

# Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund

## Service Standards

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The administering authority for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in Berkshire is the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

The administering authority is responsible for paying the pensions of former LGPS members and their dependents and for looking after the Scheme.

The administering authority employs a number of independent professional advisers to help them run the Scheme, including an actuary. The actuary carries out a health check on the Pension Fund every three years to ensure the Pension Fund has enough money to guarantee the payment of the pensions. This health-check is commonly known as a 'Valuation'.

The administering authority also has to ensure an effective and efficient administration of the Scheme for all current and former members and that all retired members receive an equally efficient payroll service.

The following are the Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund's service standards or 'promises' of the level of service that current and former LGPS members have the right to expect from us. They are in addition to our Corporate Service Standards which apply to all services provided by the Council.

### **Investments Team Responsible for:**

- Fund investments
- Interpretation of Scheme regulations
- Receiving monies due to and paying out monies owing from the Scheme
- Scheme report and accounts

### **Administrative Team Responsible for:**

- Administration of the LGPS
- Maintaining the member database
- Dealing with members' individual enquiries
- Calculating member benefits
- Providing a pension payroll service and related matters
- Implementing Scheme regulations.

## **We will:**

- Offer polite and friendly help and guidance
- Provide an efficient, effective and courteous administration service
- Make an annual benefit statement available to all members
- Ensure that all new members have access to an employee's guide to the scheme and a formal notification of membership
- Respond to letters and complaints within 10 working days
- Make available confidential meeting facilities as required
- Inform all members of significant changes to the LGPS regulations
- Ensure that all pension payments are made on the correct pay date
- Ensure that all tax-free lump sum retirement grants are paid within one month of retirement (subject to receipt of all relevant information from the member and the member's employer)
- Notify all retired members of the annual increase to their annual pension
- Apply for all transfers of pension rights within 20 working days of a request for this information
- Pay refunds of contributions where requested within 10 working days of receipt of all relevant information from employers
- Inform members of their rights to benefits upon leaving the LGPS within 20 working days of receipt of all relevant information from employers
- Contact personal representatives of a deceased member within 10 working days of the notification of death
- Provide information relating to the payment of additional contributions within 20 working days of a request
- Maintain and update a website for current and former members of the Scheme.

## **Our complaints procedure**

We have a commitment to put things right if they go wrong. If you have a problem or feel that our services are not up to scratch, then please let us know and we will do all we can to investigate and resolve your complaint.

If, however, you feel that we have not been able to satisfactorily resolve your complaint, you have a right of appeal under the internal disputes resolution procedure (IDRP) regulations.

### **Stage 1**

Your complaint is referred to an adjudicator appointed by your employer (or former employer as the case may be) who makes any first stage decisions.

### **Stage 2**

If a satisfactory conclusion is not found at stage 1 you can refer your complaint to the administering authority for the Berkshire Pension Fund i.e. the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

### **Stage 3**

If a satisfactory conclusion to your complaint has still not been found, you can appeal to the Pensions Ombudsman.

Before entering into such an appeal, you should first contact the pensions team as in many cases a satisfactory conclusion can be found at this stage.

### **‘Engage’ – online pension portal**

Don't forget you can now view your pension information online through our online service - 'Engage'.

'Engage' enables you to securely update your personal details, perform benefit calculations and update your nominated beneficiaries from the comfort of your own home or workplace.

It's easy to sign up - just visit our website [www.berkshirepensions.org.uk](http://www.berkshirepensions.org.uk)

### **More information**

More detailed information about the scheme is available from the pension team at the following address: **Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund, Zone C, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1RF**

**Help Desk Telephone Number: 01628 796 668**

**E-mail:** [info@berkshirepensions.org.uk](mailto:info@berkshirepensions.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.berkshirepensions.org.uk](http://www.berkshirepensions.org.uk)