



THE ROYAL COUNTY OF  
**BERKSHIRE**  
PENSION FUND

**ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

**QUARTER 3 – 2023 (Q2 2023/24)**

**1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023**

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# 1. ADMINISTRATION

## 1.1. Scheme Membership

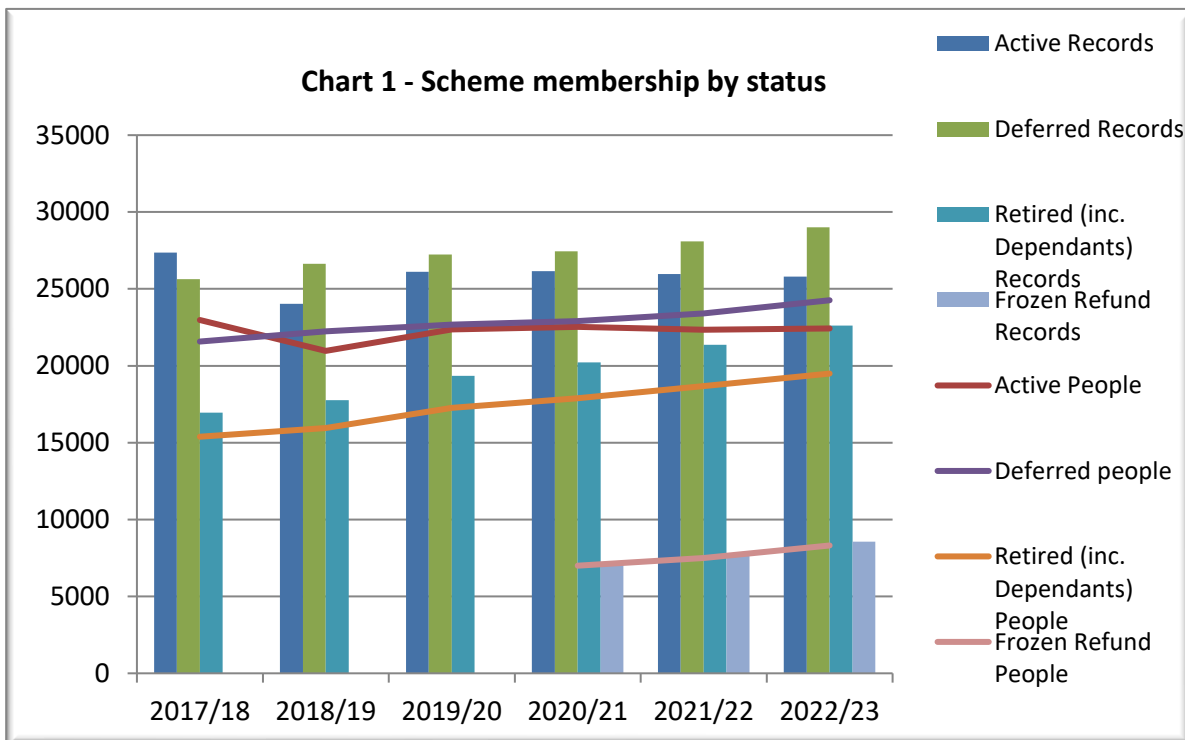


Table 1 – Total Membership as at 30 September 2023

Active Records	25,795	Active People	22,431
Deferred Records	28,999	Deferred People	24,261
Retired Records	22,622	Retired People	19,494
Frozen Refund Records	8,553	Frozen Refund Records	8,314
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85,969</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74,500</b>

