

SOUTH YORKSHIRE PENSIONS AUTHORITY
STRATEGY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Incorporating:

- Employer Service Level Agreements with the Fund Administrator
- Fund Administrator Service Level Agreement with Employers
- Communication Policy and Strategy (Elements of)
- Consultation Policy and Strategy (Elements of)
- IDR Procedure (Charging Policy)
- Actuarial Services (Charging for certain elements)
- Interest (Policy & Rates)
- Funding and Debt Recovery Strategies (Elements of and Policy)

The following, revised, document details the strategy to be adopted in the administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority and participating Fund Employers with effect from ~~1 April 2020~~ ~~1 April 2020~~ ~~March 2018. For the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Pension Fund, (the administration of which is carried out by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority on an agency basis), and its one participating employer, First South Yorkshire Ltd, the effective date of this strategy will be 1 May 2016.~~

It has been ~~updated developed and adopted~~ in consultation ~~and agreement~~ with the participating Fund Employers and is provided for through statute by Regulation 59 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended).

It sets out, amongst other things, how the Administering Authority, SYPA, will administer the Pension Scheme and Fund on behalf of Employing Organisations, and their Scheme Members, participating in the South Yorkshire Pension Fund, its requirements for employers in terms of the timely and accurate provision of information pertinent to the administration of the Scheme and Fund, and the penalties to be applied to those employing organisations failing to meet their duties, responsibilities and obligations as detailed within this strategy document.

The strategy has been developed and adopted in consultation to improve the overall standard of administration of the Scheme and the Fund in the South Yorkshire Fund area and is intended to apply in a spirit of partnership working and co-operation where every assistance, tool, facility, system, support, training and guidance will be provided where possible to enable employers to improve administrative performance and meet the requirements of the strategy.

Any penalties and censures carried within the strategy are not intended to apply as a first resort but rather as a last resort following a period of grace during which time any organisation struggling to meet its obligations will be given the opportunity to make the necessary improvements to their performance.

~~Jason Bailey~~ Gary Chapman



Head of Pensions Administration
South Yorkshire Pensions Authority

REVIEW DATE

This Administration Strategy will be reviewed as follows:

- Every 5 years as a matter of routine
- Whenever impacted by Regulatory Changes
- Whenever impacted by other legislative changes
- Whenever impacted by major changes to other policies, statements and strategies used by the Administering Authority
- As required by operational changes and demands

Where changes are planned, or deemed necessary, outside of the routine review period then consultation will begin on those proposals for change as soon as possible after the potential requirement(s) for change has been identified, or at the beginning of year five if the review is as a result of the routine review policy.

REGULATIONS AND OTHER LEGISLATION GOVERNING THE STRATEGY

- The Local Government Pension Scheme 1995, 1997 and 2008 Regulations as they still have effect in part
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Protection) Regulations 2014
- The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 in force now or as amended and in force at any future date
- The Public Sector Pensions Act 2013
- The Pensions Act 1993
- The Pensions Act 1995
- The Pensions Act 2014
- The 2004, 2006 and 2014 Finance Acts
- The Occupational & Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations in force and as amended
- The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) Regulations in force and as amended

This list is not exhaustive and other Legislation and Regulations may and will apply in certain specific circumstances

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

South Yorkshire Pensions Authority is using its powers under Regulation 59 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, Pension Administration Strategy, to consolidate its former Service Level Agreement documents, (which were signed by Employing Organisations on a voluntary basis when they were first introduced and only made compulsory for new organisations joining the Fund later), into, and make them, an integral part of, this formal Administration Strategy document

The original publication of, and any subsequent revisions and amendments to, this Strategy follows consultation with Employers and means that there will no longer be a requirement for Employers to have a separate SLA with SYPA. It is implicit that this strategy, and therefore the Service Level Standards contained within it, applies to ALL Employing Organisations participating in the South Yorkshire Pension Fund.

Where either necessary, relevant or appropriate those standards are detailed in the following pages so that all parties are aware of the requirements of this element of the Strategy as the administration of the Scheme in South Yorkshire moves forward under this document.

SCOPE

These are the tasks and issues falling within the scope of the Administration Strategy:

- The requirements and obligations of New Employers joining the Fund
- The routine notification and provision of information by employers about individual scheme members
- ~~The annual provision of information by employers about their scheme members (it is anticipated that 2018 will be the last year that annual information will be required, see next bullet point)~~
- The monthly provision of information and data of sufficient quality and quantity such as to enable the Administering Authority to collect payment of employee and employer contributions from employers via direct debit, to post member contributions, create records for new entrants to the Scheme, amend records to reflect personal and contractual changes and to create the leaver process for those members leaving the Scheme for whatever reason
- The non-routine bulk notification and provision of information by employers about their scheme members where event driven
- The payment to the Fund of employee and employer contributions including any additional contributions paid by scheme members
- The payment to the Fund's appropriate third party AVC providers of employee Additional Voluntary Contributions, AVCs
- The payment by employers of deficit contributions in accordance with the Funding Strategy Statement
- The payment by employers of any costs associated with the early termination of employment of scheme members or policy decisions requiring additional funding
- The development and publication of Employer Discretionary Policies
- The IDR Procedure and/or Formal Member Complaints about Employing Organisations
- Actuarial Services
- The Provision of Scheme compliant Payroll Services by employing organisations
- Accounting Standard Exercises for Employers
- Fund Valuation Exercises
- TUPE Transfers, Admission and/or Bond Agreements, School Conversions
- The provision of information to employers in relation to their scheme members for the purposes of:
 - Individual member retirement benefit estimates
 - Bulk member retirement benefit estimates
 - Bulk costings for employer led early retirement exercises
- The Communication Strategy
- The Consultation Strategy
- Reporting to the Regulator
- Debt Collection Procedure
- The National Fraud Initiative Exercise
- Service Standards to Employers
- Service Standards to Scheme Members
- Funding Strategy Requirements where appropriate and inter-related

- The provision of information to third parties in relation to transfer values and deferred benefits for individual scheme members
- Reporting to the Authority and its Boards

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY OBJECTIVES AND AIMS

The following is SYPA's statement of its objectives and aims in relation to how it intends to deliver its administration service to all of its stakeholders:

“The Authority wishes and intends to provide a high quality pensions’ service to employing organisations and members of the Fund by:

- **Supporting member organisations in their planning, promotion and use of pension provision for their employment needs**
- **Administering pension provision for member organisations in accordance with statutory requirements**
- **Being recognised as a continually improving provider of cost effective, efficient and high quality pension administration**
- **Providing a first class, accurate and timely service to its members, their dependants and representatives for the entire lifetime of their relationship with the Authority”**

EQUALITY STATEMENT

The Authority is committed to equal opportunities for our members and will take all necessary steps to ensure that it complies with the specific duties that have been placed upon it.

It is the Authority's intention, in addition to the specific promises made in its Customer Charters, to strive at all times to attain the aims of that commitment.

Additionally, the Authority recognises that some of its members may have special personal needs that may differ from the majority of its members and as such it aims to tailor some of its services to meet those needs.

Examples of where a bespoke service can be provided are:

- Large print documents
- Audio CD recordings of Customer Charter Service Standards
- Home visits where a member is unable to visit any of the Authority's premises
- Signing facilities for visiting members who are hard of hearing
- Limited Interpreter Services for any visiting members and/or their representatives who may have difficulties with spoken English

Some services will necessarily require advance notification of their requirement in order to help the Authority make the necessary arrangements and may not always be available even where notice is provided.

