

Report for: Pensions Committee and Board – 7 July 2020

Title: Pensions Administration Report

Report

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Ward(s) affected: Not applicable

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Not applicable

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 The report provides an update regarding:

- The amount of visits made to the Haringey pension fund website.
- This report presents details of new admissions to the pension fund.
- An update in light of the current Coronavirus pandemic and how this has impacted the Fund's pensions administration.

2 Cabinet Member Introduction

2.1 Not applicable

3 Recommendations that members:

3.1 Note

The report gives a breakdown in paragraph 6.1 of the amount of visits made to the Haringey pension fund website and an update in paragraph 6.3 – 6.5 regarding pension administration matters.

3.2 Approve

Approve the admission of Hertfordshire Catering Ltd as a new employer to the Pension Fund in respect of the following catering contracts:

- 3.2.1 St Martin of Porres School;
- 3.2.2 St John Vianney School;
- 3.2.3 St Pauls Catholic School; and

subject to Hertfordshire Catering Ltd securing a bond or a guarantee from a third party in line with the LGPS regulations, to indemnify the pension fund against any future potential liabilities that could arise or paying an increase contribution rate in lieu of a bond.

3.3 Approve

Approve the admission of Caterlink Ltd as a new employer to the Pension Fund, in respect of a catering contract with Stroud Green Primary School, subject to their securing a bond or a guarantee from a third party in line with the LGPS regulations,

to indemnify the pension fund against any future potential liabilities that could arise or paying an increase contribution rate in lieu of a bond.

3.4 Note

The information provided in paragraph 6.3 – 6.5 of this report regarding how the current Coronavirus pandemic has impacted the Fund's pensions administration.

4 Reason for decision

New Admission Body to the Fund

- 4.1 St Martin of Porres School has tendered its catering service and the successful bidder was Hertfordshire Catering Ltd (HCL). It is proposed that HCL Ltd be admitted to the Haringey Pension Scheme as an Admission Body in relation to the provision of the catering service for St Martin of Porres School, subject to HCL Ltd entering into an admission agreement with the Council and providing a suitable bond or guarantee so that those eligible employees can remain within the Haringey Pension Fund.
- 4.2 St John Vianney School has tendered its catering service and the successful bidder was Hertfordshire Catering Ltd (HCL). It is proposed that HCL Ltd be admitted to the Haringey Pension Scheme as an Admission Body in relation to the provision of the catering service for St John Vianney School, subject to HCL Ltd entering into an admission agreement with the Council and providing a suitable bond or guarantee so that those eligible employees can remain within the Haringey Pension Fund.
- 4.3 St Pauls Catholic School has tendered its catering service and the successful bidder was Hertfordshire Catering Ltd (HCL). It is proposed that HCL Ltd be admitted to the Haringey Pension Scheme as an Admission Body in relation to the provision of the catering service for St Pauls Catholic School, subject to HCL Ltd entering into an admission agreement with the Council and providing a suitable bond or guarantee so that those eligible employees can remain within the Haringey Pension Fund.
- 4.4 Stroud Green Primary School has tendered its catering service and the successful bidder was Caterlink. It is proposed that Caterlink Ltd be admitted to the Haringey Pension Scheme as an Admission Body in relation to the provision of the catering service for Stroud Green Primary School, subject to Caterlink Ltd entering into an admission agreement with the Council and providing a suitable bond or guarantee so that those eligible employees can remain within the Haringey Pension Fund.
- 4.5 That an admission agreement satisfactory to the Council, be entered into in respect of each of the service contracts and that the agreements are closed agreements, as such that new members cannot be admitted.

4.6 Under the LGPS, if a body is an admission body as defined by the Regulations; the administering authority enter into an admission agreement with that admitted body. The admitted body’s employees which have transferred over and providing the service will be eligible for membership of the Scheme if designated under the terms of the agreement. An admitted body will provide a service in connection with the exercise of a function of a Scheme employer as a result of the transfer of the service or assets by means of a contract or another arrangement.

5 Alternative options considered

5.1 Not applicable

6 Background information:

Website Views

6.1 The visits to the Haringey website www.haringeypensionfund.co.uk for the last 4 months are as follows (presented with prior year comparator figures):

	users	Page views
May 2020	265	572
May 2019	590	2434
April 2020	237	408
April 2019	400	1556
March 2020	329	555
March 2019	438	1517
February 2020	336	671
February 2019	428	1599

6.2 From February 2020 to May 2020 the average amount of users per month to the pension website is 292 and they view on average 552 pages, nearly 2 pages for each user. The amount of users and pages viewed has decreased from the previous year.

Coronavirus Update

6.3 The pension team have been working remotely from home since March 2020 following Governmental advice due to the Coronavirus pandemic outbreak. The team have had to make adjustments to some working practices in order to accommodate the new way of working. In line with government guidance, the pensions team are considered key workers as they are ‘delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits’. The fund has maintained the usual processing and payment of pensions benefits, as they would be in normal times. The pensions team are able to access all the business applications from home that they could in the office and are therefore able to complete the vast majority of tasks remotely, however there are a small number of activities that require access to the office, and the team have therefore been working on a rota basis to continue to have access to the offices in Alexandra House in order to complete office activities. Those officers accessing the office are practising social distancing, and minimise the amount of time spent in the office.

6.4 The Fund has seen an increase in the amount of pensioner deaths over recent months. The table below illustrates the number of pensioner deaths this year and last year in the months of March to May. The increase in deaths in this three month period is an increase of over 61%. Pensioners are ex employees of Haringey Council and the other employers in Haringey Pension Fund: many of whom are not Haringey residents. The fund does not have data to be able to determine what proportion of this increase is attributable to the pandemic.

	2019	2020
March	53	49
April	44	68
May	28	85

6.5 The annual benefit statements for the active and deferred members of the fund are due to be distributed by 31 August 2020. August 2020 was the first year that the annual benefit statements for active members were due to be published online only via the member self-service portal. Onboarding a large number of members onto the member self-service portal is a significant workload pressure, and unfortunately has coincided with the move to remote working and a general increased workload for the team. It will therefore not be possible to complete the mass advertising campaign to onboard members to member self service this year and this will be postponed. Annual benefits statements will therefore be sent by post this year as previously, but will also be available online on the member self-service. The annual benefits statements exercise is anticipated to be completed in line with the usual deadline of 31 August.

7 Contribution to strategic outcomes

Not applicable

8 Statutory Officers’ comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Chief Finance Officer

8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Assistant Director of Corporate Governance

8.2 The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted on the content of this report.

8.3 The report seeks authority to admit two employers as admitted bodies to the Haringey Pension Fund. A person is eligible to be an active member of the Scheme in an employment if employed by an admission body and is designated, or belongs to a class of employees that is designated by the body under the terms of an admission agreement, as being eligible for membership of the Scheme;

8.4 Both Hertfordshire Catering Ltd and Caterlink Ltd are bodies that are providing or will provide a service or assets in connection with the exercise of a function of a Scheme employer as a result of the transfer of the service or assets by means of a contract or other arrangement. The two bodies are entering into service contracts to

provide catering services to the schools mentioned in this report and the administering authority may enter into the Admission Agreements pursuant to Schedule 2 of The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013.

9. Use of Appendices

None

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not Applicable