

**Report to:** Pension Board  
**Date:** 8 May 2018  
**By:** Chief Operating Officer  
**Title:** Pensions Annual Benefit Statement update  
**Purpose:** Provide the Board with an update on the planned production of Annual Benefit Statements in 2018

---

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Board is recommended to note the update provided and invited to comment on any aspect of the production process of Annual Benefit Statements.**

---

### **1 Introduction**

1.1 This report has been prepared to inform the Board of the plan for the production of the 2018 Annual Benefit Statements (ABS's) to ensure the statutory deadline of 31 August 2018 is met. A production plan has been provided as **Appendix 1** to explain the key process timetable.

### **2 Active Members (25,064 scheme members)**

2.1 **Appendix 1** sets out that the ABS's are scheduled to be delivered to scheme members over three phased production cycles, commencing at the beginning of June with the final cycle completed at the beginning of August, well in advance of the statutory deadline of 31 August 2018.

2.2 The Board may recall that ABS's were delivered online for the majority of scheme members in 2017 and this has proved a successful innovation with members having secure access to their statement 24/7. The online facility also provides scheme members with the ability to project "what if" scenarios using different retirement criteria. It is intended to further increase the number of active scheme members who are able to access their statement online this year, where additional email addresses have been provided by employers including ESCC although members who wish to request a hard copy of the ABS will be able to do so.

2.3 At the time of writing this report we are able to confirm that all aspects of the plan are on track and whilst many employers are yet to provide their end of year return, we are further ahead with such returns than this time last year and remain confident that, with support from colleagues within the Governance team, we have plans to ensure employers will provide their returns in a timely manner. The table below details the current status as at 26 April, ahead of the deadline of 30 April.

<b>Returns received</b>	<b>Employer acknowledgment</b>	<b>Number of individual Employer returns</b>	<b>Number of "Contacts"</b>
49	80	134	105

2.4 Employers who are unable to meet the deadline will be tackled on multiple fronts including locally sponsored contact made by phone to understand reasons for delay and provide support where necessary to secure the EOY return as quickly as possible.

### **3 Deferred Members (29,386 scheme members)**

3.1 As the production of deferred member ABS's is not dependant on any EOY returns, the production of ABS's for 2018 has been brought forward within the plan. We are pleased to report

that the process for issuing deferred member statements is now underway, 2 months ahead of last year's process. In addition, Business Operations has switched to an alternative print provider who have been briefed on the activity and will provide a 48 hour production and posting turnaround process.

3.2 The combination of the earlier production date and the more responsive print provider should ensure that benefit statements will be issued in July, well in advance of the statutory deadline of 31 August 2018.

3.3 As part of the exercise, deferred members will be invited to register for the online portal to view their deferred member data. Members who have registered for the online portal will be contacted electronically to confirm that their deferred statement can be viewed online. As part of the 2018 exercise, members will be advised that the 2019 statements will only be available online (unless they specifically request a paper copy) and will be encouraged to register if they have not already done so.

3.4 As a separate exercise, Business Operations has recently carried out a screening exercise with a tracing agency to check the validity of the home addresses we hold for deferred members. Members for whom we hold no current address (5,330) but for whom a possible forwarding address has been identified via the screening will be contacted and appropriate verification sought before records are updated. This exercise should increase the proportion of deferred members receiving an ABS.

**KEVIN FOSTER**  
**Chief Operating Officer**