


<b>Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board</b>	<b>PSB 05c</b> 
<b>Date: 18 March 2022</b>	

## **Essex Pension Fund Policies and Publications: Review of Administration Strategy**

Joint Report by the Technical Hub Manager and Retirement Manager

Enquiries to David Tucker 03330 138384

**This Report requires a decision**

### **Executive Summary**

Following approval the Draft Administration Strategy was issued to Scheme Employers for consultation on 24 January 2022 which subsequently closed on 25 February 2022.

Fund Officers received a total of 4 comments which can be viewed in full in Section 4. Two minor amendments have been made to content of the Strategy.

The final Strategy is now presented for the Board's approval.

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To present the Administration Strategy to the Board for approval.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Board **approve** the Administration Strategy and note the content of the report.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Board was presented with the Draft Administration Strategy at the 15 December 2021 meeting noting the changes that had been made since the last review in December 2018.
- 3.2 It was noted key amendments were in regard to the change from Annual Returns to Monthly Returns and the subsequent amendments to the Charging Policy.
- 3.3 Other minor changes were in regard to employer responsibilities and the aligning the performance area descriptions to the CIPFA Benchmarking measures.

### **4. Administration Strategy Consultation Process**

- 4.1 The draft Administration Strategy was consulted upon with Fund Employers on 24 January 2022 for a period of four weeks. In addition, as agreed the YouTube video was also shared.
- 4.2 The Fund received a total of four responses which are detailed below and received 60 views on the YouTube video:

<b>Employer</b>	<b>Consultation Feedback</b>	<b>Fund Response</b>	<b>Revision to Strategy</b>
Essex Association of Local Councils	Thank you for the information, the YouTube video is very helpful.	No response required.	No change.
North Essex Schools Partnership	I work with a number of maintained schools. Does this mean that the employer duties fall to someone in ECC, or does it mean that each school needs to be responsible for nominating a	As a maintained school the Local Authority is deemed as the Employer. There should be an ECC contact/liaison person that you deal with where you may feed information/data too.	This strategy applies not only to existing Scheme employers but will also apply to all new future employers of the Fund. Schools (other than Academies, Free Schools and University Technical Colleges (UTCs)) are

Employer	Consultation Feedback	Fund Response	Revision to Strategy
	representative etc as outlined in the Strategy.  If needs be perhaps we can set up some sort of face to face or zoom training or explanation for them at a later date.	As it is a draft we will look to make a note in regards to schools to make it clearer.	included under the LEA of the relevant Council even if they have their own payroll or have outsourced it to a third party*.
Harwich Town Council	Thank you for consulting with us in relation to the latest draft Administration Strategy, which was discussed by Council. I can confirm that no comments were made, or concerns raised.	No response required.	No change.

4.3 An additional response was received by Tiptree Parish Council after the deadline regarding the practicalities of the submissions of monthly returns. A response was provided which also covered the future development of a new online portal for Employers which would aid the upload of data. No change would be required to the Administration Strategy.

4.4 In addition to the above minor revision\* (page 4 paragraph 2.5 of the Strategy refers), a correction was also made to the cost for the Bulk Early Retirement Estimate Costs which was listed as £715 where it should have stated £750. (Page 23 of the Strategy refers). Scheme Employers have been made aware of this change.

## 5. Link to Essex Pension Fund Objectives

5.1 Putting in place an Administration Strategy will assist in achieving the following Fund objectives:

- act with integrity and be accountable to our stakeholders;
- evolve and look for new opportunities, ensuring efficiency at all times;

- deliver a high quality friendly and informative service to all beneficiaries and employers at the point of need;
- ensure benefits are paid to the right people at the right time in the right amount; and
- ensure contribution income is collected from, the right people at the right time in the right amount.

## **6. Risk Implications**

- 6.1 There are no key risks as a result of agreeing this draft Strategy as it is predominantly based on current practices and previous Board decisions.

## **7. Communication Implications**

- 7.1 Officers will publish the approved Administration Strategy on the Fund's Website and will issue to all Scheme Employers.

## **8. Finance and Resources Implications**

- 8.1 The consultation exercise, including responding to comments from Employing Authorities, will require officer resource but it is expected that this can be managed within the existing Budget.

## **9. Background Papers**

- 9.1 Fund Policies: Review of Administration Strategy, PSB 06, 15 December 2021.
- 9.2 Administration Strategy, PSB 07, 19 December 2018.