

Wirral Council: Job Role Descriptor

Job Role:	Pensions Officer Technical
Service:	Merseyside Pension Fund (MPF)
Reports to:	Principal Benefits Manager or Data Compliance & Technical Officer
No. of Subordinates:	0
HR USE ONLY	
Job Role Ref:	BUS
Job Family:	Business Support
Proposed Grade:	Band G

JOB ROLE PURPOSE

To support the provision of a cost effective, customer focussed Pension Administration Service. The application of statutory requirements under current and legacy pension scheme regulations and associated industry wide pension legislation; ensuring compliance with overriding financial legislation and authoritative codes of operational best practice.

KEY TASKS

1. Determine entitlement and calculate all members benefits, divorce/pension sharing orders and transfer payments. Action relevant options in compliance with HMRC tax legislation, pension adjustments including the Annual Pensions Increase Review. Respond to complex and technical queries on pension policy and ensure performance targets are met.
2. Determine entitlement and calculate dependants' benefits and death gratuities. Where no dependant benefits are payable calculate and commence recovery of any overpayments, investigating requests for write-offs due to individual circumstances.
3. Determine members eligibility to compound pension entitlements against the LGPS deminimis or HMRC limits and application of tax.
4. Process Scheme AVCs and Additional Pension Contribution (APC) contracts, along with updating existing contracts including ARCs and Added Years.
5. Calculate and process the conversion of AVCs at retirement into service credits, purchase of annuities and/or tax-free cash.
6. Produce accounts for recharges to be issued to employers in respect of early retirement strains and monthly recharges to recover Compensatory Added Years.

Liaise with Wirral Council Sundry Debtor section and line managers to action invoice write-offs and holds.

7. Ensure maintenance of accurate data for pension accounts, liaising with employers regarding outstanding documentation identified through the Contribution Return exercise. Assist with the production of annual benefit statements, control and checking of the financial data including liaison with the Fund Accounts section.
8. Provide support to senior officers in respect of admission applications from prospective new employers and academies including preparation, data cleansing and population of member data. Assist with production of information for actuarial valuations, reviews and closure of admission bodies.
9. Determine action required for new entrants and leavers, check associated records, respond to enquiries and provide appropriate information on options and choices available; including combining benefits for re-employed actives, deferred and pensioner members. Check the accuracy of refunds of contributions, ensuring that the appropriate regulations have been applied and interest paid when necessary.
10. Ensure incoming mail and electronic data, including My Pension Online requests are indexed and initiate workflows for casework. Manage the storage and disposal of confidential document waste in compliance with Data Protection requirements. Manage the maintenance of the microfiche records and ensure generic Fund documents are held within the general filing system.
11. Check accuracy of payment processing, ensuring operational practise is within audit guidelines. Responsible for processing and control of foreign currency requests and procurement of both UK and international travel arrangements for Fund officers in compliance with policy and budget guidelines.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

People

Interpret relevant regulatory provisions and provide advice and guidance when communicating orally or in writing to a wide range of customers seeking complex specialist information on benefit options and retirement planning to enable members to make informed decisions to future proof financial wellbeing in retirement.

Support diverse employer base to comply with complex statutory duties and engage with external agencies including DWP and HMRC when dealing with sensitive/contentious and confidential casework.

Offer emotional support and assistance to disadvantaged member's bereaved beneficiaries and member's retiring in poor health with serious illness.

Resolve complex complaints on a daily basis.

Provide advice and support to clerical officers and less experienced pension officers and collaborate with staff and employers in all service areas to promote a positive conducive team culture.

Financial

Financial responsibility for inputting and processing complex pension information, payment and receipt of high value benefits, annual pension payments and cash equivalent transfer values ensuring validity of a combined annual value of approx £380 million.

Assist in the maintenance of pension accounts to ensure the correct payment of pension values and correct actuarial assessment of employer liabilities for valuation purposes.

Responsible for the application of esoteric government actuary guidance and HM RC regulations. Failure to comply could result in detriment to the Pension Fund and members in financial terms and penalties imposed by HMRC, the pension regulator and Pension Ombudsman.

Strategic

Operates within established policies, procedures and operating frameworks to achieve targets. Works systematically with the requirement to challenge existing processes and optimise the use of IT to deliver continuous improvement to business processing.

Resources

Controls the qualitative data requirements including pay, contributions, personal information and changes to tax codes for 46,000 active, 37,000 deferred and 48000 pensioner and deferred members of MPF in accordance TPR data requirements.

Responsibility for stock control, procurement and ensuring maintenance of appropriate machinery to access archived files, security and confidential waste management.

Planning and Organising

Working within continual strict deadlines in a pressurised environment in line with performance standards; dealing with a wide range of confidential issues in accordance

with the DPA. Manage and prioritise own allocated workload, monitoring and taking into consideration other team members workloads and priorities with the necessity to deal and cope with frequent regulatory changes.

Decision Making

Interpret and maintain knowledge of Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and all historical and other associated legislation using own initiative and judgement to identify ambiguous legislative provisions. Requirement to resolve complex data queries with employers and HMRC.

Responsible for providing advice and guidance to enable members to make informed decisions regarding their financial wellbeing.

EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Essential Criteria

Qualifications:

- Diploma or foundation Degree in Pensions Administration and Management or Equivalent.

Knowledge & Skills:

- Knowledge of the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- An understanding of HMRC Regulations and industry wide pensions' legislation.
- Good verbal and written communication skills.

Experience:

- In-depth experience of dealing with the public or working in a financial environment with practical experience of pension administration.
- The ability to demonstrate in-depth experience which supports the needs of the post.

Desirable Criteria

Qualifications:

- CIPPM or working towards.

Knowledge & Skills:

- Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.
- Using Lynx Heywood's Altair pension administration software.
- Using Microsoft Word and Excel.
- Good verbal and written communication skills.

- Good numeracy skills.
- Use of an EDM system.
- Financial systems including an accounts receivable.

Experience:

- LGPS Administration – demonstrate technical knowledge and practical experience.
- HMRC – financial regulations.
- Disclosure regulations.
- TPR Code of Practise.

ADDITIONAL WORK ELEMENTS

None.

NOTE:

The job role holder may be required to undertake other reasonable duties commensurate with the job role descriptor grade as directed by the Head of Service.

This job role descriptor will be reviewed regularly and may be subject to amendment or modification at any time after consultation with the post holder. It is not a definitive statement of procedures and tasks, but sets out the main expectations of the Service in relation to the post holder's responsibilities and duties.

Elements of this job role descriptor and changes to it may be amended in light of organisational and service requirements.

Signed Head of Service: Yvonne Murphy (Head of Pensions Administration)

Date: 21/06/2021