West Midlands Pension Fund

Employer Peer Group - Terms of reference

The Employer Peer Group consists of a group of representatives from across the Fund's employer base e.g. District Councils, educational establishments, private companies and other participating organisations. The group discusses a range of topics (based on an agreed agenda) such as the legal obligations of scheme employers, ongoing or topical issues and upcoming events.

Primary purposes of the group

- To enable the Fund to work collaboratively with employers
- To share best practice
- To discuss current pensions issues and their impact on the WMPF/LGPS/wider Pensions Industry
- To encourage engagement between the Peer Group (representing Fund Employers) and the Fund to improve the exchange of data and communication.
- Provide feedback to the Fund to assist them when implementing improvements

Meeting information

- Peer Group is usually held at the Fund offices in Mander House – Wolverhampton however, sessions can also be attended via the online platform, Microsoft Teams, when circumstances require (see 'virtual meeting etiquette').
- At least three Fund representatives will attend each meeting, to include specialist presenters on set topics as required. In the event of employee representation via Microsoft Teams, a meeting organiser will also be appointed.
- Membership of the group is open to all scheme employers via an expression of interest.
- The membership and attendance of the group will be reviewed annually or at such a point as required.
- Depending on attendee availability, and content for discussion, it is anticipated that each session will last for 2 to 3 hours.
- Common roles of the employee representatives include; Payroll, Human Resources, Finance, Pension staff, along with any other staff who liaise with the Fund on a regular basis or have a strategic role within their organisation.
- Minimum number of attendees: 7 (if attendance is lower than the minimum number, the Fund will consider rescheduling the meeting); Maximum number of attendees: 20.
- Attendance is limited to 1 representative per organisation (2 representatives will be considered with prior notification in circumstances such as shadow working, personal development and change of job role etc).
- Notification of non-attendance must be given one week in advance of the scheduled meeting. In such circumstances, a substitute is expected to attend.

Virtual meeting etiquette

- Check that the computer/laptop used to join the meeting is functioning. Check that headphones (if required), microphones, internet connection, etc. are all up and running prior to the meeting start time.
- Be ready to start a few minutes ahead of time to ensure the meeting can begin on the scheduled start time.
- Mute the microphone unless you wish to contribute to the conversation (in which case, see below)
- During the meeting, you can raise a virtual hand to let all participants know, including the meeting organiser, you wish to contribute without interrupting the ongoing conversation. The meeting organiser will then confirm, at the appropriate time, when the microphone can be unmuted, and the conversation can begin based on the order in which the virtual hands were raised.

How are the items for the agenda generated?

- The Fund will forward an invitation in the first quarter of the scheme year for each of the planned Peer Group meeting dates.
- The agenda will be issued to the Peer Group no later than 1 week prior to the scheduled meeting.
- The Fund will produce a meeting summary and action points for circulation amongst the group no later than one month after the meeting.

How will information be relayed from the group to the wider employer base?

- Employer brief (circulated to all employers on a quarterly basis)
- Annual survey (potential inclusion of discussion points in questions)
- AGM (Annual General Meeting) and MYR (Mid-Year Review)
- Fund's website
- Peer Group minutes will be available to all scheme employers upon request