

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

WILTSHIRE LOCAL PENSION BOARD
24 August 2021

ADMINISTRATION KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Fund's performance against its key performance indicators (KPIs) in relation to the administration of pension benefits.

Background

2. In the interests of transparency and to help monitor overall administration performance, officers agreed with Committee and Board to publish quarterly benefits administration key performance indicators (KPIs)
3. KPIs are an important aspect of providing an efficient and effective customer-focussed benefits administration service.

Considerations for the Board

4. The figures in this report cover the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 unless otherwise indicated.
5. As the Fund's approach to administration continues to develop, officers have updated our approach to our key performance indicators. A new approach is outlined in the appendices of this paper and further explained below:

Appendix 1: Disclosure requirement performance (using the CIPFA template) – these are quasi-legal performance targets. This is largely unchanged although some items are removed where Scheme members have instant access to quotes.

Appendix 2: The Pension Regulator (tPR) performance monitoring metrics – the key indicators that tPR focuses on within its annual report. This now includes the annual benefit statement measure but is otherwise unchanged from early versions.

Appendix 3: Internal targets (Fund performance). All Fund-decided targets have been consolidated into one section. The administrative targets focus on the high priority payment-related processes rather than the lower priority administrative tasks which are based on updating member records (although this may follow at a later date). Although backlog monitoring is still included which is a more a meaningful analysis of the lower priority tasks. No 'backlogs' exists for high priority tasks.

Appendix 4: Internal targets (Employer performance): With increasing number of employers using i-Connect, officers have revised the tables to focus on the timeliness and accuracy of i-Connect reports. For completeness, officers have also included employer performance against sending contributions in on time (for i-Connect employers only).

Conclusions

General comments

Disclosure Regulations (Appendix 1)

6. The table in appendix 1 shows high levels in all areas except deferments, joiners and some death notifications. Some technical difficulties have persisted whilst changing processes which have led to joiners and deferments being lower than hoped while death notifications are sometimes limited by not receiving timely information from, or being able to identify, the next of kin. Officers anticipate that joiners and deferments should improve in future quarters once the technical issue is resolved.

tPR Common and Conditional Data percentages (Appendix 2a)

7. The Fund's common data figure of **98.5%** and the conditional/scheme specific figure of **96.4%** (both improvements since last year) compare favourably to the industry averages of 96.6% (common) and 94.6% (conditional) respectively. Whilst still lower than the long-term goal, which we expect will be met through further implementation of i-Connect, good progress in this area has been made over the last three years.

Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) production levels (Appendix 2b)

8. As this paper, and the Local Pension Board, occur before the 31 August 2021 deadline, the production rate for this year is currently unknown and is dependant on employer response rates to the remaining queries. However, officers anticipate exceeding last year's percentage and being close to the target of a 99% production rate. The outcome for this year will be shared at the next LPB meeting.

Administration Strategy KPIs – Fund (Appendix 3a)

9. Table 1 shows the Fund has made good improvement in all areas in the last quarter although further work is still required to reach the desired performance levels. The Fund is gradually seeing the benefits of greater automation of tasks, which is freeing up officer time, and this programme of improvements will continue over the rest of this year and into the next year.

i-Connect and My Wiltshire Pension (MSS) onboarding (Appendix 3b-3c)

10. i-Connect take up received a significant boost with the onboarding of Swindon Borough Council (the 2nd largest employers) and a large payroll provider in the Fund, FS4S; both with effect from March 2021, increasing the active membership coverage to over 75%. Officers will continue to work with the remaining circa 93 employers (mostly reasonably small), with the aim of onboarding them by the end of the financial year. However, it is noted that Swindon Borough Council have had difficulties in producing subsequent reports and therefore they are currently a number of months behind.
11. MSS sign-ups are broadly in line with industry-norms after successful attempts to encourage more members to sign up and these figures are unlikely to change materially in future now, although some small improvements are still evident in the last few months.

Backlog monitoring (Appendix 3d)

12. Whilst the current backlogs are not leading to a material number of complaints, they are still an issue which needs further work to improve overall efficiency and customer service.
13. However, there has been a reduction in the number of outstanding cases in both the last two quarters and officers have recently appointed two new members of staff. One has already started and is undergoing training and the other is due to start shortly.

Administration Strategy KPIs – i-Connect (Appendix 4)

14. The timeliness of submissions varied materially over the period but was highest in June at 89%. Contributions from i-Connect are overwhelming also sent on time but only 80% of returns currently pass the test of checking contribution amounts received versus data.

