

Agenda Item

Subject	Appeals Breaches and Complaints – Quarter 2 2023/24	Status	For Publication
Report to	Local Pension Board	Date	9 th November 2023
Report of	Director		
Equality Impact Assessment	Not Required	Attached	No
Contact Officer	George Graham Director	Phone	01226 666439
E Mail	ggraham@sypa.org.uk		

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide the Board with information in Appeals, Breaches and Complaints for the second quarter of the year.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are recommended to:
a. Note the contents of this report.

3 Link to Corporate Objectives

- 3.1 This report links to the delivery of the following corporate objectives:

Customer Focus

To design our services around the needs of our customers (whether scheme members or employers).

Listening to our stakeholders

To ensure that stakeholders' views are heard within our decision making processes.

Effective and Transparent Governance

To uphold effective governance showing prudence and propriety at all times.

Using the information generated through analysis of Appeals, Breaches and Complaints should result in positive progress against each of the above corporate objectives.

4 **Implications for the Corporate Risk Register**

4.1 The actions outlined in this report have no implications for the Corporate Risk Register.

5 **Background and Options**

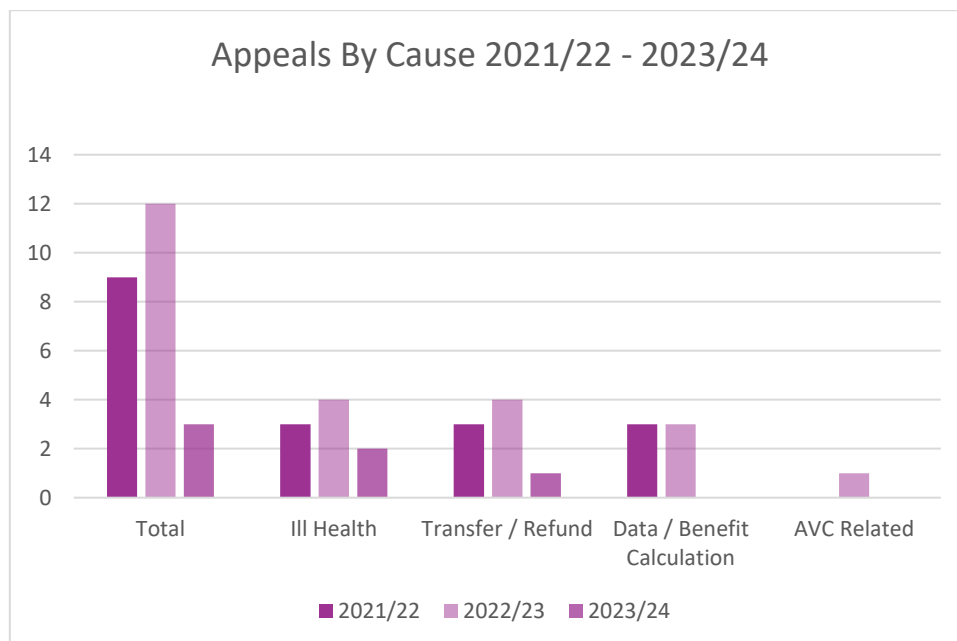
5.1 Each quarter the Board receives a summary of the Appeals, Breaches and Complaints either dealt with or received in the quarter to ensure that the organisation is effectively learning from what happens when things go wrong.

Appeals

5.2 One Stage 1 Appeal against the actions of the Authority has been determined in the quarter and details are provided below.

Ref	Reason for Appeal	Upheld?	Comments
KT	Actions by SYPA has caused delay in processing a transfer into the Fund resulting in a lower value than anticipated being added to the members pension account. In addition, the initial response to the complaint was inadequate causing additional distress to the scheme member.	Yes	The members' account has been adjusted in line with the likely decision had the case been considered by the Ombudsman and compensation of £200 awarded.

5.3 This case is in some senses individual, but it is reflective of some of the difficulties faced when dealing with significant volumes of outstanding work, nonetheless this sort of delay is not acceptable and the way in which the complaint was dealt with made the situation worse and this has been addressed internally. The chart below shows the trends in causes of appeals over the current year and previous two years.



Breaches

5.4 The table below sets out the various breaches identified by the Authority in the quarter.

Ref	Date	Type	Description	Action
70	27/09/2023	GDPR	A monthly payslip file containing 31 payslips was mailed to one member. The member contacted SYPA and confirmed they had shredded the documents.	Reminder issued to staff to follow the correct process which prevents instances of this sort. Procedure reviewed and a further check added to the process to further reduce the risk of instances of this sort. Apology letter issued to the affected members.
68	02/08/2023	GDPR	The details of two members with the same name became entangled resulting in information for one member being provided to the other. The wrongly disclosed information was returned to the office by one of the members and shredded.	Records separated and position rectified by system administration action.
67	03/07/2023	Provision of Information	A change of address and change of nominated beneficiary were processed in the wrong order. This resulted in the letter confirming the change of beneficiary which contains no information as to the nature of the change being sent to the member's ex spouse's house.	An apology was made to the member and feedback given to the members of staff involved.

