



## Pension Fund Board agenda

Date: Tuesday 13 December 2022

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: MS Teams

### Membership:

B Black (Scheme employer representative), P Dearden (Scheme member representative), R Ellis (Scheme employer representative) (Chairman), J McGovern (Scheme member representative), T Pearce (Scheme member representative), I Thompson (Scheme member representative) (Vice-Chairman), L Wheaton (Scheme employer representative) and J Whiteley (Scheme employer representative)

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Page No</b>
<b>1 Apologies / Declarations of interest</b>	
<b>2 Minutes of the Pension Fund Board</b> To agree the minutes of the meeting held 19 October 2022 as an accurate record.	<b>5 - 12</b>
<b>3 Minutes of Pension Fund Committee</b> To note the minutes of the Pension Fund Committee held 24 November 2022.	<b>13 - 16</b>
<b>4 Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure</b> To be presented by Sam Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>17 - 22</b>
<b>5 Training Opportunities</b> To be presented by Claire Lewis-Smith, Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>23 - 24</b>
<b>6 Forward Plan</b> To be presented by Claire Lewis-Smith, Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>25 - 26</b>

<b>7</b>	<b>Administration performance statistics</b> To be presented by Sam Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>27 - 34</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Annual Benefit Statements - Administration Year End Update</b> To be presented by Sam Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>35 - 36</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Exclusion of Press and Public</b> To resolve to exclude the press and public as the following item is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	
<b>10</b>	<b>Annual Benefit Statements - Confidential Appendix</b> To be presented by Sam Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>37 - 38</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Administration performance statistics - Confidential Appendix</b> To be presented by Sam Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>39 - 46</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Confidential minutes of Pension Fund Board</b> To agree the confidential minutes of the meeting held 19 October 2022 as an accurate record.	<b>47 - 48</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Confidential minutes of Pension Fund Committee</b> To note the confidential minutes of the Pension Fund Committee held 24 November 2022.	<b>49 - 52</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Cyber Security</b> To be presented by Claire Lewis-Smith, Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>53 - 100</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Pension Fund Performance</b> To be presented by Julie Edwards, Head of Pensions, Buckinghamshire Council.	<b>101 - 148</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Actuarial Valuation 2022</b> To be presented by Barnett Waddingham.	<b>149 - 196</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b> 29 March 2023, 10am via MS Teams	

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Katherine Farooqi on 01895 837205, email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk).

This page is intentionally left blank



## Pension Fund Board minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Pension Fund Board held on Wednesday 19 October 2022 in MS Teams, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 11.44 am.

### Members present

B Black, P Dearden, R Ellis, T Pearce, L Wheaton and J Whiteley

### Others in attendance

K Farooqi, C Lewis-Smith and S Price

### Apologies

J Edwards, J McGovern and I Thompson

### Agenda Item

#### **1 Apologies / Declarations of interest**

Apologies were received from J Edwards, I Thompson and J McGovern.

A declaration of interest was reported from T Pearce who was potentially affected by the £95k exit cap.

The Chairman welcomed Jo Whiteley the new Scheme Employer representative to the Board.

It was noted Dr Jane McCarthy was in attendance for the public section of the Board meeting.

#### **2 Minutes of the Pension Fund Board**

**RESOLVED** Members of the Board **AGREED** the minutes of the Pension Fund Board held 27 July 2022.

#### **3 Minutes of Pension Fund Committee**

**RESOLVED** Members of the Board **NOTED** the minutes of the Pension Fund Committee held 7 July 2022.

**RESOLVED** Members of the Board **NOTED** the minutes of the Pension Fund Committee held 29 September 2022.

It was advised the 2021-22 Buckinghamshire Council's annual accounts had not been

formally signed off yet.

#### **4 i-Connect/Pensions 'Online' Update**

S Price Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council, referred the report circulated with the agenda.

The following points on My Pensions Online were highlighted:

- 38% of Buckinghamshire Pension Fund members were registered to use My Pension Online. This was a 6% increase since March 2022.
- The table on the report showed the different registration status of members, this included 52.89% of pensioner age members fully registered for the service which was encouraging.
- For those members who were partially registered i.e had not completed the sign up process, contact would be made annually to encourage them to complete the registration process.
- A member of the Board queried the number of people registered plus members who had opted out of the online service. It was confirmed 35.5% of pensioners were not registered and if the number of people opted out of the online service were removed, then only 83% of pensioners are able to be registered
- The Member Liaison Officers in the pensions team were encouraging members to use the online service for responses to queries. If a member had not chosen to opt of the service, all correspondence and statements would be issued on My Pension Online.
- A message to log online to view statements is included on all email communications and scheme employers had been notified once annual benefit statements had been issued asking them to encourage employees to use the online service.
- It was clarified that partially registered members had begun the registration process online however, they had not verified their email address and completed the final step in the registration process. There were instances when the verification email had gone to the junk folder.
- There was an increase of 600 pensioners who opted out of My Pensions Online, this surge occurred in April due to P60s being issued online.
- There were on average 8600 log ins to My Pensions Online a month, with figures increasing in May and August due to annual benefit statements and P60s being issued.
- The amount of traffic to the portal was positive each month with members able to update their own details. Members made use of the retirement benefit calculations function which resulted in less requests to the pensions team.