Environmental Impact

15. There is no environmental impact from this report.

Financial Considerations

16. There are no immediate financial considerations resulting from the reporting of the Fund's performance against its key performance indicators.

Risk Assessment

17. There are no direct risks to the Fund associated with this reporting.

Legal Implications

18. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

Safeguarding Considerations/Public Health Implications/Equalities Impact

19. There are no implications at this time.

Proposals

20. The Board is asked to note the content of this paper, including the revised tables, and is invited to make any comments or recommendations on the revisions it may have.

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APPENDIX 1

Disclosure Requirements (CIPFA template) – Quasi-legal performance measures

The table below is based on a template produced and updated by CIPFA for insertion within LGPS Funds annual report. It is based on what are collectively known as the 'disclosure requirements' which broadly means that the Fund is required to supply certain information to members (or their next of kin).

Benefit Administration Key Performance Indicators

Disclosure Regulations

Period 01/04/2021 to 30/06/2021

Process name		Disclosure Requirement	%	Change since last quarter	No. cases within Legal Timeframe
Deaths - initial letter acknowledging death		2 months	96.9%	+11.9%	126
Deaths - letter notifying amount of dependants pension		2 months	81.8%	-1.2%	106
Retirements - letter notifying estimate of retirement benefits	Active	2 months	n/a		n/a
	Deferred		n/a		n/a
	Total		93.7%	-3.3%	465
Retirements - letter notifying actual retirement benefits + process and pay benefits on time	Active	2 months	96.9%	+0.9%	245
	Deferred		99.6%	+0.6%	247
	Total		98.4%	+1.4%	492
Deferment - calculate and notify deferred benefits		2 months	58.8%	+13.3%	368
Refund - process and pay a refund		2 months	99.3%	-0.7%	138
Divorce quote - letter detailing cash equivalent value and other benefits		3 months	96.4%	-3.6%	75
Joiners - notification of date of enrolment		2 months	61.6%	-2.4%	492

Explanatory notes

Deaths: For both measures, the timeframes start on the date of notification. However, sometimes the notification is not from the next of kin (e.g. we are notified from a tracing agent) and it can take some time to establish who is the next of kin and if a dependent pension is due.

'Transfers out' quote and estimates: We have removed this measure from the table as members have instance access to quotes.

Joiners: This measures the time taken to confirm to a member that we have set them up in the Scheme. However, it is an employer responsibility to begin the deduction of contributions with effect from the member's start date and also to inform the member of their start date.

We have also removed very low volume task as percentages are not a good measure of performance.

APPENDIX 2: tPR Data performance measures

The Pension Regulator (tPR) helps regulate each LGPS's Fund compliance with various legislation. It has various enforcement powers such as setting improvement plans and fining.

In respect of administrative performance, tPR focuses on two types of measures as explained separately below. The Fund is required to submit its scores against these measures each year as part of its Scheme Return.

tPR target's for all of these scores is 100% although there is an informal acceptance that scores are likely to often be slightly less.

a). Common and Conditional/Scheme Specific data scores

Common data scores test the Fund's data quality (existence and accuracy of data) against various data measures it expects all Pension Funds to hold (e.g. name, address etc). Conditional/Scheme Specific data scores are those data types which are needed for the administration of that specific scheme. For the LGPS, the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) has determined the relevant data items.

Note: It was somewhat onerous and costly to do this analysis so at present the Fund only revisits these scores annually, normally in October, in order to complete its annual report.

The Fund's latest scores are: (as at 12 October 2020)

tPR Common Data Percentage

Total score = 98.5% (+0.6% since 11/10/2019)

tPR Conditional Data Percentage

Total score = 96.4% (+1.0% since 11/10/2019)

These percentages are re-calculated annually.

b). Active Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) production

The Fund is required under the LGPS Regulations to produce active ABSs by the 31 August of each year (related to the member's pension as at 31 March of that same year). The Fund currently uploads all ABSs to the MSS member portal (My Wiltshire Pension). It only sends out paper statements to members who have opted in to receiving paper statements.

The Fund's active ABS production rate for 2020 was as follows:

2020 = 96.9%

The Fund's target for 2021 is to reach 99% by 31 August 2021.

The Pension Regulator stated within its *Public Service Governance and Administration Survey 2020-2021*, that the average ABS production rate in the public sector for 2020 was 94%, down slightly from the 95% in 2019.

However, around 48% of Local Government Funds stated they met the target for all members.

