

# **SOUTH YORKSHIRE PENSIONS AUTHORITY**

## **JOINT LOCAL PENSION BOARD**

**20 July 2017**

### **INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To monitor and make recommendations on the Authority's Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure as per 4.1 of the Local Pension Board's Terms of Reference – Information on the SYPA internet site.

#### **2. Background Information**

The Local Government Pension Scheme has a formal dispute resolution procedure consisting of two stages. At the first stage the member submits an appeal to the organisation that made the decision being disputed. The second stage is intended to review the initial and first stage decisions and must be considered by SYPA as administering authority (delegated responsibility of the Fund Director).

In relation to appeals made against decisions taken by SYPA, first stage appeals are determined by the Head of Pensions Administration.

Once the internal dispute route has been exhausted a member may submit an appeal to the Pensions Ombudsman who can direct the fund to make payments beyond the scope of the regulations and/or award compensation for distress and inconvenience.

Attached is the information available for members on the SYPA website.

#### **3. Internal Disputes Update**

The 2016/17 position is outlined below.

During 2016/17 70,584 items of casework were completed ranging from complex benefit calculations to simple data amendments. From this casework the following appeals and complaints were received.

<b>Appeal Type</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Stage 1	1	3
Stage 2	1	3
Ombudsman	1	0
Complaints	31	10

The Stage 1 and Stage 2 appeals related to three scheme members whose benefits upon retirement were less than they were quoted whilst still in employment. All asked the Authority to honour the amounts they had been quoted; this could not be done as benefits can only be paid in accordance with the scheme regulations.

The three members in question all expressed an interest in asking the Pensions Ombudsman to look at their cases independently so their cases were fast-tracked and Stage 1 and Stage 2 combined (the Ombudsman requires Stage 1 and Stage 2 to have been completed before taking on a case).

As yet, the Authority has not received an enquiry from the Pensions Ombudsman for any of the three cases.

The Authority received 10 formal complaints in the year; these covered a range of issues mostly from members asking for something the scheme rules does not allow.

In addition to the formal complaints, staff successfully resolve informal issues and satisfy member requirements that could have otherwise turned into a formal complaint. The number of complaints has now reverted to pre-UPM levels.

#### **4. Comments**

Members are asked to comment and/or make suggestions on the content of the information available concerning the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure on the SYPA website.

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