The following points on i-Connect were highlighted:

- The majority of employers would be on-boarded to the system by the end of 2022-23. The largest scheme employer was on-boarded in November 2021 and the last large employer was on-boarded last month with the systems team finalising the process.
- At the end of September 2022, 258 employers had been on-boarded and were successfully submitting data on a monthly basis.

- A monthly reconciliation of data provided from employers via i- Connect is now in place which allows the team query any data inaccuracies
- Scheme employers were able to upload documents to i-Connect instead of emailing them. The team were encouraging employers to use this function as it was a safer and quicker way for member data to be sent.

The chairman congratulated the team on their hard work and highlighted the benefit of more employers using i-Connect to reduce queries received by email.

## **5 Internal Administration Benchmarking**

S Price Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council, referred to the report circulated with the agenda.

The following points were highlighted to the Board:

- The annual report provided a comparison against measures including; staffing, scheme membership, costs & workload. The report covered the year 2021-22 and the previous two years.
- There had been an increase in staffing from 43.1 FTE to 49.1 FTE. In anticipation of McCloud going live in October 2023, one senior pension officer post and three pension officer posts were added in 2021.
- There were a total six posts added to the structure in 2021 including a one year fixed term member liaison officer post to cover maternity leave. This post would be removed from the structure next year.
- The two vacant posts from the end of last year had been recruited and there were currently no vacant posts in the team.
- The report included a breakdown on salary bandings and experience in the team structure. There were 10.8 FTE posts with less than one-year experience. Salaries were in line with LGPS nationally and were based on experience.
- Scheme membership increased year on year and the staff to fund member ratio was 1 to 1780. In 2018-19 the ratio was 1 to 2062.
- There had been a consistent increase in costs due to an increase in staffing costs.
- Buckinghamshire Pension Fund were previously part of the CIPFA benchmarking which provided a comparison of costs and performance with other funds. This benchmarking process was limited due to inconsistencies with the process of funds submitting data. CIPFA had conducted a review of the process and it was hoped the team could participate in the benchmarking scheme in the near future.

The Chairman asked if there was an optimum number of staff to scheme members. It was confirmed there was currently no target level and officers would discuss a target level.

A member asked if the increased cost of Heywood software provider was due to McCloud. It was advised there was a contract extension with Heywood as the contract was due to expire in March, the extension did incur additional costs.

A member queried if five days' sickness absence per full time post was a normal

level. It was highlighted there was previously a few members of staff on long term sick leave however, sickness absence had reduced over the years and wasn't considered a concern.

There was a discussion relating to scheme membership and an increase in frozen refunds. It was explained there had been an increase in new cases where employees had left their entitlement and it was difficult to make contact. Where a scheme member left with less than 2 years total membership they are not entitled to a deferred benefits but due a refund instead. This was an increase from 3 months as a result of Regulation changes in 2014 meaning there has since been a growth in the number of refund entitlements. Refund are expected to be paid out in five years. Scheme members were issued with a claim form however, in many cases there were no current addresses for the members, and many didn't realise they were entitled to a refund. It was noted the pensions dashboard would be useful in highlighting member's pensions rights and could encourage them to claim lost pensions.

The Chairman queried the process if scheme members claimed a refund after the five-year limit. It was advised some refunds were outstanding from 1980s/1990s and the member would receive the refund with interest accrued in line with scheme regulations.

A member of the Board queried if there were more people opting out of the pension scheme due to the cost of living crisis. It was advised there did not appear to be a trend for more members opting out however, this could be monitored going forward. Furthermore, there had not been an increase in members opting for the 50/50 scheme to reduce pension contributions in times of hardship.

**Action: S Price to provide opt out and 50/50 scheme statistics at each Board meeting.**

It was noted the employer newsletter could include wording to advise members of the 50/50 option to discourage opt outs.

## **6 Breaches of the Law**

C Lewis Smith, Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council provided an update on breaches of the law.

The following points were highlighted:

- The aim of the report was to identify, assess, record and report any breaches. Breaches of the law are reported annually.
- Appendix 1 of the report identified breaches of the law from 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2022.
- There were 43 refunds issued after the five-year limit expired. These were not material breaches and six months prior to the five-year deadline members were contacted in an attempt issue refunds. A request had been made to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to remove the regulation for the five-year refund limit.



- There was a report of a breach as not 100% of annual benefit statements were issued. There were 99.89% of statements issued in time and the team continued to work with employers on outstanding queries.
- The table on page 36 highlighted late and outstanding payments for the last financial year and the first six months of this financial year.

A member of the Board queried the table on page 36 on late payments if there was a typing error and which employers had late payments.

**Action C Lewis Smith to check the queries above.**

## **7 Administration performance statistics**

S Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council, referred the report circulated with the agenda.

