



Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan
Pension Fund

Communication Policy Statement

Communications Policy Statement

Introduction

The Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund strives to provide a high quality and consistent service to our customers in the most efficient and effective way possible, in this ever-changing pension environment.

This Policy Document has been prepared and published, by Cardiff Council as Administering Authority of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund. This Policy document has been written in compliance with regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Regulations 2013 (the LGPS Regulations).

The Objectives of the Fund's Communication Strategy are:

- improve awareness and appreciation of the benefits provided by the pension scheme
- encourage take up of the scheme amongst new and existing employees
- answer all LGPS member pension entitlement questions promptly
- develop the partnership between the Pension Fund's administration team and the employing bodies
- liaise with a range of other groups who have an interest in the scheme

Within the pension fund there are five groups of members with whom the Fund needs to communicate with:

1. Scheme Members
2. Prospective Scheme Members
3. Scheme Employers
4. Representatives of Members
5. Other Bodies

This Policy document sets out how we plan to communication with all five groups.

The Cardiff and Vale Pension Fund aims to use the most appropriate channel of communication for the audience receiving the information. In some circumstances this may mean using more than one channel.

Scheme Members

Scheme members include:

- **Active members** - currently contributing into the Fund
- **Deferred members** - benefits in scheme but not contributing
- **Pensioners** - receiving a pension

Fund Website

The Fund has developed an extensive website which sets out Scheme rules and regulations in a simple and easy to read format. Information updates and news items are quickly added to notify members of any Scheme changes. Electronic copies of the Fund's leaflets, forms, booklets, policy documents and reports are also readily available. The Fund's Annual Report and Accounts are available, plus all key governance documents. Active members also have access to a Member Self Service electronic portal via the website. Through this portal they can amend their personal details, calculate retirement estimates and receive secure communication from the Pension Fund.

Annual Report and Accounts

An electronic copy of the Fund's Annual Report and Accounts is available to all Scheme members on the website. Hard copies are also available on request.

Newsletter

The Fund may issue communication to active Scheme members of the Fund on an ad hoc basis, which will cover current pension topics within the Local Government Pension Scheme and wider pensions industry.

We send an annual newsletter to all pensioners every April, giving them details of their annual pension increase, the payment dates for the new financial year, plus any other relevant pension information.

Annual Benefits Statement

Annual Benefits Statements for Active members are uploaded to their Member Self Service electronic account. These statements show them the current value of their pension as at 31 March, including a projection figure to Normal Pension Age (NPA) and current value of death benefit. For any active member who opted out of electronic communication we will send a hard copy Annual Benefit Statement to their home address.

Currently, we are still sending hardcopies of the Annual Benefit Statements to our deferred members' home address, which gives them the current value of their pension at every April (the date the pension was last increased in line with the appropriate cost of living index).

Supplementary notes are provided with both Annual benefits Statements and Notes for Guidance are published on our website for additional support.

Scheme Literature

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund produce an extensive range of Scheme literature, which are available to all Employers and Scheme Members in both English and Welsh. All literature is updated regularly, to keep up to date with regulation changes and available on the Pension Fund's website.

Pension Increase Statements

Annual Pension Increase statements are sent to all pensioners informing them of the percentage rate their pension will increase, and the new pension payment for the new financial year.

Retirement Figures

Deferred members need to contact us 6 weeks before their retirement date and retirement figures are sent to their home address.

Statutory Notifications

In Compliance with Scheme Regulations, members are notified when any change occurs to their pension record which will affect their pension benefits.

Correspondence

The Fund uses electronic, surface mail and email to receive and send correspondence. Response will be sent in the individuals preferred language of choice.

Payment Advice/P60

All Pensioners are issued with payment advice pay slips every April (together with their Pension Increase newsletter). Payslips are only sent throughout the year if their net pension changes by £10 or more.

P60 notifications are sent out annually (usually in April or May) and provide members with a breakdown of the payments they have received over the last complete financial year.

Prospective scheme members

Scheme Leaflet

All prospective Scheme members are provided with a Scheme brochure, which explains the benefits of joining the LGPS. This brochure is sent by the Human Resources Team when their employment contract is sent to new employees.

Pension Website

The Fund's website has a dedicated section for non-members, where it highlights the benefits of the Scheme and the importance of planning for retirement. Giving all non-members the information, they need to make an informed decision.

Scheme Employers

The Fund communicates with its participating employers in several ways to help them meet their responsibilities as Scheme Employers.

Annual Employer Forum

We hold an Employer Forum meeting every year for all Scheme Employers, where Fund Managers discuss:

- Detailed investment update Financial and administrative reports
- Any relevant procedural/legislative changes
- Triennial valuation – if valuation year
- Guest speakers who will be able to upskill our Employers

The Communications and Training Officer will make periodic visits to the Employers address to discuss issues as and when they arise.

