



Surrey Local Pension Board 13 February 2020

Administration Update 1 October 2019 to 31 December 2019

Recommendations:

The Board is asked to **note** the content of this report and make recommendations if any further action is required.

Background

1. Surrey County Council (the Council) is the Administering Authority for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) on behalf of the employers participating in the LGPS through the Surrey Pension Fund (the Fund). The LGPS is governed by statutory regulation.
2. The Pensions Administration Team (PAT) based within Orbis Business Services carries out the operational, day-to-day tasks on behalf of the members and employers of the Fund and for the Council. They also lead on topical administration activities, projects and improvements that may have an impact on members of the LGPS.
3. The Board has previously requested to be kept updated on progress relating to a number of key administration projects and planned improvements which may have an impact on members of the pension fund and the purpose of this report is to provide an update on the current status and progress against any specific target dates.

Internal Audit

4. A project board meets monthly to manage the progress of agreed actions resulting from the Internal Audit report. The board is made up of senior representatives from Internal Audit, Pensions Administration, and Corporate Finance Officers.
5. The actions within the report have been incorporated into the next stage of the Service Improvement Plan. The most recent highlight report is attached as **Annex 1**.

Staffing and Training Update

6. A number of new posts have been created as part of the Service Improvement Plan, including a Systems & Support Lead, Data Quality Team, Technical & Compliance Specialist, Customer Relationship Manager, Training Officer and second Communications Officer.
7. Recruitment is progressing well for these positions, with many interviews already taking place over the last few weeks.
8. The Engagement and Education Team have provided a number of very well received member presentations recently, and further sessions have been booked well into January/February.
9. The team are also working to create a dedicated 'employer' section of the Pensions website with a view to increasing knowledge and understanding amongst scheme employers.
10. Two members of the Trainee Team have been successfully promoted within the Admin Team with two new Trainees already in post.
11. Staff are using the Heywood's Training & Education Centre courses to improve their scheme knowledge and understanding of best practice.
12. Heywood's have offered Orbis Pensions the opportunity to be part of a pilot for an employer version of their Training & Education Centre.
13. A Senior Pensions Officer has been recruited within the Pensions Helpdesk to take responsibility for training Helpdesk staff. During January, interviews are taking place to recruit an additional three FTE within the Helpdesk.

Customer Complaints Report

14. Complaints received for this quarter have decreased significantly in comparison to last quarter, with a total of 6 received. This equates to 0.12% of the total work completed in the period.
15. It is noted that Service Delay was the sole reason for complaints during the period. All but 2 of the complaints have been responded to.
16. The Customer Complaints Table can be found at **Annex 2**.

Pensions Helpdesk

17. For the period October to December the Pensions Helpdesk handled 8,028 calls, of which 3,858 were Surrey Pension Fund related calls. The team also responded to 6,036 email enquiries, of which 3,743 related to Surrey.

18. The Pensions Helpdesk receives more feedback than any other Helpdesk teams through the customer thermometer tool. The graph below shows the feedback for December.



Rating	Count
Excellent	18
Good	6
Below Average	1
Poor	8

Gold Star	13 Jan 20 10:11	Courtney Whitford was very helpful. Please pass on my grateful thanks, Philip Barnes
Gold Star	11 Jan 20 10:53	Bernadette was excellent!
Red Light	10 Jan 20 05:10	So sorry I meant to press excellent! EXCELLENT not poor at all
Gold Star	9 Jan 20 19:00	Bernadette was very efficient in attending to my pension enquiry and followed my way to the self service website. I had a problem with the logging in procedure, which was observed and then sending a link again. Thank you. David Gosling.
Yellow Light	9 Jan 20 15:34	The advisor did not appear to have read my question.
Green Light	9 Jan 20 14:19	Simply to note that SCC replied quickly and in helpful manner, which was appreciated Phyllis Croucher 9 January 2020
Gold Star	8 Jan 20 17:52	June meadow is an asset to your organisation
Red Light	8 Jan 20 16:03	I have spoken and emailed a few people now and am waiting for the cash value as going through a divorce
Gold Star	8 Jan 20 10:42	Jayne Meadows provided very clear and helpful advice in a timely manner. Thank you.
Green Light	8 Jan 20 10:17	Happy New Year! Thank you for the swift reply. I was just wondering about how long it will be before I receive the email link though. No time scale given.
Gold Star	7 Jan 20 15:28	The person I spoke to was very helpful, patient and informative.
Gold Star	7 Jan 20 15:05	Everyone that I have spoken with today regarding my pension queries has been brilliant, especially Millie Porter. Thank you.