MEMBER SERVICES

PENSION INFORMATION SURGERIES

SYPA currently runs an on-line booking service for appointments by members at any one of its ~~four live~~ locations. More detail can be found on the website at: www.sypensions.org.uk

SYPA is committed to continuing these services for as long as ~~there is sufficient demand and~~ it has access to premises at the four District Councils and has the facilities at the location of its HQ premises wherever that might be now or in the future

PENSION SAVINGS TAX ISSUES

Whilst tax is a personal issue, some tax liabilities can arise as a result of pension savings growth for an individual exceeding that allowed by HMRC in any given tax year. As a result SYPA will notify members of any tax implications arising from their pension's savings in the LGPS:

- By an initial notification on their Annual benefit Statement

- By a follow up letter confirming the excess savings amount and the implications for tax if any
- By providing further information on the options available through the Scheme for discharging any tax liability arising

~~In addition SYPA will run a tax seminar each year aimed at those members whose level of earnings might demand more information on these tax issues for the people concerned. Such seminars will be presented by Independent Advisors licensed to provide information and advice.~~

REPORTING POLICY

The Pensions Regulator

The Pensions Regulator is the UK regulator of work-based pension schemes. It works with trustees, employers, pension specialists and business advisors, giving guidance on what is expected of them.

It also has functions under legislation passed in 2008 and a statutory objective to maximise compliance with the employer duties under that legislation relating to automatic enrolment.

Its principal aim is to prevent problems from developing. It uses its powers flexibly, reasonably and appropriately, with the aim of putting things right and keeping schemes, and employers on the right track for the long-term.

The Pensions Regulator has published a Code of Practice for Public Sector Pension Schemes that in itself is not law but which is designed to help Scheme Administrators comply with the law. SYPA intends to comply fully with this code of practice at all times and to self-report instances where it fails to do so.

It also has a policy of reporting “material” employer breaches that it becomes aware of where such a breach is deemed to be detrimental to the Fund’s position or reputation or where member benefits could be in jeopardy, for example where an employer deducts pension contributions from members’ pay but either fails consistently to remit those contributions to the Fund by the statutory deadline or fails to remit them at all.

The Pensions Regulator will decide on any appropriate course of action or censure deemed appropriate.

More information about the role and responsibility of the Pensions Regulator can be found at: www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk

South Yorkshire Pensions Authority Annual Report

The Authority will, as a matter of Policy, include the names of those organisations incurring financial penalties in any year for poor performance or non-compliance with the Administration Strategy, in its Annual report.

Office of the Information Commissioner

SYPA has a policy of self-reporting “material” data protection breaches to the Office of the Information Commissioner. This policy will continue under both current and future legislation such as GDPR which is effective from May 2018.

DATA HANDLING AND SHARING

General

The business of the Authority requires it to transmit and receive personal data to a number of individuals and organisations, often electronically.

Where it transmits data electronically it will do so using a secure method and in accordance with any other Policies the Authority has in place, for instance, its E-Mail Usage Policy.

Where it receives data from individuals or organisations within the Fund it will require that data to be sent to it in a secure manner and may require the sender to adopt and use the Authority’s own secure electronic transmission facility.

It will only collect, store and use Data for the purposes for which it was collected and for the purposes of administering the Pension Scheme.

It will delete data in accordance with its Document Retention Policy.

General Data Provisions Regulations 2018

The General Data Protection Regulations 2018 ~~are due to come~~ into force in May 2018. Although of European Genesis the UK Government has confirmed it will enshrine the principles of the Regulations in UK Law and the Regulations will therefore apply.

SYPA, who for the purposes of the Regulations are classified as a "Data Controller", will comply with this legislation wholly and fully and will:

- Requisition the services of an independent and qualified Data protection officer
- ~~Publish a Memorandum of Understanding with employers to clarify the arrangements for~~ ~~Enter into all necessary agreements with those parties with whom it obtains and sharing personal es~~ data
- Ensure data sharing partners are themselves fully compliant with the requirements of the Regulations
- ~~Publish a Privacy Notice to explain how and why it uses personal data~~ ~~Obtain the appropriate consent from individuals to hold their data on any of its systems~~
- Only use their data for the purposes for which it was collected
- Only hold that data for as long as is necessary to administer the Scheme for the members concerned
- Ensure members are able to have their data deleted from the Authority's systems in accordance with the Regulations

ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS

The main duties, responsibilities and obligations of an Administering Authority are detailed and can be viewed in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, Part 2 - Administration.

The major compliance tasks are as follows:

- To prepare and publish the Pension Fund Annual Report
- To prepare, publish and maintain its Funding Strategy Statement
- To prepare, publish and maintain its Communications' Policy
- To commission and obtain a valuation of Fund assets and liabilities as at the 31 March in every third year commencing on 31 March 2016 and to obtain a report and a rates and adjustments certificate prepared by an Actuary in respect of that valuation
- To decide any question concerning a person's previous service or employment, the crediting of additional pension and the amount of benefit to which any person has or will become entitled out of the Fund
- To publish a statement concerning its policy on the use of its discretions
- To issue annual benefits statements in respect of its active, deferred, deferred pensioner and pension credit members
- To appoint an adjudicator to consider applications from members affected by first instances decisions or any acts or omissions of the Administering Authority and to make a decision on such applications

The above list is not exhaustive nor is it as detailed as the Regulations which should be referred to in the event of any doubt.

ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY DISCRETIONS

The main discretions afforded to an Administering Authority are detailed and can be viewed in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, Part 2 - Administration.

The major discretions are concerned with and relate to the following:

- The waiving of reductions in any benefits of members where there is no longer a scheme employer to fulfil that function
- The person(s) or bodies to whom it will pay any death grant arising from the death of a member

In addition, the Administering Authority is also required to exercise its discretion, together with the Employing Organisation concerned, in the matter of extending the time frame in which a member can request an inwards transfer of pension rights from a previous arrangement.

Because of the Regulatory requirement for both employing and administering authority to agree on the use of this discretion it will be a requirement placed on all employers within the Fund to notify SYPA of any decision to allow an extension of time for requesting such a transfer. That notification must be submitted on the Late Transfer Form which is available on EPIC. Where appropriate it must be accompanied by any supporting minute from the Board, Panel or Committee ratifying the decision.

In addition **Absolute Discretion** is afforded under the Statutory Regulations to Administering Authorities to determine to whom any Death Grant is payable, even where an expression of wish exists for the deceased member. For operational expediency, SYPA have delegated this discretionary decision making power to the Officer occupying the post of Pension ~~Benefits Teams~~ Manager, this avoids any conflict with the IDRPA Adjudicator who may need to look at any decisions made under this discretion and subsequently appealed against and make a determination about the correctness of that decision. Currently the role of Adjudicator is delegated to the Post of Head of Pensions Administration. It is not practical for the Authority to have to make these decisions given the frequency of cases occurring balanced against the additional report writing required and the infrequency of Authority meetings which could delay payment of these benefits to the detriment of the ~~potential recipients estate and any dependants.~~

EMPLOYING ORGANISATION DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS

The main duties, responsibilities and obligations of a Scheme Employer are detailed and can be viewed in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, Part 2 - Administration.