## 1.2. Membership by Employer

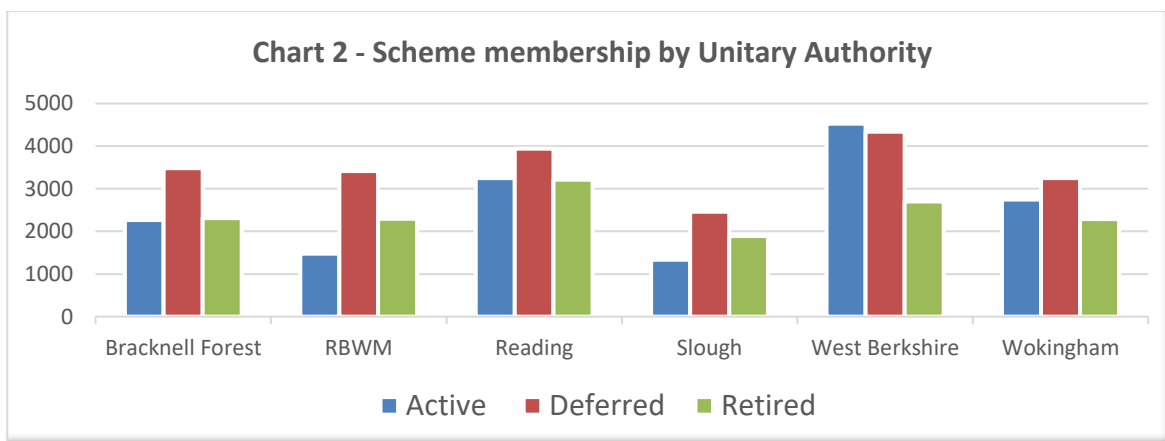
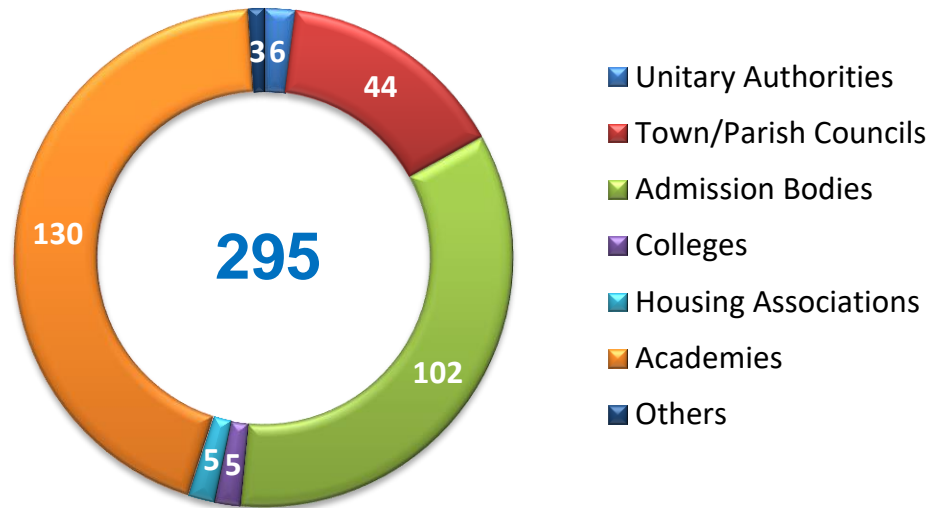


Table 2 - Membership movements in this Quarter (and previous Quarter)

	Bracknell	RBWM	Reading	Slough	W Berks	Wokingham
Active	<b>+4</b>	<b>+35</b>	<b>+13</b>	<b>-16</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>-87</b>
	<b>+30</b>	<b>-14</b>	<b>+62</b>	<b>-26</b>	<b>+83</b>	<b>-43</b>
Deferred	<b>+12</b>	<b>-7</b>	<b>+12</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>+23</b>	<b>+17</b>
	<b>-5</b>	<b>-7</b>	<b>+11</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>+27</b>	<b>+7</b>
Retired	<b>+19</b>	<b>+10</b>	<b>+19</b>	<b>+5</b>	<b>+32</b>	<b>+24</b>
	<b>+18</b>	<b>+15</b>	<b>+19</b>	<b>+16</b>	<b>+47</b>	<b>+22</b>