The following points were highlighted:

- Incoming communications were at consistent levels for the past two quarters. The report did not include communications generated from i- Connect however, these statistics would be included going forward.
- It is anticipated when more members used the document upload facility on My Pension Online that email and post communications would reduce.
- It was highlighted the team were dealing with member queries quickly with the telephone call queue time at an average of 17 seconds. There were four members of staff who answered the phones and over 99% of calls received were answered.
- The priority areas turnaround target was 95% however the team had achieved almost 98% for both quarter one and two of 2021/22. There were no delays in responding to queries or backlogged queries.
- The benefit administration cases were highlighted with no areas of concern. Aggregation had 89% of cases completed which was an area which had shown improvement. The team reviewed and processed these cases quicker due to data being uploaded straight to i-Connect.
- The total number of overdue cases in each area were highlighted. The table also showed 80% of overdue cases were waiting for external action from scheme employers. A report showing external cases overdue by each employer would be provided at the December meeting. 16% of overdue cases were overdue by three months, the team was focusing on these.
- The deadline for providing a pension saving statement to all scheme members who had exceeded the Annual Allowance in the 2021/22 scheme year was 6 October 2022. Following a bulk calculation on all active scheme member records, 158 individual cases were manually reviewed & 129 statements were issued to scheme members who had exceeded the limit.
- The team were working to identify any errors in data held on the system. Common data was data specific to scheme members for example addresses. Scheme specific data related to data or a field missing. Identifying data errors was a monthly task and not just reviewed annually. The Insights reporting tool was useful to identify errors, the common data score was currently 96.2% and scheme specific data 98.94%.

- The common data score was lower than scheme specific data due to scheme members not at retirement age failing to notify of address changes. An external tracing company sent correspondence to these members to validate their details.

The Chairman asked if it was possible to have mid-year calculations to advise members they would exceed the annual allowance. It was advised as it was a retrospective process it would be difficult to predict in advance whether a scheme member would exceed or not as pay increases are not always known. Members who have exceeded the annual limit would work out tax owed. The scheme can pay this on their behalf with a pension debit being applied to the member benefits at retirement.

## **8 Funding Strategy Statement**

C Lewis Smith, Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council referred to the report included in the agenda.

The following points were highlighted:

- The funding statement strategy revision was approved by Pension Fund Committee at the September meeting.
- The report explained the revision of the admission bodies policy and outsourcing of service.
- Previously the admission agreement transferred risk to an admission body with the requirement to have a bond. The new arrangement requires a side agreement within the contract which allowed the risk to be retained by the letting authority.
- The cessation valuations for when a scheme employer exits the fund were highlighted on pages 57 and 58 of the appendix.
- Previously there was an arrangement for pre-payment of employer contributions. Employers could pay in advance and receive a discount assessed by the fund actuary. The fund has removed this facility in the revised strategy.

It was highlighted a self-insurance arrangement would be place to cover ill-health retirement and death-in-service benefits for all individual employers not involved in a pooling arrangement. A percentage of funding could be set aside and used if needed.

## **9 Forward Plan**

C Lewis Smith, Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council requested any topics Board members wished to include at the December meeting.

It was advised the cyber security report scorecard results were due to be shared in spring however, due to a limited data from other organisations the results were delayed. The scorecard results were received on 6th October and the results would be shared at the December Board meeting.

The Annual Accounts 2021-22 report would be on the agenda for the December meeting as there was currently no update.

The Chairman requested an update on administration particularly overdue cases, late contributions and projects.

**10 Annual Benefit Statements - Administration Year End Update**

S Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager, Buckinghamshire Council, referred the report circulated with the agenda.

The following points were highlighted:

- The report advised 98% of employers submitted the 2021/22 annual returns by 30 April 2022 deadline with the remaining returns received before the end of May 2022.
- The team successfully raised any queries to scheme employers and processed all returns by 30 June. There were 1639 queries raised with scheme employers and 99% of these were resolved within the ten working days' turnaround time.
- By 31 August 99.8% of annual benefit statements had been issued with the majority online and over 300 posted. The majority of statements were issued before the end of July.
- As of 1 September there were 45 scheme members who had not received their annual benefit statement however, 21 of these queries have now been resolved and statements issued. The delay in issuing these statements was due to issues with the scheme employers.

To date 99.89% of annual benefit statements had been issued with 24 statements outstanding. These queries related to nine scheme employers and would be resolved imminently.

**11 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**12 Annual Benefit Statements - Confidential Appendix**

Restricted.

**13 Confidential minutes of Pension Fund Board**

Restricted.

**14 Confidential minutes of Pension Fund Committee**

Restricted.

**15 Pension Fund Risk Register**

Restricted.

**16 Pension Fund Performance**

Restricted.

**17 Date of next meeting**

Date of next meeting: 13 December 10am via MS Teams

Members were encouraged to attend the Pensions General Meeting on 8th December at The Gateway, Aylesbury where the results of the triennial valuation would be presented by Barnett Waddingham.

It was advised the McCloud consultation documentation had not been released yet. There would be further consultation in the new year. The Pensions Regulator's new TPR single code of practice would hopefully be received this autumn. The new pensions dashboard programme had started along with liaison with software providers. The deadline for the dashboard was 2024.

The Chairman highlighted the slides from the June training sessions from Barnett Waddingham and CIPFA had been circulated to Board members. The training sessions covered different topics including cyber security from CIPFA. It was suggested in future members attend one session from each provider and presentations could be shared afterwards.



## Pension Fund Committee minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Pension Fund Committee held on Thursday 24 November 2022 in Paralympic Room, The Gateway, Aylesbury, commencing at 2.00 pm and concluding at 4.40 pm.

