



Havering
L O N D O N B O R O U G H

**HAVING PENSION FUND
COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

2021-2024

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1. Introduction

An effective communications policy is vital for any organisation which strives to provide a high quality and consistent service to their stakeholders.

Havering Council, as the administering authority for the Havering Pension Fund (the Fund), must maintain a communications policy as required by the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulation 2013.

The provision of timely, relevant information in a suitable format is key to ensuring efficient and effective communications. It is important that we consider the costs in terms of resource and staff time for all communications and work with the LPPA to ensure there are appropriate systems and processes in place to facilitate these communications with our stakeholders.

This policy identifies our key stakeholders and details the different forms and methods of communications required to maintain the successful governance and administration of the Fund.

Every effort is made to ensure all our communications are accessible to all. Documents can be re-produced in different fonts, formats and languages where required by the recipient.

Strategy Review, Ownership and Authorisation

The Havering Pension Fund Communications Policy is effective with effect from November 2021.

The administering authority will review this policy as required to reflect changes in regulations, governance or working practices with a full review every three years

The policy lead is the Pension Projects and Contracts Manager. The document has been developed with approval from the Pensions Committee.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Pensions Administration Strategy, please contact Caroline Guyon, Pensions Projects and Contracts Manager.
Telephone: 01708 432185 or via email caroline.guyon@havering.gov.uk

Pensions Administration

From 1 November 2017, the London Borough of Havering delegated the pension administration service to Lancashire County Council who have engaged the Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA) to undertake their pension portfolio. The Local Pensions Partnership was formed in 2016 through a collaboration between Lancashire County Council and the London Pensions Fund Authority and provides pension services to the Local Government Pension Scheme, Police and Firefighter Schemes.

LPPA can be contacted via telephone on 0300 323 0260 or via the contact form on the [website](#).

2. Legislative Framework

The Fund is required by regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 to maintain and publish a communications policy statement. Regulation 61 is reproduced below:

61. (1) An administering authority must prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out its policy concerning communications with-

- a) Members
- b) Representatives of members
- c) Prospective members
- d) Scheme employers

(2) In particular the statement must set out its policy on-

- a) The provision of information and publicity about the scheme to members, representatives of members and Scheme employers
- b) The format, requery and method of distributing such information or publicity
- c) The promotion of the Scheme to prospective members and their employers

(3) The statement must be revised and published by the administering authority following a material change in their policy on any of the matters referred to in paragraph (2).

In accordance with the Public Sector Pensions Act 2015, the LGPS is regulated by the Pensions Regulator who has provided guidance in Code of Practice 14 on providing good quality communications to Scheme members and other stakeholders.

3. Key Objectives

The key objectives of the communications policy are:

- To improve the understanding of members, their representatives and perspective members of the benefits of the Local Government Pension Scheme
- Assist Scheme employers in understanding their roles and responsibilities within the LGPS and to provide guidance and support
- To improve the service that Pension Fund Members receive
- Use plain English for all communications
- Identify and use the most appropriate communication method to take account of stakeholders' different needs
- To communicate in the most effective and cost efficient way

4. Communications with Scheme Members

Our aims for communicating with our scheme members are:

- to better educate members of the benefits of the scheme to reduce the general queries being directed to the LPPA help desk
- to encourage the use of the pension scheme website and registration to My Pension Online - Member Self Service.

The Key actions will be:

- continual review of employee communication methods to ensure they are effective and efficient
- on-going promotion of the pension websites and Member Self Service
- Working with LPPA to ensure communications are relevant and timely

Action	Audience	Media	End of Year Review 2022
Review and update the pension websites and intranet site	All	Web	
Promote the pension websites and intranet	All	Web	
Promote My Pension Online – Member Self Service	Active, Deferred and Pensioner	Web	
Ensure relevant, accurate and timely communications are sent to all members	All	Paper or electronic	

The Administering Authority will ensure the following communications are provided as required, in addition to day to day individual communications with members.

Communication	Media	Frequency of Issue	Distribution	Audience
Pension Websites	Web	Continually available. Updated as required	Advertised on all communications	All
Havering staff intranet site	Web	Continually available. Updated as required	Advertised regularly via internal communications	Havering Corporate staff