### 1.3. Scheme Employers

Chart 3 - Employers with active members



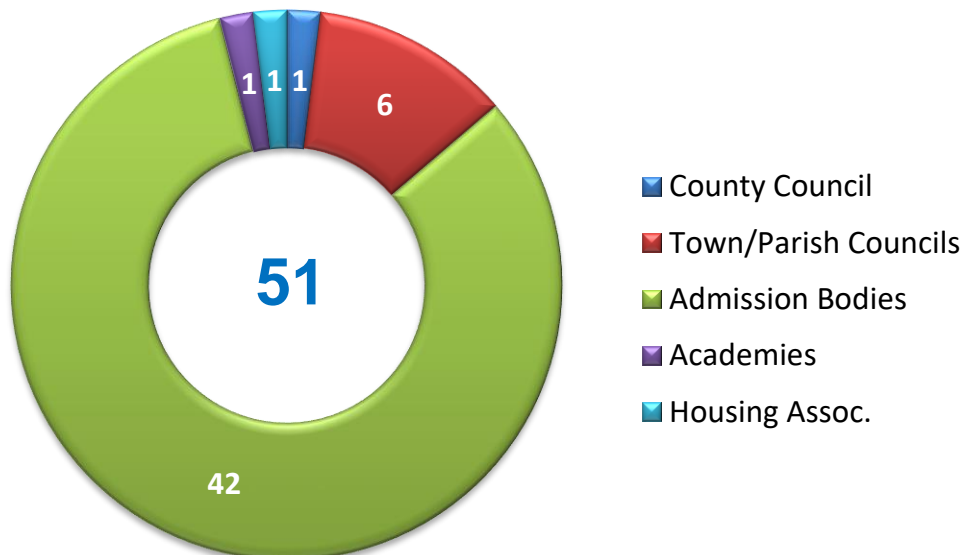
New employers since last report:

**Admission Bodies:** None

**Academies:** None

**Scheduled bodies:** None

Chart 4 - Employers without active members



**Exiting employers:** None

## 1.4. Scheme Employer Key Performance Indicators

Table 3 – i-Connect users Quarter 2 (1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023)

Employer	Starters	Leavers	Changes	Total	Submission Received Within Specification
<b>Bracknell Forest Council</b>	207	155	505	867	100%
<b>RBWM</b>	166	108	398	672	100%
<b>Reading BC</b>	278	155	848	1,281	100%
<b>Slough BC</b>	90	86	229	405	100%
<b>West Berks Council</b>	482	427	1,170	2,079	100%
<b>Wokingham BC</b>	126	74	386	586	100%
<b>Academy/ School</b>	969	816	3,454	5,239	93.40%*
<b>Others</b>	16	18	93	127	96.72%

\*Increase of 8.29% compared with percentage achievement reported in Quarter 1

**NOTES:** Table 1A above shows all transactions through i-Connect Software for the second quarter of 2023/2024. Changes include hours/weeks updates, address amendments and basic details updates.

The benefits of i-Connect are:

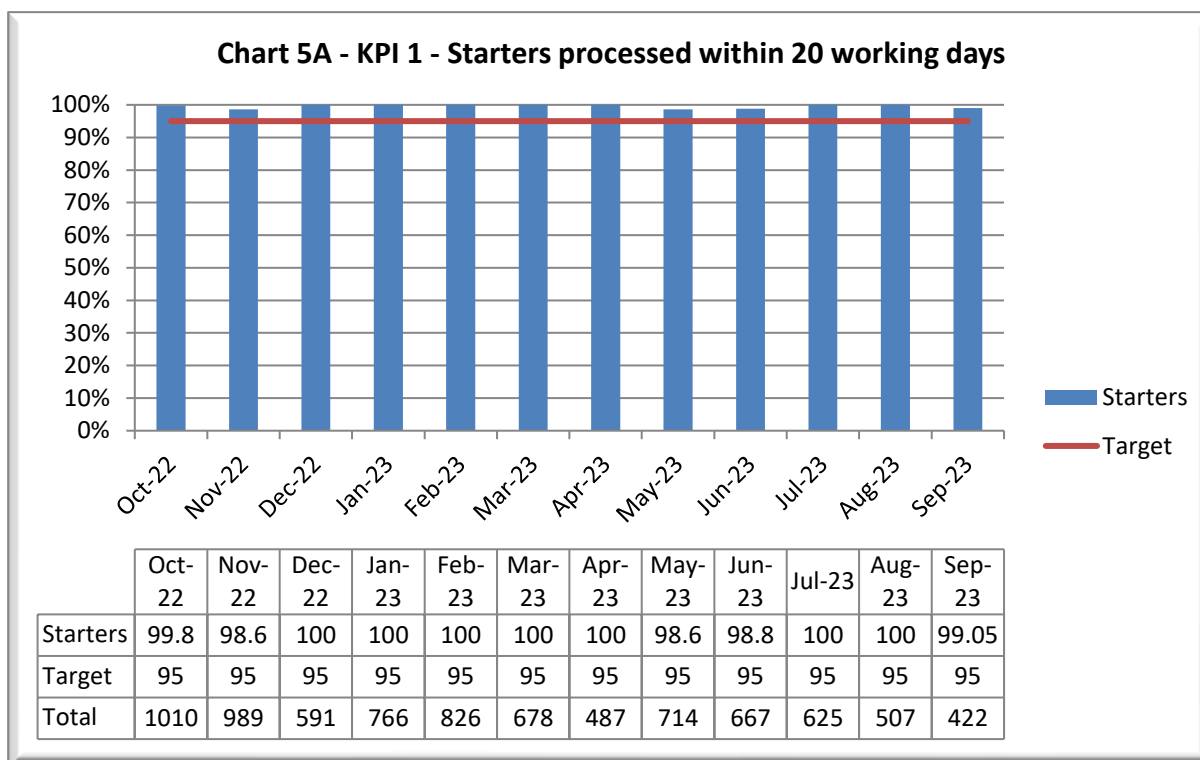
- Pension records are maintained in 'real-time';
- Scheme members are presented with the most up to date and accurate information through "my pension ONLINE" (Member self-service);
- Pension administration data matches employer payroll data;
- Discrepancies are dealt with as they arise each month;
- Employers are not required to complete year end returns;
- Manual completion of forms and input of data onto systems is eradicated removing the risk of human error.

Since 1 July 2024, one scheme employer has on boarded i-connect Software - Denefield School - representing 111 scheme member records. Officers continue to work closely with Excalibur Academies Trust, Mary Hare Grammar School, Schelwood Academy Trust, The Arbib Education Trust, The Keys Academy Trust and The Pioneer Educational Trust which represents circa 940 scheme member records endeavouring to on board.