### Members present

R Bagge, T Butcher, E Gemmell and M Walsh

### Others in attendance

J Edwards, R Ellis, C Gray, M Passey - Mercer, M Preston, Kieran O'Connor – Mercer, Roisin McGuire - Barnett-Waddingham, Ellie Murray - Barnett-Waddingham

### Agenda Item

#### 1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Collingwood, Macpherson and Marland

#### 2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3 Minutes of the last meeting

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Committee held on 29 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

#### 4 Buckinghamshire Pension Fund Board Draft Minutes

Copies of the Pension Fund Board minutes were circulated previously.

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Buckinghamshire Pension Fund Board meeting held on 19 October 2022 be noted.

#### 5 Response to LGPS Governance and Reporting of Climate Risk Consultation

On 1st September 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) launched its consultation regarding governance and reporting of climate change risks. The consultation sought views on proposals to require Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) administering authorities in England and Wales to assess, manage and report on climate-related risks, in line with the recommendations of the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD). A response was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The consultation sought views on policy proposals to require administering authorities of the LGPS to have effective governance, strategy, risk management and accompanying metrics and targets for the assessment and management of climate risks and opportunities. The full consultation could be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-pension-scheme-england-and-wales-governance-and-reporting-of-climate-change-risks/localgovernment-pension-scheme-england-and-wales-governance-and-reporting-of-climate-change-risks>

During discussion the following points were noted:-

- The proposed requirements would apply to all LGPS administering authorities from 2023/24 regardless of fund size.
- The consultation proposed that LGPS administering authorities would calculate the 'carbon footprint' of their assets and assess how the value of each fund's assets or liabilities would be affected by different temperature rise scenarios, including the ambition to limit the global average temperature rise to below 2°C set out in the Paris Agreement. A Member commented that the Paris Agreement should be corrected in the Government consultation as it should say well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius. However, as the deadline for responses was today there would not be time for this to be changed.
- Question 3 Response – the draft response supported the triennial use of at least two scenario analyses regarding the Council's overall investment and funding strategies with one scenario 'below 2°C temperature rise'. A Member asked that it be noted that he thought this should be undertaken annually due to the speed of climate change. The Chairman made reference to the LGA's response which stated that scenarios other than the Paris aligned one should be required to illustrate the effect of global temperature rises above 2°. A small set of plausible scenarios should be agreed and included in the statutory guidance, together with a presumption that pools should provide this expertise. Concerns had also been expressed about incurring costs in collecting the necessary data for scenario analysis. C Dobson reported that it was important to measure carbon emissions from the Fund's portfolio rather than globally and in the short term there was not enough data relating to equity portfolios and private markets.
- Question 5 – clarification was sought on scope 3 emissions related to the fact that the draft response stated that they should be presented separately. C Dobson reported that scope 3 emissions were difficult to measure and a huge amount of data was not available. The Chairman referred to the draft LGA response which urged caution and suggested that scopes 1-3 should be reported separately. The draft response suggested allowing for a range of methodologies to be used and for an evaluation of these to be done once they had been properly tested. The response referred to the fact that they did not believe a single methodology had emerged which could be deemed the most appropriate.

The Chairman referred to the Local Government's Association response to the consultation attached as a link below.

[221012\\_DLUHCClimateRiskReportingconsultation\\_SABresponse.pdf \(lgpsboard.org\)](https://www.lgpa.org.uk/media/221012/221012_DLUHCClimateRiskReportingconsultation_SABresponse.pdf)

On a vote being taken it was:-

**RESOLVED that the response to the consultation on LGPS Governance and Reporting of Climate Risk, attached as Appendix 1 to the report be approved.**

**6 Forward Plan**

The Assistant Director of Finance reported that the external auditors would be attending the next meeting in March 2023. Work was ongoing on the Council's accounts and it was noted that the Pension Fund accounts could not be fully reviewed until the Council accounts had been completed so that they could be signed off together.

**RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.**

**7 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**RESOLVED**

**That the press and public be excluded for the following items as they were exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because they contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

**8 Confidential minutes of the last meeting**

**Resolved:** That the confidential minutes of the Buckinghamshire Pension Fund Committee held on 29 September 2022, be approved as a correct record.

**9 Buckinghamshire Pension Fund Board Confidential Draft Minutes**

Copies of the Confidential Pension Fund Board minutes were circulated previously.

**Resolved:** That the Confidential Minutes of the Buckinghamshire Pension Fund Board meeting held on 19 October 2022 be noted.

**10 Pension Fund Performance**

**RESOLVED that the investment performance of the Pension Fund for the third quarter of 2022, ending 30th September 2022 be noted.**

**11 Actuarial Valuation as at 31 March 2022**

**RESOLVED that the actuarial valuation as at 31 March 2022 be noted.**

**12 Date of the next meeting**

21 March 2023 at 2pm.

This page is intentionally left blank





## Report to Pension Fund Board

**Date:** 13 December 2022

**Title:** Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure

**Author and/or contact officer:** Sam Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager

**Recommendation:** The Board is asked to **NOTE** the content of this report.

### Executive summary

- 1.1 The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) operates a two stage dispute procedure under Regulation 72 to 79 of The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013.

Within the first stage of this procedure, the complaint will be considered by a person nominated by the body that took the decision that the member wishes to complain against. Each employer is asked to nominate a 'specified person' and any complaints against the employing authority will be directed to them. Where the complaint is against the administering authority, these complaints will be addressed by myself, as the 'specified person'.

