

Teesside Pension Fund

Communication Policy

Administering the Local Government Pension Scheme

December 2024

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Who we Communicate with?
3. Key Objectives
4. Methods of Communication
5. Monitoring and Reporting
6. Overview of key documents
7. Further Information

1. Introduction

Middlesbrough Council (the "administering authority") is responsible for the local administration of the Fund, which is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme ("the LGPS"). Operationally, the administration of the Fund is partly outsourced to a third-party administrator (currently XPS Administration), and partly carried out by Council staff. The third-party administrator's staff and Council staff work together to provide a seamless service to scheme employers and members, and as such effective communication between the two organisations is vitally important.

This policy sets out the Fund's intentions regarding engagement with its stakeholders and has been produced to meet the requirements of the LGPS Regulations 2013.

Our communications are accurate and accessible as expected by the Pensions Regulator. We communicate to our stakeholders in an understandable and clear way with this in mind.

2. Who we communicate with?

The Key Stakeholders for the Fund are:

- Scheme Members and their representatives
- Prospective Scheme members
- Scheme Employers
- Prospective Scheme Employers
- Pension Fund Committee and Pension Board members
- Pension Fund Staff

Other Interested Organisation:

- The Fund Actuary
- Investment Advisors and Managers
- Border to Coast Pensions Partnership Limited (the asset pooling company)
- Asset Custodian
- AVC Provider
- Fund Solicitor
- Government Departments
- Scheme Advisory Board and Advisors to the Pension Fund

3. Key Objectives

The objectives are:

- To inform stakeholders regularly around the administration and management of the Fund

- Communicate in a clear, concise manner
- Promote the Scheme as a valuable benefit and provide sufficient information to educate members to help them to make informed decisions about their benefits.
- Ensure we use the most appropriate means of communication, taking into account the different needs of different stakeholders
- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of communications and shape future communications appropriately for example through greater use of technology to provide up to date and timely information

4. Methods of Communication

Communicating to Scheme Members:

Communication	When	How
Scheme Literature	Permanently Available	Website
Telephone Helpline	Available during working hours	Telephone
Website	Permanently Available	Website
Annual benefit statements / Pension Saving Statements	Annually	Online, Paper
Outlook & At Ease	Bi-Annually	Online, Paper
Pensioner Pay Slip	Monthly	Online, Paper
Member Self Service	Permanently Available	Online
Member Pension Awareness Sessions	As Required	Via Employer, delivered by Employer Liaison Team

Communication to Scheme Employers:

Communication	When	How
Employer Bulletins	As Required	Email
Technical Updates	As Required	Email
Website	Permanently Available	Website
Employer Training	As Required	Via Employer, delivered by Employer Liaison Team

Employer Guide	Permanently	Website
Employer Annual Conference	Annually	Face to Face
Pensions Administration Strategy	Permanently Available	Website
Charging Policy	Permanently Available	Website
Admission Agreements Guide	Permanently Available	Website
Academies Guide	Permanently Available	Website

Communicating with Pension Fund Committee and Pension Board:

Communication	When	How
Committee Papers	Quarterly	Website / Email / Paper
Workshops	As Required	Face to Face
Board Reports	Quarterly	Website / Email / Paper
3 rd Party Training	As Required	Face to Face

5. Monitoring and Reporting

To manage expectations and meet regulatory requirements we will evaluate the effectiveness of our communications by the methods listed below:

- Satisfaction Surveys
- Assess compliments and complaints
- Report and reviews by the Local Pension Board

In order to continually develop we plan to:

- Increase the use of Member Self Serve
- Produce and simplify the annual benefit statements
- Actively review letter content to benefit members and employers
- Continuously update the website
- Continuously update guides and policies
- Increase communication and information we provide to employers

6. Overview of Communications

The below are the other key documents available on our website relating to the administration and governance of the fund:

- Administration Strategy
- Charging Policy
- Employers Guide
- Annual Report and accounts
- Investment Strategy Statement
- Funding Strategy Statement
- Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure

7. Further Information

Any enquiries in relation to the day to day communications with scheme members and employers of the Fund should be sent to:

Graeme Hall
XPS Administration
PO Box 340
Middlesbrough
TS1 2XP

E-Mail: pensionsunit@xpsgroup.com

Telephone: 01642 030693

Any other enquiries in relation the Fund's communications or the principles or content of this Policy should be sent to:

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Middlesbrough Council,
Head of Pensions, Governance and Investments,
Fountain Court,
119 Grange Road
Middlesbrough,
TS1 2DT

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