

Appendix B**Current Technical Issues****HMT**

HMT consultation on public sector exit payments

On 8 August 2022, HM Treasury (HMT) launched a [consultation on public sector exit payments](#). The Government is proposing to introduce:

- an expanded approval process for employee exits and special severance payments
- additional reporting requirements.

The guidance is intended to apply to all bodies that are classified as 'Central Government'. This **does not** include local authorities or bodies under devolved administrations. The guidance **will apply** to academies.

The new approvals requirement would apply to decisions made by employers to agree to an exit where the total payment to be made would be more than £95,000. This includes relevant statutory, contractual or discretionary payments. This would include any strain cost where an LGPS member aged over 55 leaves due to redundancy or efficiency. A further approval will be needed if special severance payments – payments in excess of contractual obligations – are to be offered.

Employers will need to report any exit to HMT if the total payments made in relation to it exceed £95,000.

You can find more information about the proposals in the [draft HMT guidance on public sector exits](#) draft HMT guidance on public sector exits.

The consultation closes on 17 October 2022.

TPO**TPO publishes corporate plan**

[The Pensions Ombudsman's \(TPO\) corporate plan for 2022 to 2025](#) has been published. The corporate plan outlines TPO's key performance indicators, strategic goals and priorities for the period, along with the actions required to deliver those priorities.

New Pensions Ombudsman On 31 August 2022, [Dominic Harris was confirmed](#) as the new Pensions Ombudsman (TPO). See [bulletin 227](#) for more information.

He will start his appointment from 16 January 2023. The current Pensions Ombudsman, Anthony Arter, will remain in post until 15 January 2023.

News – September 2022

On 6 September 2022, [TPO published its September 2022 news](#).

It contains information about September's events, TPO resources and the latest determinations.

TPR warns employers about auto-enrolment duties

On 26 September 2022, the Pensions Regulator (TPR) published [a press release](#) warning employers to ensure they are complying with their automatic enrolment duties.

The warning follows a series of in-depth compliance inspections with more than 20 large employers earlier this year. The employers are from the transport, hospitality, finance and retail sectors. TPR found several common errors in respect of calculating pension contributions and communications to staff.

Scheme Advisory Board (SAB)

You can use the links below to find out about the latest updates on the work of the SAB and its committees:

- the latest [SAB meeting and agenda papers](#)
- the latest [committee meetings and agenda papers](#)
- the latest [Responsible Investment Advisory Group meetings and agenda papers](#)
- the [latest news items](#)

Letter about discrimination in the LGPS sent to minister

On 26 August 2022, Cllr Roger Phillips, Chair of the SAB, wrote to the Local Government Minister, Paul Scully. [The letter to the minister](#) recommends amending the regulations on death grants and survivor benefits.

The SAB expressed concern about continuing to restrict death grants to cases where the member died before age 75. It considers the restriction may be at risk of legal challenge and should be removed.

The SAB reminded the minister that the LGPS rules on survivor benefits have not yet been amended to reflect the Goodwin judgment. It has previously recommended the Government investigate the feasibility of removing all differences in the survivor benefit rules.

Pension Dashboards

DWP confirms frozen refunds are out of scope for initial dashboards

On 3 August 2022, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) confirmed that frozen refunds will be out of scope for initial dashboards because they are not considered to be member benefits

We expressed our disappointment and informed DWP that we will keep them updated about any issues this creates for the LGPS when we first start receiving find requests.

Guidance on Value Data for pensions dashboards

The Pensions Administration Standards Association (PASA) has published [Guidance on Value Data for pensions dashboards](#). PASA recognises that the regulations are yet to be finalised and that some uncertainty remains. The guidance includes a checklist of steps administrators can take now, despite these uncertainties. These steps will help administrators to:

- gain an understanding of what the Value Data requirements mean for their scheme
- identify where gaps exist, what the options are for filling those gaps and whether they should wait to see DWP's final regulations before making a decision
- decide if there is work they can do in advance of the designated staging date.

As reported in [Bulletin 227](#), public service pension schemes will have to provide Value Data to pensions dashboards by 1 April 2025, although they can supply it earlier if they choose to.

You can read more about the launch in the [PASA press release – Value Data guidance](#).

Data matching guidance updated

PASA has updated its guidance on dashboards data matching conventions. The [PASA dashboards data matching conventions guidance](#) was originally issued in December 2021. It has been updated to include a call to action, set out the next steps being worked on and provide links to other industry guidance.

You can read more about the updates and the reasons for them in the [PASA press release - DMC guidance](#).

LGA response to PDP's consultation and call for input on standards and guidance

LGA responded to this consultation on 31 August 2022. The Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) launched the consultation on 19 July 2022. LGA covered this in [Bulletin 227](#).

In the LGA response, they call on PDP to:

- include a flow chart and checklist to assist pension schemes understand their responsibilities when they use a third-party Integrated Service Provider (ISP) to connect to the dashboard ecosystem
- make it mandatory for users to input their national insurance number in the find data

- be mindful that the LGPS has a different McCloud remedy to the unfunded public service schemes. Any McCloud warnings or wording will need to cover the unfunded schemes and the LGPS
- make it clear to users that frozen refunds are not included on pensions dashboards
- provide more information on how the complaints procedure will work.

They also expressed concern about the proposed timeframe of 30 days for connecting via a third-party connection because of the number of funds and other public service schemes that use the same pension software providers.

The LGA response can be found on the:

- [non-scheme consultations](#) page of <http://www.lgpsregs.org/>

LGPS Governance Conference 2023

Booking is now open for the LGPS Governance Conference 2023.

The conference will take place on 19 and 20 January 2023 at the Cardiff Marriott Hotel. You can attend the conference in person or join us online.

The conference is aimed at elected members and others who attend pension committees/panels and local pension boards. Past delegates include elected members, trades union representatives, member and employer representatives, as well as a variety of officers who attend and support committees.

You can book and view the programme using the links below. An updated programme with confirmed speakers will be published shortly. We are unable to take manual bookings.

- [book to attend in person](#)
- [book to attend virtually](#).

The booking page for all LGA events is www.local.go.uk/events.