If the member is not satisfied with the decision from stage 1, they have not received a decision or an interim letter more than 3 months after the date the initial complaint is lodged or it is more than 1 month from the date they were informed a decision would be made, then a member can progress their complaint to stage 2. At this stage, the administering authority can take a fresh look at the complaint which would be undertaken by a person not involved in the first stage decision. Where the stage 1 complaint was against the employing authority, I will undertake the stage 2 review. Where the stage 1 complaint was against the administering authority, Buckinghamshire Council Legal team are responsible for this review.

If members are still unhappy following stage 1 & Stage 2 then they can take the case to the Pensions Ombudsman within 3 years of the original decision.

## Content of report

1.2 The table below provides details of IDRP cases during the 2021/2022 year

CASE	DESCRIPTION	EMPLOYING/ ADMIN AUTHORITY	STAGE 1	OUTCOME	PROGRESSED TO STAGE 2	OUTCOME
1	Transfer	Admin	May 2021	Declined	Nov 2021	Declined
2	Interfund Transfer	Admin	July 2021	Upheld		
3	Transfer	Admin			Sept 2021	Partially upheld
4	Overpayment of Pension	Admin	January 2022	Upheld		
5	Errors in calculation of benefit	Admin	Nov 2021	Partially upheld	Jan 2022	Partially upheld

### Details of cases

*Case 1* – Appeal on behalf of scheme member relating to the transfer out of LGPS pension rights on the basis that it was believed that the BPF failed to meet regulatory requirements & failed to give advice resulting in financial loss. Both the stage 1 & stage 2 reviews undertook a thorough review of the transfer, checking whether the BPF followed relevant guidelines and undertook all necessary checks. It was determined that the transfer was completed correctly and in accordance with the scheme members decision. The appeal was declined at both stages.

*Case 2* – Appeal received on behalf of the scheme member in relation to the BPF decision not to permit an election from the scheme member to aggregate previous LGPS service with another Authority on the basis that the scheme member had previously elected to not aggregate in 1989. Upon investigation, it was found that there was no evidence to support that the BPF had provided the scheme member with sufficient information to allow a fully informed decision to be made nor was it confirmed that the election would be final and there would be no opportunity to revisit this decision. As a result, the determination was to allow the scheme member to aggregate, and the appeal was upheld.

*Case 3* – Similar to case 1, appeal on behalf of scheme member relating to the transfer out of LGPS pension rights on the basis that it was believed that the BPF failed to meet regulatory requirements & failed to give advice resulting in financial loss. Both the stage 1 (complete in 2020/21) & stage 2 reviews undertook a thorough review of the transfer, checking whether the BPF followed relevant guidelines and undertook all necessary checks. Appeal was declined at stage 1 but at stage 2 it was determined that a pension scams leaflet had not been issued to the scheme member prior to the transfer. Although it was determined that this was unlikely to have changed the members decision to transfer a payment of £500 was awarded for distress and inconvenience of these omissions.

*Case 4* – Pensioner member appealed BPF decision to recover remaining overpayment which had not been recovered due to a payroll input error. Following the end of the repayment period, the BPF identified that the full overpayment had not been recovered as it had been entered incorrectly meaning that approximately 10% of the overpayment was still outstanding. The member appealed BPF decision to continue to recover this. Upon review, it was agreed that the BPF would not seek recovery and the remaining amount was written off. Appeal upheld.

*Case 5* – Scheme member appealed against the benefits being paid at retirement which differed from those confirmed in the retirement estimates in advance of retirement. It had been identified during the appeal investigation that the administration team had made numerous errors in calculating the estimates & provided misleading information. The scheme member had requested for her retirement date to be changed to an earlier date which was not agreed. It was however agreed that the errors and misinformation did result in the scheme members lump sum being less and a compensation payment was offered to the same amount as the 'lost' lump sum. Stage 1 also offered a £500 compensation payment for the inconvenience and distress caused. The stage 2 appeal agreed with the stage 1 determination but increased the payment to £850.

### **Non-formal appeals**

Between 1 April 2021 & 31 March 2022 the team received 56 non-formal complaints, with 5 of these relating to payroll related complaints. 91.07% of these complaints were responded to within the 5 working days target with the 3 cases above progressing to IDR. The majority of these complaints relate to where there is a delay in payment of scheme benefits and a Senior Pensions Officer will review and ensure that the administration team have processed where possible. On the whole, these tend to be as a result of missing notifications from the scheme employer in which case the Senior Pensions Officer will

escalate this in order to resolve. Another reason for complaints is where a scheme member believes they hold an entitlement to a benefit, such as a refund of contributions or to trivially commute a main scheme benefit/AVC and they do not have this option. In these cases the appeal is again referred to a Senior Pensions Officer to review scheme Regulations or HMRC guidance.

### **Lessons Learned**

We continue to be keen to learn from both IDRPs appeals and non-formal appeals to look at where improvements can be made to internal procedures. With two appeals in 2021/22 relating to failure to transfer out of LGPS benefits & more expected due to the increase of claims management companies, we have undertaken a full review of the transfer processes in line with recent pension scams guidance to ensure that the transfer process is defined and also gives the scheme member every opportunity to fully understand and review their decision prior to the transfer. There have also been a couple of complaints relating to incorrect information being provided, trained needs have been identified and raised and procedures reviewed to stop this reoccurring.

