

Pension Administration Strategy for consultation

The East Riding Pension Fund (ERPF) have drafted a Pensions Administration Strategy under Regulation 59 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (2013). In line with this regulation all employers should be consulted on the contents of the Strategy.

The Pension Administration Strategy sets out what Scheme Employers and ERPF should expect from one another when administering the Scheme.

The strategy is attached as the start of the consultation. Please forward any comments to Jennifer.gregory@eastriding.gov.uk before 30 November 2017.

The strategy will come into force on 1 January 2018 and will be registered with the Secretary of State.

Employer discretions

Discretionary powers allow employers to choose how, or if, they apply certain provisions. The ERPF require a copy of the discretionary policies held by each employer to ensure that the potential employer costs are correctly reflected in future valuation results; in the absence of a policy being held the actuary will assume the higher cost option is taken by the employer which would increase the employer's liabilities.

ERPF uses the Scheme Employers policy to ensure that member benefits are calculated correctly and in accordance with the discretions policy. Where a policy has not been sent to ERPF or the Scheme Employer does not have a policy in place ERPF are unable to process the member's benefits. To avoid delays in processing estimates and retirements Scheme Employers should ensure that they have made a policy and that a copy of this policy has been sent to ERPF.

Two documents have been added to ERPFs website to help employers update their discretionary policies with ease. These two documents are:

- a form for the employer to complete indicating what their discretions are (only in relation to the five which **must** be published) and,
- a document providing further guidance on those discretions and the implications specific options can have.

These documents can be found here: <http://www.erpf.org.uk/employers/employer-discretions/>

The Local Government Association (LGA) Secretariat issued clarification in Bulletin 160 regarding what a discretionary policy should show, it is the view of the LGA that:

- a discretions policy should show the basis on which a Scheme Employer will consider exercising the discretions listed in regulations 60 or 58 (as applicable) and,

in doing so, Scheme Employers should not fetter their discretion; that is, their policies on how discretionary powers are to be exercised should not be so rigid or restrictive as to prevent flexibility where a (possibly unanticipated) situation requires it.

Further guidance from the LGA on setting discretions policies can be found here:

<http://www.lgpsregs.org/resources/guidesetc.php>

Once an employer has made a policy, that policy must be published for all staff to see for 30 days. Only after this period, and only after any queries have been dealt with, can the policy become effective; at this time, an employer should forward a copy to the ERPF.

If you have not yet made a policy please submit this to the ERPF by 31 December 2017.

ERPF Online Services

Following the employer workshops held on 20 October 2017 all employers are invited to sign up to ERPF Online Services. This will enable employers to submit forms and reply to questions online rather than by post or e-mail.

Employers will need to complete some paperwork before being given access and if you need any further information please contact ERPFs Systems & Web Team and speak to Kerrie Shields or Olivia Sherburn on 01482 394183/4141 or e-mail employerweb@eastriding.gov.uk

The presentation from the day can be found under useful documents ERPF Online Service here: <http://www.erpf.org.uk/employers/>

Timely SU18 paperwork

ERPF receive payments from over 250 Scheme Employers every month. As these payments are made up of employee contributions, employer contributions, secondary contribution lump sums and additional contributions it is essential that the SU18 form is received at the same time as the payments.

Where an employer fails to submit an SU18 breakdown payments are put in our holding account until the breakdown is received.

If the payment is not allocated to employer accounts by the 19th of the month following the month of deduction ERPF is unable to confirm that employers have paid their contributions on time and this may lead to interest for late payment being charged.

If you need any help submitting your SU18 form please contact ERPFs Financial Control Team on 01482 394177 or e-mail kerry.hoe@eastriding.gov.uk

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

As part of both East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) and the LGA's working groups, ERPF are already preparing for the changes to ensure full compliance.

ERPF is working with the ERYC and the LGA in preparation for the new GDPR and will be updating our privacy notice and documentation to detail how, as the Data Processor for Scheme Employers active members we will use, retain and dispose of the confidential data provided to ERPF in relation to Scheme administration.

Distribution details

To make sure the information provided in the monthly employer bulletins is reaching the right people, could you please circulate this bulletin to colleagues within your organisation who have responsibilities for pensions including Business Managers, Finance Officers, HR and Payroll staff.

If you would like to add anyone to the mailing list please send their details (name, email address and organisation) to: liz.vollans@eastriding.gov.uk.

Earlier bulletins issued can all be found on the ERPF website <http://www.erpf.org.uk/employers>