The major compliance tasks are as follows:

- To contribute to the Fund in each year covered by the rates and adjustment certificate the amount determined by reference to that certificate
- To pay over all amounts received from employees by way of their contributions to the Fund
- To deduct from a person's pay any contributions payable by the member under the Regulations
- To decide any question relating to a person's rights or liabilities under the Scheme not falling to the Administering Authority to determine
- To appoint an adjudicator to consider applications from members affected by first instances decisions or any acts or omissions of the employer and to make a decision on such applications
- To provide the Administering Authority, within ~~three months 41 days~~ of the end of the Scheme Year, with a statement of details of every employee that has been an active member during the scheme year. ~~Employers now meet this requirement via the submission of monthly data files. Whilst Regulation requires provision within three months, SYPA is using its statutory powers to shorten this deadline because of the pressures placed upon it to meet other work deadlines resulting from the Year-End Exercise and from the commencement of Monthly Posting from April 2018~~

The above list is not exhaustive nor is it as detailed as the Regulations which should be referred to in the event of any doubt.

EMPLOYING ORGANISATION DISCRETIONS

The main discretions afforded to a Scheme Employer are detailed and can be viewed in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, Part 2 - Administration.

The major discretions are concerned with and relate to the following:

- The Funding of additional pension
- Flexible Retirement
- Waiving of actuarial reductions
- Award of additional pension

PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY TO:

Members and Member Representatives

The Authority is required to provide members and/or their representatives with a wide range of information under Regulation and other legislation which may also prescribe timeframes in which the information must be provided. SYPA has published Customer Charters detailing its own service standards. These are invariably much tighter and more stringent than those allowed for in law and are the standards SYPA always aims to achieve. However, the fall-back position at particularly busy or demanding times, and SYPA reserves the right to move to that fall-back position without notice, will be the legislative requirements governing the type of case(s) concerned.

Therefore, as a minimum, SYPA will always administer the Scheme in relation to the provision of information to members and/or their representatives in line with the Regulations in force at any time and in line with any other appropriate legislation.

The major requirements in this respect are as follows:

- The notification to individual members and/or their representatives of the type of benefit and amount of benefit to which the member and/or their representatives or dependants have become entitled as a result of an actual event, such as retirement or death, will be issued in line with the standards detailed in the Authority's Customer Charters. Any payments due from the Fund as a result will also be dealt with in line with the same service standards. The detailed content of such information will, as a minimum, meet the requirements of any Regulations or legislation in force at the time.
- The issuing of Annual Benefits Statements to Active, Deferred, Deferred Pensioner and Pension Credit members. Regulation states that these must be issued by 31 August and, although the Authority relies heavily on its Employing Organisation Partners for data upon which to base these statements it is the Authority's intention and objective to comply with Regulation in this respect and to issue Annual Benefit Statements by the 31 August each year or by whatever date subsequent changes in the Regulations dictate.
- The provision of information for matrimonial proceedings is a statutory duty under both Regulation and over-riding Divorce legislation. The Authority will administer the provision of this information in accordance with both sets of legal requirements both in terms of timeframes and the persons to whom the information is to be released. The service standards for this are also contained with the Authority's Customer Charters. Where matrimonial proceedings result in an actual Pension Sharing order then SYPA's Policy is to make a charge of £350 plus VAT for the implementation and maintenance of such an order. SYPA may increase the charge to reflect the cost of living and/or any changes to the information required to be issued which result in additional resourcing requirements. Costs will usually be charged to the ex-spouse of the member but may be allocated or apportioned by the Court in which case the Authority will comply with such direction and invoice the parties according to the Court's direction.
- The provision of Preserved Benefit and Transfer Value information is also prescribed for in Regulation and specific legislation. The Authority will provide such information in accordance with its legal obligations to members and/or their representatives. In this context a member's representative may be any financial advisor appointed by the member, any third party administrator authorised by the member to obtain such information or the administrators of any occupational scheme acting for the member in a new or subsequent employment. Where transfer value information is requested by an advisor or pensions' administration company for an active member of the pension scheme, then a

statement of entitlement will only be provided as a result of a direct request by the member concerned. This is to ensure, so far as possible, that the member is fully aware of the implications associated with the requirements of the Scheme for the member to opt-out in order to transfer out. The information will then be sent directly to the member concerned and not any third party.

The Authority's Policy on the provision of this information is to only provide it to the member and or their representative once in any twelve month rolling period. The Authority reserves the right to make a charge for the provision of this information prior to the commencement of a new 12 month period and the right to introduce such a charging policy at any time without notice. Any such charge so levied will only ever seek to cover the actual cost to the Authority of the work undertaken in producing the information again.

Independent Financial Advisors or other advisors acting for or on behalf of the member

The Authority will provide information to Independent Financial or other Advisors appointed or authorised by the member in accordance with any Regulatory or legislative obligations and, where Preserved Benefit and/or Transfer Value information is concerned, in accordance with the Policy described in the preceding paragraph.

The Authority:

- Will provide all member specific information it is obligated to provide in the timeframes required of it in law
- Will provide all generic Scheme information it is able to provide in order to assist the enquirers to advise their client(s)
- Will not respond to additional questions it deems not relevant to the enquiry
- Will not engage in follow up discussions by telephone, or communications by e-mail or letter until such time as the member has made a decision in relation to any transfer out of the Scheme, but
- Will provide all information required by the member or their representatives to enable members to take advantage of the Freedoms of Choice as announced by the Government in the 2015 Spring Budget and enabled in subsequent legislation

Participating Employer Organisations

Information will be provided to participating employers as a matter of routine in some instances and upon request in others.

Where information is provided as a matter of routine it will be provided in timeframes and schedules as follows:

- Employer performance, as measured against the agreed service standards, will be reported quarterly in retrospect for the periods:
 - **1 January to 31 March**
 - **1 April to 30 June**
 - **1 July to 30 September**
 - **1 October to 31 December**

in each calendar year. Employer performance will also be reported to the Authority.

- Electronic Employer Newsletters will be issued as and when circumstances dictate that Regulatory or legislative change needs to be communicated
- Employer specific alerts of outstanding tasks will be communicated through the EPIC System or any subsequent replacement system developed and introduced by the Authority
- The Authority will hold an Employers' ~~Forum~~ **workshop/training event** at least once a year, ~~usually in the Autumn~~, to disseminate other important and relevant information
- The Authority will, either pro-actively or upon request, where appropriate and/or necessary, disseminate information by the use of roadshows, presentations, advisory surgeries, training seminars, on-line tutorials, and other electronic media. There would usually be no charge for these services

Where information is provided following a request from the employer then the following service standards will apply:

- Employers will be directed to the online portal to process requests for retirement estimates. However, where the online portal is not available, Retirement Estimate requests for individual employees will be provided **within 5 working days** of the Authority being in possession of all information necessary to ensure the accuracy of the estimate.
- Bulk Retirement Estimate requests **involving 20 or more employees** will be provided **within 10 working days** of receipt of the bulk request template assuming this is populated correctly and accurate estimates can be provided as a result
- Early Retirement Strain on the Fund Costs as part of a bulk estimate request will also be provided **within 10 working days** of receipt of the bulk request template

None of the information detailed above or the services used to provide this information will incur any fee or charge to employing organisations

Other Administering Authorities:

The working relationship between SYPA and other LGPS Administering Authorities is usually one based on member administration except where the Authority undertakes an element of collaborative working with another Administering Authority or the Administering Authority has become a software/systems' client of SYPA.