### **Other options considered**

1.3 N/A

### **Legal and financial implications**

1.4 N/A

1.5 N/A

### **Consultation and communication**

1.6 N/A

### **Next steps and review**

### **Background papers**

N/A

### **Your questions and views (for key decisions)**

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can

be done by telephone [01296 382343] or email  
[democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk]

This page is intentionally left blank



## Report to Pension Fund Board

<b>Date:</b>	13 December 2022
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Training Opportunities</b>
<b>Author and/or contact officer:</b>	Claire Lewis-Smith
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>The Board is asked to REVIEW their training opportunities and DISCUSS future training needs.</b>

### Executive summary

- 1.1 Buckinghamshire Pension Board members must have the required knowledge and understanding of LGPS rules, documents recording administration policies and pensions law. They should have adequate training to meet the knowledge and understanding requirements.

### Content of report

- 1.1 Pension Board members are required to undertake adequate training to meet the responsibilities placed upon them by the:
- Board's Terms of Reference
  - LGPS Regulations and associated legislation
  - The Pensions Regulator
  - CIPFA Code of Practice on Public Sector Pensions Finance Knowledge and Skills
  - Board's Knowledge and Understanding Policy and Framework

Board members are expected to complete The Pensions Regulator's Public Sector Toolkit and visit these periodically. Board members have been offered the following training/knowledge opportunities over the past year.

<b>Training Opportunity</b>	<b>Attendee(s)</b>
LGA Annual Governance Conference – January 2022	
Barnett Waddingham Pre-2022 valuation seminar – March 2022	Roona Ellis Ian Thompson Lisa Wheaton
CIPFA Annual Full Day Event – May 2022	Pete Dearden Roona Ellis
Barnett Waddingham Annual Full Day Event – June 2022	Tina Pearce
LGA Fundamentals Training Programme (3 days) – October to December 2022	Jo Whiteley
CIPFA/ISIO Autumn Training Event – November 2022	Pete Dearden

### **Other options considered**

1.2 Not applicable.

### **Legal and financial implications**

1.3 All training costs are met by the Pension Fund.

### **Consultation and communication**

1.4 Not applicable.

### **Next steps and review**

Training opportunities are reviewed annually.



**Pension Fund Board Forward Plan**

Updated	02-Dec-22
---------	-----------

13 December 2022		MS Teams	
MS Teams	Agenda Item	Author	Cyclical Item?
10:00-12:00	Apologies/Declarations of interest/Minutes	Chairman	Every meeting
	Minutes of Pension Fund Committee	Pension Fund Committee Chairman	Every meeting
	Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure	Sam Price	Annually
	Training Opportunities	Claire Lewis-Smith	Annually
	Forward Plan	Claire Lewis-Smith	Every meeting
	Administration performance statistics	Sam Price	Every meeting
	Annual Benefit Statements - Administration Year End Update	Sam Price	Every meeting
	Exclusion of Press and Public		
	Annual Benefit Statements - Confidential Appendix	Sam Price	Ad-hoc
	Administration performance statistics - Confidential Appendix	Sam Price	Every meeting
	Confidential Minutes	Chairman	Every meeting
	Minutes of Pension Fund Committee	Pension Fund Committee Chairman	Every meeting
	Cyber Security	Claire Lewis-Smith	Annually
	Pension Fund Performance	Julie Edwards	Every meeting
	Actuarial Valuation 2022	Barnett Waddingham	Triennial
	Date of next meeting/AOB	--	

29 March 2023		MS Teams	
MS Teams	Agenda Item	Author	Cyclical Item?
10:00-12:00	Election of Chairman		Ad-hoc
	Apologies/Declarations of interest/Minutes	Chairman	Every meeting
	Minutes of Pension Fund Committee	Pension Fund Committee Chairman	Every meeting
	Scheme member and employer communications	Madelena da Costa	Annually
	i-Connect/Pensions 'Online' Update	Sam Price	Bi-annually
	Annual Review of Buckinghamshire Pension Board	Claire Lewis-Smith	Annually
	Governance Compliance Statement	Claire Lewis-Smith	Annually
	Annual Accounts Audit 2021/22	Julie Edwards	Annually
	McCloud Update	Claire Lewis-Smith	Bi-annually
	Forward Plan	Claire Lewis-Smith	Every meeting
	Administration performance statistics	Sam Price	Every meeting
	Annual Benefit Statements - Administration Year End Update	Sam Price	Every meeting
	Exclusion of Press and Public		
	Annual Benefit Statements - Confidential Appendix	Sam Price	Ad-hoc
	Administration performance statistics - Confidential Appendix	Sam Price	Every meeting
	Confidential Minutes	Chairman	Every meeting
	Minutes of Pension Fund Committee	Pension Fund Committee Chairman	Every meeting
	Pension Fund Performance	Julie Edwards	Every meeting
	Date of next meeting/AOB	--	

July 2023 TBC		Venue TBC	
In person	Agenda Item	Author	Cyclical Item?
The Gateway	Apologies/Declarations of interest/Minutes	Chairman	Every meeting
10:00-12:00	Minutes of Pension Fund Committee	Pension Fund Committee Chairman	Every meeting
	Review of Buckinghamshire Pension Board Policies	Claire Lewis-Smith	Ad hoc
	Pension Fund Annual Report 2021/22	Julie Edwards	Annually

