

## **THIS IS THE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY OF THE WANDSWORTH PENSION FUND**

1. The Wandsworth Pension Fund (the Fund) is required by regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 to maintain and publish a communications policy statement. The LGPS is also subject to the regulatory oversight of the Pensions Regulator who has provided guidance in Code of Practice 14 on providing good quality communications to Scheme members and other stakeholders. Regulation 61 is reproduced below: -

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

**61.** — (1) An administering authority must prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out its policy concerning communications with

- a) members;
- b) representatives of members;
- c) prospective members; and
- d) Scheme employers.

(2) In particular the statement must set out its policy on -

- a) the provision of information and publicity about the Scheme to members, representatives of members and Scheme employers;
- b) the format, frequency and method of distributing such information or publicity; and
- c) the promotion of the Scheme to prospective members and their employers.

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

## **2. Who We Communicate With**

Scheme Members (Current, Deferred, Pensioner, Dependant);  
Representatives of Scheme Members;  
Prospective Scheme Members;  
Human Resources Services (HR) and Service Managers; and  
Scheme employers;  
Elected Members of the Joint Pensions Committee; and  
Local Pension Board.

The Fund’s pension administration function is undertaken by the Pensions Shared Service (PSS) and the PSS is mainly responsible for communicating with the scheme members in line with this Communications Policy Statement together with other responsible senior officers of Richmond and Wandsworth Councils.

### **3. Methods of Communication – Scheme Members and Prospective Members**

#### *(a) Scheme Literature*

A link to a Scheme guide is provided to all employees on commencing Scheme membership. Changes in the Scheme regulations are notified to all affected members via newsletters. The Scheme guide is regularly updated to take account of any Scheme changes. The link to the Scheme guide is available on the PSS website, from the member's HR service or employer and direct from the PSS.

#### *(b) Website/Information Technology*

The PSS website ([www.pensionssharedservice.org.uk](http://www.pensionssharedservice.org.uk)) contains details of the Scheme together with newsletters, information guides and forms. The PSS can be contacted by email at [pensions@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:pensions@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk). Scheme information is also available online via the Local Government Employers' Organisation's national website at [www.lgpsregs.org/](http://www.lgpsregs.org/) and [www.lgpsmember.org/](http://www.lgpsmember.org/). Access to the Scheme regulations is available at the PSS office or online using the website at [www.lgpsregs.org/schemeregs/lgpsregs2013/timeline.php](http://www.lgpsregs.org/schemeregs/lgpsregs2013/timeline.php). Newsletters for current members are available on the PSS website with hard copies available on request.

#### *(c) Member Support*

Scheme members can contact the PSS by direct dial telephone numbers between 9:00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday. The PSS operates an "open-door" policy where members may visit the office between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday without a pre-arranged appointment.

The PSS also offers pre-arranged appointments between 7.30am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. The PSS contributes to the Councils' Learning and Development Service by way of participating in the Corporate Induction training giving an overview of the Scheme. The PSS also plays a major role in the Planning for Retirement courses. These courses are available through the Councils' Learning and Development Service. Seminars are also arranged when requested on an individual basis from time to time.

#### *(d) Alternative Requirements*

Members can contact the PSS if they wish to receive information in a non-standard format (for example large print, Braille or on audiotape). The PSS has access to transcription, translating and interpreting services if required. Correspondence to members is sent in increased font sizes according to individual members' requests.

#### *(e) Benefit Statements*

Active and deferred members are sent annual benefit statements.

#### *(f) Pay advice slips / P60s / Pensions Increase*

Pay advice slips are provided to pensioner members in accordance with the agreed Council-Payroll arrangements and a form P60 is sent annually. Pensioner members are sent a letter annually with details of the new amount of pension following the

yearly Pensions Increase. Newsletters for pensioner members are available on the PSS website with hard copies available on request.