APPENDIX 3: Internally set targets (Fund)

While the figures in appendix 1 outline the (quasi) legal requirements using a CIPFA template, and appendix 2 outlines the tPR's own metrics against which it may take action, appendix 3 outlines internally set, aspirational service level targets. The Fund's administrative performance priority is its performance against the targets in appendices 1 and 2 but the following sets of information set's out internally set targets to help met the goals of the Fund's business plan.

a). Administration payment processing scores (higher priority administrative tasks)

The following table shows the Fund's process times against the timeframes set out in the administration strategy. It covers the high priority tasks, data on lower priority administrative tasks (such as deferrals and aggregations) will be shared at a later date. The tasks which are deemed as higher priority are the ones which relate to making a payment to the member (or a beneficiary). Members are now able to instantly access benefits estimates and therefore there is no longer a disclosed target related to this.

Period **01/04/2021** to **30/06/2021**

Type of case	Created cases in period	Open cases at period end	Percentage against membership	Completed cases time to complete						Total	% on target (15 working days)	Change since last quarter
				0 - 5 days	6 - 10 days	11 - 15 days	16 - 20 days	20 - 40 days	40 + days			
Active to Retirement	196	101	0.44%	91	40	31	38	36	16	252	64%	+45%
Deferred in to retirement	247	10	0.03%	125	55	52	13	2	1	248	94%	+10%
Processing of Death cases	132	162	0.20%	17	32	20	12	37	12	130	53%	+23%
Refund of contributions	53	17	0.07%	33	103	1	1	0	1	139	99%	+1%
Grand Total	628	290		266	230	104	64	75	30	769		
Percentage				35%	30%	14%	8%	10%	4%			

b). i-Connect onboarding progress

The following table shows the progress in onboarding employers on to i-Connect. The long-term target is now to onboard all employers on to i- by the end of 2021/2022. Data was last calculated on 7 June 2021.

	Number onboarded	Number left to onboard	Completion rate
Active members	17,701	5398 (total = 23,099)	76.6% (+30.8% since last meeting)
Employers	77	93 (total = 170)	45.3% (+21.8%)

The active member percentage is much higher than the employer percentage because officers have focussed on onboarding the largest employers.

c). MSS (My Wiltshire Pension) take up

A table summarising the position as at 7 June 2021 is shown below. Note the figures are 'pension record' level figures, rather than member level, as this is easier to report and there is little difference in the percentages. There has been very little change in recent quarters, which is as expected as the take up rate is in line with industry norms.

RECORDS	
ACTIVE	7 June 2021
Registered	9,041
Total	23,101
Percentage	39.1% (up 1.6%)
DEFERRED	
Registered	10,291
Total	31,692
Percentage	32.5% (up 1.2%)
TOTAL	
Registered	19,340
Total	54,793
Percentage	35.3%

d). Backlog monitoring

Prior to making a number of process improvements to the refunds, deferreds and aggregations processes, the Fund accumulated processing backlogs in certain areas. Officers define a backlog for a process where there are more than 300 outstanding cases. Where this is the case, officers plan to ring-fence this area of work and manage the backlog area of work separately although this is not in place as at the date of this report.

