



West Northamptonshire Council

Pension Committee

27/03/2024

Mark Whitby – Head of Pensions

Report Title	2024/2025 Northamptonshire Pension Fund communications plan
Report Author	Sharon Grimshaw Communications Officer sharon.grimshaw@westnorthants.gov.uk

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

MO	Sarah Hall on behalf of Catherine Whitehead	06/03/2024
S151	James Smith on behalf Martin Henry	04/03/2024
Head of Pensions	Mark Whitby	14/02/2024

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Northamptonshire Pension Fund communications plan

1. Purpose of report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to obtain approval for our communications plan for 2024/25.

2. Executive summary

2.1 The communications plan outlines our activities monthly for each stakeholder group. As well as sending out statutory communications planned newsletters, surveys, employer training and web updates it also highlights other key communications initiatives.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Pension Committee is asked to approve the communications plan.

- 3.2 Reason for recommendation: to follow the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) regulations 2013 to give information and publicity about the scheme to members and employers.

4. Report background

- 4.1 Regulation 61 of the LGPS regulations 2013 states that an administering authority must prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out its policy on communications with members and employers.
- 4.2 The communications plan for 2024/25 details the communications activities within the scheme year and can be found in appendix 1.

5. Issues and choices

- 5.1 The communications plan outlines our activities for the year, monthly, for each of our stakeholders.
- 5.2 Q1 will mainly be focussed on the development of our new website. We're aiming to launch the website in Q2 which will tie in with our annual benefit communications and our employers' forum. We'll also use the forum to consult on our new administration strategy.
- 5.3 In Q3 we'll focus on embedding our new brand guidelines and making sure that as a service we're:
- using plain language
 - writing inclusively
 - engaging our audience.
- 5.4 In Q4 our focus will be on launching the enhanced member self-service portal to increase member engagement. This is subject to some improvements being made to the service.
- 5.4 Our communications plan also highlights our intention to promote campaigns like:
- pensions awareness week
 - pension attention campaign
 - national pension tracing day
- and to work with the LGA on initiatives like new starter engagement and midlife MOTs.
- 5.5 The plan also includes timings for:
- statutory communications
 - cyclical newsletters
 - surveys
 - employer training.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1 There are no direct finance and resourcing implications of this plan. Ongoing communication costs are picked up in the administration budget. Our new website and enhanced member self service portal have been budgeted for within the business plan.
- 6.1.2 Our drive to increase electronic communications should save costs in the long term.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 Not applicable.

6.3 Risk

- 6.3.1 We're required by legislation to prepare, maintain, and publish a written statement setting out our policy on communications with members and employers.

The mitigated risks associated with this report have been captured in our risk register below:

Risk No.	Risk	Residual risk rating
7	Information may not be provided to stakeholders as required.	Green
17	Failure to administer the scheme in line with regulations and guidance	Green

Our full risk register can be found on our [website](#).

6.4 Relevant Pension Fund objectives

6.4.1 The following objectives have been considered in this report:

- To promote the scheme as a valuable benefit.
- To deliver accessible communications to stakeholders.
- To give members up to date information about the scheme so they can make informed decisions about their benefits.
- To get regular feedback from all stakeholders to help us to shape our administration.

6.5 Consultation

6.5.1 Not applicable.

7. Background papers

7.1 [Communications strategy](#)

Communications plan 2024/25

Month	Active members	Scheme employers	Prospective members	Deferred members	Retired & dependant members	Fund staff
APR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payslip – online pension promotion Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website user testing
MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey Website user testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer training Employer newsletter Website user testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website user testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey Website user testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payslip – online pension promotion Member satisfaction survey Website user testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website user testing
JUN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer training 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey Website user testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff newsletter Website user testing
JUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website launch Online pension promotion Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admin strategy consultation Website launch Employer training Online pension promotion pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website launch Online pension promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual benefit statements Member newsletter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website launch Pensions dashboards Anti-fraud communication Online pension promotion Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website launch
AUG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual benefit statements Member newsletter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website launch Pensions dashboards Anti-fraud communication Online pension promotion Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active annual benefit statement comms materials for employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online pension promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member satisfaction survey 	



Month	Active members	Scheme employers	Prospective members	Deferred members	Retired & dependant members	Fund staff
SEPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New website promotion • Pensions awareness week / pension attention campaign • Online pension promotion • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer training • Employer newsletter • New website promotion • Pensions awareness week/ pension attention campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New website promotion • Pensions awareness campaign • Online pension promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New website promotion • Pensions awareness week / pension attention campaign • Online pension promotion • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New website promotion • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff newsletter • New website promotion • Embedding new brand guidelines
OCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National pension tracing day • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer training • National pension tracing day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National pension tracing day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National pension tracing day • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding new brand guidelines
NOV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • New starter engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer training • New starter video/bitesize training • Pre-valuation comms 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding new brand guidelines
DEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • Website feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer newsletter • Website feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • Website feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • Website feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff newsletter • Embedding new brand guidelines
JAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • Enhanced member self-service portal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer training • Enhanced member self-service portal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced member self-service portal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • Enhanced member self-service portal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • Enhanced member self-service portal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced member self-service portal
FEB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer training • Employer Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Valuation launch 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member newsletter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website launch ▪ Pensions dashboards ▪ Anti-fraud communication ▪ Online pension promotion • Member satisfaction survey 	
MAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • Midlife MOTs promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer newsletter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pensions dashboards ▪ New contribution rates • Midlife MOTs promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midlife MOTs promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member satisfaction survey • Midlife MOTs promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payslip – online pension promotion • Member satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff newsletter