#### *(g) Report and Accounts*

The Pension Fund Annual Report is produced and available to all Scheme members at [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/pensions](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/pensions). The availability of the report is notified via newsletters and announcements on intranets and the PSS website. A paper copy can be provided on request. The report includes details of the Pension Fund Accounts, the Pension Fund investment performance, the Fund's policies on Governance, Investment Strategy, Funding Strategy and its Communications Statement.

#### *(h) Performance Monitoring*

The PSS is committed to continuous service improvements. It monitors its performance and reports this quarterly. Performance achievements are published in the Pension Fund Annual Report and reported to the Local Pension Board at each meeting.

### **Communicating with Representatives of Scheme Members**

The range of information and ways of communicating that is available to Scheme members is also available to their representatives (except for any in-house training).

### **Communicating with Prospective Scheme Members**

The range of information and ways of communicating that is available to Scheme members is also available to employees who are not currently members of the Scheme but may be considering joining (including any in-house training).

### **Communicating with Human Resources and Scheme Employers**

Richmond and Wandsworth Councils are the main employers in the Fund. Scheme employers are informed of changes to the scheme, policies and procedures by Employers' Newsletters. In addition, information is available to employers on dedicated "employer pages" on the PSS website. Training for responsible officers (e.g. School Administrative Officers or Bursars/Finance Officers) can be provided. The full range of Scheme information is provided.

### **Communicating with Elected Members**

Scheme information and data is provided to Elected Members of the Joint Pensions Committee, so they may effectively perform their duties and responsibilities. In order to maintain their required knowledge and understanding of the Scheme and any other associated legislation or official guidance, elected members have Member training as a regular agenda item at quarterly meetings and confer with Officers on training requirements. Training is provided either internally by officers or by external resources.

## **Communicating with the Local Pension Board**

Scheme information and data is provided to members of the Local Pension Board, so they may effectively perform their duties and responsibilities and comply with the governance requirements of the Scheme and the Pension Regulator's Code of Practice 14. To maintain their required knowledge and understanding of the Scheme and any other associated legislation or official guidance, Pension Board members have training as a regular agenda item at their biannual meetings and confer with Officers on training requirements. Training is provided either internally by officers or by external resources. Information may also be shared with members electronically outside of the normal cycle of meetings on an ad-hoc basis when needed.

## **Review of the Communications Policy Statement**

This Communications Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated where there are significant changes to be made.

Enquiries in relation to this Communications Policy should be addressed to:

Pensions Shared Service  
PO Box 72351  
London, SW18 9LQ

v. June 2019

### Summary of Communication Material

<b>Communication Document</b>	<b>When Made Available</b>	<b>Available To</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>When Reviewed</b>
Guide to the Local Government Pension Scheme Guide	Before commencing employment / On leaving / When requested	Prospective / Active / Deferred members	Paper (if requested) / PSS & National Member's Website / Intranet	As regulations change or annually
Joining the LGPS – Transfer of Pension Rights from other schemes	Before commencing employment / When requested	Prospective / Active Members	Paper / PSS & National Member's Website / Intranet	As regulations change or annually
Leaving Pensionable Employment – A Guide to Your Pension Options	On leaving the Scheme before retirement age	Active / Deferred members	Paper / PSS & National Member's Website / Intranet	As regulations change or annually
Pay Advice Slips	As per Payroll agreements	Pensioner Members	Paper	Annually
Form P60	Annually	Pensioner Members	Paper	Annually
Newsletters	Biannually / As required by Regulations	Prospective / Active / Pensioner Members	Paper / PSS & National Member's Website/ Intranet / Audiotape	Biannually / As required
Pensions Service Annual Business Plan	On Request	All	Paper / PSS & National Member's Website/ Intranet	Annually
Statutory Statements	On Request	All	Paper / PSS & National Member's Website/ Intranet	Annually / As required
Pension Fund Report and Accounts	Annually	All	Paper / PSS & National Member's Website / Intranet	Annually
Schools Employers' Manual	On becoming an employing authority / When requested	Employing Authorities	Paper/ PSS Website / Intranet	Annually