



# **Oxfordshire Pension Fund Communication Policy Statement**

**Version: 2024**

## Introduction

1. This is the Communication Policy Statement of the Oxfordshire Local Government Pension Scheme Pension Fund ('the Fund'), established within the 1995 Regulations and now prepared under Regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 ('the regulations').

## Purpose

2. This policy sets out the Oxfordshire Pension Fund's approach for its communications with members and Scheme Employers.
3. The policy applies, in the context of LGPS administration, to members as defined in Schedule 1 of the principal regulations and, in turn, by section 124(1) of the Pensions Act 1995 to include:
  - Active members
  - Deferred members, and
  - Pensioner members
  - Pensioner credit members
4. Scheme Employers, as defined within the regulations, including Teckal companies:
  - Statutory Scheduled Bodies such as the County and District Councils, Colleges of Further Education and Oxford Brookes University; Academies
  - Designating Bodies, including the Town and Parish Councils
  - Admission Bodies, where the Pension Fund Committee have granted scheme admission within the terms of Part 3 Schedule 2 of the Regulations
5. The regulations require the policy statement is prepared, written and published, and for these purposes publish means being accessible on the publicly available pensions website.

## Aim

6. To assist all individual employers to fulfil their statutory role in the Oxfordshire Fund by providing regular current information and access to alternative resources

7. To ensure that members have access to scheme information, notice about proposed and actual changes and are aware of the process to lodge questions and appeals.
8. To enable the Scheme Manager / Administering Authority to discharge their respective responsibilities in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended); The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information Regulations 2013 (as amended) and The Pension Regulator Guidance.

## **Communication Policy**

9. The LGPS is supported nationally by websites and guidance for both employers and scheme members. Our Fund communications will reference these national resources as well as material provided by the Fund's advisors.
10. Local communications, intended audience, publication media and frequency are explained in the annex to this policy, which should be read in conjunction with the Administration Strategy.
11. The Fund will aim to use national resources in a way which will avoid duplication with the Fund's own resources. Oxfordshire Pension Fund supports those national developments financially and by active engagement with the working group which concentrates on member communications. The Fund will continue to support collaboration and development of communication media with other administering authorities.
12. The Fund maintains a website which provides access to member guides, forms and information. The Fund requests that employers provide a copy of the member Brief Guide or the link to the website to all new employees on commencing employment, helping to ensure that scheme information is available within disclosure timetable to members and those eligible to join.
13. The Fund maintains a dedicated area of the website to provide resources and information for employers.
14. The Fund maintains a dedicated area of the website to provide resources and information about investments activity.
15. Member Self Service (My Oxfordshire Pension) using a secure online web portal hosted by Aquila Heywood, is available for the whole membership. Registered members can a) look at generic scheme information b) view personal correspondence such as letters and annual benefit statements c) run their own personalised calculations and d) keep their personal details up to date.

16. The Fund uses secure email, or My Oxfordshire Pension to communicate with members wherever possible, with paper letters only being sent on specific request or where no email address is available.
17. My Oxfordshire Pension is now integrated with most standard work processes.
18. Mailshots aimed at increasing take up of My Oxfordshire Pension across all membership groups are undertaken annually.
19. The Fund has not created a profile on any social media such as Twitter or Facebook; no requests for such access have been received and there is currently no perceived benefit for these to be created.
20. The fund informs members and Scheme Employers of material changes to the Scheme via the website, email alerts or the appropriate newsletter.
21. The Fund aims to produce communications which are factual, easy to understand and accessible.
22. The Fund strives for efficiency in delivering communications through better use of technology, whilst ensuring that the needs of all stakeholders are taken into account.
23. The Fund strives to continually improve member and employer engagement.

## **Review of the Policy**

24. We will undertake annual reviews of the Communication Policy considering feedback invited at meetings, training, via the survey and through monthly newsletters.

## Annex A

### Fund Publications

	Available to:	Media	Frequency
Pension Fund Report & Accounts	Scheme employers Pension Fund Committee MHCLG Scheme members	Website Paper on request Email on request 'My Oxfordshire Pension'	Annual
Annual Benefit Statement	Scheme members	Paper on request 'My Oxfordshire Pension'	Annual
Newsletter – Members	Active Scheme members,	Website Paper on request Email (assisted by employers) 'My Oxfordshire Pension'	Quarterly
	Deferred	Website Paper on request 'My Oxfordshire Pension'	Annual
	Pensioner members	Website Paper on request 'My Oxfordshire Pension'	Annual to tie in with pensions increase notification
Newsletter - Employers	Scheme employers	Email	Monthly
P60	Pensioner members	Paper on request 'My Oxfordshire Pension'	Annual
Payslip	Pensioner members	Paper on request 'My Oxfordshire Pension'	Posted where variance is >£1 Monthly on 'My Oxfordshire Pension'

	<b>Available to:</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Guides for New Employers	Scheme employers	On line employer toolkit, includes essential guidance for new employers Paper on request Email on request	As required

## Meetings and forums

<b>Meeting Type</b>	<b>Available to:</b>	<b>Purpose of meeting</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Employer Forum	Scheme employers	Review of topical issues in fund investment and scheme administration affecting fund employers and members benefits	Annual
Employer User Group	Scheme employers	Review administration, regulation changes, share experience with peer group	Twice yearly
Intro to LGPS Training	Scheme employers	Brief course to cover the statutory employer role and regular returns	4 per year or as required
Ad hoc training	Scheme employers	Cover specific subjects for either single employer or a group of employers	By appointment
Presentations	Scheme members Scheme employers		By appointment
Attendance at employer pre-retirement seminars or new member/ employee inductions	Scheme members		By appointment
One to one meeting	Scheme members		By appointment

## Other Services

<p>Telephone helpline to Pension Services (Low call rate) Pensioner payroll enquiry help line Employer helpline</p>
<p>Dedicated email addresses to Pension Services Member and employer enquiries Dedicated email address for employer monthly returns</p>
<p>'My Oxfordshire Pension' web portal dedicated telephone help line</p>
<p>Oxfordshire Pension Fund website (promoted in our publications above)</p>
<p>National websites (promoted in our publications above)</p>
<p>Customer service survey (sent to members at the end of transactions)</p>
<p>Employer survey (sent annually – new initiative commencing 2024)</p>

\*\*Scheme members" unless otherwise described includes prospective members, active members, deferred members, pensioners and members' representatives.