Having Pension Fund Communication Policy 2021-2024

Scheme booklet	Web	Continually available. Updated as required	For viewing as required	All
Factsheets	Web	Continually available. Updated and replaced as required	For viewing as required	All
Newsletters and scheme updates	Web or paper	As required	For viewing as required. Post to home address for targeted communication	All
Forms	Web or paper	As required	Available to download or post to home address	All
Annual Benefit Statements	Web or paper if opted out of online statements	Continually available. Updated annually	For viewing as required. Members are informed of availability via personal email, email to employers or internal Global News	Active and Deferred
Retirement Workshops	Web	Periodically	LPPA run retirement workshops for members nearing retirement. These are advertised via employer communications	
Road shows/ Workshops	Face to face in person or virtually	When required	Advertised via email, Global News, Posters and employers	Active
Pensioner payslips	Paper	1 st pension payment and every April, May and October	Post to home address	Pensioner
Notice of Pensions Increase	Paper	Annually in April	Post to home address with April payslip	Pensioner
Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure	Paper or Web	Continually available. Updated as required	Post to home address or available to download	All

Annual Report and Accounts	Web	Continually available. Replaced annually	For viewing as required.	All
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Explanation of communications

Pension Websites - The LPPA website (www.lppapensions.co.uk) provides LGPS information for all of their clients, including forms, guides, newsletters, links to related sites including My Pension Online Member Self Service and contact information. The Havering Pension website (www.havering.gov.uk › info › council_data_and_spending › pension_fund) provides information specific to Havering Fund members such as our retirement process factsheet and planning guide, IDR policy, Annual report and accounts and information about the Local Pensions Board.

Scheme booklet - A booklet providing detailed overview of the LGPS, including who can join, how much it costs, the retirement and death benefits and how to purchase additional pension.

Factsheets – Leaflets that provide information in relation to specific topics, for example automatic enrolment.

Newsletters – General newsletters are issued annually and additionally as required, usually when a significant change to the scheme occurs. Pensions Increase newsletters are sent annually to advise pensioner members of the increase to their pension.

Forms – LGPS forms are available on the pension website such as opt out form, 50:50 or Main Scheme election form and nomination form.

Annual Benefit Statements – For active members these include the current value of benefits and projected benefits to normal retirement date. The associated death benefits are also shown. For deferred members these show the current value of the pension benefits and associated death benefits. These are released by the end of August and are available on My Pension Online – Member Self Service. Members can opt out of the online service and elect to receive a paper copy sent to their home address.

Retirement workshops – LPPA run a programme of retirement workshops held virtually throughout the year. We advertise these via employer and internal communications

Road shows – These are available, when required, providing staff with the opportunity to have a face to face conversation about their pension rights. These can also be held virtually.

Pensioner payslips – The payslips are sent when a member receives their first pension payment, if the monthly amount varies by more than £5, each April and May. They are posted to the pensioner’s home address.

Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure – A formal notification of the procedure to follow in the event that a dispute cannot be resolved by the LPPA or the Havering Pensions Projects or Contracts Manager

Annual Report and Accounts – Detailed document providing information regarding the value of the Pension Fund during the financial year, income, expenditure and other scheme based information such as the number of scheme members and scheme employers. This is published and available on the Havering pension website.

5. Communications with Prospective Scheme Members

Our aims for communicating with our prospective scheme members are:

- to increase the take up of the LGPS
- to better educate members of the benefits of the scheme to reduce the general queries being directed to the LPPA help desk

The Key actions will be:

- review of communication methods to ensure they are effective and efficient
- ensuring automatic enrolment and re-enrolment is well communicated

Action	Audience	Media	End of Year Review 2022
Ensure pension website is included with new employee contracts and information packs	New employees	Paper or electronic	
Review and update the pension websites	All	Web	
Work with employer to ensure automatic enrolment is correctly communicated	Existing employee	Paper or electronic	

The pension scheme will work with LPPA and employers to provide the following communication as required.

Communication	Media	Frequency of Issue	Distribution	Audience
Pensions Joiner Option Form	Paper or electronic	On commencing employment	Via LPPA with new starter information	New employees
Pension Websites	Web	Continually available. Updated as required	Advertised on all communications	All

Scheme booklet	Web	Continually available. Updated as required	For viewing as required	All
Education Sessions	Face to Face or virtually	As required	Part of induction workshops	New Employees
Annual Report and Accounts	Web	Continually available. Replaced annually	For viewing as required.	All

Explanation of communications

Pensions Joiner Option Form – Form provided to all new employees which provides the details of the pension scheme website and allows them to advise of any previous pension entitlements.

Pension Website - The LPPA website (www.lppapensions.co.uk) provides LGPS information for all of their clients, including forms, guides, newsletters, links to related sites including My Pension Online Member Self Service and contact information. The Havering Pension website (www.havering.gov.uk › info › council_data_and_spending › pension_fund) provides information specific to Havering Fund members such as our retirement process factsheet and planning guide, IDR policy, Annual report and accounts and information about the Local Pensions Board.

Scheme booklet - A booklet providing detailed overview of the LGPS, including who can join, how much it costs, the retirement and death benefits and how to purchase additional pension.

Education sessions – A presentation providing an overview of the benefits of the pension scheme and an opportunity to ask questions.

