

PENSION FUND COMMITTEE – 25 JUNE 2010

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Report by Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer

Introduction

1. The Oxfordshire Local Government Pension Scheme Communication Policy Statement was first issued in 2006. The policy has been updated to reflect the changes in regulations and current practices (Appendix).

Changes to the Policy

2. The employing authorities have been updated to include Academy Schools in the list of scheduled employers.
3. Town and Parish Councils are now referred to in the regulations as Designating Bodies rather than Resolution Bodies.
4. The detail in the annex has been updated to reflect the introduction of the pension web pages and the information available to both scheme members and employers.

RECOMMENDATION

5. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note this report.**

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Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer

Background papers: Ni

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1 June 2010

OXFORDSHIRE PENSION FUND
COMMUNICATION POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

This is the Communication Policy Statement of the Oxfordshire Local Government Pension Scheme Pension Fund, published under the Local Government Pension Scheme Administration Regulations 2007 (SI 2008 No 239) Statements of policy concerning communications with members and employing authorities.

Purpose

1. This policy sets out the Oxfordshire Pension Fund's strategy for its communications with members, members' representatives and employing authorities.
2. The strategy also covers the promotion of the scheme to prospective members.
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
4. Employing authorities, as defined within the regulations, include non-scheme employers:
 - Statutory Scheduled Bodies such as the County and District Councils, Academy Schools, Colleges of Further Education and Oxford Brookes University;
 - Designating Bodies being the Town and Parish Councils
 - Admission Bodies, where the Pension Fund Committee have granted scheme admission

Aim

5. To ensure that all members and scheme employers, as defined above, have access to full information about the scheme, their benefits, or prospective benefits due from the scheme and about the changes, both actual and proposed to the scheme regulations.

6. Oxfordshire County Council, as administering authority, will make available to all scheme employers any documents relating to consultation of changes to the regulations so that they can undertake the consultation with their employees.

Communication Policy

7. Annex 1 details the types and frequency of specific communications to members.

Review of This Policy

8. This policy will be reviewed annually in April each year or earlier if there is a material change to this policy.

June 2010

Communication Issue	Target audience	Method	Frequency	Target completed date
Communication Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers • Members – active, deferred and pensioner • Prospective scheme members • Employee representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County intranet • County web site • Make available for employers in the fund for their sites 	Initial publicity and then after any future changes to the policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First issued in 2006 – now available on website
Pensions Increase Notification – including summary of accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioner members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post • County Web site • Loaded to website 	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February
Annual Benefit statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active • Deferred members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post to individuals, either to home addresses via employers • Notes to support statements posted to website 	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already operational
Employers Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers in the Oxfordshire Pension Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting 	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already operational

Communication Issue	Target audience	Method	Frequency	Target completed date
Regular, quarterly newsletters; (Will replace and incorporate current ad hoc bulletins and the summary leaflet of accounts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Scheme members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper distribution with assistance from employers or employer can request copy of PDF only. Employer responsibility to distribute. Available to download from County Web site 	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31 March 30 June 30 September 31 December
Beneficiaries Report from the Pension Fund Committee beneficiary's advisor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active members Employee representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E mail distribution to Employers for notice boards and intra nets By post and information on intra nets 	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already operational Available electronically from February 2006
Pensions User Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer Human Resource and Payroll contacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting Email distribution of agenda and action notes. 	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already operational

Communication Issue	Target audience	Method	Frequency	Target completed date
LGPS Summary information guide Membership forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospective scheme members • Employers for new starters, job application packs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper copies • Download from County web site • Email 	All year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already operational • Available on website
Provide presentations and talks on LGPS matters to scheme members Provide support training to HR and payroll employer representatives on LGPS matters Facilitate pensions seminars for Prudential 'Basic LGPS scheme and AVC talks'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active members • Employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meetings • Part of pre retirement courses • Induction meetings for new joiners • Active members group meetings 	Ad hoc as required Timings as agreed with the Prudential and individual employer area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already operational • Already in operation.
Development of electronic information systems, external	All targeted audiences should be able to access information, especially from the external site.		Regular reviews to keep up to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCC intra net targets OCC employer information • County web site pages divided into sections reflecting

<p>County Council web site and intranet pages.</p> <p>Support information administration</p>	<p>Employers in the pension fund</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Toolkit' pages to support administration function, Links to forms they need and why information 	<p>Maintained to report changes with User Groups</p>	<p>different membership groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be consolidating this information during 2010/11 • Continually reviewed and kept up to date to reflect changes
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