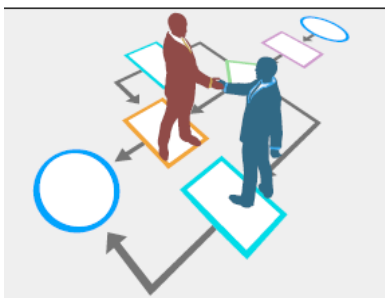


OD AND HR POLICIES

Organisational Development & Human Resources

PENSIONS ADMINISTRATION COMMUNICATION POLICY



May 2016

Introduction

Dumfries and Galloway Council Pension Fund provides pension administration services for employees of Dumfries and Galloway Council and employees of participating employers.

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 2014 require each pension fund administering authority to prepare, publish and review its communication policy.

A policy must set out:

- The provision of information and publicity of the scheme to members, representatives of members and scheme employers.
- The format, frequency and method of distributing information and publicity.
- The promotion of the scheme to prospective members and scheme employers

This policy summarises how the administrators communicates with members, employers and other stakeholders.

Communications Objectives

The key objectives of the communication policy are

- To improve understanding of the Scheme.
- To promote the benefits of scheme membership as an important part of the employment package.
- Keep members, employers and other stakeholders up to date with regulation changes.
- To allow members to make informed decisions.

In order to achieve these objectives, our aim is to ensure communications are

- Factual and presented in plain language.
- Designed to meet the needs of each target audience.
- Use the most efficient and effective means of delivery.

Key Audiences

The following distinct groups with whom we need to communicate with are;

- Scheme members.
- Scheme employers.
- Prospective scheme members and employers.

- Trade Unions.
- Pensions Sub Committee and the Pension Board.

Communication Tools and Strategy

The following section outlines how we will communicate with each group.

Active Scheme members – currently contributing to the Scheme

By post

- Statutory confirmation of membership.
- Annual benefit statement.
- On request, communications can be provided in alternative formats including Braille, translation and audio.
- Correspondence relating to members' benefits.

In person/phone

- One-to-one meetings.
- Contact telephone numbers publicised in scheme literature.
- Roadshows, induction/retirement talks – at request of employer.

Email/Website

- Dedicated email address for queries.
- Email used to receive and send correspondence where appropriate.
- Website <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/LGPS> providing an extensive range of scheme literature including scheme guides, leaflets, policies, the valuation report, Pension Fund Annual report and the Funding strategy statement. Literature is updated accordingly.
- Website has links to other useful websites including www.scotlgps2015.org which provides full details on the new LGPS effective from 1 April 2015.
- Newsletters updating members about scheme changes.
- Global emails promoting the scheme, for example introducing the new scheme from 1 April 2015 and AVC information sessions

Pensioner Members – those receiving a pension from the Fund

By post

- Correspondence relating to members' benefits.
- On request, communications can be provided in alternative formats including

- Braille, translation and audio.
- Payslip once a year detailing pension increase and lifetime allowance certificate.

In person/phone

- One-to-one meetings.
- Contact telephone numbers publicised in scheme literature.

Email/Website

- Dedicated email address for queries
- Email used to receive and send correspondence where appropriate
- Website providing an extensive range of scheme literature including scheme guides, leaflets and policies. Literature is updated accordingly.

Deferred Members – no longer actively contributing to the scheme but have left their benefits in the Fund

By post

- Annual benefit statement
- Annual newsletter
- Correspondence relating to members' benefits
- On request, communications can be provided in alternative formats including Braille, translation and audio.

In person/phone

- one-to-one meetings
- Contact telephone numbers publicised in scheme literature.

Email/Website

- Dedicated email address for queries.
- Email used to receive and send correspondence where appropriate.
- Website providing an extensive range of scheme literature including scheme guides, leaflets and policies. Literature is updated accordingly.

Scheme Employers

The Fund communicates with scheme employers in the following ways

- Employer Meetings
- Employer newsletters giving updates on legislation and policy matters.
- Wording of global emails/intranet messages provided for employers to cascade down to scheme and potential members.
- Pension Administration strategy setting out the roles, responsibilities and service standards for the Fund and employers.
- Statutory Annual report on the Fund.
- Promotion of pension website. Guides/leaflets and forms can be downloaded from the site.
- Presentations/briefings on request.
- Training and support provided by Team members on technical, procedural and policy matters.

Prospective Members

The Pension's Team works closely with employers to promote the benefits of the scheme to new employees and to those who have previously opted out. Upon appointment, prospective scheme members are provided with a scheme booklet. A new section has been developed outlining the benefits of scheme membership and allowing employees to download easily all the relevant forms and guides to join the LGPS.

If requested by an employer, the Team gives presentations to promote the scheme.

Representatives of Members

We will work with the relevant trade unions to ensure the scheme is understood by all interested parties and to promote the benefits of scheme membership.

There is Trade Union representation on the Pension Board. The Pension's Team assists Trade Union representatives with member queries.

Pensions Sub Committee and the Pension Board

The sub-Committee and Board members receive papers. The Pension's Team assists Member's with any queries in relation to the administrative service.

Development Priorities

A key priority is to improve the digital delivery of our communications. The Pension's

Team is working closely with the Council's Communications Team to enhance the web site.

We are currently working to introduce a self-service system for employers. The system will integrate with the pension administration system to manage the data flow from employers to the Team.

The team is also working closely with the Heywood's (supplier of pensions system) to introduce an on-line portal for members to access their Local Government Pension Scheme records. This facility will allow members to update their personal data, ask questions, access annual benefit statements and request pension estimate calculations. Pension members will also be able to view their pension records.

Evaluation

Comments on how the Pensions Team communicates with any of our stakeholders are welcome. We are aware that in order for a communications strategy to be fully effective, we need feedback from all our target groups.

If you want to get in touch with us about how we communicate, please contact us using the contact details below.

Contact Details

The Team	How to Contact us
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewart Clanachan - Human Resource Manager • Islay Herrick – Team Leader • Stacey Eide-Johansen – Senior Pensions Assistant (Systems) • Gemma Patterson – Pensions Assistant (Systems) • Rosie Hair – Senior Pensions Assistant (Benefits) • Sheryl Walker – Pensions Assistant (Benefits) • Sharon Anderson – Pensions Assistant (Benefits) 	<p>Telephone: 01387 273854 or 01387 273848</p> <p>Email: pensions@dumgal.gov.uk</p> <p>In writing: Dumfries and Galloway Council The Pensions Section Monreith House The Crichton Glencaple Road Dumfries DG1 4ZZ</p> <p>Opening Times: Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5.00 pm</p> <p>Website: http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/LGPS</p>