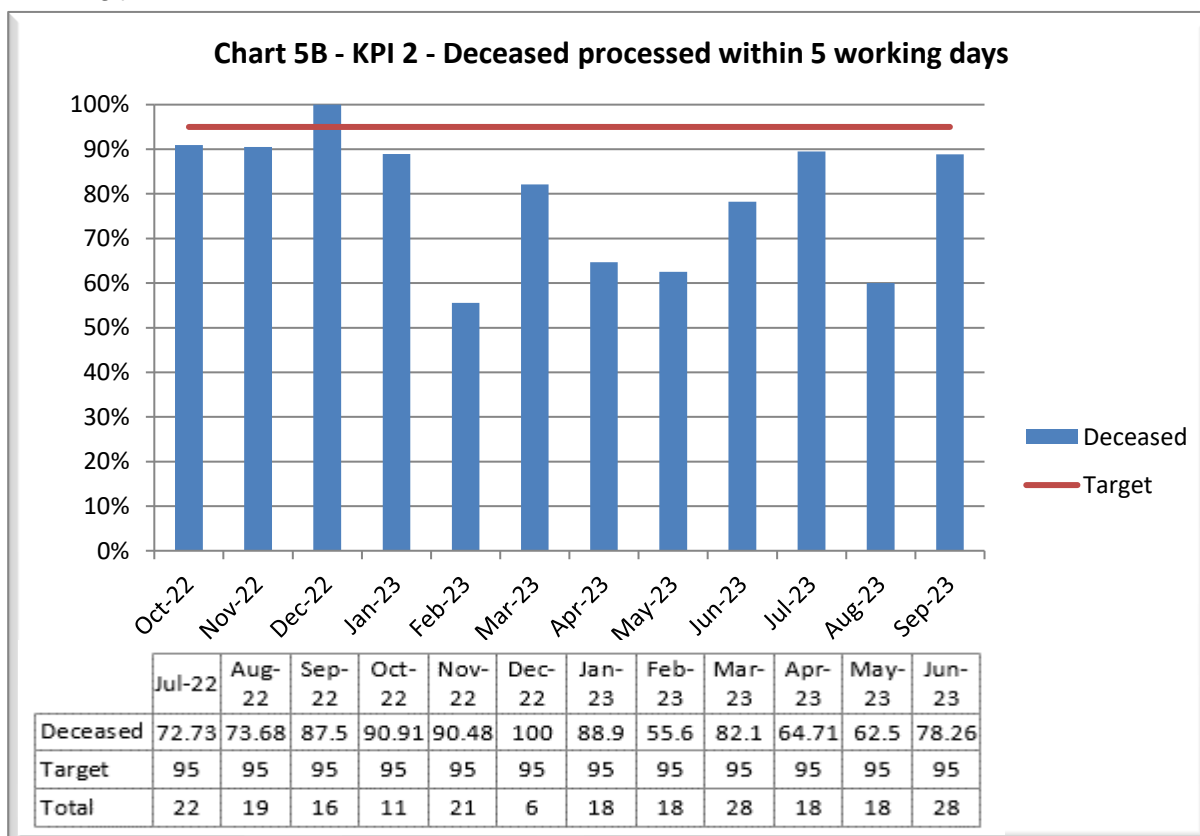
Overall, 132 scheme employers are yet to on board i-Connect Software which represents circa. 1,850 scheme member records (7.20% of total Active Scheme members).

The Pension Fund remains committed to continuing to work with these scheme employers to help them to onboard, where it is possible for them to do so. Scheme employers with fewer than 10 scheme members (81 employers) have the option of using an on-line portal version of i-Connect Software rather than submitting via ".csv".

## 1.5. Key Performance Indicators



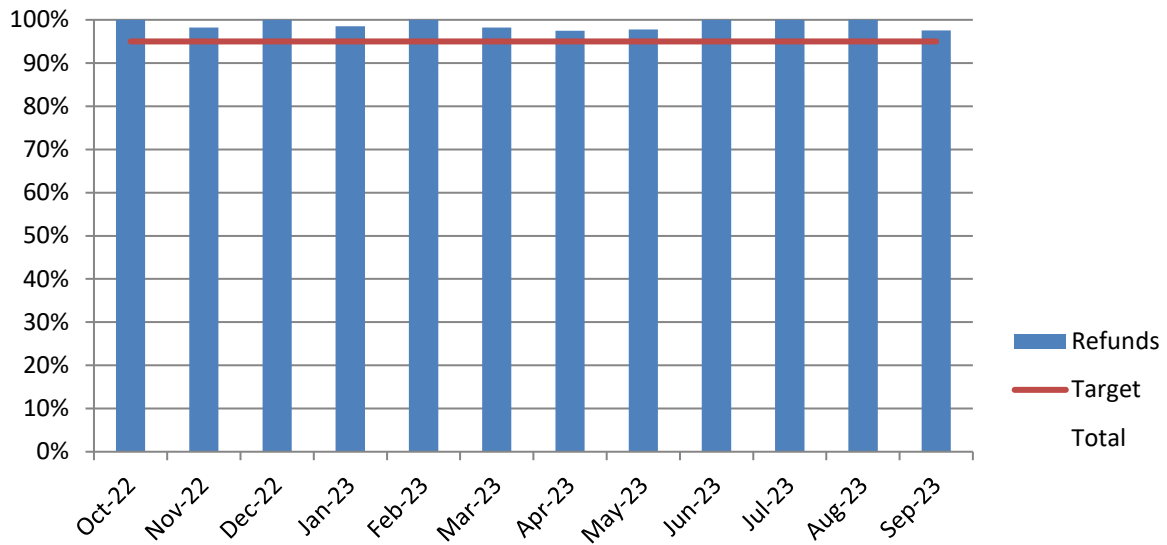
**CIPFA Benchmark:** Two months from date of joining the scheme or if earlier within one month of receiving jobholder information.



