

Date:	8th March 2018
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Pension Administration Update
Report of:	Lee Witham, Director of People Services
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Service Delivery
Financial Summary:	Limited

1. Executive Summary

1.1. This report provides a summary of the performance of the City Council, Surrey County Council and BT. The report also gives an update on the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) performance of the pension administrators Surrey County Council (SCC) for the period January 2018. The detailed KPIs are shown in Appendix 1.

2. Surrey County Council (SCC) Performance

2.1. The scope of the KPIs in this report have been agreed between WCC and SCC based on the section 101 agreement, however they will continue to be reviewed on feedback from all parties, including committee members.

2.2. This paper covers only the month of January 2018, February data is not available at the time of drafting this committee report, the previous reporting period is also shown for comparison. The next review meeting with Surrey is planned for 1st of March 2018 after the drafting of this paper.

2.3. People Services continue to hold regular meetings with SCC to discuss both day to day issues plus any future matters that need to be planed for, such as pension workshops, future re-organisations which may result in bulk leavers/retirements as well as performance against KPIs. We have previously highlighted areas where a need for improvement was identified. KPI issues for January are discussed below.

- 2.3.1. Retirement Options Issued to Members.** We are pleased to note the improvement from 94% in the period September through to November and then onto 100% in December. In this reporting period of January 2018 the KPI remains at 100%. This is considered one of our more important KPI measures.
- 2.3.2. Pension Payment, Member paid on the next available Pension Payroll.** This KPI was only 95% for the period September to November but improved to 100% in December, and has maintained a 100% level in January 2018. People Services will continue to closely monitor as this is one of our key measures.
- 2.3.3. Deferred benefits Statement Issued.** After a drop in December 2017 to 86% due to one late case we are pleased to note we are back at 100% in January 2018.
- 2.3.4. Lump Sum payment made within 5 days.** We are happy to note that this KPI remains at 100% in January 2018 following the same rate in December 2017 and is an increase on the 97% reported for September to December.
- 2.3.5. Interfunds Out Actual Processed in 30 Days.** Fell to 97 % in September to November but is back to 100% in December and has remained at 100% in January.
- 2.3.6. Material Changes.** One material change i.e a change that may impact someone's pension benefit was processed late in January reducing the accuracy to 97%.
- 2.3.7. Correspondence to 3rd Party.** There was only one correspondence to a 3rd party in January 2018 but this was processed outside of the 10 day, deadline and so was late.

- 2.4.** The committee requested a further breakdown of the positive response rate reported for retirees who had been surveyed. The January KPI figures include a 91.3% positive response rate for the period October to December 2017. The Questions the members were asked are as follows;
1. You found it easy to get in touch with us? (Strongly disagree – strongly agree)
 2. We were friendly and helpful on the phone? (Strongly disagree - strongly agree)
 3. You received all the information you needed about your retirement benefits from Pension Services? (Strongly disagree – strongly agree)
 4. Our letters and forms were clear and easy to understand? (strongly disagree – strongly agree)
 5. Your retirement was processed in a timely manner? (strongly disagree – strongly agree)

6. Overall, how satisfied are you with the service you received from us? (very unsatisfied – very satisfied)
7. If you would like us to contact you to discuss any points you have raised, please provide us with your contact details in the box (comments)

2.5. The responses to the questions received are as follows:

- 1 78.26% agreed or strongly agreed.
- 2 78.26% agreed or strongly agreed.
- 3 91.31% agreed or strongly agreed.
- 4 52.17% agreed, with 4.35% disagreeing
- 5 86.96% agreed or strongly agreed.
- 6 60.87% said very satisfied. 4.35% said very unsatisfied

2.6. In question 7, where members have provided contact details, Surrey have gone back to them to thank them for their feedback and to request further clarification where that feedback indicated the member was dissatisfied. In the above breakdown one person indicated that Surrey's forms were unclear and not easy to understand. That individual did leave contact details on the survey and they have been contacted by Surrey but have yet to respond at the time of writing this report. A second individual responded on question 6 indicating that they were very unsatisfied with the service they received. This member did leave contact details and they have been contacted though have yet to respond.

2.7. The Pension Officer has asked Surrey to e-mail the two people involved one more time to see if they want to provide further feedback at this time. We would not wish to keep chasing our pensioners though and we should not lose focus on the overall positive feedback and that it's only two individuals who raised a concern.

2.8. The Committee should also note the 91.3% positive feedback from the same survey for the period September to December 2017 reported on the attached appendix. The Pension Officer has requested additional breakdown on this data and will update the committee in the next report.

2.9 The improvement to the member self-service access has been completed in January 2018. This change will improve the appearance of the Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) and enable mobile and tablet access. One individual has already provided direct feedback that the revised site is more intuitive to use and makes pension information easier to understand. People Services are now planning to promote the online access to scheme members.

3. BT Performance

3.1 In an update from the previous committee, WCC People Services have agreed with BT that they will take over the completion of urgent pension leaver forms from 1st of January 2018. The agreed process is that People Services raise an

Incident with BT when they are aware of an impending retirement case. People Services then advise the pensions lead officer at BT of the incident number so that these cases can be escalated quickly and pension leaver forms can be returned to Surrey before the members last day of employment.

- 3.2 It is still too early to give the committee real feedback on the process we introduced on January the 1st. There have been few retirements that would require BT to provide an immediate response.
- 3.3 In an update from our last committee report we can confirm that WCC officers have been completing Q and A work on automated monthly leavers files that BT have produced. The process has picked up errors in the initial files and BT have addressed those returning files for a further Q and A. The second Q and A is due to be completed as this report is submitted. WCC Officers are hopeful that this will allow BT to send monthly leavers files to Surrey to pick up all the non-urgent leavers going forward.
- 3.4 The matter regarding the correction payroll for previous year's errors, including pension contributions is still outstanding and high level discussions are still ongoing between BT and Directors of the 3 boroughs.

4. Issues Log

- 4.1 People Services continue to review any pension matters that have been referred to the in house team by individuals, Unison, BT or Surrey.
- 4.2 There are currently 5 issues on the log. Four cases are chasing transfers in and there is one case regarding a transfer of an AVC to a private pension company. This case is almost completed with the main payment made to the individual SIPP provider and we are waiting for supplier forms to be completed to pay the agreed compensation.

5. Risk Register

- 5.1 Finance will be presenting the risk register to committee however as it was last reported Operational Administration reference 26 is remaining as Amber until we are satisfied that the leaver process with BT is timely and accurate.

6. Summary

- 6.1 There have been improvements by both SCC and BT and People Services will continue to work with both to improve the pension service to members.