

Communications Plan 2015/16 (version 1)

Communications Working Group - LGPC Secretariat

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1. Communications Working Group

a) Background

The Communications Working Group (CWG), a meeting of communication professionals from Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds in England and Wales¹ is a collaborative forum, who meet on a quarterly basis to develop items of communication for scheme members in the LGPS. The group was created and is run by the Local Government Pensions Committee Secretariat (LGPC) (as part of the Local Government Association).

The CWG provides the opportunity for LGPS funds to share knowledge and experience in the field of communications and for this information to then assist the LGPC secretariat in the development and provision of centrally devised communications resources. The group has been in existence for a number of years and is considered a strong example of collaboration in action across the LGPS.

The CWG priorities include the identification of best practice within pension communications generally and the LGPS specifically, exploring the areas where centrally produced communications would save individual LGPS funds financial resources and staff time.

Across the LGPS, all funds have common, mutual objectives in terms of the message they need to communicate to scheme members. The CWG provides for the division of labour and sharing of knowledge, which helps to deliver an improved

¹ Please note that for the LGPS in Scotland the LGPC secretariat provides a full suite of communication guides and works in collaboration with the Scottish Pensions Liaison Group (SPLG) on specific projects. In addition a communication group created for LGPS 2015 exists and the LGPC secretariat will continue to work with SPLG and this SLOGPAG Communications Group on specific Scottish based communications.

product for all funds across the LGPS. This is even more evident in the work needed to implement large communication projects such as LGPS 2008 and LGPS 2014 reform.

The information produced by the LGPC in conjunction with the CWG for LGPS 2014 can be found at:

- www.lgps2014.org
- www.local.gov.uk/web/lgaworkforcepensions/lgps2014comms

Document, content and information prepared by the LGPC secretariat in conjunction with the CWG can be found on the communications resource section of the lgpsreg.org website available from:

- <http://www.lgpsregs.org/index.php/resources/comms-resources>

Set out below are the terms of reference for the CWG including current membership of the group, role of the rotating chair, link outside the group, frequency of meetings and the role of task driven sub-groups.

b) Membership of the Communications Working Group

The CWG consists of officers from LGPS funds in England and Wales who in the main are tasked with leading on the area of communication for their fund. These officers volunteer their time to attend quarterly meetings held in London. The LGPC are the secretariat for, and facilitate these meetings in their offices to reflect that this is the most convenient location for the group. In addition work will be carried out via email amongst the CWG, where possible.

List of Members

Name	LGPS Pension Fund
Antony Lowbridge-Ellis	West Midlands Pension Fund
Andy Brooks	Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund
Ben Altoft	Avon Pension Fund
Carol Haywood	Leicestershire Pension Fund
Cheryl Platts	Buckinghamshire Pension Fund
David Williams	Environment Agency Pension Fund
Guy Hayton	Merseyside Pension Fund
Heather Chambers (Chair)	Tyne and Wear Pension Fund
Jenny Gregory	West Yorkshire Pension Fund
Jenny Wylie	Oxfordshire Pension Fund
Mandy Judd	Hampshire Pension Fund
Martin Griffiths	Staffordshire Pension Fund
Mathew James	Dyfed Pension Fund
Neil Lewins	London Pension Fund Authority
Rebecca Purfit	Shropshire Pension Fund
Steve Makin	Avon Pension Fund
Victoria Bennett	West Midlands Pension Fund
Zoe Stannard	Wiltshire Pension Fund
Secretariat	
Mary Lambe	LGPC

c) Terms of Reference

Membership: Individuals can put themselves forward for membership of the group to the LGPC secretariat for consideration. To ensure effective debate and discussion can occur, the optimum number which the group aims to retain is 20 members. Once at capacity the group will retain requests for membership from other interested parties and where members leave or are unable to attend meetings then consideration will be made by the secretariat to incorporate these requests.

Frequency of meetings: Quarterly meetings held in London with dates agreed by consensus with the CWG. Actions and agreements from CWG meetings are made available from <http://www.lgpsregs.org/index.php/resources/comms-resources>.

Chair: The secretariat will seek nominations from CWG members for the role of chair on an annual basis. The chair will preside over each of the quarterly meetings. Where more than one nomination is received the group will undertake a ballot (managed by the secretariat) to determine the chair for that year. The chair shall take over their role each April in line with that year's new annual communications plan. A chair may retain the role of chair for subsequent years up to a maximum number of years as agreed by the group and the LGPC secretariat.

Vice-chair: The secretariat will seek nominations from CWG members for the role of vice-chair on an annual basis. The vice-chair will preside over quarterly meetings where the chair is unable to attend. Where more than one nomination is received the group will undertake a ballot (managed by the secretariat) to determine the vice-chair for that year. The vice chair shall take over their role each April in line with that year's new annual communications plan. A vice-chair may retain the role of chair for subsequent years up to a maximum number of years as agreed by the group and the LGPC secretariat.

Secretariat: The secretariat will devise the agenda and prepare papers for meetings of the CWG. They will liaise with the group when formulating agendas and look to issue agendas 5 working days before any meeting. The minutes of meetings (taken by the secretariat) will focus on the actions and agreements and be made available to CWG members for review 5 working days after any meeting. The secretariat will also be responsible for the creation of an annual communications plan and will make any final decision about the work that is contained in that plan following consultation with CWG members and in line with the work plan of the LGPC secretariat.

