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This bulletin from the Staffordshire Pension Fund, focuses on the current issues that you should be aware of relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

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## Ill Health Retirement – Independent Registered Medical Practitioners (IRMP)

**IMPORTANT - Under Staffordshire Pension Fund's Administering Authority Discretionary Policy we can only accept a Medical Certificate for Ill Health Retirement signed by an IRMP on the Fund's approved list.**

You can obtain an up to date [list of the current panel of approved independent Doctors](#) the Fund uses on our web site (Employer password required) or by contacting [pensions.comms@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:pensions.comms@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Employers will be aware that an independent doctor must complete a Medical Certificate stating whether, in his or her opinion, the Member meets the ill health criteria or not.

The IRMP must be qualified in occupational health medicine and be approved by Staffordshire Pension Fund. They must also certify that they have not previously been involved or advised on the case.

Unfortunately, the Fund has experienced a handful of cases where Employers have submitted a Medical Certificate signed by a Doctor who is not on the Fund's approved IRMP list. When this happens the Fund cannot accept the application and it is returned to the Employer to obtain a further Medical Certificate signed by an IRMP approved by the Fund.

This causes delays in process, additional work (and costs) for Employers and the medical profession and also complaints from the individual Members.



## The Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) – Annual Report 2021

The aim of the SAB annual report is to provide a single source of information about the status of the LGPS for its Members, Employers and other stakeholders. Continually improving key information about the Scheme as a whole is one of the top priorities of the Board. This report aggregates information supplied in the 86 Pension Fund's annual reports, as of 31 March 2021.

Highlights include:

- total membership grew by 1.08 per cent from 6.160 million to 6.226 million
- total assets increased to £342 billion - a rise of 23.4 per cent
- Local Authority net return on investment from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 was 20.56 per cent - reflective of market conditions
- a positive cash-flow was maintained overall, including investment income
- over 1.8 million pensioners were paid
- COVID-19 significantly impacted life expectancy - with a drop of 0.9 years and 0.5 years for males and females respectively (2019 figures versus 2020)
- total management charges increased by £196 million, an increase of 12.9 per cent - primarily driven by a rise in investment management charges, while administration, oversight and governance costs remained broadly stable.

## Local Pensions Board Representative and an Employer Focus Peer Group Representative – required from our Academies

Following a recent resignation, the Local Pensions Board (LPB) has a vacancy for an Employer representative from one of our Academies.



The role of the LPB is to assist the scheme manager (Staffordshire County Council) to secure compliance with the LGPS regulations and to help secure the effective governance and administration of the LGPS, for the Staffordshire Pension Fund and its Members.

As a member of the LPB, you would serve for a 4-year term of office and be expected to attend meetings, which are held on a quarterly basis. To help and support the LPB representative in their role we provide full training which includes access to online portals as well as in person training sessions, at least twice a year.

If you feel you would be interested in taking up this role, then please e-mail Vikki Evans the Fund's Communications Officer, with an expression of your interest. [vikki.evans@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:vikki.evans@staffordshire.gov.uk)

## Eligibility to join the Local Government Pension Scheme

Please note, the LGPS has a maximum upper age limit of 75 for Members of the scheme. If you have new employees or are undergoing an Automatic Enrolment process for existing employees who are age 75 or over, they cannot be enrolled into the LGPS. If you have an existing Member of the scheme approaching age 75, we will contact you to ask you to cease their membership of the scheme, in order that we can bring their pension benefit into payment.

**If you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact [pensions.comms@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:pensions.comms@staffordshire.gov.uk)**

