

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

WILTSHIRE PENSION FUND LOCAL PENSION BOARD
21 May 2020

PENSION FUND – DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Board on the Fund's progress on the implementation of its Communication Strategy and its digital communication approach for its employers and both members that can and cannot access the internet. The report also includes how the Fund will monitor and measure the effectiveness of its digital communication methods to its employers and members.

Background

2. Following the new Communications Strategy roll out at the end of 2019, the Communications Manager has since sought ways to identify the appropriate tools and applications to communicate with its employers and members. Both broad categories require different communication methods, as do the sub-categories within each.
3. As part of the approval process for rolling out the Communications Strategy, the Board recommended that progress was monitored against the strategy and data was obtained to measure take up rates.

Considerations for the Board

Applications:

4. In April 2020, the Fund purchased a license for a communication application called Mail Chimp. Mail Chimp is purchased at a package rate based on the number of contacts and audiences. The Fund has three main target audiences: Internal team, employers and members. The employer audience has been split into segments based on roles: Human Resources, payroll, payroll managers, finance and the pension liaison officer. This approach also allows the Communications Manager to monitor contract numbers and click rates.
5. Officers regularly check employer contacts are up to date, and where employers are not engaging with key contacts, the Employer Relationship Manager is advised accordingly.
6. Member's contact details will also be updated on a monthly basis after being extracted from the Fund's member online secure portal (My Wiltshire Pension)

Employer website:

7. At the end of 2019 the Fund launched a new website for its employers. The purpose of the website is to bring all employer information such as employer newsletters, member communications and training opportunities into one place. Since then, the Fund has developed the website to hold training videos and surveys. Furthermore, the Fund can measure and analyse the results of page views via the website statistic tool to identify engagement levels. Information stored on the website from surveys will be removed annually from the website and will be reviewed to confirm if the information needs to be stored in the Fund's online secure files. As well as monitoring posts on an ad-hoc basis, the Fund will monitor page activity on a quarterly basis.

Member website and online portal (My Wiltshire Pension):

8. The member website is currently hosted by an outside provider (as commissioned in 2017). Unfortunately, this restricts the amount of changes the Fund can make to the website and there is no way of reviewing and measuring website activity. As per the business plan, the Fund plans to build a website in house, similar to that of the employer website, to gain the same types of advantages as available on that site. This will enable us to monitor website activity and create feedback surveys.
9. In the long term, surveys will be created on the new member website once created. The Fund is still searching for the appropriate platform to create feedback surveys in the short-term.
10. The Fund is now publishing written communications to each member's individual online secure portal and members are successfully viewing their documents online. The Fund has also launched a facility within the online secure portal to enable members to upload and complete documents and forms. This was only launched recently so the impact of this latest development is unknown. For members that cannot access the internet, written communications will continue to be sent via post where members opt in to receive paper communications.
11. The Fund continues to use Docmail as a remote printing facility. Members can also continue to return forms/documents via post and in person.

Conclusions

12. The Fund has successfully implemented a digital communication approach to its employers and has received good feedback so far from them. However, the Fund now needs to continue to implement a digital communication approach to its members. The Fund plans to complete this within the next 12 months as per the business plan.
13. All digital platforms and communication tools can only be accessed via the appropriate officers to ensure the Fund remains compliant with Data Protection legislation.
14. In terms of further developments, the Fund wishes to further expand the digital access to its services and expand the range of data available from this to monitor the effectiveness of its communications and to then make data-driven decisions on future developments.

Environmental Impact

15. There is no environmental impact relating directly to this report although the digital strategy is thought to have a positive environmental impact.

Financial Considerations

16. There are no financial considerations. The Fund continues to save both money and paper by continuing to make communications online.

Risk Assessment

17. There are no specific risks related to this update.

Legal Implications

18. There are no immediate legal implications relating to 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 this update.

ANDY CUNNINGHAM

Head of Pensions Administration and Relations

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