19. Work shadowing sessions between the Helpdesk and Admin Team are due to take place in February. This will help increase scheme knowledge but also support the teams understanding of how processes work.

20. Avoidable contact meetings have been arranged to explore what customers are requesting. Focus will be on the top two recurring enquiries – MSS and Retirement Claim Forms. The team are currently looking at exploring other video options including those produced by the LGA to support the drive to reduce avoidable contact.

Member Self Service

21. An MSS survey has been issued to a sample of 6,000 registered members and closes at the end of January. From this the team are hoping to gauge whether members are happy with the service and identify any areas of improvement for future development.
22. There are currently 12,561 active members registered for MSS which equates to 35.89% of the total active population.
23. Communications are being sent to all members who haven't registered for MSS in advance of the ABS' being published with the aim of encouraging sign up.

Annual Benefit Statements

24. An ABS plan has been drafted for 2020 and shared with the Pension Fund team. A meeting is being held to discuss and sign off the plan by the end of February.
25. Initial communications are being sent to scheme employers regarding their end of year responsibilities. This will be included in the Employer Newsletter which is due to be issued by the end of January.

Robotics

26. Two robots have recently been created to process Deferred Benefits and Deferred into Payment quotations. This is as a result of an extensive amount of development, testing and joint working with the Robotics lab.
27. Dippy (Deferred into Payment quotations) has been up and running for over a month and has processed quotations for retirement dates up to February 2020.
28. Chewie (Deferred Benefits) is currently in the final stages of testing and will be able to process cases for those where employers submit leaver data via a spreadsheet. The plan is to extend this process out to all scheme employers.

Service Improvement Plan Summary

Recruitment

29. There has been a large amount of recruitment work with adverts being created and interviews taking place for key roles required to deliver the service improvement. We have now appointed our Programme Officer which has been well timed to provide much needed support. This has given the opportunity for a number of key documents to be created and designed, ready for discussion and approval at the next executive meeting.

30. Other key roles that have now been offered include the System and Support Lead, Contract Manager and Quality and Assurance Officer. We are hopeful to get these people in place in the next 1 – 3 months depending on notice periods.

Projects

31. It has been great to see the i-Connect contract signed for SPF. Implementation planning of this system is now underway with a planned go live still aiming for April 2020. Engagement with key team members such as payroll have taken place and all those involved can see the benefits this will bring to their respective services. We are mindful of the timing for go live and will work our colleagues to reduce the potential impact it could have on them and the risks it brings to go live.

32. The Legacy project is still making positive moves forward. Mercer (JLT) have been working on aggregation and concurrency cases over the last month, which are far more complex and take more time to process. As of the 6th December 2019 there were 2577 cases pending, which has now been cut down to 1387, so a reduction of nearly 1200 cases. Mercer will continue to focus on these cases for the next 1 – 2 months to clear down the current numbers. There has also been some positive movement with the robot 'Chewie' as we are very close to signing this off for full use in processing single record deferred cases. Using this robot could bring about some potential large savings as this would be used as an alternative to outsourcing the more simple cases within the backlog work.

33. We have also received the legacy analysis from ITM and will be working towards providing a plan, including an options paper, on how we can further remove the legacy work using various approaches.

34. The team have continued to press forward with the plans to undertake a full procurement exercise for our administration system. Approval has been made by the Sourcing Governance Board (SGB) to go to open market by the beginning of March.

35. There are several more projects where the team have been working hard to keep pace moving in the programme and further detail can be seen within the highlight reports.

36. For more detailed information on the various ongoing projects under the Service Improvement Plan, please see the Highlight Reports at Annex 3 to 9.

Next steps

37. The Board are asked to note the updates and agree on the form of any future updates that are required.

Annex 1 – Internal Audit Update

Annex 2 – Customer Complaints Table

Annex 3 – Address Tracing

Annex 4 – Backlog

Annex 5 – GMP Reconciliation

Annex 6 – Education & Engagement

Annex 7 – iConnect

Annex 8 – New System

Annex 9 – Server Migration

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