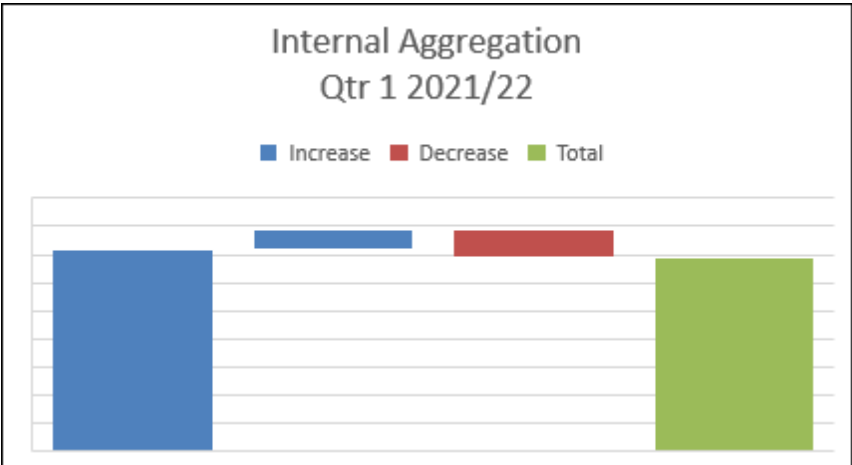
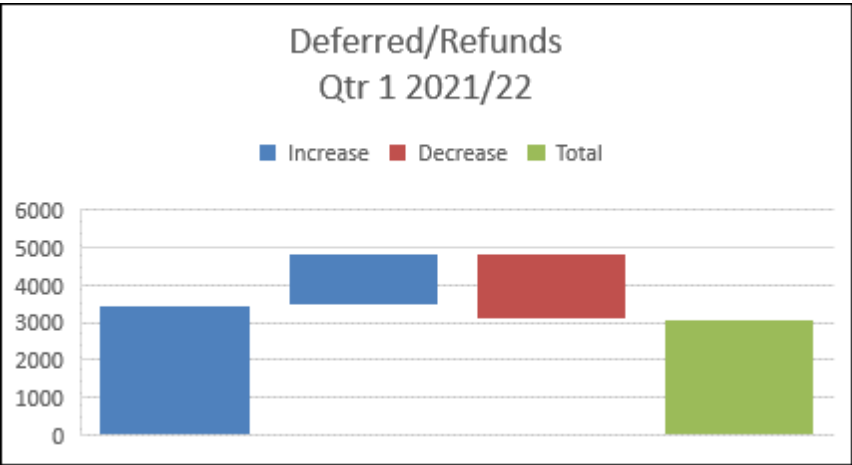
At present, there are two areas which meet this criteria and current situation in respect of these processes are outlined:

i). Deferred/Refunds

Cases where the member has left and we need to calculate their pension entitlement, but they are not old enough to be able to start receiving their benefits.

ii). Internal aggregation cases

These cases are where the member has more than one record at Wiltshire Pension Fund which should be combined together. Members are not financially disadvantaged by delays in completing this work.



APPENDIX 4: Internal targets - Employers

a). i-Connect submission performance

Note: Newly onboarded employers are not included with the performance statistics as typically more support is needed in the initial months and therefore the normal deadlines do not apply.

i). Timeliness measure of submissions

All employers onboarded on to i-Connect are required to submit their return by the 19th of the month following the month the data relates to.

Percentage/number returns received on time	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021
Large employers* (>250 actives)	3/5 (60%)	1/5 (20%)	3/5 (60%)
Medium employers* (50-249 actives)	11/13 (85%)	1/13 (8%)	13/14 (93%)
Small employers* (10-49 actives)	23/24 (96%)	12/25 (48%)	22/24 (92%)
Very small employers* (Under 10 actives)	7/12 (58%)	7/11 (64%)	10/11 (91%)
Total	44/54 (81%)	21/54 (39%)	48/54 (89%)

*Employers numbers are just assessed once a year.

ii). Quality measures

Data quality gradings: The Fund categorises each employer into one of three quality measures depending on the quality of the returns being produced. The middle category of Silver is the starting category. Gold means good quality returns are consistently produced, Silver means that good quality returns are mostly produced by some issues and errors occur while Bronze means that there are a number of concerns with the quality of data produced which requires frequent intervention, more checks and escalation with the employer. These categories are regularly monitored internally but not reported here.

Contributions vs data comparisons: Additionally, as part of its control checks, officers undertake a cross comparison between the data and the contributions received. A failure of this check for an employer indicates that either the contribution payment or the membership data submitted was incorrect (or both are incorrect) and further investigation with the employer is required.

The current breakdown of employers against this measure is as follows:

Contributions received consistent with data	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021
Large employers (>250 actives)	0/5 (0%)	3/5(40%)	3/5 (60%)
Medium employers (50-249 actives)	3/13 (23%)	12/13 (92%)	13/14 (93%)
Small employers (10-49 actives)	14/24 (58%)	19/25 (76%)	18/24 (75%)
Very small employers (<10 actives)	10/12 (83%)	9/11 (82%)	9/11 (82%)
Total	27/54 (50%)	42/54 (78%)	43/54 (80%)

b). Timeliness of contributions payments

Below is a breakdown showing the timeliness of employer contribution payments (i-Connect employers only).

Percentage/number returns received on time	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021
Large employers (>250 actives)	5/5 (100%)	5/5 (100%)	5/5 (100%)
Medium employers (50-249 actives)	13/13 (100%)	13/13 (100%)	14/14 (100%)
Small employers (10-49 actives)	24/24 (100%)	23/25 (92%)	24/24 (100%)
Very small employers (<10 actives)	11/12 (92%)	11/11 (100%)	11/11 (100%)
Total	53/54 (98%)	52/54 (96%)	54/54 (100%)