

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
PENSION FUND**



Pension Committee

Date: 23 March 2017

Report by: Head of Pensions

Subject:	2017 Joint Communications Strategy
Purpose of the Report	To present the Cambridgeshire Pension Fund Communication Strategy to member of the Committee.
Recommendations	The Committee are asked to approve the Communication Strategy located in the appendix to this report.
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1. Background

- 1.1 The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (The Regulations) requires the Pension Fund to prepare, maintain and publish a written statement setting out its policy concerning communications with members and scheme employers.

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; and*
- (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, frequency and method of distributing such information or publicity; and*
- (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).

- 1.2 The current Communication Strategy was previously approved at the October 2014 Pension Committee meeting. This is included in **appendix 1**.
- 1.3 The existing Strategy has been reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose and in line with the Pension Fund's objectives which have been amended since the previous strategy was approved.
- 1.4 A proposed new strategy incorporating the new Pension Fund Objectives has been drafted by Officers and included in **appendix 2**.
- 1.5 The changes between the 2014 and proposed revised Strategy are identified in Section 3 of this report.

2. The Communications Strategy

- 2.1 The Communications Strategy details the Funds approach to the delivery of the Funds key communication objectives, including the methods of communication that will be used for each of the following stakeholders:

Active scheme members
Deferred scheme members
Prospective scheme members
Retired scheme members
Dependant scheme members
Scheme employers
Fund staff

- 2.2 The Strategy sets firm deadlines for key communications in the Communications Plan, which is updated annually.
- 2.3 The Communication Strategy also provides details about the Funds approach to the following matters:

Brand Identity
Confidentiality
Disclosure
Equality
Freedom of Information

3. Revisions made to the Communication Strategy

- 3.1 The main revisions to the Strategy have been to ensure that the strategy is aligned with the revised Pension Fund objectives. The new relevant objectives have been included in section 4 of this report. For fullness, the old objectives that applied to the Communication Strategy were as follows:

Provide clear information about the Scheme, including changes to the Scheme, to educate and engage with scheme members so that they can make informed decisions about their membership, contributions and benefits.
Deliver a clear and consistent message that is engaging, factual and presented in plain language.
Promote the Scheme as a valuable benefit.
Seek and review regular feedback from all stakeholders about communications and shape future communications appropriately.
Look for efficiencies in delivering communications including through greater use of technology and partnership working.

- 3.2 Other changes to the Strategy reflect changes to the way in which we communicate with members, particularly, the Funds increasing use of electronic communication, where possible and some minor rewording.
- 3.3 The Communication Plan has also been updated to show schedule communications for the 2017/18 Scheme year.

4. Relevant Pension Fund Objectives

Have robust governance arrangements in place, to facilitate informed decision making, supported by appropriate advice, policies and strategies, whilst ensuring compliance with appropriate legislation and statutory guidance. (Objective no 1)
Ensure the relevant stakeholders responsible for managing, governing and administering the Fund, understand their roles and responsibilities and have the appropriate skills and knowledge to ensure those attributes are maintained in a changing environment. (Objective no 3)
Continually monitor and measure clearly articulated objectives through business planning. (Objective no 4)
Continually monitor and manage risk, ensuring the relevant stakeholders are able to mitigate risk where appropriate. (Objective no 5)
Put in place performance standards for the Fund and its employers and ensure these are monitored and developed as necessary. (Objective no 8)

Promote the Scheme as a valuable benefit. (Objective no 12)
Deliver consistent plain English communications to Stakeholders. (Objective no 13)
Provide Scheme members with up to date information about the Scheme in order that they can make informed decisions about their benefits. (Objective no 14)

5. Finance & Resources Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct finance and resource implications of approving this plan however, the communication activities themselves will have costs and resource application which will depend entirely on the final specification of each communication activity.

6. Risk Implications

- a) Risk(s) associated with the proposal

Risk	Mitigation	Risk Rating
There are no risks associated with this proposal.		

- b) Risk(s) associated with not undertaking the proposal

Risk	Risk Rating
Failure to comply with Regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013	Red
Failure to comply with statutory obligations to provide members and scheme employers with certain key communications throughout the scheme year.	Red

7. Communication Implications

Direct Communications	Not applicable
Website	The approved communication strategy will be published on the LGSS Pensions website

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 Not applicable

9 Consultation with Key Advisers

- 9.1 Consultation with the Funds advisers was not required for this report.

10. Alternative Options Considered

10.1 Not applicable

11. Background Papers

11.1 Not applicable

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix 1 – Existing Cambridgeshire Pension Fund Communications Strategy

12.2 Appendix 2 – Proposed revised Cambridgeshire Pension Fund Communications Strategy

Checklist of Key Approvals	
Is this decision included in the Business Plan?	Yes
Will further decisions be required? If so, please outline the timetable here	No
Is this report proposing an amendment to the budget and/or policy framework?	N/A
Has this report been cleared by Chief Finance Officer/Section 151 Officer?	Sarah Heywood – 6/3/2017
Has this report been cleared by Head of Pensions?	Mark Whitby – 22/2/2017
Has the Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee been consulted?	Councillor Hickford – 6/3/2017
Has this report been cleared by Legal Services?	Sent to Quentin Baker - 3/3/2017