension board members of funded pension schemes should ensure that they have the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding of funding and investment matters relating to their scheme to enable them to effectively carry out their role. This includes having a working knowledge of provisions in their scheme regulations and administration policies that relate to funding and investment, as well as knowledge and understanding of relevant law relating to pensions.
54. All board members should attain appropriate knowledge so that they are able to understand the relevant law in relation to their scheme and role. The degree of knowledge and understanding required of pension board members may vary according to the role of the board member, as well as the expertise of the board member. For example, a board member who is also a pensions law expert (for instance, as a result of their day job) should have a greater level of knowledge than that considered appropriate for board members without this background.

Acquiring, reviewing and updating knowledge and understanding

55. Pension board members should invest sufficient time in their learning and development alongside their other responsibilities and duties. Schemes should provide pension board members with the relevant training and support that they require. Training is an important part of the individual's role and will help to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and understanding to effectively meet their legal obligations.
56. Newly appointed pension board members should be aware that their responsibilities and duties as a pension board member begin from the date they take up their post. Therefore, they should immediately start to familiarise themselves with the scheme regulations, documents recording policy about the administration of the scheme and relevant pensions law. Schemes should offer pre-appointment training or arrange for mentoring by existing pension board members. This can also ensure that historical and scheme-specific knowledge is retained when pension board members change.
57. Pension board members should undertake a personal training needs analysis and regularly review their skills, competencies and knowledge to identify gaps or weaknesses. They should use a personalised training plan to document and address these promptly.

58. Learning programmes should be flexible, allowing pension board members to update particular areas of learning where required and to acquire new areas of knowledge in the event of any change. For example, pension board members who take on new responsibilities will need to ensure that they gain appropriate knowledge and understanding relevant to carrying out those new responsibilities.
59. The regulator will provide an e-learning programme to help meet the needs of pension board members, whether or not they have access to other learning. If schemes choose alternative learning programmes they should be confident that those programmes:
- cover the type and degree of knowledge and understanding required
 - reflect the legal requirements, and
 - are delivered within an appropriate timescale.

Demonstrating knowledge and understanding

60. Schemes should keep appropriate records of the learning activities of individual pension board members and the board as a whole. This will help pension board members to demonstrate steps they have taken to comply with legal requirements and how they have mitigated risks associated with knowledge gaps. A good external learning programme will maintain records of the learning activities of individuals on the programme or of group activities, if these have taken place.

Conflicts of interest and representation

Legal requirements

61. A conflict of interest is a financial or other interest which is likely to prejudice a person's exercise of functions as a member of the pension board. It does not include a financial or other interest arising merely by virtue of that person being a member of the scheme or any connected scheme for which the board is established³².
62. In relation to the pension board, scheme regulations must include provision requiring the scheme manager to be satisfied:
- that a person to be appointed as a member of the pension board does not have a conflict of interest and
 - from time to time, that none of the members of the pension board has a conflict of interest³³.

32
Section 5(5) of the 2013 Act defines a conflict of interest in relation to pension board members and s7(5) of that Act in relation to scheme advisory board members.

33
Section 5(4)(a), *ibid*.

63. Scheme regulations must require each member or proposed member of a pension board to provide the scheme manager with such information as the scheme manager reasonably requires for the purposes of meeting the requirements referred to above³⁴.
64. Scheme regulations must include provision requiring the pension board to include employer representatives and member representatives in equal numbers³⁵.
65. In relation to the scheme advisory board, the regulations must also include provision requiring the responsible authority to be satisfied:
- that a person to be appointed as a member of the scheme advisory board does not have a conflict of interest and
 - from time to time, that none of the members of the scheme advisory board has a conflict of interest³⁶.
66. Scheme regulations must require each member of a scheme advisory board to provide the responsible authority with such information as the responsible authority reasonably requires for the purposes of meeting the requirements referred to above³⁷.

Practical guidance

67. This guidance is to help scheme managers to meet the legal requirement to be satisfied that pension board members do not have any conflicts of interest. The same requirements apply to responsible authorities in relation to scheme advisory boards, (apart from the requirement regarding employer and member representatives), but the regulator does not have specific responsibility for oversight of scheme advisory boards.
68. Actual conflicts of interest are prohibited by the 2013 Act and cannot, therefore, be managed. Only potential conflicts of interest can be managed.
69. A conflict of interest may arise when pension board members:
- must fulfil their statutory role³⁸ of assisting the scheme manager in securing compliance with the scheme regulations, other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the scheme and any requirements imposed by the regulator or with any other matter for which they are responsible, whilst
 - having a separate personal interest (financial or otherwise), the nature of which gives rise to a possible conflict with their statutory role.

34
Section 5(4)(b) of the 2013 Act.

35
Section 5(4)(c), *ibid.*

36
Section 7(4)(a), *ibid.*

37
Section 7(4)(b), *ibid.*

38
Section 5(2), *ibid.*

70. Some, if not all, of the 'Seven principles of public life' (formerly known as the 'Nolan principles')³⁹ will already apply to people carrying out roles in public service pension schemes, for example through the Ministerial code, Civil Service code or other codes of conduct. These principles should be applied to all pension board members in the exercise of their functions as they require the highest standards of conduct. Schemes should incorporate the principles into any codes of conduct (and across their policies and processes) and other internal standards for pension boards.
71. Other legal requirements relating to conflicts of interest may apply to pension board members and/or scheme advisory board members⁴⁰. The regulator may not have specific responsibility for enforcing all such legal requirements, but it does have a particular role in relation to pension board members and conflicts of interest. While pension board members may be subject to other legal requirements, when exercising functions as a member of a pension board they must meet the specific requirements of the 2013 Act and are expected to satisfy the standards of conduct and practice set out in this code.
72. It is likely that some pension board members will have dual interests, which may include other responsibilities. Scheme managers and pension board members will need to consider all other interests, financial or otherwise, when considering interests which may give rise to a potential or actual conflict. For example, a finance officer appointed as a pension board member can offer their knowledge and make substantial contributions to the operational effectiveness of the scheme, but from time to time they may be involved in a decision or matter which may be, or appear to be, in opposition to another interest. For instance, the pension board may be required to take or scrutinise a decision which involves the use of departmental resources to improve scheme administration, while the finance officer is at the same time tasked, by virtue of their employment, with reducing departmental spending. A finance officer might not be prevented from being a member of a pension board, but the scheme manager must be satisfied that their dual interests are not likely to prejudice the pension board member in the exercise of any particular function.

39

The Committee on Standards in Public Life has set out seven principles of public life which apply to anyone who works as a public office holder or in other sectors delivering public services:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life.

40

For example, local government legislation applicable to English local authorities contains legal requirements relating to certain people about standards of conduct, conflicts of interest and disclosure of certain interests.

73. Scheme regulations will set out matters for which the pension board is responsible⁴¹. Schemes⁴² should set out clear guidance on the roles, responsibilities and duties of pension boards and the members of those boards in scheme documentation. This should cover, for example, whether they have responsibility for administering or monitoring the administration of the scheme; developing, delivering or overseeing compliance with requirements for governance and/or administration policies; and taking or scrutinising decisions relating to governance and/or administration. Regardless of their remit, potential conflicts of interest affecting pension board members need to be identified, monitored and managed effectively.
74. Schemes should consider potential conflicts of interest in relation to the full scope of roles, responsibilities and duties of pension board members. It is recommended that all those involved in the management or administration of public service pension schemes take professional legal advice when considering issues to do with conflicts of interest.

A three-stage approach to managing potential conflicts of interest

75. Conflicts of interest can inhibit open discussions and result in decisions, actions or inactions which could lead to ineffective governance and administration of the scheme. They may result in pension boards acting improperly, or lead to a perception that they have acted improperly. It is therefore essential that any interests, which have the potential to become conflicts of interest or be perceived as conflicts of interest, are identified and that potential conflicts of interest (including perceived conflicts) are monitored and managed effectively.
76. Schemes should ensure that there is an agreed and documented conflicts policy and procedure, which includes identifying, monitoring and managing potential conflicts of interest. They should keep this under regular review. Policies and procedures should include examples of scenarios giving rise to conflicts of interest, how a conflict might arise specifically in relation to a pension board member and the process that pension board members and scheme managers should follow to address a situation where board members are subject to a potential or actual conflict of interest.

41
Section 5(2) of the 2013 Act.

42
See paragraph 25 for the definition of 'schemes'.

77. Broadly, schemes should consider potential conflicts of interest in three stages:
- identifying
 - monitoring, and
 - managing.

Identifying potential conflicts

78. Schemes should cultivate a culture of openness and transparency. They should recognise the need for continual consideration of potential conflicts. Disclosure of interests which have the potential to become conflicts of interest should not be ignored. Pension board members should have a clear understanding of their role and the circumstances in which they may find themselves in a position of conflict of interest. They should know how to manage potential conflicts.
79. Pension board members, and people who are proposed to be appointed to a pension board, must provide scheme managers with information that they reasonably require to be satisfied that pension board members and proposed members do not have a conflict of interest⁴³.
80. Schemes should ensure that pension board members are appointed under procedures that require them to disclose any interests, including other responsibilities, which could become conflicts of interest and which may adversely affect their suitability for the role, before they are appointed.
81. All terms of engagement, for example appointment letters, should include a clause requiring disclosure of all interests, including any other responsibilities, which have the potential to become conflicts of interest, as soon as they arise. All interests disclosed should be recorded. See the section of this code on 'Monitoring potential conflicts'.
82. Schemes should take time to consider what important matters or decisions are likely to be considered during, for example, the year ahead and identify and consider any potential or actual conflicts of interest that may arise in the future. Pension board members should be notified as soon as practically possible and mitigations should be put in place to prevent these conflicts from materialising.

43
Section 5(4)(b) of the
2013 Act and scheme
regulations.

Monitoring potential conflicts

83. As part of their risk assessment process, schemes should identify, evaluate and manage dual interests which have the potential to become conflicts of interest and pose a risk to the scheme and possibly members, if they are not mitigated. Schemes should evaluate the nature of any dual interests and assess the likely consequences were a conflict of interest to materialise.
84. A register of interests should provide a simple and effective means of recording and monitoring dual interests and responsibilities. Schemes should also capture decisions about how to manage potential conflicts of interest in their risk registers or elsewhere. The register of interests and other relevant documents should be circulated to the pension board for ongoing review and published, for example on a scheme's website.
85. Conflicts of interest should be included as an opening agenda item at board meetings and revisited during the meeting, where necessary. This provides an opportunity for those present to declare any interests, including other responsibilities, which have the potential to become conflicts of interest, and to minute discussions about how they will be managed to prevent an actual conflict arising.

Managing potential conflicts

86. Schemes should establish and operate procedures which ensure that pension boards are not compromised by potentially conflicted members. They should consider and determine the roles and responsibilities of pension boards and individual board members carefully to ensure that conflicts of interest do not arise, nor are perceived to have arisen.
87. A perceived conflict of interest can be as damaging to the reputation of a scheme as an actual conflict of interest. It could result in scheme members and interested parties losing confidence in the way a scheme is governed and administered. Schemes should be open and transparent about the way they manage potential conflicts of interest.
88. When seeking to prevent a potential conflict of interest becoming detrimental to the conduct or decisions of the pension board, schemes should consider obtaining professional legal advice when assessing any option.

Examples of conflicts of interest

89. Below are some examples of potential or actual conflicts of interest which could arise, or be perceived to arise, in relation to public service pension schemes. These will depend on the precise role, responsibilities and duties of a pension board. The examples provided are for illustrative purposes only and are not exhaustive. They should not be relied upon as a substitute for the exercise of judgement based on the principles set out in this code and any legal advice considered appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

a. Investing to improve scheme administration versus saving money

An employer representative, who may be a Permanent Secretary, finance officer or local councillor, is aware that system X would help to improve standards of record-keeping in the scheme, but it would be costly to implement. The scheme manager, for instance a central government department or local administering authority, would need to meet the costs of the new system at a time when there is internal and external pressure to keep costs down. In order to meet the costs of the new system, the scheme manager would need to find money, perhaps by using a budget that was intended for another purpose. This decision could prove unpopular with taxpayers. A conflict of interest could arise where the employer representative was likely to be prejudiced in the exercise of their functions by virtue of their dual interests.

b. Outsourcing an activity versus keeping an activity in-house

In an extension of the previous example, a member representative, who is also an employee of a participating employer, is aware that system X would help to improve standards of record-keeping in the scheme, but it would mean outsourcing an activity that is currently being undertaken in-house by their employer. The member representative could be conflicted if they were likely to be prejudiced in the exercise of their functions by virtue of their employment.

c. Representing the breadth of employers or membership versus representing narrow interests

An employer representative who happens to be employed by the administering authority and is appointed to the pension board to represent employers generally could be conflicted if they only serve to act in the interests of the administering authority, rather than those of all participating employers. Equally, a member representative, who is also a trade union representative, appointed to the pension board to represent the entire scheme membership could be conflicted if they only act in the interests of their union and union membership, rather than all scheme members.

d. Assisting the scheme manager versus furthering personal interests

- i. A pension board member, who is also a scheme adviser, may recommend the services or products of a related party, for which they might derive some form of benefit, resulting in them not providing, or not being seen to provide, independent advice or services
- ii. A pension board member who is involved in procuring or tendering for services for a scheme administrator, and who can influence the award of a contract, may be conflicted where they have an interest in a particular supplier, for example, a family member works there.

e) Sharing information with the pension board versus a duty of confidentiality to an employer

An employer representative has access to information by virtue of their employment, which could influence or inform the considerations or decisions of the pension board. They have to consider whether to share this information with the pension board in light of their duty of confidentiality to their employer. Their knowledge of this information will put them in a position of conflict if it is likely to prejudice their ability to carry out their functions as a member of the pension board.

Representation on pension boards

90. While scheme regulations must require pension boards to have an equal number of employer and member representatives⁴⁴, there is flexibility to design arrangements which best suit each scheme.
91. Arrangements should be designed with regard to the principles of proportionality, fairness and transparency, and with the aim of ensuring that a pension board has the right balance of skills, experience and representation (for example, of membership categories and categories of employers participating in the scheme). Those responsible for appointing members to a pension board should also consider the mix of skills and experience needed on the pension board in order for the board to operate effectively in light of its particular role, responsibilities and duties.

44
Section 5(4)(c) of the
2013 Act.

Publishing information about schemes

Legal requirements

92. The scheme manager for a public service scheme must publish information about the pension board for the scheme(s) and keep that information up-to-date⁴⁵.
93. The information must include:
- who the members of the pension board are
 - representation on the board of members of the scheme(s), and
 - the matters falling within the pension board's responsibility⁴⁶.

Practical guidance

Publication of pension board information

94. Scheme members will want to know that their scheme is being efficiently and effectively managed. Public service pension schemes should have a properly constituted, trained and competent pension board, which is responsible for assisting the scheme manager to comply with the scheme regulations and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the scheme and requirements imposed by the regulator.
95. Scheme managers must publish the information required about the pension board and keep that information up-to-date⁴⁷. This will ensure that scheme members can easily access information about who the pension board members are, how pension scheme members are represented on the pension board and the responsibilities of the board as a whole.
96. When publishing information about the identity of pension board members, the representation of scheme members and matters for which the board is responsible, schemes⁴⁸ should also publish useful related information about the pension board such as:
- the employment and job title (where relevant) and any other relevant position held by each board member
 - the pension board appointment process
 - who each pension board member represents
 - the full terms of reference for the pension board, including details of how it will operate, and
 - any specific roles and responsibilities of individual pension board members.

45
Section 6(1) of the 2013 Act.

46
Section 6(2), *ibid.*

47
Section 6(1), *ibid.*

48
See paragraph 25 for the definition of 'schemes'.

97. Schemes should also consider publishing information about pension board business, for example board papers, agendas and minutes of meetings (redacted to the extent that they contain confidential information and/or data covered by the Data Protection Act 1998). They should consider any requests for additional information to be published, to encourage scheme member engagement and promote a culture of transparency.
98. Scheme managers must ensure that information published about the pension board is kept up-to-date⁴⁹. Schemes should have policies and processes to monitor all published data on an ongoing basis to ensure it is accurate and complete.

Other legal requirements

99. Scheme managers (or any other person specified in legislation) must comply with any other legal requirements relating to the publication of information about governance and administration. In particular, HM Treasury directions may require the scheme manager or responsible authority of a public service pension scheme to publish scheme information, including information about scheme administration and governance and may specify how and when information is to be published⁵⁰.

49
Section 6(1) of the 2013
Act.

50
Section 15, *ibid.*

Managing risks

100. This part of the code covers the requirement for scheme managers to establish and operate adequate internal controls.

Internal controls

Legal requirements

101. The scheme manager of a public service pension scheme must establish and operate internal controls. These must be adequate for the purpose of securing that the scheme is administered and managed in accordance with the scheme rules and in accordance with the requirements of the law.

102. For these purposes 'internal controls' means:

- arrangements and procedures to be followed in the administration and management of the scheme
- systems and arrangements for monitoring that administration and management, and
- arrangements and procedures to be followed for the safe custody and security of the assets of the scheme⁵¹.

Practical guidance

103. Internal controls are systems, arrangements and procedures that are put in place to ensure that pension schemes are being run in accordance with the scheme rules (which for most public service pension schemes are set out in the scheme regulations) and other law. They should include a clear separation of duties, processes for escalation and decision making and documented procedures for assessing and managing risk, reviewing breaches of law and managing contributions to the scheme.

104. Good internal controls are an important characteristic of a well-run scheme and one of the main components of the scheme manager's role in securing the effective governance and administration of the scheme. Internal controls can help protect pension schemes from adverse risks, which could be detrimental to the scheme and members if they are not mitigated.

105. Scheme managers must establish and operate internal controls⁵². These should address significant risks which are likely to have a material impact on the scheme. Scheme managers should employ a risk-based approach and ensure that sufficient time and attention is spent on identifying, evaluating and managing risks and developing and monitoring appropriate controls. They should seek advice, as necessary.

⁵¹ Section 249A(5) and s249B of the Pensions Act 2004.

⁵² Section 249B, *ibid.*

Identifying risks

106. Before implementing an internal controls framework, schemes⁵³ should carry out a risk assessment. They should begin by:
- setting the objectives of the scheme
 - determining the various functions and activities carried out in the running of the scheme, and
 - identifying the main risks associated with those objectives, functions and activities.
107. An effective risk assessment process will help schemes to identify a wide range of internal and external risks, which are critical to the scheme and members. When identifying risks, schemes should refer to relevant sources of information, such as records of internal disputes and legislative breaches, the register of interests, internal and external audit reports and service contracts.
108. Once schemes have identified risks, they should record them in a risk register and review them regularly. Schemes should keep appropriate records to help scheme managers demonstrate steps they have taken to comply, if necessary, with legal requirements.

Evaluating risks and establishing adequate internal controls

109. Not all risks will have the same potential impact on scheme operations and members or the same likelihood of materialising. Schemes should consider both these areas when determining the order of priority for managing risks and focus on those areas where the impact and likelihood of a risk materialising is high.
110. Many pension schemes will already have adequate internal controls in place, some of which may apply to a variety of the functions of the administering authority. Schemes should review their existing arrangements and procedures to determine whether they can prevent and detect errors in scheme operations and help mitigate pension scheme-related risks. For example, schemes could obtain assurance about their existing controls through direct testing or by obtaining reports on controls. Any such review should be appropriate to the outcome of the risk evaluation.
111. Schemes should consider what internal controls are appropriate to mitigate the main risks they have identified and how best to monitor them. For example, the scheme manager(s) for a funded scheme should establish and operate internal controls that regularly assess the effectiveness of investment-related decision making. Scheme managers for all pension schemes should establish and operate internal controls that regularly assess the effectiveness of data management and record-keeping.

53

See paragraph 25 for the definition of 'schemes'.

Managing risks by operating internal controls

112. Schemes should consider a number of issues when designing internal controls to manage risks. The examples provided are for illustrative purposes only and are not exhaustive. They should not be relied upon as a substitute for the exercise of judgement, based on the principles set out in this code and any advice considered appropriate, particularly in light of any problems experienced in the past.

a. How the control is to be implemented and the skills of the person performing the control

For example, schemes should ensure that new employers participating in the scheme understand what member data are required and the process for supplying it. Where employers fail to supply the correct data or do not follow the correct process, schemes should ensure that the employer identifies the cause of the error and that appropriate action is taken to avoid recurrence, for example remedying a systemic error or providing the relevant training.

b. The level of reliance that can be placed on information technology solutions where processes are automated

For example, where scheme administration processes use an automated system, internal or external auditors could audit the system on an annual basis to assess whether it is capable of performing a required function and report any issues that are identified.

c. Whether a control is capable of preventing future recurrence or merely detecting an event that has already happened

For example, schemes should ensure that their systems support the maintenance and retention of good member records. This includes implementing procedures and controls which identify where systems are not fit for purpose, there are gaps in the data, the data are of a poor quality and/or there has been a loss of data.

d. The frequency and timeliness of a control process

For example, schemes should ensure that data are complete. They should undertake a data-cleansing or member-tracing exercise and review this on a regular basis (at least annually or at regular intervals that they consider appropriate for the scheme).

e. How the control will ensure that data are managed securely

For example, schemes should ensure that all staff, including temporary or contract staff, complete information management training before they are given access to sensitive data.

f. The process for flagging errors or control failures, and approval and authorisation controls

For example, schemes should ensure that member communications such as member information booklets are reviewed regularly, particularly where there are changes to the scheme. All relevant parties should be aware of how they should flag errors and the authorisation required before any changes are made to the communications.

Monitoring controls effectively

113. Risk assessment is a continual process and should take account of a changing environment and new and emerging risks, including significant changes in or affecting the scheme and employers who participate in the scheme.
114. For example, where relevant, schemes should put in place systems and processes for making an objective assessment of the strength of an employer's covenant (which should include analysis of their financial position, prospects and ability to pay the necessary employer contributions).
115. An effective risk assessment process will provide a mechanism to detect weaknesses at an early stage. Schemes should periodically review the adequacy of internal controls in:
- mitigating risks
 - supporting longer-term strategic aims, for example relating to investments
 - identifying success (or otherwise) in achieving agreed objectives, and
 - providing a framework against which compliance with the scheme regulations and legislation can be monitored.
116. Internal or external audits and/or quality assurance processes should ensure that adequate internal controls are in place and being operated effectively. Reviews should take place when substantial changes take place, such as changes to pension scheme personnel, implementation of new administration systems or processes, or where a control has been found to be inadequate.
117. A persistent failure to put in place adequate internal controls may be a contributory cause of an administrative breach. Where the effect and wider implications of not having in place adequate internal controls are likely to be 'materially significant', the regulator would expect to receive a whistleblowing report that outlines relevant information relating to the breach. For more information, see the 'Reporting breaches of the law' section of this code.

118. Ultimately, the legal responsibility for establishing and operating adequate internal controls rests with the scheme manager⁵⁴. Scheme regulations or other documents may delegate responsibilities to pension board members or others – for example identifying, evaluating and managing risks, developing and maintaining appropriate controls and providing assurance to the scheme manager about any controls in place. However, accountability for those controls and the governance of policies, procedures and processes will reside with the scheme manager.

Outsourcing services

119. The legal requirements relating to internal controls apply equally where schemes outsource services connected with the running of the scheme. Providers should be required to demonstrate that they will have adequate internal controls in their tenders for delivering services. The requirements should be incorporated in the terms of engagement and contract between the scheme and service provider. Outsourced services may include, for example, the maintenance of records and data, calculation of benefits and investment management services. Where services are outsourced, scheme managers should be satisfied that internal controls associated with those services are adequate and effective.

120. An increasing number of service providers are obtaining independent assurance reports to help demonstrate their ability to deliver quality administration services. Schemes should ask their service providers to demonstrate that they have adequate internal controls relating to the services they provide. It is vital that schemes ensure they receive sufficient assurance from service providers. For example, the information from providers should be sufficiently detailed and comprehensive and the service level agreements should cover all services that are outsourced. Schemes should also consider including provisions in contracts for outsourced services requiring compliance with appropriate standards. This should help to ensure effective administration.

54
Section 249B of the
Pensions Act 2004.

Administration

121. This part of the code covers:

- scheme record-keeping
- maintaining contributions, and
- providing information to members.

Scheme record-keeping

Legal requirements

122. Scheme managers must keep records of information relating to:

- member information⁵⁵
- transactions⁵⁶, and
- pension board meetings and decisions⁵⁷.

123. The legal requirements are set out in the Public Service Pensions (Record Keeping and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014 ('the Record Keeping Regulations').

Practical guidance

124. Failure to maintain complete and accurate records and put in place effective internal controls to achieve this can affect the ability of schemes⁵⁸ to carry out basic functions. Poor record-keeping can result in schemes failing to pay benefits in accordance with scheme regulations, processing incorrect transactions and ultimately paying members incorrect benefits. For funded schemes, it may lead to schemes managing investment risks ineffectively. There is also the potential for the maladministration of members' contributions and failure to identify any misappropriation of assets. Schemes should be able to demonstrate to the regulator, where required, that they keep accurate, up-to-date and enduring records to be able to govern and administer their pension scheme efficiently.

125. Scheme managers must establish and operate adequate internal controls⁵⁹, which should include processes and systems to support record-keeping requirements and ensure that they are effective at all times.

55
Regulation 4 of the Record Keeping Regulations.

56
Regulation 5, *ibid.*

57
Regulation 6, *ibid.*

58
See paragraph 25 for the definition of 'schemes'.

59
Section 249B of the Pensions Act 2004.

Records of member information

126. Scheme managers must ensure that member data across all membership categories specified in the Record Keeping Regulations is complete and accurate⁶⁰. Member data should be subject to regular data evaluation.
127. Scheme managers must keep specific member data⁶¹, which will enable them to uniquely identify a scheme member and calculate benefits correctly. This is particularly important with the establishment of career average revalued earnings (CARE) schemes. Scheme managers must be able to provide members with accurate information regarding their pension benefits (accrued benefits to date and their future projected entitlements) in accordance with legislative requirements⁶², as well as pay the right benefits to the right person (including all beneficiaries) at the right time.
128. Schemes should require participating employers to provide them with timely and accurate data in order for the scheme manager to be able to fulfil their legal obligations. Schemes should seek to ensure that processes are established by employers which enable the transmission of complete and accurate data from the outset. Processes will vary from employer to employer, depending on factors such as employee turnover, pay periods, number of employees who are members and the timing and number of payroll processing systems.
129. Schemes should seek to ensure that employers understand the main events which require information about members to be passed from the employer to the scheme and/or another employer, such as when an employee:
- joins or leaves the scheme
 - changes their rate of contributions
 - changes their name, address or salary
 - changes their member status, and
 - transfers employment between scheme employers.
130. Schemes should ensure that appropriate procedures and timescales are in place for scheme employers to provide updated information when member data changes, for checking scheme data against employer data and for receiving information which may affect the profile of the scheme. If an employer fails to act according to the procedures set out above, meaning that they and/or scheme managers may not be complying with legal requirements, those under a statutory duty to report breaches of the law to the regulator under section 70 of the Pensions Act 2004 should assess whether there has been a relevant breach and take action as necessary.

⁶⁰
Section 16 and s30 of the 2013 Act. Regulation 4 of the Record Keeping Regulations specifies member records which must be kept. The Data Protection Act 1998 requires personal data to be accurate and up-to-date.

⁶¹
Regulation 4 of the Record Keeping Regulations.

⁶²
Legislative requirements include s14 of the 2013 Act, HM Treasury directions made under that section, and the Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations 2013.

Records of transactions

131. Schemes should be able to trace the flow of funds into and out of the scheme and reconcile these against expected contributions and scheme costs. In doing so, they will have clear oversight of the core scheme transactions and should be able to mitigate risks swiftly.
132. Scheme managers must keep records of transactions made to and from the scheme and any amount due to the scheme which has been written off⁶³. They should be able to demonstrate that they do so.

Records of pension board meetings and decisions

133. Scheme managers must keep records of pension board meetings including any decisions made⁶⁴. Schemes should also keep records of key discussions, which may include topics such as compliance with policies relating to administration of the scheme.
134. Scheme managers must also keep records relating to any decision taken by members of the pension board other than at a pension board meeting, or taken by a committee/sub-committee, which has not been ratified by the pension board. The records must include the date, time and place of the decision and the names of board members participating in that decision⁶⁵. This will ensure that there is a clear and transparent audit trail of the decisions made in relation to the scheme.

Retention of scheme records

135. Schemes should retain records for as long as they are needed. It is likely that data will need to be held for long periods of time and schemes will need to retain some records for a member even after that individual has retired, ensuring that pension benefits can be properly administered over the lifetime of the member and their beneficiaries. Schemes should have in place adequate systems and processes to enable the retention of records for the necessary time periods.

Ongoing monitoring of data

136. Schemes should have policies and processes that monitor data on an ongoing basis to ensure it is accurate and complete, regardless of the volume of scheme transactions. This should be in relation to all membership categories, including pensioner member data where queries may arise once the pension is being paid.
137. Schemes should adopt a proportionate and risk-based approach to monitoring, based on any known or historical issues that may have occurred in relation to the scheme's administration. This is particularly important for the effective administration of CARE pension schemes, which requires schemes to hold significantly more data than needed for final salary schemes.

63
Regulation 5 of the
Record Keeping
Regulations.

64
Regulation 6, *ibid.*

65
Ibid.

Data review exercise

138. Schemes should continually review their data and carry out a data review exercise at least annually. This should include an assessment of the accuracy and completeness of the member information data held. Schemes should decide the frequency and nature of the review in light of factors such as the level of data quality, any issues identified and key scheme events.
139. Where the management of scheme data has been outsourced, it is vital that schemes understand and are satisfied that the controls in place will ensure the integrity of scheme member data. They should ensure that the administrator has assessed the risks that poor or deficient member records may present to the scheme and has taken the necessary steps to mitigate them, where applicable.
140. Where there has been a change of administrator or the administration system/platform, schemes should review and cleanse data records and satisfy themselves that all data are complete and accurate.

Data improvement plan

141. Where schemes identify poor quality or missing data, they should put a data improvement plan in place to address these issues. The plan should have specific data improvement measures which schemes can monitor and a defined end date within a reasonable timeframe when the scheme will have complete and accurate data.

Reconciliation of member records

142. Schemes should ensure that member records are reconciled with information held by the employer, for example postal address or electronic address (email address) changes and new starters. Schemes should also ensure that the numbers of scheme members is as expected based on the number of leavers and joiners since the last reconciliation. Schemes should be able to determine those members who are approaching retirement, those who are active members and those who are deferred members.

Data protection and internal controls

143. Schemes must ensure that processes that are created to manage scheme member data meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the data protection principles.

144. Schemes should understand:

- their obligations as data controllers and who the data processors are in relation to the scheme
- the difference between personal data and sensitive personal data (as defined in the Data Protection Act 1998)
- how data are held and how they should respond to data requests from different parties
- the systems which need to be in place to store, move and destroy data, and
- how data protection affects member communications.

Other legal requirements

145. In addition to the requirements set out in the Record Keeping Regulations, there are various other legal requirements that relate to record-keeping in public service pension schemes. Those requirements apply variously to managers, administrators and employers. Not all requirements apply to all public service pension schemes, but some of the key requirements are set out under the following legislation:

- Pensions Act 1995 and 2004
- Pensions Act 2008 and the Employers' Duties (Registration and Compliance) Regulations 2010⁶⁶
- Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Administration) Regulations 1996
- Registered Pension Schemes (Provision of Information) Regulations 2006
- Data Protection Act 1998, and
- Freedom of Information Act 2000.

146. Where applicable, schemes should be able to demonstrate that they keep records in accordance with these and any other relevant legal requirements. Schemes should read the relevant legislation and any guidance in conjunction with this code where applicable.

⁶⁶ See the regulator's guidance about automatic enrolment for more information about record-keeping requirements under this legislation.

Maintaining contributions

Legal requirements

147. Employer contributions must be paid to the scheme in accordance with any requirements in the scheme regulations. Where employer contributions are not paid on or before the date they are due under the scheme and the scheme manager has reasonable cause to believe that the failure is likely to be of material significance to the regulator in the exercise of any of its functions, the scheme manager must give a written report of the matter to the regulator as soon as reasonably practicable⁶⁷.
148. Where employee contributions are deducted from a member's pay, the amount deducted must be paid to the managers of the scheme at the latest by the 19th day of the month following the deduction, or by the 22nd day if paid electronically (the 'prescribed period')⁶⁸, or earlier if required by scheme regulations. References to 'days' means all days. References to 'working days' do not include Saturdays, Sundays or Bank Holidays.
149. Where employee contributions are not paid within the prescribed period, if the scheme manager⁶⁹ has reasonable cause to believe that the failure is likely to be of material significance to the regulator in the exercise of any of its functions, they must give notice of the failure to the regulator and the member within a reasonable period after the end of the prescribed period⁷⁰. Where there is a failure to pay employee contributions on an earlier date in accordance with scheme regulations, schemes should also consider their statutory duty under section 70 of the Pensions Act 2004 to assess and if necessary report breaches of the law. For more information about reporting breaches of the law, see this section of the code.

67
Section 70A of the Pensions Act 2004.

68
Section 49(8) of the Pensions Act 1995 and regulation 16 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Administration) Regulations 1996.

69
The legal requirement to report late payments of employee contributions is imposed on the 'managers' of a scheme, which the regulator generally takes to be the 'scheme manager' identified in scheme regulations in accordance with the 2013 Act.

70
Section 49(9) of the Pensions Act 1995.

71
See paragraph 25 for the definition of 'schemes'.

Practical guidance

150. As part of the requirement to establish and operate adequate internal controls, scheme managers should ensure that there are effective procedures and processes in place to identify payment failures that are – and are not – of material significance to the regulator. A 'payment failure' is where contribution payments are not paid to the scheme by the due date(s), or within the prescribed period and a 'materially significant payment failure' refers to a payment failure which is likely to be of material significance to the regulator in the exercise of its functions.
151. Schemes⁷¹ should monitor pension contributions, resolve payment issues and report payment failures, as appropriate, so that the scheme is administered and managed in accordance with the scheme regulations and other legal requirements.

152. Adequate procedures and processes are likely to involve:

- developing a record to monitor the payment of contributions
- monitoring the payment of contributions
- managing overdue contributions, and
- reporting materially significant payment failures.

153. These procedures and processes should help scheme managers to meet their statutory duty to report materially significant payment failures to the regulator, as well as ensuring the effective management of scheme contributions and payment of the right pension.

Developing a record for monitoring the payment of contributions

154. There are legislative requirements for managers of DB schemes to keep a schedule of contributions; and for DC schemes, a payment schedule, which allows managers to monitor contributions to their scheme. There are various exemptions from these requirements including for DB and DC schemes which are established by or under an enactment and which are guaranteed by a Minister of the Crown or other public authority, and for DB schemes which are pay-as-you-go schemes⁷².

155. Public service pension schemes which meet these exemptions should nonetheless develop a record for monitoring the payment of contributions to the scheme (a contributions monitoring record, which must reflect any requirements in scheme regulations where relevant). Schemes should prepare the contributions monitoring record in consultation with employers.

156. A contributions monitoring record will enable schemes to check whether contributions have been paid on time and in full, and, if they have not, provide a trigger for escalation for schemes to investigate the payment failure and consideration of whether scheme managers need to report to the regulator and, where relevant, members.

157. A contributions monitoring record should include the following information:

- contribution rates
- the date(s) on or before which employer contributions are to be paid to the scheme
- the date by when, or period within which, the employee contributions are to be paid to the scheme
- the rate or amount of interest payable where the payment of contributions is late.

72

Exemptions from the requirement to secure a schedule of contributions in respect of DB schemes under s227 of the Pensions Act 2004 are in regulation 17 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Funding) Regulations 2005. Exemptions from the requirement to secure a payment schedule in respect of DC schemes under s87 of the Pensions Act 1995 is in regulation 17 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Administration) Regulations 1996.

158. The date when employer contributions must be paid is the date on or before which they are due under the scheme in accordance with the scheme regulations (or other scheme documentation). Schemes should assess the timing of payments against the date specified.
159. While there is a legal requirement for employee contributions to be paid to the scheme by the 19th day of the month following deduction, or by the 22nd day if paid electronically, this does not override any earlier time periods required by the scheme regulations. There are special rules for the first deduction of contributions on automatic enrolment under the Pensions Act 2008⁷³.
160. A contributions monitoring record should help schemes to identify any employers who are not paying contributions on time and/or in full, support schemes to ensure that contributions are paid and employers to develop and implement new processes, as appropriate. The contributions monitoring record should provide schemes with information to maintain records of money received and will be useful for schemes to ensure that their member records are kept up-to-date.

Monitoring the payment of contributions

161. Schemes should monitor contributions on an ongoing basis for all the membership categories within the scheme. Schemes should regularly check payments due against the contributions monitoring record.
162. Schemes should apply a risk-based and proportionate approach to help identify employers and situations which present a higher risk of payment failures occurring and which are likely to be of material significance and require the scheme manager to intervene.
163. Schemes should be aware of what is to be paid in accordance with the contributions monitoring record or other scheme documentation, which may be used by the pension scheme. Schemes should also have a process in place to identify where payments are late or have been underpaid, overpaid or not paid at all.
164. For schemes to effectively monitor contributions they will require access to certain information. Employers will often provide the payment information that schemes need to monitor contributions at the same time as they send the contributions to the scheme, which may be required under the scheme regulations. Payment information may include:
- the employer and employee contributions due to be paid, which should be specified in the scheme regulations and/or other scheme documentation
 - the pensionable pay that contributions are based upon (where required), and
 - due date(s) on or before which payment of contributions and other amounts are to be made.

73
Regulation 16 of the
Occupational Pension
Schemes (Scheme
Administration)
Regulations 1996.

165. Schemes should have adequate internal controls in place to monitor the sharing of payment information between the employer, pension scheme and member. Where the necessary payment information is not automatically available or provided by employers, schemes should request the additional information they need. Schemes may not need to obtain payment information as a matter of course, only where it is required for effective monitoring.
166. Scheme managers must record and retain information on transactions, including any employer and employee contributions received and payments of pensions and benefits⁷⁴, which will support them in their administration and monitoring responsibilities.
167. Where the administration of scheme contributions is outsourced to a service provider, schemes should ensure that there is a process in place to obtain regular information on the payment of contributions to the scheme and a clear procedure in place to enable them to identify and resolve payment failures which may occur.

Managing overdue contributions

168. When schemes identify or are notified of a problem, they should assess whether a payment failure has occurred before taking steps to resolve and, if necessary, report it. During their assessment, schemes should take into account:
- legitimate agreed payments made directly by an employer for scheme purposes, ie where the scheme has agreed that a contributions payment can be made late due to exceptional circumstances
 - legitimate agreed payment arrangements made between an employee and employer, ie where the employer has agreed that a contribution payment can be made late due to exceptional circumstances
 - contributions paid directly to a pension provider, scheme administrator or investment manager
 - any AVCs included with an employer's overall payment.
169. Where schemes identify a payment failure, they should follow a process to resolve issues quickly. This should normally involve the following steps:
- a. Investigate any apparent employer failure to pay contributions in accordance with the contributions monitoring record or legal requirements.
 - b. Contact the employer promptly to alert them to the payment failure and to seek to resolve the overdue payment.

74
Regulation 5 of the
Record Keeping
Regulations.

- c. Discuss it further with the employer as soon as practicable to find out the cause and circumstances of the payment failure.
- d. Ask the employer to resolve the payment failure and take steps to avoid a recurrence in the future.
170. Schemes should maintain a record of their investigation and communications between themselves and the employer. Recording this information will help to provide evidence of schemes' effective monitoring processes and could help to demonstrate that the scheme manager has met the legal requirement to establish and operate adequate internal controls. It will also form part of the decision of whether or not to report a payment failure to the regulator and, where relevant, members.
171. The regulator recognises that a monitoring process based on information provided by employers may not be able to confirm deliberate underpayment or non-payment, or fraudulent behaviour by an employer. Schemes should review current processes or develop a new process which is able to detect situations where fraud may be more likely to occur and where additional checks may be appropriate.
172. Ultimately, schemes have flexibility to design their own procedures so that they can obtain overdue payments and rectify administrative errors in the most effective and efficient way for their particular scheme.

Reporting payment failures which are likely to be of material significance to the regulator

173. Scheme managers must report payment failures which are likely to be of material significance to the regulator within a reasonable period, in the case of employee contributions; and as soon as reasonably practicable in the case of employer contributions⁷⁵.
174. Where schemes identify a payment failure, they should attempt to recover contributions within 90 days from the due date or prescribed period having passed without full payment of the contribution.
175. While schemes are not expected to undertake a full investigation to establish materiality or investigate whether an employer has behaved fraudulently, schemes should ask the employer:
- the cause and circumstances of the payment failure
 - what action the employer has taken as a result of the payment failure, and
 - the wider implications or impact of the payment failure.

⁷⁵ Section 49(9)(b) of the Pensions Act 1995 and s70A of the Pensions Act 2004.

176. When reaching a decision about whether to report, schemes should consider these points together and establish whether they have reasonable cause to report.
177. Having reasonable cause means more than merely having a suspicion that cannot be substantiated. Schemes should investigate the payment failure and use their judgement when deciding whether to report to the regulator.
178. Schemes may choose to take an employer's response to their enquiries at face value if they have no reason to believe it to be untrue or where their risk-based process indicates that there is a low risk of continuing payment failure. Where they receive no response, schemes may infer that an employer is unwilling to pay the contributions due.
179. Examples of payment failures that are likely to be of material significance to the regulator include:
- where schemes have reasonable cause to believe that the employer is neither willing nor able to pay contributions, for example in the event of a business failure or where an employer becomes insolvent and is unable to make pension payments
 - where there is a payment failure involving possible dishonesty or a misuse of assets or contributions, for example where schemes have concerns that an employer is retaining and using contributions to manage cash flow difficulties or where schemes have become aware that the employer has transferred contributions elsewhere other than to the pension scheme, which may be misappropriation
 - where the information available to schemes may indicate that the employer is knowingly concerned with fraudulently evading their obligation to pay employee contributions
 - where schemes become aware that the employer does not have adequate procedures or systems in place to ensure the correct and timely payment of contributions due and the employer does not appear to be taking adequate steps to remedy the situation, for example where there are repetitive and regular payment failures, or
 - any event where contributions have been outstanding for 90 days from the due date, unless the payment failure was a one-off or infrequent administrative error that had already been corrected on discovery or is thereafter corrected as soon as possible.

180. Examples of payment failures which are not likely to be of material significance to the regulator include:
- where a payment arrangement is being met by an employer for the recovery of outstanding contributions, or
 - where there are infrequent one-off payment failures or administrative errors such as where employees leave or join the scheme and those occasional failures or errors have been corrected within 90 days of the due date.
181. Schemes should identify and report to the regulator, as appropriate, any payment failures that may not be of material significance taken individually, but which could indicate a systemic problem. For example, an employer consistently failing to pay contributions by the due date or within the prescribed period, but paying within 90 days, may be due to inefficient scheme systems and processes. Schemes may also need to report payment failures that occur repeatedly and are likely to be materially significant to the regulator, depending on the circumstances.
182. Reporting payment failures of employer contributions as soon as 'reasonably practicable' means within a reasonable period from the scheme manager having reasonable cause to believe that the payment failure is likely to be of material significance to the regulator. Schemes should also consider whether it may be appropriate to report a payment failure of employer contributions to scheme members.
183. A reasonable period for reporting would be within ten working days from having reasonable cause to believe that the payment failure is likely to be of material significance. This will depend upon the seriousness of the payment failure and impact on the scheme. A written report should be preceded by a telephone call, if appropriate.
184. In the case of an employer failing to pay employee contributions to the pension scheme, if the scheme manager has reasonable cause to believe that the payment failure is likely to be of material significance to the regulator, the failure must be reported to the regulator⁷⁶ and members within a reasonable period after the end of the prescribed period⁷⁷. A reasonable period for reporting to the regulator would be within ten working days and to members within 30 days of having reported to the regulator.
185. Reports relating to payment failures of employer contributions must be made in writing (preferably using our Exchange online service)⁷⁸. In exceptional circumstances the scheme manager could make a telephone report.

76
Reporting to the regulator does not affect any responsibility to report to another person or organisation.

77
S49(8) and (9) of the Pensions Act 1995 and regulation 16 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Administration) Regulations 1996. Where there is a failure to pay employee contributions on an earlier date in accordance with scheme regulations, schemes should also consider their statutory duty under s70 of the Pensions Act 2004 to assess and if necessary report breaches of the law.

78
Section 70A of the Pensions Act 2004.

186. The regulator has standardised reporting procedures and expectations regarding content, format and channel. For more information, see the section of this code on 'Reporting breaches of the law'.

Providing information to members

Legal requirements

187. The law requires schemes⁷⁹ to disclose information about benefits and scheme administration to scheme members and others. This section summarises the legal requirements relating to benefit statements and certain other information which must be provided and should be read alongside the requirements in the 2013 Act, HM Treasury directions⁸⁰ and the Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations 2013 ('the Disclosure Regulations 2013'). In addition to these duties, there are other legal requirements relating to the provision of information to members and others under other legislation. See paragraph 211 for further details.

79
See paragraph 25 for the definition of 'schemes'.

80
Section 14 of the 2013 Act.

81
Section 14(1) and s30(1) of the 2013 Act.

Benefit statements

For active members of DB schemes under the 2013 Act

188. Scheme regulations must require scheme managers to provide an annual benefit information statement to each active member of a DB scheme established under the 2013 Act or new public body scheme⁸¹. The statement must include a description of the benefits earned by a member in respect of their pensionable service⁸².

82
Section 14(2)(a), *ibid.*

83
Section 14(4) and (5), *ibid.*

84
Section 14(2)(b) and (6), *ibid.*

189. The first statement must be provided no later than 17 months after the scheme regulations establishing the scheme come into force. Subsequent statements must be provided at least annually after that date⁸³.

85
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Managers) Regulations 1986 specify who is to be treated as the 'manager' (in certain occupational public service pension schemes) for the purpose of providing information under specified legislation, including the Disclosure Regulations 2013, which may differ from the person who is the 'scheme manager'.

190. Statements must also comply with HM Treasury directions in terms of any other information which must be included and the manner in which they must be provided to members⁸⁴.

For active, deferred or pension credit members of any DB public service pension scheme under the Disclosure Regulations 2013

191. Managers⁸⁵ of a scheme must also provide a benefit statement following a request by an active, deferred or pension credit member of a DB scheme if the information has not been provided to that member in the previous 12 months before that request⁸⁶.

86
Regulation 16 of the Disclosure Regulations 2013.

192. These benefit statements must include information about the amount of benefits by reference to a particular date and how they are calculated⁸⁷. The full details depend on the type of member making the request.

193. The information must be given as soon as practicable but no more than two months after the date the request is made⁸⁸.

For members of a DC public service pension scheme under the Disclosure Regulations 2013

194. Managers of a scheme must provide a benefit statement to a member of a DC public service pension scheme, who is not an 'excluded person', within 12 months of the end of the scheme year⁸⁹. An 'excluded person' is a member or beneficiary whose present postal address and email address is not known to the scheme because the correspondence has been returned (in the case of postal correspondence) or has not been delivered (in the case of electronic correspondence)⁹⁰.

195. The information which must be provided includes the amount of contributions (before any deductions are made) credited to the member during the immediately preceding scheme year⁹¹, the value of the member's accrued rights under the scheme at a date specified by the managers of the scheme⁹² and a statutory money purchase illustration⁹³. The full detail of the information that must be provided is set out in the Disclosure Regulations 2013.

87
Regulation 16 and
Schedule 5 of the
Disclosure Regulations
2013.

88
Regulation 16(3), *ibid.*

Other information about scheme administration

196. Under the Disclosure Regulations 2013, managers of a scheme must provide other information to members and others in certain circumstances (for example, on request). The Regulations set out the information which must be given, the timescales for providing such information and the methods that may be used. Not all information must be provided in respect of all public service pension schemes (there are some exemptions for specified public service schemes or according to the type of benefit offered), but information which scheme managers may need to provide includes:

89
Regulation 17, *ibid.*

90
Regulation 2, *ibid.*

91
'Scheme year' is defined
in Regulation 2, *ibid.*

92
Regulation 17 and
Schedule 6, *ibid.*

93
Paragraph 6 and
Schedule 6, *ibid.* There
are certain exceptions
to the requirements to
provide this information.

- basic scheme information
- information about the scheme that has materially altered
- information about the constitution of the scheme
- annual report (this requirement will generally not apply to unfunded DB public service pension schemes and DB schemes for local government workers⁹⁴)

94
Regulation 4, *ibid.*

- information about funding principles, actuarial valuations and payment schedules (these requirements will generally not apply to unfunded DB public service pension schemes and DB schemes for local government workers⁹⁵)
- information about transfer credits
- information about lifestyling (this requirement will not apply in respect of DB benefits in public service pension schemes⁹⁶)
- information about accessing benefits, and
- information about benefits in payment.

197. The detail of the information that must be provided to scheme members and others and any exemptions are set out in the Disclosure Regulations 2013. Managers must provide the required information, along with confirmation that members may request further information and the postal and email addresses to which a person should send those requests and enquiries⁹⁷.

Who is entitled to information

198. Managers of a scheme must ensure that scheme members and others are given information in accordance with the Disclosure Regulations 2013, unless they are an 'excluded person' (as defined above).

199. The Disclosure Regulations 2013 make provision for scheme members and others to receive information that is relevant to their pension rights and entitlements under the scheme. The categories of people who are entitled to receive information vary according to the different types of information, and there are exemptions where information has already been provided in a specified period. The detail of who is entitled to any particular type of information is set out in the Disclosure Regulations 2013 but may include any of the following ('a relevant person'):

- active members
- deferred members
- pensioner members
- prospective members
- spouses or civil partners of members or prospective members
- other beneficiaries, and
- recognised trade unions.

⁹⁵
Regulation 4 of the Disclosure Regulations 2013.

⁹⁶
Regulation 18(1), *ibid.*

⁹⁷
Regulation 4(7), *ibid.*

When basic scheme information must be provided

200. Managers must disclose certain basic information about the scheme and the benefits it provides to a prospective member (if practicable to do so) or a new member⁹⁸. Where the manager has received jobholder information⁹⁹ for the member or prospective member they must provide the information within a month of the jobholder information being received¹⁰⁰. Where they have not received jobholder information, they must provide the information within two months of the date the person became an active member of the scheme¹⁰¹.

201. Managers must also provide the information on request to a relevant person within two months of the request being made, except where the same information was provided to the same person or trade union in the 12 months before the request¹⁰².

What information must be disclosed on request

202. In addition to the basic scheme information, pension scheme members and other relevant persons are entitled to request certain scheme information or scheme documents including:

- information about the constitution of the pension scheme, and
- information about transfer credits¹⁰³.

98
Regulation 6 of the Disclosure Regulations 2013.

How benefit statements and other information must be provided

203. Generally, schemes may choose how they provide information to scheme members, including by post, electronically (by email or by making it available on a website) or by any other means permitted by the law. For benefit statements issued under the 2013 Act, HM Treasury directions may specify how the information must be provided. Where schemes wish to provide information required under the Disclosure Regulations 2013 by electronic means there are important steps and safeguards that must first be met¹⁰⁴. These include:

99
Specified in regulation 3 of the Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Automatic Enrolment) Regulations 2010.

100
Regulation 6(5) of the Disclosure Regulations 2013.

101
Regulation 6(6), *ibid.*

102
Regulation 6(4) and (7), *ibid.*

103
Regulations 11, 14 and Parts 1 and 4 of Schedule 3, *ibid.*

104
Regulation 26, *ibid.*

- scheme members and beneficiaries being provided with the option to opt out of receiving information electronically by giving written notice to the scheme
- managers being satisfied that the electronic communications have been designed:
 - so that the person will be able to access and either store or print the relevant information and
 - taking into account the requirements of disabled people

- ensuring that members and beneficiaries who were members or beneficiaries of the public service pension scheme on 1 December 2010 (where the scheme had not provided information electronically prior to that date) has been sent a written notice (other than via email or website), informing them that:
 - it is proposed to provide information electronically in the future and
 - scheme members and beneficiaries may opt out of receiving information electronically by sending written notice.

204. Where schemes make information or a document available on a website for the first time, they must give notice (other than via a website) to the recipient¹⁰⁵. They must ensure that the notice includes:

- a statement advising that the information is available on the website
- the website address
- details of where on the website the information or document can be read, and
- an explanation of how the information or document may be read on the website¹⁰⁶.

205. When any subsequent information is made available on a website, managers of a scheme must give a notice (other than via a website) to recipients informing them that the information is available on the website¹⁰⁷. This notice will not be required where¹⁰⁸:

- at least two documents have been given to the recipient by hand or sent to the recipient's last known postal address
- each of those letters asks the recipient to give their electronic (email) address to the scheme and informs the recipient of their right to request (in writing) that information or documents are not to be provided electronically
- a third letter has been given to the recipient by hand or sent to the recipient's last known postal address and includes a statement that further information will be available to read on the website and that no further notifications will be sent to the recipient and
- the managers of the scheme do not know the recipient's email address and have not received a written request that information or documents are not to be provided to the recipient electronically.

105
Regulation 27(1) and (5) of the Disclosure Regulations 2013.

106
Regulation 27(2), *ibid.*

107
Regulation 27(3) and (5), *ibid.*

108
Regulation 28, *ibid.*

206. In some cases, the Disclosure Regulations 2013 specify that information must be made available by one of the following methods¹⁰⁹:

- available to view free of charge, at a place that is reasonable having regard to the request
- published on a website (in which case the procedure to be followed before making information available on a website does not apply, except that the person or trade union must be notified of certain details)
- given for a charge that does not exceed the expense incurred in preparing, posting and packing the information, or
- publicly available elsewhere.

Practical guidance

207. Schemes should design and deliver communications to scheme members in a way that ensures they are able to engage with their pension provision. Information should be clear and simple to understand as well as being accurate and easily accessible. It is important that members are able to understand their pension arrangements and make informed decisions where required.

208. Schemes should attempt to make contact with their scheme members and, where contact is not possible, schemes should carry out a tracing exercise to locate the member and ensure that their member data are up-to-date.

209. Where a person has made a request for information, schemes should acknowledge receipt if they are unable to provide the information at that stage. Schemes may encounter situations where the time period for providing information takes longer than expected. In these circumstances, schemes should notify the person and let them know when they are likely to receive the information. Scheme managers and managers (where different) must provide information in accordance with the time periods specified in the 2013 Act and Disclosure Regulations 2013.

210. To promote transparency, schemes should make information readily available at all times to ensure that prospective and existing members are able to access information when they require it.

Other legal requirements

211. Managers (or any other person specified in legislation) must comply with other legislation requiring information to be provided to members of public service pension schemes in certain circumstances. Not all requirements apply to all public service pension schemes and some may only arise in limited circumstances.

¹⁰⁹ Regulation 29 of the Disclosure Regulations 2013.

Some of the requirements that schemes may need to be aware of are set out in or under the following legislation¹¹⁰:

- Occupational Pension Schemes (Contracting-out) Regulations 1996
- Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) Regulations 1996
- Occupational Pension Schemes (Winding up etc.) Regulations 2005
- Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008 (the requirements of these regulations are covered in the section of this code on 'Internal dispute resolution').

110

The legislation identified in this list is made under section 113 of the Pension Schemes Act 1993. There are other requirements that relate to providing information to members which arise under other legislation and which may be relevant to public service pension schemes (for example, under legislation relating to automatic enrolment and early leavers).

Resolving issues

212. This part covers:

- internal dispute resolution, and
- reporting breaches of the law.

Internal dispute resolution

Legal requirements

213. Scheme managers¹¹¹ must make and implement dispute resolution arrangements that comply with the requirements of the law and help resolve pensions disputes between the scheme manager and a person with an interest in the scheme. 'Pension disputes'¹¹² cover matters relating to the scheme between the managers and one or more people with an interest in the scheme. These exclude 'exempted disputes'.

214. There are certain 'exempted disputes' to which the internal dispute resolution procedure will not apply¹¹³. This includes disputes where proceedings have commenced in any court or tribunal, or where the Pensions Ombudsman has commenced an investigation into it. Certain other prescribed disputes, for instance medical-related disputes that may arise in relation to police and fire and rescue workers, are also 'exempted disputes'¹¹⁴.

215. A person has an interest in the scheme if they:

- are a member or surviving non-dependant beneficiary of a deceased member of the scheme
- are a widow, widower, surviving civil partner or surviving dependant of a deceased member of the scheme
- are a prospective member of the scheme
- have ceased to be a member, beneficiary or prospective member or
- claim to be in one of the categories mentioned above and the dispute relates to whether they are such a person.

216. Dispute resolution arrangements may require people with an interest in the scheme to first refer matters in dispute to a 'specified person' in order for that person to consider and give their decision on those matters. The specified person's decision may then be confirmed or replaced by the decision taken by the scheme manager after reconsideration of the matters¹¹⁵.

111

Legal requirements relating to the internal dispute resolution provisions are imposed on the 'managers' of a scheme, which the regulator generally takes to be the 'scheme manager' identified in scheme regulations in accordance with the 2013 Act.

112

Section 50(3) of the Pensions Act 1995.

113

Section 50(9), *ibid.*

114

Regulation 4 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008.

115

Section 50(4A) of the Pensions Act 1995.

217. Scheme managers and specified persons (if used as part of a scheme's procedure) must take the decision required on the matters in dispute within a reasonable period of receiving the application. They must notify the applicant of the decision within a reasonable period of having taken it¹¹⁶.
218. Internal dispute resolution procedures must state the manner in which an application for the resolution of a pension dispute is to be made, the particulars which must be included in such an application and the manner in which any decisions required in relation to such an application are to be reached and given¹¹⁷. The procedure must specify a reasonable period within which applications must be made by certain people¹¹⁸.
219. Scheme managers must provide information about the scheme's dispute resolution procedure as well as information about The Pensions Advisory Service (TPAS) and the Pensions Ombudsman to certain people at certain stages¹¹⁹.

Practical guidance

220. Scheme members expect their pension scheme to be managed effectively. Where a person with an interest in the scheme is not satisfied with any matter relating to the scheme (for example a decision which affects them), they have the right to ask for that matter to be reviewed.
221. Internal dispute resolution arrangements provide formal procedures and processes for pension scheme disputes to be investigated and decided upon quickly and effectively. They play a key role in the effective governance and administration of a scheme.
222. Schemes¹²⁰ can operate a two-stage procedure with a 'specified person' undertaking the first-stage decision. Alternatively, they may adopt a single-stage procedure if they consider that is more appropriate for their scheme.
223. With the exception of certain matters outlined below, the law does not prescribe the detail of the dispute resolution procedure. Schemes should decide on this and ensure it is fit for purpose.

116
Section 50(5) of the Pensions Act 1995.

117
Section 50B(4), *ibid*.

118
Section 50B(3)(a), *ibid*.

119
Regulation 6 of, and Part 1 of Schedule 2 to, the Disclosure Regulations 2013 and regulation 2 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures) (Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008.

120
See paragraph 25 for the definition of 'schemes'.

When applications should be submitted

224. Schemes may choose to specify time limits within which the following people must apply for a dispute to be resolved¹²¹:

- scheme members
- widows, widowers, surviving civil partners or surviving dependants of deceased scheme members
- surviving non-dependant beneficiaries of deceased scheme members, and
- prospective scheme members.

225. If schemes decide to specify time limits, they should publish and make those time limits readily available to ensure that those with an interest in the scheme are aware that they must submit an application within a prescribed time limit.

226. Scheme managers must ensure their scheme's procedure specifies a reasonable period within which applications by the following people must be made¹²²:

- a person who has ceased to be within the categories in paragraph 224 above
- a person who claims that they were a person within the categories in paragraph 224 above and has ceased to be such a person, and the dispute relates to whether they are such a person.

227. A reasonable period would be six months beginning immediately after the date on which the person ceased to be, or claims they ceased to be, a person with an interest in the scheme. However, schemes have the flexibility to exercise their judgement and take an application outside a specified time period, if appropriate.

When decisions should be taken

228. Managers and specified persons (where applicable) must decide the matter in dispute within a reasonable period of receiving the application. A reasonable period is within four months of receiving the application. In the case of a two-stage dispute resolution procedure, the reasonable period applies to each stage separately. Where a dispute is referred to scheme managers for a second-stage decision, the reasonable period begins when the managers receive the referral. However, there may be cases where it will be possible to process an application sooner than the reasonable time given. Where this is the case, there should not be a delay in taking the decision.

121
Section 50B(3)(b) of the Pensions Act 1995.

122
Section 50B(3)(a) of the Pensions Act 1995.

229. There may be exceptional circumstances of a particular dispute which may prevent the process being completed within the reasonable time period stated above. For instance, where the dispute involves unusually complex and labour-intensive calculations or research, or delays occur that are outside the control of the scheme manager (or specified person), or because they need to obtain independent evidence.
230. The regulator recognises that the circumstances of each dispute are different and decision times may vary. Schemes should be satisfied that the time taken to reach a decision is appropriate to the situation and be able to demonstrate this, if necessary.

When applicants should be informed of a decision

231. Applicants must be notified of the decision made by a scheme manager and specified person (where applicable) within a reasonable time period after the decision has been made¹²³. Schemes should usually notify applicants of the decision no later than 15 working days after the decision has been made. However, there may be cases where it is possible to notify an applicant sooner than the reasonable time given. Where this is the case, there should not be a delay in notifying them of the decision.
232. Schemes should provide the applicant with regular updates on the progress of their investigation. They should notify the applicant where the time period for a decision is expected to be shorter or longer than the reasonable time period and let them know when they are likely to receive an outcome.

Implementing the procedure and processes

233. Scheme regulations or other documents recording policy about the administration of the scheme should specify internal dispute resolution arrangements. Schemes should focus on educating and raising awareness of their internal dispute resolution arrangements and ensuring that they are implemented.
234. Schemes should ensure that the effectiveness of the arrangements is assessed regularly and be satisfied that those following the process are complying with the requirements set, which includes effective decision making. This is particularly important where the arrangements require employers participating in the pension scheme to carry out duties as part of the process, for example where schemes have implemented the two-stage procedure and employers are acting as the specified person for the first stage.
235. Schemes should confirm and communicate their arrangements to members, for example, in the joining booklet. Schemes should make their arrangements accessible to potential applicants, for example by publishing them on a scheme website.

¹²³
Section 50(5) of the
Pensions Act 1995.

236. Scheme managers must provide the following information about the procedure and processes the scheme has in place for the internal resolution of disputes to certain people in certain circumstances¹²⁴:
- prospective members, if it is practicable to do so
 - any scheme members who have not already been given the information
 - certain relevant people who request the information and who have not been given that information in the previous 12 months, and
 - members or prospective members when schemes receive jobholder information, or when a jobholder becomes an active member, in connection with automatic enrolment.
237. Scheme managers must also provide the postal or email address and job title of the person to contact in order to make use of the internal dispute arrangements.
238. In addition, scheme managers must provide information about TPAS and the Pensions Ombudsman at certain stages¹²⁵. Upon receiving an application for the resolution of a pension dispute, scheme managers (or the specified person) must make the applicant aware as soon as reasonably practicable that TPAS is available to assist members and beneficiaries of the scheme and provide contact details for TPAS. When notifying the applicant of the decision, scheme managers must also inform the applicant that the Pensions Ombudsman is available to investigate and determine complaints or disputes of fact or law relating to a public service pension scheme and provide the Pension Ombudsman's contact details.
239. Schemes can decide what information they need from applicants to reach a decision on a disputed matter and how applications should be submitted. Schemes should ensure they make the following information available to applicants:
- the procedure and processes to apply for a dispute to be resolved
 - the information that an applicant must include
 - the process by which any decisions are reached, and
 - an acknowledgement once an application has been received.

124
Regulation 6 of, and Part 1 of Schedule 2 to, the Disclosure Regulations 2013.

125
Regulation 2 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures) (Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008.

240. When reviewing an application, scheme managers and specified persons (where relevant) should ensure that they have all the appropriate information to make an informed decision. They should request further information if required. Scheme managers and specified persons should be satisfied that the times taken to reach a decision and notify the applicant are appropriate to the situation and that they have taken the necessary action to meet the reasonable time periods. Scheme managers should be able to demonstrate this to the regulator if required.

Reporting breaches of the law

Legal requirements

241. Certain people are required to report breaches of the law to the regulator where they have reasonable cause to believe that:

- a legal duty¹²⁶ which is relevant to the administration of the scheme has not been, or is not being, complied with
- the failure to comply is likely to be of material significance to the regulator in the exercise of any of its functions¹²⁷.

For further information about reporting late payments of employee or employer contributions, see the section of this code on 'Maintaining contributions'.

242. People who are subject to the reporting requirement ('reporters') for public service pension schemes are:

- scheme managers¹²⁸
- members of pension boards
- any person who is otherwise involved in the administration of a public service pension scheme
- employers¹²⁹: in the case of a multi-employer scheme, any participating employer who becomes aware of a breach should consider their statutory duty to report, regardless of whether the breach relates to, or affects, members who are its employees or those of other employers
- professional advisers¹³⁰ including auditors, actuaries, legal advisers and fund managers: not all public service pension schemes are subject to the same legal requirements to appoint professional advisers, but nonetheless the regulator expects that all schemes will have professional advisers, either resulting from other legal requirements or simply as a matter of practice
- any person who is otherwise involved in advising the managers of the scheme in relation to the scheme¹³¹.

243. The report must be made in writing as soon as reasonably practicable¹³². See paragraph 263 for further information about how to report breaches.

126

The reference to a legal duty is to a duty imposed by, or by virtue of, an enactment or rule of law (s70(2)(a) of the Pensions Act 2004).

127

Section 70(2) of the Pensions Act 2004.

128

The legal requirement to report breaches of the law under section 70(1)(a) is imposed on the 'managers' of a scheme, which the regulator generally takes to be the 'scheme manager' identified in scheme regulations in accordance with the 2013 Act.

129

As defined in s318 of the Pensions Act 2004.

130

As defined in s47 of the Pensions Act 1995.

131

Section 70(1) of the Pensions Act 2004.

132

Section 70(2), *ibid.*

Practical guidance

244. Schemes¹³³ should be satisfied that those responsible for reporting breaches are made aware of the legal requirements and this guidance. Schemes should provide training for scheme managers and pension board members. All others under the statutory duty to report should ensure they have a sufficient level of knowledge and understanding to fulfil that duty. This means having sufficient familiarity with the legal requirements and procedures and processes for reporting.

Implementing adequate procedures

245. Identifying and assessing a breach of the law is important in reducing risk and providing an early warning of possible malpractice in public service pension schemes. Those people with a responsibility to report breaches, including scheme managers and pension board members, should establish and operate appropriate and effective procedures to ensure that they are able to meet their legal obligations. Procedures should enable people to raise concerns and facilitate the objective consideration of those matters. It is important that procedures allow reporters to decide within an appropriate timescale whether they must report a breach. Reporters should not rely on waiting for others to report.

246. Procedures should include the following features:

- a process for obtaining clarification of the law around the suspected breach where needed
- a process for clarifying the facts around the suspected breach where they are not known
- a process for consideration of the material significance of the breach by taking into account its cause, effect, the reaction to it, and its wider implications, including (where appropriate) dialogue with the scheme manager or pension board
- a clear process for referral to the appropriate level of seniority at which decisions can be made on whether to report to the regulator
- an established procedure for dealing with difficult cases
- a timeframe for the procedure to take place that is appropriate to the breach and allows the report to be made as soon as reasonably practicable
- a system to record breaches even if they are not reported to the regulator (the record of past breaches may be relevant in deciding whether to report future breaches, for example it may reveal a systemic issue), and
- a process for identifying promptly any breaches that are so serious they must always be reported.

133
See paragraph 25
for the definition of
'schemes'.

Judging whether a breach must be reported

247. Breaches can occur in relation to a wide variety of the tasks normally associated with the administrative function of a scheme such as keeping records, internal controls, calculating benefits and, for funded pension schemes, making investment or investment-related decisions.

Judging whether there is 'reasonable cause'

248. Having 'reasonable cause' to believe that a breach has occurred means more than merely having a suspicion that cannot be substantiated.

249. Reporters should ensure that where a breach is suspected, they carry out checks to establish whether or not a breach has in fact occurred. For example, a member of a funded pension scheme may allege that there has been a misappropriation of scheme assets where they have seen in the annual accounts that the scheme's assets have fallen. However, the real reason for the apparent loss in value of scheme assets may be due to the behaviour of the stock market over the period. This would mean that there is not reasonable cause to believe that a breach has occurred.

250. Where the reporter does not know the facts or events around the suspected breach, it will usually be appropriate to check with the pension board or scheme manager or with others who are in a position to confirm what has happened. It would not be appropriate to check in cases of theft, suspected fraud or other serious offences where discussions might alert those implicated or impede the actions of the police or a regulatory authority. Under these circumstances the reporter should alert the regulator without delay.

251. If the reporter is unclear about the relevant legal provision, they should clarify their understanding of the law to the extent necessary to form a view.

252. In establishing whether there is reasonable cause to believe that a breach has occurred, it is not necessary for a reporter to gather all the evidence which the regulator may require before taking legal action. A delay in reporting may exacerbate or increase the risk of the breach.

Judging what is of 'material significance' to the regulator

253. In deciding whether a breach is likely to be of 'material significance' to the regulator. It would be advisable for those with a statutory duty to report to consider the:

- cause of the breach
- effect of the breach
- reaction to the breach, and
- wider implications of the breach.

254. When deciding whether to report, those responsible should consider these points together. Reporters should take into account expert or professional advice, where appropriate, when deciding whether the breach is likely to be of material significance to the regulator.

Cause of the breach

255. The breach is likely to be of material significance to the regulator where it was caused by:

- dishonesty
- poor governance or administration
- slow or inappropriate decision making practices
- incomplete or inaccurate advice, or
- acting (or failing to act) in deliberate contravention of the law.

256. When deciding whether a breach is of material significance, those responsible should consider other reported and unreported breaches of which they are aware. However, historical information should be considered with care, particularly if changes have been made to address previously identified problems.

257. A breach will not normally be materially significant if it has arisen from an isolated incident, for example resulting from teething problems with a new system or procedure, or from an unusual or unpredictable combination of circumstances. But in such a situation, it is also important to consider other aspects of the breach such as the effect it has had and to be aware that persistent isolated breaches could be indicative of wider scheme issues.

Effect of the breach

258. Reporters need to consider the effects of any breach, but with the regulator's role in relation to public service pension schemes and its statutory objectives in mind, the following matters in particular should be considered likely to be of material significance to the regulator:

- pension board members not having the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding, which may result in pension boards not fulfilling their roles, the scheme not being properly governed and administered and/or scheme managers breaching other legal requirements
- pension board members having a conflict of interest, which may result in them being prejudiced in the way that they carry out their role, ineffective governance and administration of the scheme and/or scheme managers breaching legal requirements
- adequate internal controls not being established and operated, which may lead to schemes not being run in accordance with their scheme regulations and other legal requirements, risks not being properly identified and managed and/or the right money not being paid to or by the scheme at the right time
- accurate information about benefits and scheme administration not being provided to scheme members and others, which may result in members not being able to effectively plan or make decisions about their retirement
- appropriate records not being maintained, which may result in member benefits being calculated incorrectly and/or not being paid to the right person at the right time
- pension board members misappropriating any assets of the scheme or being likely to do so, which may result in scheme assets not being safeguarded, and
- any other breach which may result in the scheme being poorly governed, managed or administered.

259. Reporters need to take care to consider the effects of the breach, including any other breaches occurring as a result of the initial breach and the effects of those resulting breaches.

Reaction to the breach

260. Where prompt and effective action is taken to investigate and correct the breach and its causes and, where appropriate, notify any affected members, the regulator will not normally consider this to be materially significant.

261. A breach is likely to be of concern and material significance to the regulator where a breach has been identified and those involved:

- do not take prompt and effective action to remedy the breach and identify and tackle its cause in order to minimise risk of recurrence
- are not pursuing corrective action to a proper conclusion, or
- fail to notify affected scheme members where it would have been appropriate to do so.

Wider implications of the breach

262. Reporters should consider the wider implications of a breach when they assess which breaches are likely to be materially significant to the regulator. For example, a breach is likely to be of material significance where the fact that the breach has occurred makes it appear more likely that other breaches will emerge in the future. This may be due to the scheme manager or pension board members having a lack of appropriate knowledge and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities or where other pension schemes may be affected. For instance, public service pension schemes administered by the same organisation may be detrimentally affected where a system failure has caused the breach to occur.

Submitting a report to the regulator

263. Reports must be submitted in writing and can be sent by post or electronically, including by email or by fax. Wherever possible reporters should use the standard format available via the Exchange online service on the regulator's website.

264. The report should be dated and include as a minimum:

- full name of the scheme
- description of the breach or breaches
- any relevant dates
- name of the employer or scheme manager (where known)
- name, position and contact details of the reporter, and
- role of the reporter in relation to the scheme.

265. Additional information that would help the regulator includes:

- the reason the breach is thought to be of material significance to the regulator
- the address of the scheme
- the contact details of the scheme manager (if different to the scheme address)
- the pension scheme's registry number (if available), and
- whether the concern has been reported before.

266. Reporters should mark urgent reports as such and draw attention to matters they consider particularly serious. They can precede a written report with a telephone call, if appropriate.
267. Reporters should ensure they receive an acknowledgement for any report they send to the regulator. Only when they receive an acknowledgement can the reporter be confident that the regulator has received their report.
268. The regulator will acknowledge all reports within five working days of receipt, however it will not generally keep a reporter informed of the steps taken in response to a report of a breach as there are restrictions on the information it can disclose.
269. The reporter should provide further information or reports of further breaches if this may help the regulator to exercise its functions. The regulator may make contact to request further information.
270. Breaches should be reported as soon as reasonably practicable, which will depend on the circumstances. In particular, the time taken should reflect the seriousness of the suspected breach.
271. In cases of immediate risk to the scheme, for instance, where there is any indication of dishonesty, the regulator does not expect reporters to seek an explanation or to assess the effectiveness of proposed remedies. They should only make such immediate checks as are necessary. The more serious the potential breach and its consequences, the more urgently reporters should make these necessary checks. In cases of potential dishonesty the reporter should avoid, where possible, checks which might alert those implicated. In serious cases, reporters should use the quickest means possible to alert the regulator to the breach.

Whistleblowing protection and confidentiality

272. The Pensions Act 2004 makes clear that the statutory duty to report overrides any other duties a reporter may have such as confidentiality and that any such duty is not breached by making a report. The regulator understands the potential impact of a report on relationships, for example, between an employee and their employer.
273. The statutory duty to report does not, however, override 'legal privilege'¹³⁴. This means that oral and written communications between a professional legal adviser and their client, or a person representing that client, while obtaining legal advice, do not have to be disclosed. Where appropriate a legal adviser will be able to provide further information on this.

134
Section 311 of the
Pensions Act 2004.

274. The regulator will do its best to protect a reporter's identity (if desired) and will not disclose the information except where lawfully required to do so. It will take all reasonable steps to maintain confidentiality, but it cannot give any categorical assurances as the circumstances may mean that disclosure of the reporter's identity becomes unavoidable in law. This includes circumstances where the regulator is ordered by a court to disclose it.
275. The Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA) provides protection for employees making a whistleblowing disclosure to the regulator. Consequently, where individuals employed by firms or another organisation having a statutory duty to report disagree with a decision not to report to the regulator, they may have protection under the ERA if they make an individual report in good faith. The regulator expects such individual reports to be rare and confined to the most serious cases.

Appendix

Corresponding Northern Ireland legislation

GB legislation	NI legislation
Pension Schemes Act 1993 (c. 48) - Chapter 1 of Part 4 - section 113	Pension Schemes (Northern Ireland) Act 1993 (c. 49) - Chapter 1 of Part 4 - section 109
Pensions Act 1995 (c. 26) - section 47 - section 49 - section 50 - section 50B - section 87	Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (SI 1995/3213 (NI 22)) - Article 47 - Article 49 - Article 50 - Article 50B - Article 85
Employment Rights Act 1996 (c. 18)	Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (SI 1996/1919 (NI 16))
Data Protection Act 1998 (c. 29)	Data Protection Act 1998 (c. 29)
Freedom of Information Act 2000 (c.36)	Freedom of Information Act 2000 (c.36)
Pensions Act 2004 (c. 35) - section 5 - section 13 - section 70 - section 70A - section 90A - Part 3 - section 227 - section 248 - section 248A - section 249A - section 249B - section 311 - section 318	Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SI 2005/255 (NI 1)) - Article 4 - Article 9 - Article 65 - Article 65A - Article 85A - Part 4 - Article 206 - Article 225 - Article 225A - Article 226A - Article 226B - Article 283 - Article 2
Pensions Act 2008 (c. 30)	Pensions (No. 2) Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (c. 13)

GB legislation	NI legislation
Public Service Pensions Act 2013 (c. 25) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - section 1 - section 2 - section 3 - section 4 - section 5 - section 6 - section 7 - section 14 - section 15 - section 16 - section 28 - section 30 - Schedule 2 - Schedule 3 	Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (c. 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - section 1 - section 2 - section 3 - section 4 - section 5 - section 6 - section 7 - section 14 - section 15 - section 16 - section 28 - section 31 - Schedule 2 - Schedule 3
Occupational Pension Schemes (Managers) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986/1718)	Occupational Pension Schemes (Managers) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1986 (SR 1986 No. 320)
Occupational Pension Schemes (Contracting-out) Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/1172)	Occupational Pension Schemes (Contracting-out) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996 (SR 1996 No. 493)
Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Administration) Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/1715)	Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Administration) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 (SR 1997 No. 94)
Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/1847)	Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996 (SR 1996 No. 619)
Occupational Pension Schemes (Winding up etc.) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/706)	Occupational Pension Schemes (Winding up, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 (SR 2005 No. 171)
Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Funding) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/3377)	Occupational Pension Schemes (Scheme Funding) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 (SR 2005 No. 568)
Registered Pension Schemes (Provision of Information) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/567)	Registered Pension Schemes (Provision of Information) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/567)

GB legislation	NI legislation
Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008 (SI 2008/649)	Occupational Pension Schemes (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 (SR 2008 No. 116)
Employers' Duties (Registration and Compliance) Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/5)	Employers' Duties (Registration and Compliance) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 (SR 2010 No. 186)
Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Automatic Enrolment) Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/772)	Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Automatic Enrolment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 (SR 2010 No. 122)
Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/2734)	Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 (SR 2014 No. 79)
Public Service Pensions (Record Keeping and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014	Public Service Pensions (Record Keeping and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

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APPENDIX B

A Procedure for Reporting Breaches of the Law to the Pensions Regulator

Leicestershire Pension Fund

Introduction

- 1 In April 2015 the Pensions Regulator (the Regulator) published its Code of Practice no 14 (the Code) *Governance and administration of public service pension schemes*. This is not a statement of law of itself, but nonetheless it carries weight.
- 2 There are many and various laws relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme, with many and various people having a statutory duty to report material breaches of the law to the Regulator. To assist, the Code states that a procedure should be established to ensure that those with a responsibility to make reports are able to meet their legal obligations. This document is that procedure for the Leicestershire Pension fund, which relates to all of the Fund's areas of operation.
- 3 Much of the text herein is drawn from the Code itself. Where it has been, the Regulator's copyright applies.

Legal requirements

- 4 Certain people are required to report breaches of the law to the Regulator where they have reasonable cause to believe that:
 - a legal duty which is relevant to the administration of the scheme has not been, or is not being, complied with and;
 - the failure to comply is likely to be of material significance to the Regulator in the exercise of any of its functions.
- 5 People who are subject to the reporting requirement ('reporters') for public service pension schemes are:
 - scheme managers;
 - members of the local pension board;
 - any person who is otherwise involved in the administration of the Fund (and thus members of the pension board and all of the Fund's officers);
 - employers, and any participating employer who becomes aware of a breach should consider their statutory duty to report, regardless of whether the breach relates to, or affects, members who are its employees or those of other employers;
 - professional advisers including auditors, actuaries, legal advisers and fund managers; and

- any person who is otherwise involved in advising the managers of the scheme in relation to the scheme.

Reasonable cause

- 6 Having 'reasonable cause' to believe that a breach has occurred means more than merely having a suspicion that cannot be substantiated.
- 7 Reporters should ensure that where a breach is suspected, they carry out checks to establish whether or not a breach has in fact occurred. For example, a member of a funded pension scheme may allege that there has been a misappropriation of scheme assets where they have seen in the annual accounts that the scheme's assets have fallen. However, the real reason for the apparent loss in value of scheme assets may be due to the behaviour of the stock market over the period. This would mean that there is not reasonable cause to believe that a breach has occurred.
- 8 Where the reporter does not know the facts or events around the suspected breach, it will usually be appropriate to consult the appropriate Officer regarding what has happened. It would not be appropriate to check in cases of theft, suspected fraud or other serious offences where discussions might alert those implicated or impede the actions of the police or a regulatory authority. Under these circumstances the reporter should alert the Regulator without delay.
- 9 If the reporter is unclear about the relevant legal provision, they should clarify their understanding of the law to the extent necessary to form a view.
- 10 In establishing whether there is reasonable cause to believe that a breach has occurred, it is not necessary for a reporter to gather all the evidence which the Regulator may require before taking legal action. A delay in reporting may exacerbate or increase the risk of the breach.

Material significance

- 11 In deciding whether a breach is likely to be of material significance to the Regulator, it would be advisable for the reporter to consider the:
 - cause of the breach;
 - effect of the breach;
 - reaction to the breach; and
 - the wider implications of the breach.

- 12 When deciding whether to report, those responsible should consider these points together. Reporters should take into account expert or professional advice, where appropriate, when deciding whether the breach is likely to be of material significance to the Regulator.
- 13 The breach is likely to be of material significance to the Regulator where it was caused by:
- dishonesty;
 - poor governance or administration;
 - slow or inappropriate decision making practices;
 - incomplete or inaccurate advice; or
 - acting (or failing to act) in deliberate contravention of the law.
- 14 When deciding whether a breach is of material significance, those responsible should consider other reported and unreported breaches of which they are aware. However, historical information should be considered with care, particularly if changes have been made to address previously identified problems.
- 15 A breach will not normally be materially significant if it has arisen from an isolated incident, for example resulting from teething problems with a new system or procedure, or from an unusual or unpredictable combination of circumstances. But in such a situation, it is also important to consider other aspects of the breach such as the effect it has had and to be aware that persistent isolated breaches could be indicative of wider scheme issues.

Effect of the breach

- 16 Reporters need to consider the effects of any breach, but with the Regulator's role in relation to public service pension schemes and its statutory objectives in mind, the following matters in particular should be considered likely to be of material significance to the Regulator:
- Local Board members not having the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding, which may result in the Board not fulfilling its role, the Fund not being properly governed and administered and/or the Pension Board breaching other legal requirements;
 - Local Board members having a conflict of interest, which may result in them being prejudiced in the way that they carry out their role, ineffective governance and administration of the scheme and/or the Pension Board breaching legal requirements;
 - adequate internal controls not being established and operated, which may lead to the Fund not being run in accordance with the Scheme's Regulations

and other legal requirements, risks not being properly identified and managed and/or the right money not being paid to or by the Fund at the right time;

- accurate information about benefits and Scheme administration not being provided to Scheme members and others, which may result in members not being able to effectively plan or make decisions about their retirement;

- appropriate records not being maintained, which may result in member benefits being calculated incorrectly and/or not being paid to the right person at the right time;

- anyone involved with the administration or management of the Fund misappropriating any of its assets, or being likely to do so, which may result in assets not being safeguarded; and

- any other breach which may result in the Fund being poorly governed, managed or administered.

- 17 Reporters need to take care to consider the effects of the breach, including any other breaches occurring as a result of the initial breach and the effects of those resulting breaches.

Reaction to the breach

- 18 Where prompt and effective action is taken to investigate and correct the breach and its causes and, where appropriate, notify any affected members, the Regulator will not normally consider this to be materially significant.

- 19 A breach is likely to be of concern and material significance to the Regulator where a breach has been identified and those involved:

- do not take prompt and effective action to remedy the breach and identify and tackle its cause in order to minimise risk of recurrence;

- are not pursuing corrective action to a proper conclusion;

- fail to notify affected scheme members where it would have been appropriate to do so.

Wider implications of the breach

- 20 Reporters should consider the wider implications of a breach when they assess which breaches are likely to be materially significant to the Regulator. For example, a breach is likely to be of material significance where the fact that the breach has occurred makes it appear more likely that other breaches will emerge in the future. This may be due to the scheme manager or pension board members having a lack of appropriate knowledge and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities or where other pension schemes may be affected.

For instance, public service pension schemes administered by the same organisation may be detrimentally affected where a system failure has caused the breach to occur.

Examples of breaches

Example 1

- 21 An employer is late in paying over employee and employer contributions, and so late that it is in breach of the statutory period for making such payments. It is contacted by officers from the administering authority, it immediately pays the moneys that are overdue, and it improves its procedures so that in future contributions are paid over on time. In this instance there has been a breach but members have not been adversely affected and the employer has put its house in order regarding future payments. The breach is therefore not material to the Regulator and need not be reported.

Example 2

- 22 An employer is late in paying over employee and employer contributions, and so late that it is in breach of the statutory period for making such payments. It is also late in paying AVCs to the Prudential. It is contacted by officers from the administering authority, and it eventually pays the moneys that are overdue, including AVCs to the Prudential. This has happened before, with there being no evidence that the employer is putting its house in order. In this instance there has been a breach that *is* relevant to the Regulator, in part because of the employer's repeated failures, and also because those members paying AVCs will typically be adversely affected by the delay in the investing of their AVCs.

Example 3

- 23 An employer is late in submitting its statutory year-end return of pay and contributions in respect of each of its active members and as such it is in breach. Despite repeated reminders it still does not supply its year-end return. Because the administering authority does not have the year-end data it is unable to supply, by 31 August, annual benefit statements to the employer's members. In this instance there has been a breach which *is* relevant to the Regulator, in part because of the employer's failures, in part because of the enforced breach by the administering authority, and also because members are being denied their annual benefits statements.

Example 4

- 24 A pension overpayment is discovered and thus the administering authority has failed to pay the right amounts to the right person at the right time. A breach has therefore occurred. The overpayment is however for a modest amount and the pensioner could not have known that (s)he was being overpaid. The overpayment is therefore waived. In this case there is no need to report the breach as it is not material.

Example 5

- 25 Members of the Local Pension Board, the Local Pension Committee and key Officers have a responsibility to declare if they have a material interest in any decision that they are involved in. This may, for example, be a family member that is employed by an investment management firm that is being considered for appointment or an individual investment decision that may have potential benefit for themselves or a close friend/family member. This interest should be declared prior to any decision being taken, and the interested party should be excluded from the decision.

If it is subsequently found that a notification of material interest was not made, this would be considered a material breach and should be reported to the Regulator. Non-disclosure of the material interest is also likely to lead to disciplinary action against the individual.

Submitting a report to the Regulator

- 26 Before you submit a report you should obtain clarification of the law around the suspected breach. You should contact the Pensions Manager in the first instance.
- 27 The Pensions Manager will consider whether the Regulator would regard the breach as being material. (S)he will also clarify any facts, if required. If the case requires input from others, including a Legal view, (s)he will seek advice, as required.
- 28 Some matters could be urgent, if for example a fraud is imminent, whilst others will be less so. Non-urgent but material breaches should be reported to the Regulator within 30 working days of them being confirmed, and in the same time breaches that are not material should be recorded (see later).
- 29 Some breaches could be so serious that they must always be reported, for example a theft of funds by anyone involved with the administration or management of the Fund. It is difficult to be definitive about what constitutes a

breach that must always be reported, but one test is: might it reasonably lead to a criminal prosecution or a serious loss in public confidence?

- 30 Any report that is made (which must be in writing and made as soon as reasonable practicable) should be dated and include as a minimum:
- full name of the Fund;
 - description of the breach or breaches;
 - any relevant dates;
 - name of the employer or scheme manager (where known);
 - name, position and contact details of the reporter; and
 - role of the reporter in relation to the Fund.
- 31 Additional information that would help the Regulator includes:
- the reason the breach is thought to be of material significance to the Regulator;
 - the address of the Fund;
 - the pension scheme's registry number (if available); and
 - whether the concern has been reported before.
- 32 Reporters should mark urgent reports as such and draw attention to matters they consider particularly serious. They can precede a written report with a telephone call, if appropriate.
- 33 Reporters should ensure they receive an acknowledgement for any report they send to the Regulator. Only when they receive an acknowledgement can the reporter be confident that the Regulator has received their report.
- 34 The Regulator will acknowledge all reports within five working days of receipt, however it will not generally keep a reporter informed of the steps taken in response to a report of a breach as there are restrictions on the information it can disclose.
- 35 The reporter should provide further information or reports of further breaches if this may help the Regulator to exercise its functions. The Regulator may make contact to request further information.
- 36 Breaches should be reported as soon as reasonably practicable, which will depend on the circumstances. In particular, the time taken should reflect the seriousness of the suspected breach.

- 37 In cases of immediate risk to the Fund, for instance, where there is any indication of dishonesty, the Regulator does not expect reporters to seek an explanation or to assess the effectiveness of proposed remedies. They should only make such immediate checks as are necessary. The more serious the potential breach and its consequences, the more urgently reporters should make these necessary checks. In cases of potential dishonesty the reporter should avoid, where possible, checks which might alert those implicated. In serious cases, reporters should use the quickest means possible to alert the Regulator to the breach.

Recording breaches that have not been reported to the Regulator

- 38 Breaches that are found not to be material to the Regulator must still be recorded. This is so that if similar breaches continue, then they become material. Recording all breaches also highlights where improvements are required, to try and prevent similar breaches.
- 39 Breaches that are not being reported should be recorded here: (being a link to an in-house spreadsheet designed to capture all the relevant data).

Whistleblowing protection and confidentiality

- 40 The Pensions Act 2004 makes clear that the statutory duty to report overrides any other duties a reporter may have such as confidentiality and that any such duty is not breached by making a report. The Regulator understands the potential impact of a report on relationships, for example, between an employee and their employer.
- 41 The statutory duty to report does not, however, override 'legal privilege. This means that oral and written communications between a professional legal adviser and their client, or a person representing that client, while obtaining legal advice, do not have to be disclosed. Where appropriate a legal adviser will be able to provide further information on this.
- 42 The Regulator will do its best to protect a reporter's identity (if desired) and will not disclose the information except where lawfully required to do so. It will take all reasonable steps to maintain confidentiality, but it cannot give any categorical assurances as the circumstances may mean that disclosure of the reporter's identity becomes unavoidable in law. This includes circumstances where the regulator is ordered by a court to disclose it.
- 43 The Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA) provides protection for employees making a whistleblowing disclosure to the regulator. Consequently, where individuals employed by firms or another organisation having a statutory duty to report disagree with a decision not to report to the regulator, they may have protection under the ERA if they make an individual report in good faith. The Regulator expects such individual reports to be rare and confined to the most serious cases.

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LOCAL PENSION BOARD – 9 OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

RISK REGISTER

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform the Board of the combined pensions and investments risk register.

Background

2. The Pensions Manager and Investments Manager maintain a combined pensions and investments risk register. This is used by the two managers to monitor and control emerging risks. The register is reviewed quarterly and new risks are added and scores amended as risks and controls change. The risk register is attached as Appendix A.
3. In April 2015 The Pensions Regulators code of practice Number 14 "Governance and administration of public service pension schemes", came into force, which includes a section on risk. The risk register will now be brought to the Local Pension Board annually for consideration.
4. Each risk is considered both in terms of impact and likelihood of risk. These are shown on the risk register as I = Impact and L = Likelihood.
5. Both elements are scored and the numbers multiplied to calculate the total risk score. A residual risk is also shown reflecting the reduced risk score with further actions and additional controls in place. The scoring matrix is attached as Appendix B.

Recommendation

6. The Board is asked to note this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None specific

Appendices

Appendix A - Risk register

Appendix B - Scoring matrix

Background Papers

Number 14 Governance and administration of public service pension scheme document is available in the link shown below.

<http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/codes/code-governance-administration-public-service-pension-schemes.aspx>

Officers to Contact

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Chris Tambini – telephone (0116) 305 6199

APPENDIX A – Pensions Risk Register

Pensions																
R i s k n o e	S e r v i c e	Risk	Causes (s)	Consequences (s)	Risk Owner	List of current controls	I	L	Current Risk Score	Risk Response; <i>Tolerate</i> <i>Treat</i> <i>Terminate</i> <i>Transfer</i>	Further Actions / Additional Controls	I	L	Residual Risk Score	Action owner	
1	Pensions	If accurate information is not received at year end from employers we will be unable to meet statutory deadlines	A change in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. There is a risk of not receiving accurate and timely information from employers at year-end. The career average revalued earnings (CARE) pay provided by employers is "locked" into the members pension account and is used for annual benefit statements and future pension calculations.	Complaints - Appeals Potential Fines or charges for late information to HMRC	Ian Howe	Bulletins issued and Comprehensive combined HR/Payroll Guide developed to inform employers of statutory deadlines, responsibilities and information required Pension Colleagues continue to meet with employers to resolve issues to mitigate the risk of inaccurate information	3	3	9	Treat	Develop and implement a control sheet for employers to sign off to reduce the risk of inaccurate data Provide a key contact for each employer to help resolve their own specific issues Develop the administration and communication strategy Change the year end process to monthly loading of contributions from employers	3	2	6	Ian Howe	Managed at Service level

R i s k n o	S e r v i c e	Risk	Causes (s)	Consequences (s)	Risk Owner	List of current controls	I	L	Current Risk Score	Risk Response; <i>Tolerate</i> <i>Treat</i> <i>Terminate</i> <i>Transfer</i>	Further Actions / Additional Controls	I	L	Residual Risk Score	Action owner	
2	P e n s i o n s	If we fail to reconcile HRMC GMP data with the Pensions Section data there is a risk of overpayment of Pensions Increase	Government changes to end contracting out legislation. Contracting out ends April 2016 and between 2015 and 2018 we need to reconcile our GMPs to the information held by HM Revenue. From 2018 we take on responsibility for GMPs so we need to ensure we pay the correct Pensions Increase (e.g. no GMP means we pay full PI and if there should be a GMP we pay less PI).	Overpaying pensions NI for employees increasing by 1.4% from April 2016 which could lead scheme members to opt out of the scheme NI for employers increasing by 3.4% from April 2016 Reputation	Ian Howe	Checking of HMRC GMP data to identify any discrepancies in against our data	3	4	12	Treat	Implement national recommendations in a timely way once they are agreed LGA liaising with Treasury on GMP reconciliation in order to assist pension funds	3	2	6	Ian Howe	Managed at Service level
3	P e n s i o n s	If we fail to meet the service requirements of the three Fire Authorities we may lose their business	Changes in legislation on the Firefighters pension scheme, Managing the Fire fighters pension scheme changes and the retained fire fighters buy back. Only limited knowledge in the Section in this key area.	Reputation Potential loss of business	Ian Howe	Quarterly meetings take place with the Fire Authorities to resolve issues Membership of the Midlands Fire Officer Group enables us to identify and resolve issues early	3	3	9	Treat	Establish a joint Fire Local Pensions Board to standardise working practices subject to DCLG approval Provide a single point of contact to resolve issues and develop the SLA for the benefit of all parties Increase resource in the Fire Team	2	2	4	Ian Howe	Managed at Service level

4	I n v s	If employer and employee contributions are not paid accurately and on time	Error on the part of the scheme employer	Potentially reportable to The Pensions Regulator as late payment is a breach of The Pensions Act	Colin Pratt	Receipt of contributions is monitored and late payments are chased quickly	2	4	8	Treat	Late payers will be reminded of their legal responsibilities.	2	3	6	Colin Pratt	Managed at Service level
5	I n v s	If assets held by the Fund are ultimately insufficient to pay benefits due to individual members	Ineffective setting of employer contribution rates over many consecutive actuarial valuations	Reputation Significant financial impact on scheme employers due to the need for large increases in employer contribution rates.	Chris Tambini/ Colin Pratt	Input into actuarial valuation, including ensuring that actuarial assumptions are reasonable and the manner in which employer contribution rates are set does not bring imprudent future financial risk	5	2	10	Treat	Actuarial assumptions need to include an element of prudence, and Officers need to understand the long-term impact and risks involved with taking short-term views to artificially manage employer contribution rates	4	2	8	Chris Tambini/ Colin Pratt	Managed at Service level
6	P e n s / I n v s	If the sub-funds of Community Admission Bodies were not monitored to ensure that there is the correct balance between risks to the Fund and fair treatment of the employer	Changing financial position of both sub-fund and the employer	Reputation Significant financial impact on employing bodies due to need for large increases in employer contribution rates, which may ultimately lead to insolvency and a deficit that has to be met by the Fund.	Ian Howe/ Colin Pratt	Ensuring, as far as possible, that the financial position of Community Admission Bodies is understood. On-going dialogue with them to ensure that the correct balance between risks and fair treatment continues.	5	2	10	Treat	Dialogue with the employers, particularly in the lead up to the setting of new employer contribution rates.	3	2	6	Ian Howe/ Colin Pratt	Managed at Service level

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APPENDIX B

Scale	Description	Departmental Service Plan	Internal Operations	People	Reputation	Financial per annum / per loss
1	Negligible	No impact to objectives in service plan	Limited disruption to operations and service quality satisfactory	N/A	Public concern restricted to local complaints	<£50k
2	Low	Minor impact to service as objectives in service plan are not met	Short term disruption to operations resulting in a minor adverse impact on partnerships and minimal reduction in service quality	Residents inconvenienced	Minor adverse local media attention, 'routine sniping' and complaints	£50k-£250k
3	Medium	Considerable fall in service as objectives in service plan are not met	Sustained low level disruption to operations / Relevant partnership relationships strained / Service quality not satisfactory	Potential for minor physical injuries / Stressful experience	Adverse local media public attention	£250k - £500k
4	High	Major impact to services as objectives in service plan are not met	Serious disruption to operations with relationships in major partnerships affected / Service quality not acceptable with adverse impact on front line services	Exposure to dangerous conditions creating potential for serious physical or mental harm	Serious negative regional criticism, with some national coverage	£500-£750k
5	Very High	Significant fall/failure in service as objectives in service plan are not met	Long term serious interruption to operations / Major partnerships under threat / Service quality not acceptable with impact on front line services	Exposure to dangerous conditions leading to potential loss of life or permanent physical/mental damage	Prolonged regional and national condemnation, with serious damage to the reputation of the organisation	>£750k

Risk Likelihood Measurement Criteria

Rating Scale	Likelihood	Example of Loss/Event Frequency	Probability %	Projects
1	Rare	Expected less than 1 time in next 10 years	0-5%	1 in every 50 projects
2	Unlikely	Expected 1 time in next 5 to 10 years	6-20%	1 in every 25 projects
3	Possible	Expected 1 time in 3 to 4 years	21-40%	1 in every 12 projects

4	Probable / Likely	Expected 1 time in 2 years	41-60%	1 in every 6 projects
5	Almost Certain	Expected annually	61% +	1 in every 3 projects

Risk Management Matrix - What colour does your Current Risk Score fall in?

	<u>Impact</u>				
5 Very High	5	10	15	20	25
4 High	4	8	12	16	20
3 Medium	3	6	9	12	15
2 Low	2	4	6	8	10
1 Negligible	1	2	3	4	5
	1 Rare	2 Unlikely	3 Possible	4 Probable / Likely	5 Almost certain
					<u>Likelihood</u>

Tolerance Levels Current Risk Score Expected Actions by Risk Owners

White	1 to 2	Contingency Plans = Monitoring = Escalation =	No action required No action required No action required
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Low	3 to 5	Contingency Plans = Monitoring = Escalation =	Not essential Review once a year / Reporting with service area Service area manager
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Medium	6 to 12	Contingency = Monitoring = Escalation =	Contingency plans considered Review at least twice a year / Reporting to DMT Business Partners / Relevant AD / DMT
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High	15 to 25	Contingency = Monitoring = Escalation =	Comprehensive contingency plans Quarterly Monitoring / Consider reporting to Pensions Committee Chief Officer / CMT / Lead Member
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