

APPENDIX A

COMMUNICATION POLICY STATEMENT

December 2017

Hertfordshire Firefighters Pension Scheme



Communication Policy Statement

This policy statement sets out how as an employer Hertfordshire County Council communicates with scheme members, and prospective members, in regard to the Firefighters Pension Schemes.

Electronic Communications

The scheme is seeking to move to electronic means of communication with members, as opposed to paper hard copies, where possible. This will include online self-service, as well as email communications, notifications, payslips and alerts.

Before changing the form of a particular communication the Authority is required to provide members with a formal written notice to that effect, as well as provide the opportunity for members to opt out of electronic communication and continue to receive hard copies. In future ABS Statements, Payslips and Pensioner Newsletters will be provided electronically unless members opt out.

Pensions Committee and Pension Board Reports and Minutes

These are available from the Hertfordshire County Council website;
<http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/CabinetandCommittees.aspx>

Advice and Help

The Local Pensions Partnership (LPP) who administers the Firefighters Pension schemes on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council is available to give advice on the telephone, by letter or by email to scheme members and the employer. Comprehensive information and guidance is also accessible from the Pension Fund website at www.yourpension.org.uk/HCCFire/Pensions-Home, and the member self-service portal (available at the same link).

Annual Benefit Statements

All active and deferred scheme members receive an Annual Benefit Statement setting out the level of benefits that have been built up, along with a forecast of benefits at retirement. There is a requirement to publish statements by 31 August, containing information about benefits, up to and including those accrued over the previous financial year.

Internet

The Pension Fund's website provides information about Scheme benefits. Scheme members may also have access to information about their pension benefits by subscribing to an on-line service. This can be found at www.yourpension.org.uk/HCCFire/Pensions-Home

Information Letters

Information about changes in regulations is provided to employees through a range of media, including email, letter and workshop sessions.

Payslips

All active members receive payslip which includes details of pension deductions. All pensioners receive at least three payslips each year and messages are included whenever there is new information to be communicated.

Newsletter for Active Members

Protect, Community Protection newsletter is issued monthly and includes articles on pension as and when required.

Newsletter for Pensioners

Pensioner newsletters will be published annually and will be hosted online, unless members opt out of electronic communications in which case they will continue to receive a hard copy.

Prospective Scheme Members

The methods used to ensure that prospective members are aware of the Scheme and its benefits are:

Job Advertisements

The Firefighters Pension scheme is advertised as a benefit as part of any recruitment process.

Scheme Booklet

All new starters are provided with a link to the Scheme booklet which summarises the benefits available from the Pension Fund. This can be found at:

<http://www.yourpension.org.uk/HCCFire/2006-Scheme/Scheme-Guide.aspx>