Annual Report and Accounts – Detailed document providing information regarding the value of the Pension Fund during the financial year, income, expenditure and other scheme based information such as the number of scheme members and scheme employers. This is published and available on the Havering pensions website.

6. Communications with Scheme Employers

Our aims for communicating with our scheme employers are:

- to improve relationships
- to assist them in understanding their role as a scheme employer
- to assist them in understanding funding/cost requirements
- to work together to achieve accurate scheme actuary data submissions
- to ensure smooth staff transfers
- to improve the service our pension fund members receive

The Key actions will be:

- offer induction meetings for all new scheme employers
- support employers with training and technical guidance
- on-going promotion of the employer section of the LPPA pension website and use of the YourFund secure portal
- working with relevant parties to admit new employers to the fund

Action	Audience	Media	End of Year Review 2022
Meet with all new scheme employers to discuss responsibilities and requirements	Employers	Face to face or virtually	
Review and update the employer sections of the pension websites	Employer	Web	
Work with LPPA to promote employer training sessions	Employer	Web	
Work with LPPA to ensure accurate and timely data submissions	Employer	Email, phone, face to face or virtually	
Provide regular updates to employers on key aspects of the scheme	Employer	Web or email	

The pension scheme will provide the following communication to employers as required.

Communication	Media	Frequency of Issue	Distribution	Audience
Induction meeting	Face to Face or virtually	On becoming a scheme employer	By email	New scheme employers
New employer information pack	Electronic	On becoming a scheme employer	By email	New scheme employers
Pension Websites	Web	Continually available. Updated as required	Advertised on all communications	All
Tupe Manual and Admissions Policy	Web	Continually available. Updated as required	For viewing as required	Scheme employers and potential admitted bodies
Employer roadshows	Face to Face or virtually	When required following scheme changes	Advertised via email to employer	All
Annual Report and Accounts	Web	Continually available. Replaced annually	For viewing as required.	All
Pension Fund Valuation reports	Electronic	Every three years	Via email	All
Funding Strategy Statement	Web	Continually available. Replaced every three years and updated as required	For viewing as required.	All
Employer Newsletters	Electronic and Web	Periodically	Via Email or for viewing as required	Scheme employers

Explanation of communications

Induction Meeting – A meeting offered to all new academies and admitted bodies to discuss roles and responsibilities.

New Employer Information Pack – Email sent to welcome an employer to the Havering LGPS, including all information relevant to being a scheme employer, eg paying contributions and the pensions administration strategy detailing their role and responsibilities.

Pension Website - The LPPA website (www.lppapensions.co.uk) provides LGPS information for all of their clients, including forms, guides, newsletters, links to related sites including My Pension Online Member Self Service and contact information. The Havering Pension website (www.havering.gov.uk › info › council_data_and_spending › pension_fund) provides information specific to Havering Fund members such as our retirement process factsheet and planning guide, IDRPs policy, Annual report and accounts and information about the Local Pensions Board.

TuPE Manual and Admissions Policy – These documents are relevant to Letting Authorities that are looking to outsource a service to a third party supplier

Employer Roadshows – Provided by LPPA/LB Havering as required following a significant change in the scheme

Annual Report and Accounts – Detailed document providing information regarding the value of the Pension Fund during the financial year, income, expenditure and other scheme based information such as the number of scheme members and scheme employers. This is published and available on the pensions website

Pension Fund Valuation Reports – A report issued every three years setting out estimates assets and liabilities of the Fund as a whole and setting individual employer contribution rates for the next three year period

Funding Strategy Statement – A summary of the Fund's approach to funding its liabilities, including reference to the Fund's other policies although it is not an exhaustive statement of policy on all issues.

7. Communications with Representatives of Members

A. Pensions Committee

Our aims for communicating with Pensions Committee are:

- to provide information to enable the Committee to make decisions delegated under the Council's constitution
- to provide information to ensure the Committee are kept informed of pension related matters
- to ensure the Committee are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the Scheme

- to provide training with regards to investment and administration matters
- The Key actions will be:
- to submit Committee reports, which have been reviewed by the relevant Council business partners and senior manager
 - To arrange training sessions with Fund officers, advisors and external experts when required

Action	Audience	Media	End of Year Review 2022
To submit Committee reports in line with the annual plan and as and when required	Pensions Committee Members	Paper and web	
To arrange required training as and when required	Pensions Committee Members	Face to Face, online or virtually	

The pension scheme will provide the following communication to Pensions Committee Members as required.