All Employers need to supply pay and contribution data to the pension scheme, within deadlines and in the format specified by the Pensions Team.

All employers within the Scheme, and their Human Resources functions, play a key role in informing the pension team of the new starters, leavers, retirements etc. Employers are also responsible for providing information on the pension scheme to their employees.

Annual Report and Accounts

The audited accounts of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund are prepared as at 31 March each year. A copy of the Fund's Annual Report, which includes the accounts, is posted on the Fund website.

Pension Administration Strategy

The Administration Strategy defines the responsibilities of both the Fund and all Scheme employers in the administration of the Scheme.

The Strategy sets out the level of performance expected from the Cardiff and Vale Pension Fund and all employers, as well as the consequence of not meeting statutory deadline.

Website

The Fund website has a dedicated employer area to provide employers with the guidance needed to effectively discharge their administrative responsibilities and will include updates and forms which can be downloaded.

Updates

Regulatory and administrative updates are frequently issued to all employers by email.

Training

Bespoke training sessions can be delivered on request by the dedicated Communication & Training Officer to resolve any administrative issues identified by the employer.

Member Representatives

Trade Unions

Trade Unions in Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan are valuable ambassadors for the Pension Scheme. They deliver details of the Local Government Pension Scheme's to their members by local representative. They also assist in negotiation under TUPE transfers to ensure, whenever possible, continued access to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

A combined Employer and Trade Union Forum is held annually. Representatives of the local trade union branches receive presentations on the Fund's Annual Report, the performance of its investments and other current issues.

Pension Board

The Fund's Local Pension Board was established on 1st April 2015. In addition to the three Trade Union (scheme member) representatives outlined above, the Board also includes three Employer representatives, and an independent chair, who participate in the Board's role of assisting the Scheme Manager. Each Board member has received appropriate induction and training and will be kept up to date with national and local developments in the LGPS. The names and contact details of the Local Pension Board representatives are available on the Cardiff and Vale Pension Fund website.

Other Bodies

The Pensions Administration Team are also actively involved with other various groups who have an interest in the LGPS.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)

This Government Department are responsible for amending the Scheme regulations following consultation with all local authorities, and some employers. The Fund takes part in these exercises as and when necessary.

We also have involvement with the **Local Government Association (LGA)** and **National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF)**. The Fund is also a member of the **Local Authority Pension Fund Forum (LAPFF)**.

Scheme Advisory Board (SAB)

The **Scheme Advisory Board** is a board that provides advice and guidance to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in England and Wales. The board is responsible for ensuring that the LGPS is run in a transparent and responsible manner, and that it is governed in accordance with the best practices of the industry. The board is also responsible for ensuring that the LGPS is run in a way that is consistent with the interests of its members. The board is made up of a number of members who are appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The board meets regularly to discuss issues related to the LGPS and to provide advice and guidance to its members.

All Wales Pensions Officer's Group

Pension Officers from all the Welsh administering authorities meet regularly to discuss and share information. This ensures uniform interpretation of the LGPS and other prevailing regulations.

Wales Pension Partnership (WPP)

Since the proposals for a Wales Investment Pool were approved by the Minister for Local Government in November 2016 this Fund has worked closely with the other Welsh Local Government Pension Funds in the setting-up of the Wales Pension Partnership (WPP). The remit of the WPP has been to develop specific partnership investment arrangements for the Welsh LGPS Funds and a number of sub-funds have been launched since the inception of the WPP. The work of the WPP continues with the development of other shared investment opportunities, particularly for

alternative investments. The development of the WPP has also allowed the Welsh LGPS Funds to develop consistent communications across areas such as Responsible Investment and Voting and Engagement policies. Further details of the WPP can be found on its website:

www.walespensionpartnership.org

Seminars

Fund Officers regularly participate at seminars and conferences held by LGPS related bodies.

General Information

Data Protection

To protect any personal information held on computer, the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund, is registered under the Data Protection Act 2018. This allows members to check that their details held are accurate. The Fund's Privacy Notices are published on the Pension Fund website.

National Fraud Initiative

The Authority are under a duty to protect the public funds it administers and may use information for the prevention and detection of fraud.

General

Whilst this Policy Statement outlines the communication approaches adopted by the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund there are roles and responsibilities which fall on Scheme members, prospective scheme members and participating Scheme employers in ensuring that information necessary to maintain an accurate membership base is provided in a timely manner.

Policy Review

This statement will be revised if there are any material changes in Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund's Communication Policy but will be reviewed on an annual basis.

How to get in contact with us

If you have a question or would like some more information about The Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund please contact us.

By email: pensions@cardiff.gov.uk

By phone: [029 2087 2334](tel:02920872334)

open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 5pm, and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

By Post: Pensions Team

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