

Equality Impact Assessment

PENSION DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

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1. Defining the Aims of the Procedure

- The aim of the IDRP is that pension disputes should be resolved internally before progressing to an external, independent consideration by the Pensions Ombudsman.

The Procedure is defined by the Corporate HR team. It is managed by departmental HR teams. The appeal process is administered by the Corporate HR Team.

The stakeholders are: HR, Payroll, Lancashire Pensions Services, all active, deferred and pensioner members, their widows, widowers and dependants, their nominated representatives and prospective members.

What might hinder the Procedure?

- If time limits are not followed, the person with a concern / complaint will be entitled to pursue the matter outside Blackpool Council.

2. Available Data and Research

There is no data available and this is a new procedure.

Once it is implemented, data should be collected on the people who take appeals to the first stage (Head of Business Support), the second stage (Lancashire Pensions Services) and finally, to the Pensions Ombudsman. This should cover the person's ethnicity, gender and whether or not they have a disability – and whether or not their appeal is successful.

3. Assessment of Impacts

There is no data available and no reason to suggest that there should be any adverse impact. However, future monitoring will be required to ensure that people are treated fairly when appealing decisions about their pension.

4. Possible Measures to Mitigate Impact / Promote Equality of Opportunity

- Monitor data in future as outlined above.
- Ensure that all requests made to the Head of Business Support are replied to, in writing, within 2 months.
- Ensure that the pensions officer is clear about the procedure and receives the necessary support to deal with matters informally, wherever possible.

Kirsten Burnett
HR Development Officer