Communication	Media	Frequency of Issue	Distribution	Audience
Pensions Committee Reports	Paper and Web	Quarterly and as and when required	By email and available on the Havering.Gov website	Pension Committee Members and Trade Union representatives
Pensions Committee Briefings	Face to face or Hybrid	Quarterly and as and when required		Pensions Committee Members and Trade Union representatives
Training sessions	Face to face or virtually	When there is a new Pensions Committee and as and when required	By email	Pensions Committee Members and Trade Union representatives

Explanation of communications

Pensions Committee Reports – Formal reports written by Pension Fund officers and reviewed by Business Partners and a Senior Leadership Team member. Published on the havering.gov.uk website

Pension Committee Briefings – Pension Fund officers attend each Committee meeting and provide a verbal briefing on each Committee report

Training sessions – Provided by Pension Fund officers, advisors or external experts on investment or administration related matters. Training is shared with the Local Pension Board members where applicable

B. Local Pensions Board

Our aims for communicating with the Local Pensions Board are:

- to provide information to enable the board to assist the Scheme Manager in executing their duties
- to provide information to ensure the board are kept informed of pension related matters
- to ensure the board are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the Scheme
- to provide training with regards to investment and administration matters

The Key actions will be:

- to submit reports on areas identified for review by the Board.
- To arrange training sessions with Fund officers, advisors and external experts when required

Action	Audience	Media	End of Year Review 2022
To submit reports in line with the Board work plan and any additional areas identified at meetings	Local Pension Board	Paper and web	
To arrange required training as and when required	Local Pension Board	Face to Face, online or virtually	

The pension scheme will provide the following communication to the Local Pension Board as required.

Communication	Media	Frequency of Issue	Distribution	Audience

Local Pension Board Reports	Paper and Web	Quarterly and as and when required	By email and available on the Havering.Gov websites	Local Pension Board
Local Pension Board Briefings	Face to face or virtually	Quarterly and as and when required	Fund officers attend each meeting	Local Pension Board
Training sessions	Face to face and online	When a new members is appointed. Continual self- development is also required	Face to face, web based or virtually	Local Pension Board

Explanation of communications

Local Pension Board reports – Written by Pension Fund officers to provide a formal update to a particular area of work

Local Pension Board briefings – Pension Fund officers attend each Board meeting to provide a verbal overview of written reports and to provide updates on any on-going work

Training sessions – Provided by Pension Fund officers, advisors or external experts on investment or administration related matters. Targeted training is also available for Local Pension Board members online via the Pensions Regulator website. Training is shared with the Pensions Committee members where applicable

C. Havering and oneSource Managers

Our aims for communicating with the Havering and oneSource managers are:

- to provide information to be able to make decisions delegated under the Council’s constitution
- to provide accurate, timely and relevant information on request
- to ensure managers are aware of any pension related employer costs

The Key actions will be:

- to submit executive decision reports on areas identified as requiring management approval.
- to ensure that employer requests for pension estimates are monitored against the contractual key performance indicator and include employer costs.

Action	Audience	Media	End of Year Review 2022

To write key or non-key executive decision reports as required in line with the Council's constitution	Senior or oneSource Management	Paper or email	
To ensure the provision of employer estimates is in line with the contractual agreement	HR and Heads of Service	Paper or email	

The pension scheme will provide the following communication to managers as required.

Communication	Media	Frequency of Issue	Distribution	Audience
Key and non-key executive decision reports and background papers where required	Paper or electronic	As and when required	By email	Officer delegated responsibility under the Council's constitution
Employer requested pension estimates, usually for redundancy, flexible retirement or ill health retirement	Paper or electronic	As requested	By email	HR or Head of Service

Explanation of communications

Key and non key executive decision report - Formal reports written by Pension Fund officers and reviewed by Business Partners and agreed by a Senior Leadership Team member in accordance with the Council's constitution.

Employer requested pension estimates – A detailed statement of the scheme member's pension benefits and any cost to the employer due to the payment of the pension to the member.

D. Other Stakeholders

Pension Fund Manager (Finance)

The Pension Fund Manager (Finance) responds to staff, employer and other enquiries. Skills and knowledge are kept up to date through participation in seminars and conferences.

Pension Projects and Contracts Manager

The Pensions Projects and Contracts Manager is responsible for monitoring the administration contract with the Local Pensions Partnership Administration. Quarterly client reviews take place to monitor the contract and check the service

level agreements are being met. They are also responsible for maintaining relationships with scheme employers, trade unions and other relevant stakeholders.

Investment Fund Managers

Day to day contact between the Pension Fund Manager (Finance) and the investment fund managers is maintained. Each fund manager is required to present their performance reports to the Pensions Committee on a cyclical basis, unless performance concerns override this.

Trade Unions

Trade unions in the London Borough of Havering are valuable ambassadors for the Pension Scheme. They ensure that details of the Local Government Pension Scheme’s availability are brought to their members’ attention and assist in negotiations under TUPE transfers in order to ensure, whenever possible, continued access to the Scheme.