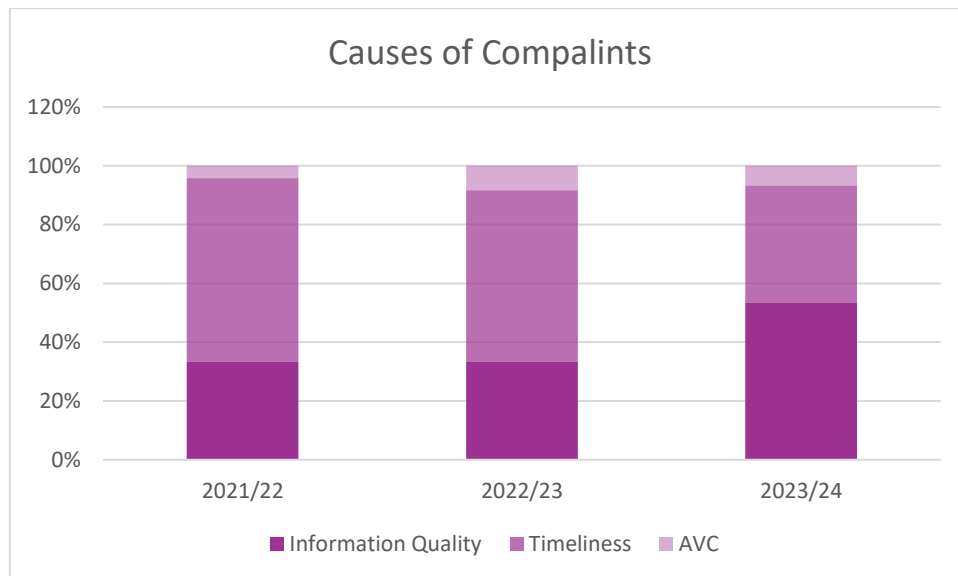
5.5 Each of these cases shows some sort of human error. In two cases the actions of scheme members prevented wider release of information which is to those individual's credit. In one case additional controls have been put in place to prevent a recurrence. However, the other two cases are individual and beyond encouraging that greater attention be paid by staff there appears little in the way of further controls that can be put in place.

Complaints

5.6 The table below outlines the complaints received and dealt with during the quarter

Ref	Complainant	Nature of Complaint	In Time	Responsible party	Other Actions
C121	Active Member	Nomination sent to wrong address (see breach above)	Yes	SYPA	See above
C122	Active Member	Delay with annual allowance calculation and member unhappy with communication in relation to the delays	Yes	SYPA/Third Party	Significant work has been undertaken to address the backlog of tax cases to prevent future cases of this sort but this work will not be completed until at least the end of the year.
C123	Deferred Member	Confirmation that not a scheme member and benefits kept separate	Yes	SYPA/Member	
C124	Active Member	Confusion over the start date on statement, aggregation, value of deferred benefits and the issuing of a transfer statement	Yes	SYPA/Member	
C125	Leaver	Wanted a refund but has previous membership in another fund which was not known up until the point of processing the final leaver data.	Yes	SYPA/Member	
C126	Active Member	Complaint about timeliness of supplying information to another fund. Delays were caused by the employer	Yes	Employer	
C127	Leaver	Complaint about the service when trying to claim a refund. In part caused by member not receiving letters or parts of letters	Yes	SYPA/ Member	Customer Centre checking processes to be reemphasised and improved.
C128	Active Member	Complaint about timeliness of completing and aggregation and lack of clarity in communication.	Yes	SYPA/Member	Issues about clarity of letters being reviewed by management.

5.7 The chart below illustrates the causes of complaints over the current year and the previous two years. Information quality and timeliness remain the main causes with the quality of information provided increasing although often these two issues can be inter-related.



5.8 Officers are examining a more systematic approach to complaint handling which will ensure that any learning is more rapidly transmitted into the operational teams and that there is greater consistency in the handling of complaints.

Cyber Security Incidents

5.9 Over the course of the quarter there were 8 cybersecurity incidents reported, one of which was a duplicate and another a false positive leaving 6 genuine incidents in the period.

5.10 All 6 genuine incidents were reported and contained without clicked links or response to coercion. In all cases the sender address and links were blocked, and all staff notified to raise awareness in relation to future attempts.

5.11 Recent incidents have highlighted the level of sophistication threat actors are able to produce when sending phishing e mails. Staff have so far been able to identify these threats, although awareness training continues to be a priority for the organisation.

6 Implications

6.1 The proposals outlined in this report have the following implications:

Financial	None directly.
Human Resources	None
ICT	None
Legal	The Authority is under an obligation to make appropriate reports to the Pensions Regulator and to appropriately consider both appeals and breaches. This report demonstrates compliance with these obligations.
Procurement	None

George Graham

Director

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure	Booklets (sypensions.org.uk)
Complaints Procedure	Complaints (sypensions.org.uk)