

Pension Administration Strategy Responses to Consultation

Thank you to all employers who reviewed the draft strategy. We received 10 formal responses from employers and, as a result, have made some amendments to the Strategy. This will now go forward to both the Devon & Somerset Pension Fund Committees to confirm acceptance in time for 1 April 2015.

The Strategy is very much a living document and changes will be made as we move forward together to build on the service we provide to scheme members.

We further recognise the Employers within the Devon & Somerset Pension Funds are of various sizes and have differing levels of knowledge with regard to the Local Government Pension Scheme and Employer responsibilities and we will work with all employers to ensure all scheme members receive the same level of service and we understand that not all standards of performance within the Strategy will be reached immediately. However, our aim is for all employers and Peninsula Pensions to reach these standards by 31 March 2016.

Below we have set out the main comments and responses.

Comment

One respondent asked for clarification of the role of Peninsula Pensions as referred to the service as both administering Authority and Pension Fund.

Response

Peninsula Pensions is the administration team for Devon and Somerset County Council Pension Funds. The Funds remain separate and each County Council retains a Pensions Investment Team to deal with the day to day running of the Fund itself.

Comment

A few respondents requested clarification regarding the Pension Liaison Officer

Response

We appreciate that some employers have different people dealing with different areas of pensions, as do we, and we are happy for that to continue and for them to have access to the employer pages of our website. We do ask though if there are any issues that need to be discussed we are given a specific name to contact. Contact details for all Peninsula pension staff and the Devon and Somerset Pension Investment Teams for are held on our [website](#)

Comment

One respondent asked if after the Provision of Electronic information Employers would be asked to provide the information again at a later point.

Response

Where data is uploaded electronically you will not be asked as a matter of course to provide the information again when scheme member leaves. However there may be the occasional request if the record seems incorrect. The exception to this is CARE data as there are still some interface issues which we need to continue to monitor.

Comment

One respondent queried the practicality of a pre retirement workshops for one member of staff

Response

Workshops require a minimum number of 10 however we are happy to discuss pension benefits with individuals themselves over the phone or at our office. If as an employer you wish us to run a pension surgery we can also do that and cover different aspects of the LGPS privately with different individuals.

Comment

One respondent queried that within the Standard of Performance for Employers it does not state the information should be correct? They also questioned where expectation of 90% within timescale came from and implications of not meeting the timescales.

Response

We have not stated that the information should be correct as we felt it was a given expectation that information passing between Employers and Peninsula Pensions should be correct.

Regarding the 90% expectation re timescale when writing our Administration Strategy we had regard to other LGPS strategies and also our own performance. We believe 90% average should be sustainable and this will be an area we will be monitoring through our performance indicators.

If employers or Peninsula Pensions struggle to meet the 90% on an ongoing basis we will review our practices and alter them where needed, and/or provide additional training and support to employer or pension staff.

Comment

A number of respondents commented on the need to provide leavers details including pay information one month in advance of the date of leaving for those retiring and also for the non retiree cases within one month of the scheme member's date of leaving.

Response

We have taken all comments on board and have altered the timescales allow submission for retirees to be received preferably a month before retirement but in **all** cases within five working days of final payday, and for leavers under age 55, with no immediate entitlement to benefits within 1 month from final payday.

We have also altered timescale for death in service with expectation to receive all details within five working days of final payday.

Comment

A comment concerning the need for further information relating to scheme member expectation of service was raised.

Response

We have a separate customer charter on our [website](#) which informs scheme members of the standard of service they can expect. We will also include these in our performance reports.

[Shirley Cuthbert](#),

Deputy Head of Peninsula Pensions

10/02/15