Member administration would usually involve:

- Supplying information to Fund Actuaries and the other Administering Authority where a bulk transfer of staff was taking place between employers of the respective Funds and either receiving and investing or paying out a subsequent bulk transfer payment, or
- Administering the Scheme in respect of individual voluntary member movement between funds and receiving and investing or paying out individual transfer payments

The Authority will conduct the administration of member business in respect of either of these scenarios in accordance with the requirements of any Regulations in force at the time and the service standard targets set by SYPA for individual member administration.

The Fund Actuary:

Typically, the routine business of the Authority with its Fund Actuary will fall into one of the following categories:

- Triennial Fund Valuation
- Accounting Standards exercises for participating employers
- Individual contribution rate assessments for new employers
- Risk assessments for new outsourced contract employers and bond assessments for the outsourcing employer
- Employer covenant assessments
- Liability assessments for employers leaving the Fund
- Re-assessment of Employer's Contribution Rate where any allowance is exceeded

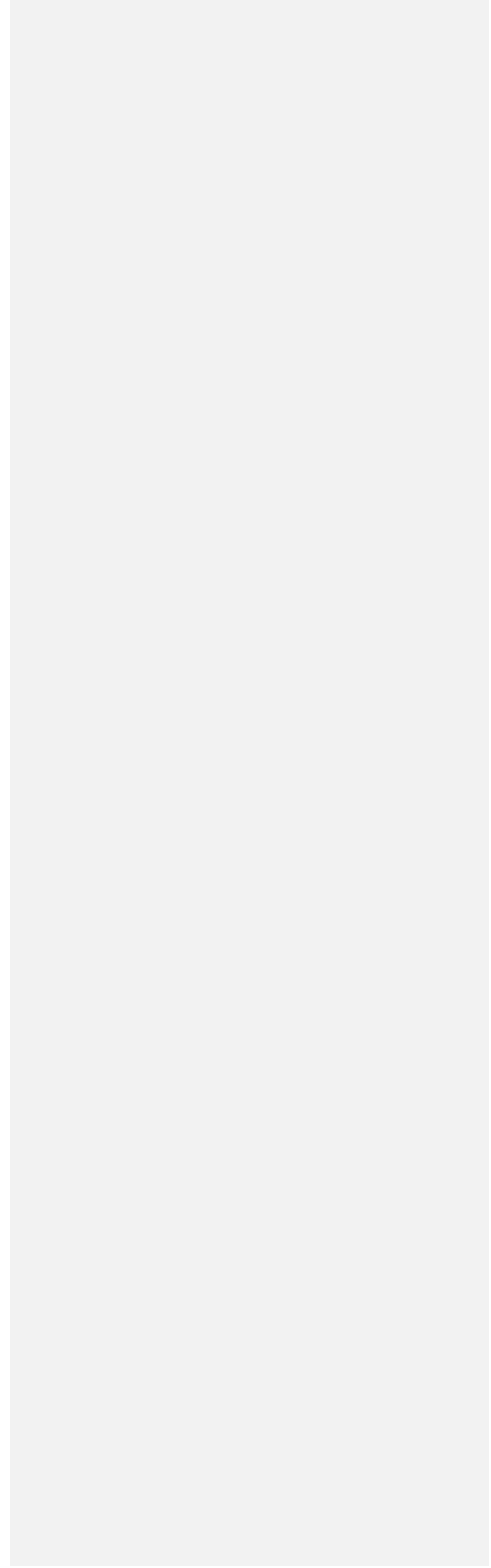
Fund Valuation

The Fund Valuation is a Statutory Duty of the Administering Authority and SYPA will carry out this duty in accordance with the Regulations in force at the time.

The Authority will, as a partner and under Regulation, consult and work closely with employing organisations to ensure that member data and financial data relating to employer cash flow is accurate and up to date at all times and that year end data, or as the case may be, monthly data, submissions, are accurate, timely and usable. The objective being that immediately following the 31 March in any given valuation year the Authority will be in a position to provide the Fund Actuary with data of sufficient quality and timeliness to allow for accurate calculations of the Fund's assets and liabilities to be performed using agreed methodology and assumptions.

The target schedule in any valuation year will be as follows:

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Year End work completed by SYPA and
Valuation Data Extract to Fund Actuary **July**

Interim Results **September/October**

Individual Employer
Results Consultation **October/November**

Formal Report **March**

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There are no employer charges or fees related to the Valuation unless additional bespoke work is requested. Before the commencement of each financial year the Authority will publish each employing organisation's contribution statement for the next financial year. The statement will be placed on SYPA's EPIC System. Organisations must ensure that they read, check and comply with it by submitting a monthly data file to facilitate the deducting and collection of contributions by direct debit ~~paying over the correct contribution amounts~~. This is an Audit requirement.

Accounting Standards Exercises

Although not required to do so under Regulation the Authority does offer to obtain and provide the appropriate accounting standards requisite information as a voluntary service to employers.

By making use of the readily available expertise and Fund profile familiarity of the Actuary the Authority feels it is able to offer a structured and efficient method of providing this information to participating employers whilst also using efficiency of scale to save employers money compared to the potential cost involved in individual approaches for actuarial assessments.

There are three scheduled exercises each year as follows:

- Organisations with a Year End of 31 March
- Educational Establishments with a Year End of 31 July
- Academies with a Year End of 31 August.

The procedure and schedule for all organisations is driven and set by the Fund Actuary following consultation and agreement on the assumptions to be used in the exercises.

The typical target schedule for organisations with a 31 March Year End would be:

End of January prior to Year End - SYPA writes to employers inviting participation and collection of data begins

Mid-February prior to Year End - Data issued to Actuary

Mid-April following Year End - Results issued to participating employers

The typical target schedule for organisations with a 31 July Year End would be:

End of May prior to Year End - SYPA writes to employers inviting participation and collection of data begins.

By 3rd week in July - Data issued to Actuary

End of August following Year End	- Results issued to participating employers
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The typical target schedule for organisations with a 31 August Year End would be:

Mid-July prior to Year End	- SYPA writes to employers inviting participation and collection of data begins
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By Mid-August	- Data issued to Actuary
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End of September following Year End	- Results issued to participating employers
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There is a cost for this service as the Authority has to commission and pay the Actuary for the work performed.

SYPA will negotiate an overall cost with the Actuary each year based on the numbers participating in the exercises. This cost will then be notified to those employers when known as part of the communication process.

In addition the Authority makes an administrative charge to cover its own costs of the additional work involved. Currently this charge is £100.00 per employing organisation but the Authority reserves the right to increase this in future should its own costs of administering the exercise(s) increase.

Employers will be invoiced by the Authority for their individual charge.

Individual contribution rate assessments for new employers

As part of the process of setting up a new employer when it joins the Fund, member data will be collected and submitted to the Actuary for an assessment of the indicative contribution rate payable for the remainder of the valuation period by the employer in question.

Typically, such assessments take about six weeks to complete. There is a schedule of charges for such work which is set by the Actuary and not the Authority. This is updated by the Actuary at regular intervals. The latest schedule is available upon request.

The new employer or the outsourcing employer is expected to pay any charges incurred in this respect.