**Pension Fund Board Forward Plan**

Updated	02-Dec-22
---------	-----------

Forward Plan	Claire Lewis-Smith	Every meeting
Annual Benefit Statements - Administration Year End Update	Sam Price	Every meeting
Administration performance statistics	Sam Price	Every meeting
Exclusion of Press and Public		
Administration performance statistics - Confidential Appendix	Sam Price	Every meeting
Confidential Minutes	Chairman	Every meeting
Minutes of Pension Fund Committee	Pension Fund Committee Chairman	Every meeting
Employer Covenant Review	Claire Lewis-Smith	Triennial
AVC Review	Claire Lewis-Smith	Ad hoc
Pension Fund Performance	Julie Edwards	Every meeting
Date of next meeting/AOB	--	

**October 2023 TBC**

**MS Teams**

10:00-12:00

**Agenda Item**

- Apologies/Declarations of interest/Minutes
- Minutes of Pension Fund Committee
- i-Connect/Pensions 'Online' Update
- Internal Administration Benchmarking
- Breaches of the Law
- McCloud update
- Funding Strategy Statement
- Forward Plan
- Administration performance statistics
- Annual Benefit Statements - Administration Year End Update
- Exclusion of Press and Public
- Annual Benefit Statements - Confidential Appendix
- Administration performance statistics - Confidential Appendix
- Confidential Minutes
- Minutes of Pension Fund Committee
- Risk Register
- Pension Fund Performance
- Date of next meeting/AOB

**MS Teams**

**Author**

- Chairman
- Pension Fund Committee Chairman
- Sam Price
- Sam Price
- Claire Lewis-Smith
- Claire Lewis-Smith
- Julie Edwards
- Claire Lewis-Smith
- Sam Price
- Sam Price
- Sam Price
- Chairman
- Pension Fund Committee Chairman
- Julie Edwards
- Julie Edwards
- 

**Cyclical Item?**

- Every meeting
- Every meeting
- Bi-annually
- Annually
- Annually
- Bi-annually
- Triennial
- Every meeting
- Every meeting
- Every meeting
- Ad-hoc
- Every meeting
- Every meeting
- Every meeting
- Annually
- Every meeting
-



## Report to Pension Fund Board

**Date:** 13 December 2022

**Title:** Administration Performance Statistics

**Author and/or contact officer:** Sam Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager

**Recommendation:** The Board is asked to **NOTE** the content of this report.

### Executive summary

1.1 The Buckinghamshire Pension Board is required to monitor the performance of the Pensions Administration team. The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with a review of the team's performance since the last Board meeting.

### Content of report

1.2 The following areas of performance have been covered in this report:

[Incoming Communications](#)

[Workload/Performance Measures](#)

[Data Improvement](#)

## Incoming Communications

We receive a high volume of communications into the Pensions Administration team from scheme members, employers & others. Sub-teams are very proactive in processing these within set timeframes to ensure that requests can be dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The following table provides an analysis of the incoming communications received between 1 October 2022 and 30 November 2022.

Type of incoming communication	Rec'd Oct-Nov 22	Rec'd July-Sept 22
Post	1,105	1,545
Pensions Inbox	4,938	6,081
Employers Inbox	281	389
Monthly Returns Inbox	56	89
'My Pension Online' registration/query Inbox	1,345	2,537
Document uploads via 'My Pension Online'	319	424
Document uploads via i-Connect	256	-
Telephone calls	1,969	3,234
<b>Total Communications</b>	<b>10,269</b>	<b>14,299</b>
<i>Ave. Daily Communications</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>220</i>

Each sub-team that is responsible for the areas of communication above have a set target for responding or dealing with the communication within. The table below provides details of the targets and performance against these targets within the quarter.

Type of incoming communication	Target	Achieved	Previous
Post	Same day*	100%	100%
Pensions Inbox	Same day*	100%	100%
Employers Inbox	10 working days	100%	100%
'My Pension Online' registration/query Inbox	Same day	100%	100%
Document uploads via 'My Pension Online'	1 working da	97.41%	97.41%
Telephone calls	Ave queue time < 40 sec	15 sec	17 sec
	Ave calls answered > 97%	99.08 %	99.11%

\*The same day target is for Pensions Assistants to process each individual item by uploading the document to the scheme members pension record and creating the relevant workflow/updating the existing workflow.

## Workload/Performance Measures

We have a priority target relating to the main areas where scheme members will be waiting payment of a benefit and we prioritise daily to ensure a quick turnaround. This target has been to achieve a minimum of 95% of priority tasks completed within relevant turnaround times and this is reported on quarterly. The table below shows the achieved percentages for each quarter of 22/23 so far.

Quarter 1 2022/23	97.17%
Quarter 2 2022/23	97.87%
Quarter 3 2022/23	95.06%
Quarter 4 2022/23	TBC

These priority areas of work include retirements, deaths, AVC's at retirement & refunds. The tables below provides the Board with statistics relating to all areas of pension administration workloads based on in department turnaround times. This is based on stats 1 October 2022 and 30 November 2022.

