

West Northamptonshire Council

Pension Committee

15/06/2021

Mark Whitby – Head of Pensions

Report Title	2021/2022 Northamptonshire Pension Fund Communications Plan
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Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

West MO	John Murphy on behalf of Catherine Whitehead	23 May 2021
West S151	James Smith on behalf of Martin Henry	19 May 2021
Head of Pensions	Mark Whitby	13 May 2021

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Northamptonshire Pension Fund Communications Plan

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval of the Fund's Communications Plan for the 2021/22 scheme year.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Communications Plan outlines the Fund's planned communication activities on a monthly basis for each stakeholder group. As well as setting out planned newsletters, surveys, employer training and web updates the plan also highlights some of the Fund's key initiatives for the year.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Pension Committee is asked to approve the Communications Plan
- 3.2 Reason for Recommendation: To accord with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 to provide information and publicity about the scheme to members, representatives of members and scheme employers.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 Regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 state that an administering authority must prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out its policy concerning communications with members and scheme employers. The Pension Committee approved a Communications Strategy on 16 October 2020.
- 4.2 The Communications Plan for 2021/22 details the communications activities to be undertaken within the scheme year and has been prepared in line with the Strategy.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The Communications Plan included as Appendix A outlines the Fund's planned communication activities for the year, on a monthly basis, for each of the Fund's stakeholders.
- 5.2 The Communications Plan highlights Fund activities to communicate the local government reorganisation to members and employers including new contact details and branding.
- 5.3 This also created an opportunity to encourage more members to sign up to their online pension account to help them manage and keep track of their pension benefits and personal information.
- 5.4 It also includes plans to consult with members and employers on changes to the Fund's Investment Strategy Statement and Funding Strategy Statement.
- 5.5 The plan also includes timings for issuing statutory communications and cyclical newsletters, surveys, employer training, and web updates.

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.
- 6.1.2 The Fund's 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 The administering authority is required by legislation to prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out its policy concerning communications with members and scheme employers.

The mitigated risks associated with this report has been captured in the Fund's risk register as detailed below -

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

The Fund's full risk register can be found on the Fund's website at the following link:
<https://pensions.northamptonshire.gov.uk/governance/key-documents/northamptonshire/>

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 consistent plain English communications to stakeholders.
- To provide scheme members with up to date information about the scheme in order that they can make informed decisions about their benefits.
- To seek and review regular feedback from all stakeholders and use the feedback appropriately to shape the administration of the Fund.

6.5 Consultation

6.5.1 Not applicable.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Communications Strategy

<https://pensions.northamptonshire.gov.uk/governance/key-documents/northamptonshire/>