**CIPFA Benchmark:** As soon as practicable and no more than two months from date of notification of death from scheme employer or deceased's representative.

With effect from Quarter 4 – 2023 (Q2 – 2023/24) Officers will begin reporting “**Deceased processed within 10 working days**”.

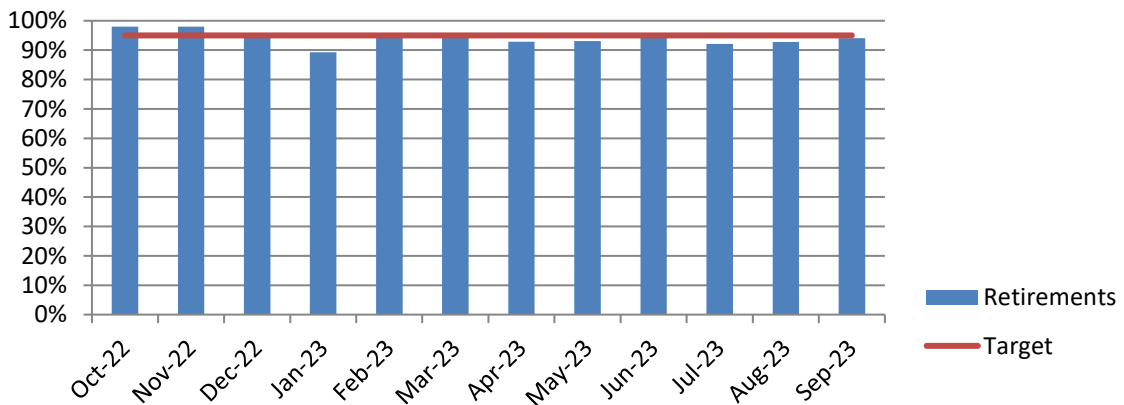
**Chart 5C - KPI 3 - Refunds processed within 10 working days**



	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23
Refunds	100	98.25	100	98.5	100	98.25	97.5	97.78	100	100	100	97.56
Target	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95
Total	44	57	54	68	63	57	40	45	66	49	54	41

**CIPFA Benchmark:** No more than two months from date of receiving the scheme members signed declaration requesting to receive a refund of employee pension contributions.

**Chart 5D - KPI 4 - Retirements processed within 5 working days**

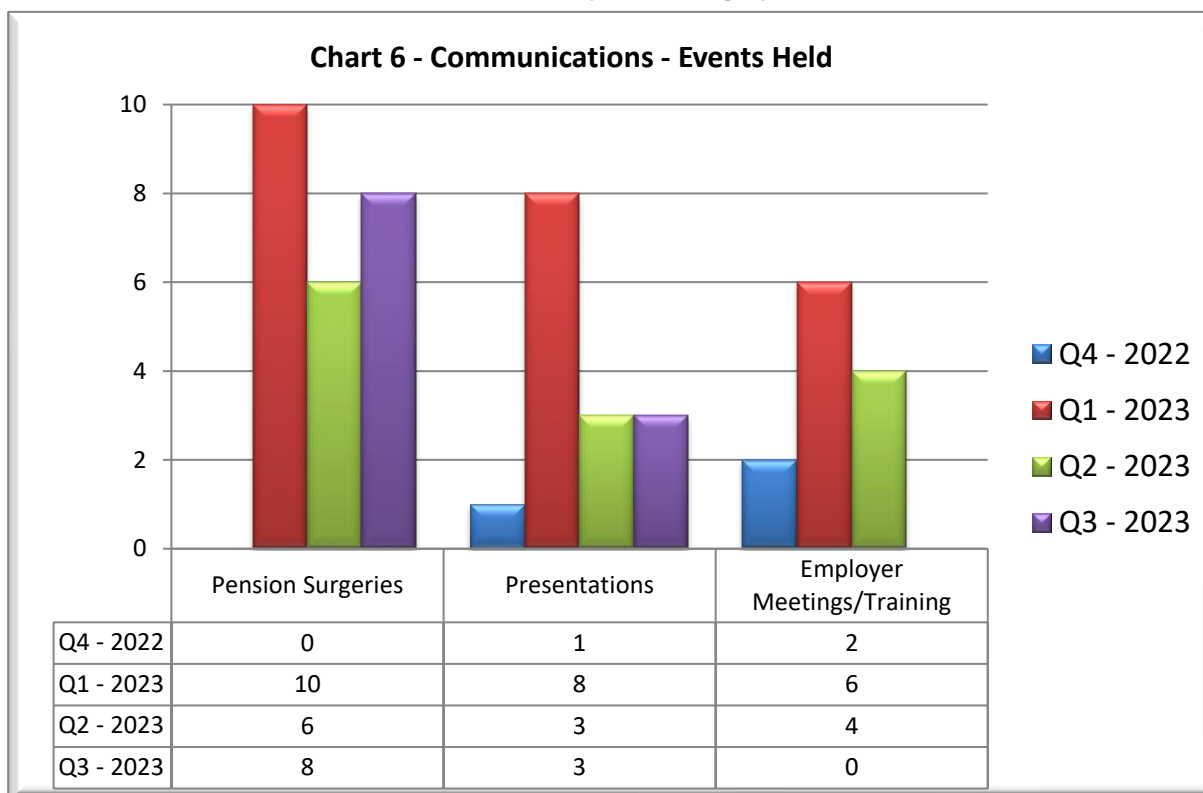


	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23
Retirements	98.01	97.96	95.52	89.3	95.1	95.4	92.86	93.04	94.49	92.16	92.79	94.02
Target	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95
Total	151	98	67	140	101	87	112	115	127	102	111	117

**CIPFA Benchmark:** One month from date of retirement if on or after normal pension age or two months from date of retirement if before normal pension age.

## 1.6. Communications

Events shown have been held remotely, including hybrid.



## 1.7. Stakeholder Feedback

As part of the Pension Fund's aim to achieve Pension Administration Standards Association (PASA) accreditation it is a requirement to report to Members the comments and complaints received from scheme employers and their scheme members on a periodic basis. Please see below feedback received from stakeholders during the second quarter:

Date Received	Method	Feedback
01/07/2023	Microsoft Teams	Member made appointment at pension surgery and complimented the team on the service we provide and they were very impressed with us. They were a new starter but had come from a previous LGPS Fund so said their experience with us has been a lot better than their old LGPS Fund!
27/07/2023	E-mail	Hi [NAME], That was the quickest and most comprehensive reply to a question I've had to a DB Scheme in my whole career – I really appreciate it sir. Have a good rest of your day.
04/08/2023	Telephone	Thank you for providing a brilliant website, it is very clear and easy to follow. I have another pension with [NAME] and your website is 100 times better than theirs. Well done!



04/08/2023	E-mail	Once again, thank you for your professional approach. It is much appreciated.
20/09/2023	E-mail	Hi [NAME], Thanks for your time earlier and for your email, you were really helpful and it's much appreciated!
25/09/2023	E-mail	Thank you very much for organising this session. It was clear, concise, and very helpful in giving me information to make decisions around.
27/09/2023	E-mail	[NAME] presented a very informative session this afternoon - thank you!
28/09/2023	E-mail	I couldn't attend the session yesterday but have just finished rewatching and wanted to say a MASSIVE thank you for putting this together. As a younger (22) person, it's all very confusing and this cleared up some confusion in my head, so thank you very much.

## 2. SPECIAL PROJECTS

### 2.1. McCloud Judgement

In 2014 and 2015 the Government introduced changes to public service pension schemes, including the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), for future service, moving from providing Final Salary to Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) benefits and increasing normal pension age to be in line with state pension age.

The changes to the LGPS in England and Wales, effective from 1 April 2014, applied to existing scheme members as well as new scheme members, but older scheme members were given protection against the changes.

As a result, two employment tribunal cases were brought against the Government, the claimants arguing that the underpin protection introduced amounted to unlawful discrimination as the protection only applied to certain older scheme members. The Court of Appeal ruled in the claimant's favour that these changes were discriminatory to younger scheme members leading the Government to commit to make changes to all public sector pension schemes to remove discrimination.

The changes to regulations are effective from 1 October 2023 and present a significant administrative burden to all LGPS Pension Funds. Scheme members in the scope of the protection will have their post 31 March 2014 benefits calculated as the best of CARE and Final Salary in line with a revised underpin protection. The effect will be retrospective; further data for calculating benefits for current contributing scheme members needs to be collated from scheme employers dating back to 1 April 2014 and benefits will need to be recalculated for qualifying scheme members who have left since 1 April 2014. Those older scheme members who were already given protection may also be affected given changes to the

methodology of the underpin that was originally introduced when the LGPS changed to CARE in April 2014.

At a fund level Officers will need to identify those scheme members in scope of the extended underpin protection, obtain the data needed to calculate a scheme member's post 31 March 2014 benefits from scheme employers, update all scheme member records, calculate retrospective benefits, pay any underpayments, communicate with scheme members and scheme employers and make changes to administration systems and processes to carry out ongoing administration under the new regulations.

Following a review of the changes to regulations effective from 1 October 2023 Officers drafted and finalised a budgeted project plan on 3 October 2023 that includes the project criteria, project resources, project stakeholders, project structure and project milestones. The project plan includes a detailed project-specific risk analysis in support of the Pension Fund's risk management process, risks will be identified and mitigations will be put in place in minimise the likelihood and impact of risks materialising and all risks will be monitored regularly.

## ***2.2. Pensions Dashboard Programme***

A national pensions dashboard has been on the horizon for some time, but now the Pension Schemes Act 2021 has received Royal Assent it is anticipated the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will begin to consult on detailed dashboards regulations and work with regulators to begin supporting both private and public sector pension providers and pension schemes to comply with their dashboards compulsion duties. It is anticipated the Pensions Dashboards Programme (PDP) will publish further detailed instructions on how a scheme administrator must operate with the dashboards ecosystem.

The DWP announced on 2 March 2023 a significant delay to the Pensions Dashboards Programme. The statement released explained that the Pensions Dashboards Programme will be unable to meet the connection deadlines set out in legislation, and the timeline will need to be revised. The framework for dashboards will remain unchanged, but DWP will now legislate to provide new deadlines. It is anticipated public sector pension scheme administrators will now begin onboarding during quarter four of 2025 rather than 2024.

Officers recognise it is important not to wait. Almost every aspect of administering a pension scheme is easier to achieve if data is actively managed and incorporates both Common and Scheme Specific data activities, an area officers have successfully improved over the last three years. Officers acknowledge Pensions Dashboards, if done well, could be a game changer in getting individuals to better engage with their pensions and a better efficiency of pension scheme management.