### Benefit Administration – Priority areas

	Case Completion Statistics				
	Percentage achieved	<i>Previous percentage achieved</i>	Cases open at the beginning of the period	Total new cases created during the	Total cases completed during the
Retirements	98%	98%	282	444	473
Deaths	91%	94%	130	202	174
AVC's at Retirement	80%	100%	9	9	5
Refunds	92%	97%	176	813	843

## Benefit Administration – Cases for period October – November 2022

	Case Completion Statistics				
	Percentage achieved	Previous percentage achieved	Cases open at the beginning of the period	Total new cases created during the period	Total cases completed during the period
Opt outs	99%	99%	32	155	138
Additional Contributions	98%	99%	6	108	103
Estimates	100%	98%	7	189	180
General query	98%	98%	98	214	218
Financial Advisor query	100%	100%	14	86	88
My Pension Online' query	100%	100%	0	4	4
Divorce	97%	95%	6	36	34
Transfers	99%	99%	97	219	204
Interfund Transfers	93%	95%	251	765	746
Aggregation	86%	89%	322	1010	1013
Complaints	100%	100%	0	5	4
Deferred Benefits	88%	95%	721	1400	1655
Change	99%	99%	16	100	110
New starter creation	98%	98%	63	1302	1308

## Payroll – Cases for period October – November 2022

	Case Completion Statistics				
	Percentage achieved	Previous percentage achieved	Cases open at the beginning of the period	Total new cases created during the period	Total cases completed during the period
Payroll set-ups	100%	100%	0	696	696
Payroll queries/adjustments	98%	97%	5	291	276

In addition to reporting & reviewing turnaround statistics, we are also now reviewing the total open cases on a monthly basis to identify overdue cases and look at how to reduce these. The table below provides details of all open cases as at the end of November 2022, split by area of work & also cases overdue.

	<b>Open cases</b>	<b>Percentage of cases overdue</b>	<b>Overdue cases external</b>
Retirements	245	36%	96%
Deaths	164	37%	93%
AVC's at Retirement	12	67%	100%
Refunds	258	30%	92%
Opt outs	82	100%	63%
Additional Contributions	20	100%	45%
Estimates	2	100%	50%
General query	28	100%	46%
Financial Advisor query	13	100%	15%
My Pension Online' query	0	N/A	N/A
Divorce	10	30%	33%
Transfers	67	34%	96%
Interfund Transfers	344	34%	92%
Aggregation	261	25%	85%
Complaints	1	N/A	N/A
Deferred Benefits	616	29%	90%
Change	6	33%	100%
New starter creation	30	67%	90%
Payroll set-ups	77	6%	80%
Year-end	13	100%	100%
Annual Allowance	2	N/A	N/A

Of the total overdue cases, 92% of these cases are classed as 'external' meaning we are unable to proceed as a result of either waiting on information from an employer, scheme member or a third party. On a monthly basis, the overdue cases in each work area are reviewed by a Senior Pensions Officer to see whether further action needs taken and how to progress these cases. Of the overdue cases, just 16% are overdue by 3 months or more with the oldest.

A breakdown of open cases where these are on hold as a result of waiting for information from a scheme employer is included in the confidential appendix.

### **Scheme Member movements**

Due to the current financial situation, Board has asked for a report to keep track of member opt outs & 50/50 scheme elections. The tables below provide data for 2022/23 to date.

#### Opt outs

Quarter 1 2022/23	90
Quarter 2 2022/23	56
Quarter 3 2022/23 to date	17
Quarter 4 2022/23	TBC

#### Move to 50/50 scheme from main scheme

Quarter 1 2022/23	53
Quarter 2 2022/23	11
Quarter 3 2022/23 to date	2
Quarter 4 2022/23	TBC

#### Move to main scheme from 50/50 scheme

Quarter 1 2022/23	3
Quarter 2 2022/23	12
Quarter 3 2022/23 to date	3
Quarter 4 2022/23	TBC

### **Other options considered**

1.3 N/A

### **Legal and financial implications**

1.4 N/A

### **Consultation and communication**

1.5 N/A

### **Next steps and review**

N/A



## **Background papers**

N/A

## **Your questions and views (for key decisions)**

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report, please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone [01296 382343] or email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk]

This page is intentionally left blank



## Report to Pension Fund Board

**Date:** 13 December 2022

**Title:** Annual Benefit Statements – Administration Year End Update

**Author and/or contact officer:** Sam Price, Assistant Pensions Administration Manager

**Recommendation:** The Board is asked to **NOTE** the content of this report.

### Executive summary

1.1 Regulation 89 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 require an administering authority to issue an annual benefit statement no later than 5 months after the end of the Scheme year to which it relates (31 August). The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the current position of the Buckinghamshire Council administering authority.

### Content of report

#### 1.2 Annual Benefit Statements

A total of 99.96% of scheme members active on 31 March 2022 have been issued with a statement.

#### Outstanding queries

There are just 11 outstanding queries relating to the 2021/22 annual returns. The Employer Liaison Team are continuing to chase for responses and work with employers in order to clear these queries. Charges for late/non-response have been issued to the 6 scheme employers who have outstanding queries. A breakdown of these employers is in the confidential appendix.

### Other options considered

1.3 N/A

### Legal and financial implications

1.4 It is a requirement of the LGPS Regulations 2013 that an administering authority issue a scheme member with an annual benefit statement no later than 5 months after the end of the scheme year to which it relates (31 August).

1.5 There are no financial implications.

### Consultation and communication

1.6 N/A

### Next steps and review

Board policies are reviewed annually.

### Background papers

N/A

### Your questions and views (for key decisions)

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone [01296 382343] or email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk]

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank