

Member Self Service (MSS) Project update to Pensions Board

1 PROJECT PURPOSE

Background

Altair Member Self Service provides members and pensioners with an easy to use web portal to access and update their own information. Using simple and easy to navigate screens accessed through a fully auditable secure system, a member or a pensioner is able to:

- Update personal details
- Run their own benefit calculations
- Request benefit statements
- Notify the pensions department of any amendments required
- Print nomination and other forms for completion
- View payslips and P60's

The roll out of this service does not only give the above advantages for members it will also free up administration time for the pension and payroll team as any estimate requests, expression of wish forms, change of addresses and bank details can be completed on the website.

Current Membership

Current Havering membership as of March 2017:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------|
| • Actives | 6172 |
| • Deferred | 6083 |
| • Pensioners/ Dependants | 6020 |
| • Frozen Refunds | 329 |

Testing and Website Update

The previous pension manager had done testing of the service and tailored the options the members have regarding what can be updated online. This testing has been extended locally to members of the pensions, payroll and some members of HR. Additional and more rigorous testing has also been done to ensure all calculations and functionality is working using the latest version of the service and it was fit for roll out.

Roll Out

Roll Out was tackled differently dependent on the status of the member:

Active members were sent out in tranches of approximately 2000 members, each tranche lasted 2 weeks before the next tranche was sent out. This minimised the amount of queries raised as there are only a limited amount of potential queries the pension's team could receive per tranche.

Deferred members were sent out in one tranche using inserts with the deferred annual benefit statements as promotion of the service.

Finally pensioners and dependants are due to be sent out in tranches of 2000 and each tranche will last 1 month. Pensioners will be the final group of members enrolled as LBH will need to do some due diligence and data matching of the data held on altair and what is being paid by the payroll. If this is not done then this could result in queries as to why the amounts do not match. This payroll data matching is due to be completed in summer 2017.

- Active members there will be 3 or more tranches dependant on employer splits
- Deferred members there will be 1 tranches
- Pensioner members there will be 3 tranches

Promotion of MSS

Promotion of service varied dependant on the status of the member:

Active Members

- Promotion on the www.yourpension.org.uk/handr website
- Promotion in 'The News – Global Email'
- Promotion on the intranet site
- Information and guides will be sent to new starters of the scheme

Deferred Members

- Bulk email to email addresses held on altair
- Promotion on the www.yourpension.org.uk/handr website
- Wording to be included on the annual benefit statement

Pensioner Members (once roll out commences)

- Bulk email to email addresses held on altair
- Promotion on the www.yourpension.org.uk/handr website
- Wording/ message to be included on payslips

2 OBJECTIVES

The objective is to allow all members of the pension scheme to have access to their own records via electronic means. This will be reliant on a number of factors;

- Promote the project in such a way to maximise take up from members.
- Roll out service within specified timescales as outlined above.
- Reduce basic correspondence requests from members

3 BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING MSS

Members are in Control

With MSS being available to members it hands back some of the responsibility to the members allowing them to monitor their records and alert the pensions team to anything that may be incorrect such as previous service, working hours and or any personal information. This makes paying benefits a smoother process as any potential queries will be addressed before retirement and the member is happy with and aware what benefits are payable. Members can also update their personal details, nomination form and contact the pension department directly if any queries do arise.

Reduction in Multiple Estimate Requests

Since the roll out of MSS any members that ask for multiple estimate requests are informed about the service and issued with login details so they can run their own estimates at different dates. The pension's team have also seen a reduction in these types of request since implementation freeing up time to process other work types. Any members that are nearing retirement, whilst can use the system to estimate when they will retire, the pensions team will also do an estimate on the date they have chosen to ensure accuracy of the figures.

Financial Benefits

Having completed both stages of disclosure LBH are now in a position to upload the annual benefit statements rather than posting them to members which gives significant savings year on year. There are also new developments within altair, the pensions database, that allow documents to be published to MSS meaning in an ideal world physical posted documents could be a thing of the past.

Targeted Information

MSS has the facility to upload documents and have news stories within the service; this can be taken advantage when promoting certain services that LBH offer. The pensions team have used this when advising members of the change in actuarial factors for over 65's and also the more recent news story of the cohabitating partner that won the ruling to extend benefits automatically to partners that are unmarried.

4 RESULTS

The roll out for active and deferred members of the scheme was completed in December 2016 and to date LBH have had 797 members register and use the system. In a drive to increase the amount of email addresses on the system LBH now have over 5000 email addresses on members records which is just under 30% of the total membership, this is up from 19% (3,600) in September 2016.

Both stages of disclosure have now also been completed; the pension's team took advantage of the bulk mail out for the vacant pension board member position and included it in the letter. This allows the pensions team to upload members annual benefit statements to their online accounts which brings potential savings on printing and postage as outlined below. To date the pension's team have had 166 people opt out of electronic communications so some will still be sent out as a hardcopy statement. This equates to fewer than 2% of the active and deferred membership, from previous experience and once the system is in place for longer LBH can expect up to 5% of members opting out of electronic communications.

The pension's team have had very positive feedback from members that are using the system as they now have easy access to their pension records and can update personal details and run estimates which accurately let them know what they can expect to receive. The most popular calculation used is the voluntary retirement calculation as members can accurately see the difference in benefits if they choose different leave dates, this helps the pension team out as we have seen requests for multiple retirement dates go down in the last couple of months.

Another promotion drive of the service is needed through the prescribed routes over the next 3 months to increase membership and also to stop a bottleneck of mass subscriptions when the annual benefit statements are issued. There is a facility to bulk email out activation keys to members that have an email address which the pension's team will be investigating as part of the promotion of online benefit statements.

All the pension staff have received training on the system and can deal with member queries efficiently. More training is planned as a refresher closer to the next promotion of member self-service. In house guides have been produced to help the pension team walk through the sign up process with members.

Overall this project has run smoothly without any major issues however there does seem to be a consistent query with a minority of members around not being able to login or the activation key/ link doesn't work. After some investigation the issue has been pin pointed and there is one factor that is constant, this is the use of unsupported internet browsers such as Chrome. This has been reported back to the software providers, Heywoods, so that future releases can include improved connectivity and usability for different browsers.

The future of the service will start by migrating to the new look Member self-service later in 2017 at no extra cost, this is dependent on agreeing the shared service approach with LPP. The pension's team will, of course, be looking at increasing the uptake of member self-service and monitoring this closely.

5 LINKS TO OTHER PROJECTS

E-Comms

In a drive to reduce print and postage costs on an on-going basis, year on year, from 2017 active and deferred annual benefit statements will be uploaded to member's online records unless members wish to opt out of electronic communications. This could see potential savings of up to £4,300.00* per annum.

*Based on 2016 annual benefit statements print and postage costs

Pension to Payroll Cross Check

Before the final roll out to pensioner members it is essential to do a pension to payroll cross check, this will ensure the pension in payment matches the members record. Failure to do this will see an increase in queries to the pension team and be counterproductive.

GMP Reconciliation

In preparation for the GMP reconciliation the above project will prepare the pension records for members without a GMP and ensure they are correct. Once the project is completed the member data will be ready and MSS can be rolled out for these members.