Link to other structures: Working and liaising with group such as the Administration and Communications sub-committee of the Shadow Scheme Advisory Board, regional communications groups, Pensions Officers Groups, Technical Group etc. In addition the CWG will seek to develop a closer relationship with other public service pension schemes identifying lessons to be learned and best practice across the sector.

Sub-groups: Where specific task-based projects are required CWG members to break into sub-groups to deliver that project.

2. Communications Plan

Following on from the success of the LGPS 2014 communication plan a decision was taken in 2014/15² to develop an annual plan for the CWG to detail the work that the group would be focusing on in that year. This is also to ensure that all Pension Funds and employers are aware of the items of communication the group is aiming to produce.

This plan sets out the objectives for the year 2015/16 alongside a timeframe for the development of communication items. The secretariat will be responsible for updating the plan in line with developments over the year. The items in this plan are over and above the regular items of communication prepared by the LGPC (including, for example the regular suite of member guides).

3. Work plan 2015/16

Summary (in alphabetical order)

Core topic	Details	Timeframe (aim for delivery)
Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) Member Leaflet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anticipated that DCLG will provide amendments to AVC provision in light of Freedom and Choice legislation introduced 6 April 2015 - In line with those changes (anticipated no earlier than Autumn 2015) the CWG want to focus on member information on AVCs to ensure the position is clearly documented - Leaflet to be designed by CWG once amended position clarified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - December 2015
Ending of Contracting-out/New State Pension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop member information on the impact of the end of contracting out on NI rebate - Develop member information on the impact on indexation of GMPs post ending of contracting out - Share information with members on new State Pension (which will be developed by the Department for Work and Pensions(DWP)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By January 2016
LGPS Effective Communications Guide (brought forward from 2014/15 plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updating the effective communications information available on the LGPC's website. - Incorporate information about options relating to electronic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By Autumn 2015

² To view the 2014/15 annual communication plan visit <http://www.lgpsregs.org/images/CommsResources/CWGPlan14-15v1.2.pdf>.

	<p>communication (including member online/self-service tools)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To include legislative requirements and best practice 	
<p>LGPS Member Website (E&W) (brought forward from 2014/15 plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Go live with www.lgpsmember.org website - This will be the new member website for the LGPS (replacing both www.lgps.org.uk and www.lgps2014.org) - LGPC working on content and delivery - subgroup to review test pages before launch - consider online tool to assist members as part of a drive to focus on the 'affordability' of retirement rather than a retirement age (inc. rule of 85 information) <p><i>(note that a member website for Scotland will also be developed - www.scotlgpsmember.org and work on this will be carried out in conjunction with SPLG)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By June 2015

a) AVC leaflet

Produce: Member factsheet/leaflet on AVCs (post DCLG position and legislation on AVCs expected Autumn 2015)

Carried out by: LGPC in conjunction with CWG members

Timeframe: Document to be created and reviewed by CWG once an agreed position alongside relevant legislation is provided by DCLG on AVC provision in the scheme follow Freedom and Choice legislation on 6 April 2015.

Available from: LGPS Communications resources page on www.lgpsregs.org

b) Ending of Contracting-out/New State Pension

Produce: Suite of member information dealing with the impact of the end of contracting out relating to the removal of the NI rebate as well as the indexation of GMPs following the end of contracting out. Also incorporate new State Pension Scheme information in LGPS documentation which is being produced by DWP.

Carried out by: LGPC in conjunction with CWG members

Timeframe: Information ready for release in January 2016 (this is to allow funds to use as part of their communication with scheme members including pensioners).

Available from: LGPS Communications resources page on www.lgpsregs.org

c) LGPS Effective Communications Guide

Produce: LGPC to deliver a document detailing legislative requirements relating to communications and cover considerations in the development of effective communications in the LGPS

Carried out by: CWG to review documentation as well as provide possible examples etc.

All CWG to review, development led by LGPC secretariat.

Timeframe: Delivered by June 2015

Available from: LGPS Communications resources page on www.lgpsregs.org

d) LGPS Member Website

Produce: LGPC delivering new member website www.lgpsmember.org

Carried out by: Review group of website (volunteers from CWG).
Review work expected to be carried out via email.

Review group to include:

- Andy Brooks - Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund
- Antony Ellis - WMPF
- Cheryl Platts - Bucks PF
- David Williams - EAPF
- Heather Chambers - TYPF
- Jenny Gregory - WYPF
- Jenny Wylie - Oxfordshire PF
- Paul Brooks - MPF
- Victoria Bennett - WMPF

Timeframe: Delivered by June 2015

Available from: www.lgpsmember.org

Reviews of earlier work

As part of the 2015/16 plan the CWG will also undertake a review of the ABS template which was developed for the new career average scheme in 2015.

Following the issuing of ABS statements by 31 August 2015, the group will undertake a review of the experience of LGPS Funds in autumn 2015 and identify lessons to be learnt from this exercise as well as improvements which can be made to the ABS template. Review and discussion expected to be part of the November meeting of the group.

Further information

If you have any queries regarding the information in this document please contact Mary Lambe mary.lambe@local.gov.uk.

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