



City of Westminster Pension Fund Board

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| Date: | 21st July 2021 |
| Classification: | General Release |
| Title: | Pension Administration Service Transfer Project |
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| Wards Involved: | All |
| Policy Context: | Service Delivery |

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report is to update the board on the project to transfer the pension administration service from Surrey County Council (SCC) to Hampshire County Council's Pension Service (HPS).
- 1.2. The change of administration provider means that the project has three main areas of focus which are the onboarding to HPS, the offboarding from SCC and the transition supporting activities such as stakeholder management, engagement and comms, finance, and other sundry supporting activities.
- 1.3. This report will update the board on these activities and progress to date.

2. Project Overview

- 2.1. Project Management: There are five main workstreams of the project: 1. Governance 2. Data Migration 3. Member Engagement and Comms 4. Employer Engagement and Comms and 5. Finance. We have workstream leads in place for each of these and they are working with both Hampshire and Surrey colleagues to ensure the smooth transition of the pension administration service from Surrey to Hampshire.
- 2.2. Governance – Project Administration: We have a monthly project board meetings attended by Senior Officers from Hampshire, Westminster, and Surrey in order to facilitate and support the project as well as bi-weekly project meetings chaired by Andrew Lowe (Head of Pensions, Investment and Borrowing, HCC) so that we can on-board successfully. We are also having off-boarding meetings with Surrey

(see Section 4) to ensure a successful exit from their service. Internally, we have weekly project meetings with officers to plan and track project activities and manage any key decisions. The RAG status of the project is Green as agreed with Hampshire and Surrey at the latest Project Board meeting which shows that the project is on time and on-track to meet targets.

- 2.3. Governance – Project Reporting and Budget Control: As part of the internal monitoring and control of the project management, we are reporting monthly to the Innovation and Change (I&C) Board. We are reporting via their standardised reporting tool which captures items such as management of risks and issues, on-time delivery, and project costs. With respect to the project costs, we have worked with finance colleagues to put together a budget for the project and are capturing actual costs against forecast costs each month ahead of the I&C Board meetings.

3. Hampshire Pension Service (HPS) Onboarding

- 3.1. On 23rd April 2021, WCC formally signed and executed a delegation agreement with Hampshire County Council which was the formal starting point for the onboarding to Hampshire Pension Service (HPS).
- 3.2. With respect to the final transition to the new service, our agreed “Go-Live” date is Monday, 8th November 2021 and this date will be the date when Members and Employers can access the new Pension Portal as part of business-as-usual activities. Our pension payroll cessation date with Surrey is the 21st of October 2021 and there will be approximately a week of offline activities which will be carefully managed between Surrey and Hampshire before we have the confirmation from Hampshire and Civica (new software supplier) on 4th of November 2021 that we can “Go Live” on 8th of November as planned.
- 3.3. In order to ensure maximum confidence in the private (4th) and public (8th) November 2021 “Go-Live” dates, the project team have planned in three (two plus one contingency) data extraction and migration run-throughs starting on 17th June 2021 and finishing in September 2021. These tests will allow Civica to assess the new software environment set up specifically for us, validate our data and verify that it is correct. The first run-through will be the longest and each subsequent iteration is expected to be shorter as they adjust to our needs.
- 3.4. Data Cut #1: On 17th June 2021 the first extraction and migration of WCC data and data images from Surrey to Hampshire successfully took place. The data has now been imported into the bespoke WCC data environment on the software UPM (Universal Pensions Management) and Hampshire officers have started the user testing of this phase of the data migration. SCC officers are taking part in a workshop on 22nd June to ensure the mapping of data from Altair to UPM is consistent and accurate. This phase of the onboarding is on-time and on-track to complete and be signed off on week beginning 9th August 2021.

4. Surrey County Council (SCC) Offboarding

- 4.1. Surrey is actively engaged in supporting our exit project and we are undertaking offboarding meetings with the project team to ensure that we capture any and all backlog and/or handover activities urgently. Our intention is to triage and prioritise these activities for completion by Surrey prior to transfer to Hampshire. However, this is also being done with the understanding that some activities may not be completed in advance of transition and so will need to be packaged and given to Hampshire Pension Service to complete (with their agreement).

5. Transition Supporting Activities

- 5.1. Stakeholder Management: HPS are having workshops with the relevant WCC officers to ensure we can cover all the relevant components of the new service that need to be communicated appropriately to make this transition a success. So far, we have had workshops on Employer comms and engagement, Member comms and engagement, the new Pension Portal, the Pension Website, and day to day Finance administration.
- 5.2. With respect to Members and Employers, WCC officers have been working with HPS and SCC officers to create a comms and engagement strategy and delivery plan to communicate the change of pension service provider to the relevant stakeholders in an effective and timely fashion. This plan has been approved by Cllr Paul Swaddle. Officers have been identifying all the relevant Members and Employers that need to be contacted and designed a campaign for each stakeholder group so that they are fully informed prior to go-live, during the transitional period and then post go-live.
- 5.3. WCC Pension Fund finance officers have also been taking part in workshops and are liaising with their counterparts at HPS to ensure an effective financial transition and to ensure adequate reporting and controls are in place so we can monitor all finance administration activities with confidence. We will be working with SCC colleagues to remove all relevant accesses and ensure all closing activities are completed prior to transition.

6. Summary

- 6.1. This paper was to update the board on the transition of the pension administration service from Surrey to Hampshire and the various processes and mechanisms that are in place ensure the transition is a success.