Risk assessments for new outsourced contract employers and bond assessments for the outsourcing employer

Where a participating scheme employer outsources a service to a private contractor and that contractor enters into an admission agreement to admit transferred employees to the Scheme then, as a matter of routine, or at the instigation of the outsourcing employer, SYPA will, through the Fund Actuary, commission a risk and bond assessment as provided for by Regulation, in order to protect the outsourcing employer and the Fund from incurring unfunded liabilities in the event of early termination of the contract and the possible redundancy of employees upon re-absorption of the service.

The cost of the actuarial work will be recharged to the outsourcing employer.

Employer covenant assessments

Covenant assessment may form part of the routine work associated with the admission of a new employer, in which case the cost of such work will be included in the overall cost of the risk/bond assessment and recharged accordingly.

However, where the Fund undertakes covenant assessment work at its own initiative as part of long-term risk management strategy then no charge will be passed on to employing organisations as a result.

Liability assessments for employers leaving the Fund

These assessments are commissioned by the Authority when an employer exits the Fund. An exit from the Fund may be triggered by:

- The natural end of a set period outsourced service contract
- The early termination of an outsourced service contract by the outsourcing employer or by the contractor
- The forced termination of an organisation as a result of financial issues
- The natural effluxion of active members leaving no contributors to the Fund

The Authority's Policy, as set out in its Funding Strategy Statement, (FSS), is that termination assessments, where required, will be calculated on a "minimum risk" basis to ensure that residual liabilities are fully funded and that, subject to prudent investment, sufficient money is recovered from the exiting employer to fund those liabilities for the remaining lifetime of its members and their dependants. However, its Termination Funding Policy under Regulation, set out within the FSS allows certain flexibilities in how, when and over how long it will recover those costs. In addition, employers within the scheme whose active membership has reduced to nil for some reason, will not automatically be required to exit the Scheme, thereby triggering an exit cost calculation. Instead they will be allowed a period of grace to allow for recruitment strategies to bring in new active members.

Where the exiting employer is solvent and able to discharge its liabilities in respect of the Fund the cost of the actuarial work will be added to the total to be recovered in respect of those liabilities.

Where the exiting employer is insolvent the cost of the actuarial work will be added to any claim made by the Authority, as a creditor, to the appointed administrator(s).

Where the exiting employer is a contractor and the exit is triggered by the natural expiry of the contract then SYPA will normally have endeavoured to manage the contributions required over the period leading to the exit to avoid any deficit or surplus arising.

Government and other Public Sector Agents

The Authority has signed up to be included in the National Audit Office's (NAO) bi-annual National Fraud Initiative (NFI) in which Public Sector Bodies and Organisations share Pensions and Payroll information in an effort to combat benefit fraud and reduce overpayments in both areas to individuals no longer entitled to receive them.

As a participant in this exercise SYPA will share information about its Fund Members with:

- The National Audit Office
- Its own Internal and External Auditors where appropriate
- The Auditors of other Local Authorities and other Local Government Organisations
- Other Local Authority Benefit Departments
- The Department for Work and Pensions
- The Police where appropriate and/or necessary

The Data Protection Act, and the General Data Protection Regulations, (effective May 2018), permit the sharing of data without the express consent of the individuals concerned where the object of such sharing is the prevention or investigation of fraud and other crimes.

Prior to the release of the reports SYPA will notify its members of its participation in the forthcoming exercise and confirm the intent to share data with other agencies.

Upon the release and receipt of the NFI Reports at the commencement point of each bi-annual exercise the Authority will nominate a senior officer to manage the project.

It will then prioritise and address the workload arising as follows:

- Apparent un-notified pensioner member deaths will be investigated within two months. Pensions in payment from the South Yorkshire Fund will be immediately suspended
- Apparent un-notified preserved pensioner deaths will be investigated within three months

~~• Apparent un-notified re-employment of South Yorkshire Pensioners will be investigated within 6~~

- Report instances of suspected Fraud to the NAO, its Internal Audit Office and the Police
- Pursue the recovery of all overpayment of pensions resulting from the non-notification of pensioner deaths whether fraud is suspected or not*

*See later section on Debt recovery

As part of its management and administration of casework ~~relating to the payment of Death Grants from the Fund~~ the Authority will also share some data with other Administering Authorities through the Local Government Association's (LGA) National Database. It will also participate in the National "Tell us Once" initiative.

As part of its Communication Strategy the Authority will also share and/or provide member data to its printer Agents, for the provision of information to members, and its Tracing Agents for the purposes of paying benefits.

General

It should be noted that where information is required by any member, member representative, dependant or advisor, whether legal or financial, in order to pursue a claim through the courts for financial loss, damages or compensation for any event not connected to the Authority's actions or inactions or omissions, then the Authority will always make a charge to cover the cost of the work done in connection with the provision of the information requested. Any such charge will not be negotiable and will always need to be settled prior to the release of the information required.

POTENTIAL NEW EMPLOYERS

Potential new employers will have certain obligations to enable their admittance to participate in the LGPS in South Yorkshire to be completed in a timely and accurate manner and ensure that there is no subsequent detriment to members. Admission Agreements cannot be backdated.

The LGPS can be an expensive commitment and any potential new employers having a choice of pension provision, either through legislation or constitution, should satisfy themselves as to the appropriateness and suitability of the Scheme for their staff, organisation, budget and business plan.

Schools converting to Academy Status

Academies ~~have no choice and~~ are required to ~~enroll offer~~ their non-teaching staff ~~into membership of the~~ LGPS upon conversion. Schools considering conversion to Academy Status should:

- Liaise with their LEA well in advance of any proposed conversion date in relation to the current funding of the Pension Scheme and any potential financial deficit to be inherited
- Assess whether their budget will allow for the payment of employer contributions based on the pensionable payroll of their non-teaching staff being transferred to the new organisation, any deficit payments necessary and any business development plans under consideration following conversion
- Be aware of the Funding Strategy of the South Yorkshire Fund
- Provide SYPA with at least six months' notice of their intent to convert together with a proposed conversion date
- Be able to provide a full and detailed personal and payroll data set of the non-teaching staff being taken on by the new organisation from the old school at least three months in advance of the proposed conversion date
- Have a Payroll System (or agent) and staff, together with HR staff, ready and able to take over the management of the employer's pensions' administration function in relation to the LGPS from day one following the conversion
- Familiarise themselves with the requirements of the Fund, Regulations and other legislation associated with the administration of the Scheme and with this Administration Strategy
- Have other systems and staff in place to ensure continuity of the pensions administration function upon conversion

- Pay the actuarial fees associated with the creation of the academy as a new employer in the SYPA fund.

Transferee Admission Bodies

Potential Transferee Admission Bodies considering pensions implications of bidding for a Local Authority or other public sector service contract where transferring staff would normally be eligible for the LGPS should:

- Liaise with the letting body well in advance of any proposed contract date in relation to the pension costs and liabilities involved in the running the contract
- Be aware of, and committed to meeting, the requirements of the Regulations in respect of Admission Bodies
- Ensure the lead-time is sufficient for the Actuarial work to be completed prior to the transfer date
- Be in a position to provide a bond or such guarantee as might be required by the letting body
- Be aware of the Funding Strategy of the South Yorkshire Fund
- Be aware of or, where appropriate, the Parent Company should be aware of, the financial implications for early termination of the contract, and also be aware of the Authority's Policy on the pursuit and recovery of debt, including Closure Costs, as detailed elsewhere in this document
- Have a Payroll System (or agent) and staff, together with HR staff, ready to take over the management of the employer's pensions' administration function in relation to the LGPS from day one of the contract
- Have other systems and staff in place to ensure continuity of the pensions administration function from day one of the contract

Community Admission Bodies

Community Bodies have absolute discretion in deciding whether to apply for admission to the Fund. Any organisation meeting the criteria for admission to the Fund as a Community Admission Body and considering applying should:

- Make their formal application at least six months prior to any proposed admission date
- Be aware of, and committed to meeting, the requirements of the Regulations in respect of Admission Bodies
- Ensure the lead-time is sufficient for the Actuarial work to be completed prior to the transfer date
- Be able to provide financial and personal data about the employees to be admitted under the terms of the Admission Agreement at least three months prior to any proposed admission date
- Be able to demonstrate strength of covenant
- Be aware of the Funding Strategy of the South Yorkshire Fund
- Be aware of the Authority's Policy on the pursuit and recovery of debt, including Closure Costs, as detailed elsewhere in this document
- Have a Payroll System (or agent) and staff, together with HR staff, ready to take over the management of the employer's pensions' administration function in relation to the LGPS from day one following the conversion
- Have other systems and staff in place to ensure continuity of the pensions administration function upon conversion
- Ensure they can provide a third party financial guarantor in line with the Authority's policy on the admission of Community Bodies

Town & Parish Councils

Town and Parish Councils are precepting, resolution bodies. There is no compulsion upon them to offer employees membership of the LGPS. Town and Parish Councils considering using the LGPS in South Yorkshire should:

- Assess whether their budget will allow for the payment of employer contributions based on the pensionable payroll of the employees they wish to give access to Scheme to
- Be aware of the Funding Strategy of the South Yorkshire Fund
- Provide SYPA with at least six months' notice of their intent to implement a Resolution to use the LGPS for their staff
- Ensure an appropriate resolution is passed at least one month prior to the proposed implementation date detailing the staff or posts to be designated as pensionable and to provide SYPA with copies of the Council Approved Resolution(s)
- Be able to provide a full and detailed personal and payroll data set of the employees joining the Scheme at least three months in advance of the proposed admission date
- Ensure that where they operate their own payroll, the Payroll System, or where the Payroll Function is provided by a third party that the third party system, can provide the range of information required by the Scheme in the format required
- Familiarise themselves with the requirements of the Fund, Regulations and other legislation associated with the administration of the Scheme and with this Administration Strategy

NEW EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS

All new employers to the Fund will be required to:

- Attend a scheme administration meeting with officers of the Authority to ensure they understand the administration requirements of the Scheme in relation to their role as a scheme employer
- Ensure that the appropriate people attend such a meeting so that where responsibilities and duties in relation to the Pension Scheme are split across different posts all responsible people are aware of their obligations in this respect
- Undergo training where training needs are identified by either the Administering Authority or the Employer. Such training may be held either on site at the Employer's premises or at SYPA HQ where access to systems may be more easily facilitated if necessary
- Submit electronic documentation in relation to the formal notification of new joiners to the Scheme and any subsequent contractual changes affecting their employee members' pensionable circumstances, through the Authority's Employer Web System or any replacement system introduced in the future. Paper documentation will not be accepted
- Nominate specific contacts with whom the Authority can work on the various aspects of Scheme Administration requiring specialist knowledge or authority

FEEES FOR THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL NON-STANDARD WORK

The Authority recognises that Employers already contribute to the administration of the Scheme through an actuarial allowance built into their contribution rates by the Fund Actuary as part of the triennial valuation exercise and, as such, it will carry out all of its statutory and routine duties and obligations under the Regulations and any other legislation affecting it without further charge.

However, the Authority reserves the right to charge for work associated with the creation and termination of employers and for any non-standard work unique to an Employer (or Group of Employers) such as a bulk transfer of pension rights requested by an Employer that would require SYPA to undertake work over, above and beyond that which it would normally undertake or to provide a requested service that it would not normally provide.

The Authority also reserves the right to make a charge for bulk routine work that is required as a matter of urgency in exceptional circumstances that would lead the Authority to incur additional costs to complete the work, for example by the use of overtime, or where the work is required, exceptionally, well within the agreed service standards for that work which could then compel the Authority to resource the work at a cost to other work, members or employers.

Any such charge or fee would always be made clear and agreed at the outset before any such work was commenced or service provided.

Possible examples of instances where the Authority may deem it appropriate to make such a charge are:

- A bulk redundancy exercise where an employer may require benefit estimates and employer costs more quickly than the agreed service standard time for providing such information
- Non-routine or bespoke actuarial work, (see later Section on Actuarial Services)
- Officer attendance at special meetings outside normal working hours

The above list is not exhaustive.

INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE (IDRP)

Under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, both Administering Authority and Employing Organisations are required to appoint an Adjudicator to review First Instance Decisions upon receipt of an application by the member or member's representatives. This is generally referred to as Stage 1 of the IDRP.

Where a Scheme Employer reviews a First Instance Decision under Regulation 74 and makes a consequential decision under Regulation 75 that results in the member making a referral to the Administering Authority for reconsideration of that decision, generally referred to as Stage 2 of the IDRP, then the Administering Authority Adjudicator will reconsider the First Instance decision and notify the employer and the member accordingly.

Where the Administering Authority makes a decision to uphold the member's appeal against the First Instance Decision and to refer the matter back to the employer for re-consideration then the Administering Authority may take the view that there has been a failing by the Employing Organisation in the original decision making review process. Possibly as a result of the Employer concerned:

- Not taking into account all relevant evidence, or
- Taking into account non-relevant evidence, or
- Disregarding the relevant evidence and making a decision that would be perverse or contrary to Regulation

SYPA's Adjudicator will always be happy to discuss these referrals and to provide any assistance, advice and guidance where appropriate or requested in the interests of ensuring that correct decisions are reached for right reasons and the member receives fair and equitable treatment through the process.

ACTUARIAL SERVICES

Actuarial services are provided by the Fund Actuary.

This service is subject to periodic tender and the appointed Fund Actuary may change.

The Fund Actuary is independent.

The retention of the Fund Actuary is a Regulatory requirement for the Authority and a number of the services commissioned from him are also required by Regulation.

Where a service or exercise is provided to the Administering Authority or Fund as a result of a statutory requirement then the Authority will fund this work from its administration budget.

Where a non-statutory service, task, exercise or some bespoke work is offered by the Authority to employing organisations then it is on the understanding that the Actuarial fees or charges will be passed through either proportionately or as previously agreed to those employing organisations on a non-profit basis for the Authority and/or Fund.

Where a service, task, exercise or bespoke work is requested specifically by an employing organisation to be commissioned by the Authority then it is on the understanding that the Actuarial fees or charges will be passed through to the employing organisation(s) concerned on a non-profit basis for the Authority and/or Fund.

Where an employing organisation chooses to approach the Fund Actuary independently, whether for advice, guidance, consultancy work or anything else then it is on the understanding that no charges will be incurred

on behalf of the Authority or Fund and the employer concerned will be solely responsible for the settlement of any fees or charges arising.

It should be noted that the Fund Actuary will rarely invoice an employing organisation directly but will submit their bill for any work carried out to SYPA who will then recharge the amount invoiced to the employer concerned.

Where the Fund Actuary provides a schedule of standard charges for certain categories of work then SYPA will provide this to Employing organisations on request

PAYROLL SERVICES AND PROVIDERS

All employing organisations must ensure that they procure payroll services and systems that:

- Store the personal and financial data of its scheme member employees that is required by SYPA in order to maintain its business and meet its duties and obligations as an Administering Authority
- Are able to provide data extracts that meet the reporting requirements of the Administering Authority and the Scheme and are in the appropriate format to interface with the Authority's Computerised Pensions Administration System

Where an employing organisation takes its Payroll Services from a third party or from a payroll located in another part of the organisation or parent company then responsibility for providing timely, quality data from the Payroll remains with the employing organisation concerned that is a participating in the South Yorkshire Fund.

Where an employing organisation changes payroll providers in the financial year then that organisation must ensure that the new service provider's payroll must be able to:

- Store the personal and financial data of its scheme member employees that is required by SYPA in order to maintain its business and meet its duties and obligations as an Administering Authority
- Provide data extracts that meet the reporting requirements of the Administering Authority and the Scheme and are in the appropriate format to interface with the Authority's Computerised Pensions Administration System

The employing organisation concerned must also ensure that the new service provider has advance knowledge of the requirements of the Pension Scheme in terms of data supply and reporting, has a system in place that is able to meet those requirements and has sufficient notice of its duties and responsibilities to enable it to seamlessly take over the supply of data to ensure that the monthly posting of member contributions is maintained from the first month of the new provider's contract. Failure to ensure this will result in a financial penalty being applied to the employing organisation responsible as outlined in Appendix A of this document.

Additionally, for scheme management, accounting and data control and quality purposes and to ensure continuity of the pensions administration side of the business for members, data on the previous payroll up to the date of termination and change must remain available for extraction and provision to SYPA as appropriate and necessary.

SERVICE STANDARDS – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

All service standards for SLA purposes are measured by reference to the time taken by the Authority from the first day when it has all of the necessary information to hand to enable it to perform the task. The measurements exclude the day of receipt of the information or final part of the information required.

Administering Authority to Employing Organisations

- Respond to employer queries **5 working days**
- Individual retirement benefit estimates **5 working days**
- Individual early retirement employer costs **5 working days**
- Bulk retirement benefits estimates (20 or more) **10 working days**
- Bulk early retirement employer costs **10 working days**

All service standards for SLA purposes are measured by reference to the time taken by the Authority from the "event date" to the date of receipt by SYPA in its HQ Office at ~~18 Regent St~~, Barnsley, ~~S70 2HG~~.

Employing Organisation to Administering Authority

- Notification of a new scheme joiner **68 weeks**
- Notification of a member's contractual change **4 weeks**
- Notification of a member leaving the Scheme with a right to immediate payment of benefits **4 weeks**
- Notification of a member leaving the Scheme without a right to immediate payment of benefits **68 weeks**
- Notification of the death of an active member **12 weeks**
- Provide a written response to any query **1 week**

SERVICE STANDARDS - CUSTOMER CHARTER

All service standards in the Customer Charters are measured by reference to the time taken by the Authority from the first day when it has all of the necessary information to hand to enable it to perform the task and exclude the day of receipt of the information or final part of the information required.

All Members

- Complaints **3 working days**
- General Enquiries **5 working days**
- Provision of information for Divorce Proceedings **5 working days**
- Notification of death benefit entitlements to Dependants and/or representatives **54 working days**

Active Members

- Setting up a new joiner record **5 working days**
- Making changes to records **5 working days**
- Providing information about Additional Benefits **12 working days**
- Provision of Retirement Benefit Estimates* **5 working days**
- Providing transfer value quotations **105 working days**

Preserved Pensioner Members

- Notification of Entitlement **20 working days**
- Provide an updated benefit statement **5 working days**

Pensioner Members

- Information on re-employment **7 working days**

*Subject to the Authority's policy in force at the date of the request.

FINANCIAL PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE BY EMPLOYING ORGANISATIONS

The Authority has determined that there will be a range of financial penalties for non-compliance with the requirements of this Administration Strategy under Regulation 70 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, "Additional Costs arising from Scheme Employers' level of performance".

In addition it has determined a Policy to apply under the umbrella of this strategy document whereby penalties imposed on the Administering Authority by third party agencies as a result of, whether directly or indirectly, the poor administrative performance or decision making process of a scheme employer, will be recovered from the Employing organisation concerned.

Penalties imposed on the Administering Authority by other Agencies

The penalties that will be recovered are as follows:

- Financial penalties imposed on the Administering Authority by Agencies such as the Pensions' Regulator for a breach of its statutory duties, such as the issuing of Annual Benefit Statements, but where the breach was occasioned by the poor performance of an employing organisation by reason of non-provision of member and/or financial data, provision of data not fit for purpose or the late provision of data or a combination of all these factors.
The penalty will be paid by the Authority but will be recovered from the Employing Organisation concerned.
- Financial Penalties imposed on the Administering Authority by HMRC, for instance Scheme Sanction Charges that arise as a result of the decision of a Scheme Employer, (for example, by allowing a member to claim benefits that will entail the Authority making an unauthorised payment).
The penalty will be paid by the Authority but will be recovered from the Employing Organisation concerned.
- Any penalties imposed by the Office of the Information Commissioner following a data breach where the breach was occasioned by the actions of a scheme employer.
The penalty will be paid by the Authority but will be recovered from the Employing Organisation concerned.

The list is not exhaustive and the Authority reserves the right to utilise the same principles and policy for other penalties imposed on it by outside agencies not detailed here.

Financial penalties for non-compliance by employing organisations

Financial penalties as detailed here may be applied by SYPA where failure of an employing organisation to:

- Meet the requirements of the Administration Strategy
- Meet the requirements of the Regulations
- Meet the requirements of other legislation

Results in:

- Additional work for the Authority or its Agent(s)
- Additional cost(s) for the Authority or its Agent(s)
- Failure of the Authority to meet its own obligations under Regulation, other legislation or guidance
- Complaints by organisations or Members
- Appeals by members or their representatives

Then the Authority will impose either a fixed penalty or a charge based on the cost of the work occasioned. The table in **Appendix A** provides details of the fixed penalty charges.

Any such penalties imposed will be recovered from the Employing Organisation concerned through additions to any existing deficit or deductions from any existing surplus with effect from the next contribution year (1st April).

INTEREST

It is the Authority's Policy, supported by Regulation in a number of areas, to charge interest for late payment on the following items and at the following rates. Late is defined as being a month or more after the due date:

- Payment of Employees' Pension Contributions, including any additional contributions paid by the employee, remitted to the Fund
- Payment of lump sum employer contributions arising from an employer decision to backdate membership for an individual or group of individuals (but cannot apply to Admission Agreements)

- Payment of Employer's Pension Contributions remitted to the Fund

Employee and Employer Contributions have to be with the Fund by the 19th of the month following the month of deduction. (Pensions Act 1993).

- Payment of any Lump Sum Deficit Contributions owed to the Fund
- Deficit payments are calculated as an annual amount due by the Fund Actuary. That annual figure is then sub-divided into 12 equal payments for remittance on a monthly basis by Employers. To allow for the spread of payments over a 12 month period and to compensate the Fund for lost investment return an element of interest is already included in the monthly amounts to be paid. Late payment of these amounts will however incur additional interest.
- Any rechargeable payments due in respect of Injury Allowances, Gratuities and Added Compensatory years
- Any costs arising from initial and annual invoices in respect of strain on the Fund costs arising from the early release of retirement benefits
- Lump sum payments arising from the granting of additional pension
- Any fees or charges arising from the use of additional or bespoke Actuarial Services or Employer initiatives
- Any fees or charges arising from the voluntary participation in Accounting Standards Exercises
- Any costs arising from the termination or exit from the Fund of a solvent employing organisation
- Any liability settlement charge arising from a claim on a Bond Agreement or similar charge that would have arisen from such a claim but where no Bond was required by the outsourcing employer. In these latter circumstances the liability falls to the employer concerned

Annual Invoices carry an element of interest in their costs already at the point of issue to allow for the spread of the cost over three years (or less). However, further interest will be incurred if annual invoices are settled late.

The rate of interest charged on all of the above items is 1% above the Bank of England Base Rate compounded with quarterly rests.

DEBT RECOVERY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Authority has a Debt Recovery Policy and Strategy in place.

It is the Authority's Policy to attempt recovery of ALL debts whether invoiced or not.

The Policy applies to individual Scheme Members, their dependants, their representatives, employing organisations, third party or outside agencies, purchasers of goods or services from the Authority and any other person or persons upon whom the Authority has a reasonable claim for payment.

The debt recovery procedure is as follows:

- Once the amount of the debt and the debtor is identified the Authority will issue an account
- If no response is received within one month of the date of issue of the account the Authority will issue one reminder
- No further reminders will be issued
- If no response is received within one month of the date of issue of the reminder the debt will be passed to the Authority's Debt Recovery Agents who will pursue the debt using the full force of the law if necessary
- Any additional costs incurred as a result of the debt recovery process, including interest for late payment, agent's fees and legal fees will be added to the total amount to be recovered
- Any party receiving an account from the Authority should immediately contact the number provided with a view to settling the debt in full or arranging a payment plan

No debt will be written off unless there is no prospect of recovery for any reason, for example there are no assets of value belonging to the debtor, (organisation insolvency), or the debtor's estate or where there is no estate and no surviving family.

Where the debt is in respect of overpaid pension and the pensioner has died recovery proceedings will be commenced against the estate through the pensioners surviving family, dependants or personal representatives.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

For business continuity purposes and for ensuring that scheme members of Educational Establishments are able to be provided with, and have access to, the same level of service as scheme members in other organisations during educational holiday breaks such as end of term and half term holidays as well as the extended summer break holiday, Educational Establishments must:

- Provide contact details of Payroll, HR, Finance and Business officers who are able to continue to conduct the pensions administration side of the employers business during any closedown or holiday period including third party service providers where appropriate
- Ensure their officers are available to deal with routine pensions administration tasks and queries during any closedown or holiday period
- Ensure specialist personnel are available to maintain the Accounting Standards Exercises during any closedown or holiday period, especially given that these exercises affect other employers and are Actuary driven

If at any point in the future SYPA experiences difficulties in business continuity with any Educational Establishment during a holiday break because the organisation has failed to ensure that contacts are available then it reserves the right to introduce and impose financial penalties on the organisation(s) concerned.

Member complaints submitted as a result of the above failure will be forwarded to the organisation concerned for a response to the member concerned.

The Authority will not be responsible for the effects of any failure of Educational Establishments to have arrangements in place during closedown or holiday periods that will enable an establishment to:

- respond to invitations,
- respond to data collection requests
- respond to queries on such information
- provide member information and documentation as normal to ensure member benefits are not delayed
- enable records to be kept up to date and
- ensure that the normal daily business of pensions administration is able to be continued for that establishment

ADMINISTRATION GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

To assist all participating employing organisations with the task of administering the employers' functions in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Authority has produced an online administration guide.

The guide can currently be found on EPIC and should be referred to whenever an employer is in any doubt about what is required of them in terms of their pension scheme administrative duties and obligations.

In addition, help, advice and guidance will always be available from Member Services Management Teams for employers falling within their purview.

Contact can be made by e-mail, telephone or letter.

APPENDIX A

Tables of charges and financial penalties

Charges

Implementation of a Pension Splitting order	£350 + VAT
Provision of information in relation to Accounting Standards Exercises	Currently £100 + VAT but <u>subject to review</u> being reviewed
Provision of additional transfer value within 12 months should the Authority introduce a charging policy. The current policy reserves the right to charge.	£350 + VAT
Bespoke Pensions Administration work	At the appropriate hourly rate to recover the actual cost of the work only
Rechargeable Actuarial work	At the appropriate hourly rate to recover the actual cost of the work only

Penalties

<p>Year End Returns 2018</p> <p>Failure to submit a usable, balanced Year End Return by the deadline detailed in this document — (4:00 pm, Friday 11 May 2018)</p>	<p>A fixed penalty of £500 plus a further fixed penalty of £50 per day for every further day late following that deadline</p>
<p>Queries arising from the Year End</p> <p>The provision of Year End information resulting in the Administering Authority being unable to reconcile information with the member record and necessitating a query</p> <p>Responses to queries necessitating a re-query</p>	<p>£25 per case query</p> <p>£10 per case re-query</p>
<p>Monthly Returns from April 2020¹⁸</p> <p>Failure to submit an <u>accurate</u> monthly return <u>permitting the correct collection of contributions by direct debit</u> by the <u>5th</u> of the month following the month of employees' contribution deduction</p>	<p>A fixed penalty of £500 plus a further fixed penalty of £50 per day for every further day late following that deadline</p>

<p>Service Level Agreements</p> <p>Failure to submit member event information in line with the requirements of the SLA through the monthly posting facility effective from April 2018</p>	<p>£25 per case</p>
<p>Discretionary Policy Statements</p> <p>Failure to devise and publish any statement of policy on the use of discretionary powers under the Regulations by any statutory deadline</p>	<p>A fixed penalty of £500 plus a Further fixed penalty of £250 for every further week late following that deadline</p>
<p>Payroll Provider Service</p> <p>Failure to ensure that any new Payroll Service Provider is able to maintain the continuity of the monthly posting system</p>	<p>A fixed penalty of £1000 for every monthly report that fails to be submitted from month 1 of the new contract by the standard monthly deadline plus the standard penalty for late submission of monthly returns</p>

Direct Debit Mandate

<p>Failure to complete a mandate to consent to the collection of contributions via direct debit prior to 1 April 2020 or the date of joining the SYPA fund or date of change in banking arrangements if later</p>	<p>A fixed penalty of £500 plus a further fixed penalty of £50 per day for every further day late following that deadline</p>
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~~SYPA anticipates and expects that there could be initial teething problems with the submission of monthly returns.~~

~~For 2018 only, and for the month of April only, the first submission under the new monthly return procedure will, if late, not incur a penalty where the Employing Organisation or its Payroll Provider, is having difficulties and communicates those difficulties to SYPA immediately they are aware of them. Where such communication is made SYPA will endeavour to provide all the assistance and guidance it can to ensure the problem is rectified.~~

~~Where no communication is made any subsequent penalty incurred as a result will stand.~~

Original version April 2016 – V1
 Revised wef ~~April 2020~~ ~~March 2018~~ – This version: **V32**

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