

Job Description: Head of Pensions

Reports to:	Director of Strategy and Policy
Division:	Strategy and Policy / Pensions Team
Grade:	Grade 9
Responsible for:	Pensions Team

Job Purpose:

To represent the interests of local authorities to Government and other scheme stakeholders including the relevant national trade unions in relation to the investment, administration, development and costs of the appropriate public service pension schemes and related compensation matters with the objective of ensuring they:

- are developed to reflect the views and needs of Local Authorities and related bodies; and
- reflect the changing political, demographic, social, financial and legal environment.

To ensure that Local Authorities and pension practitioners are provided with the necessary specialist advice, training and information to enable them to discharge their duties and achieve excellent standards in all areas related to the above pension schemes and compensation matters

To act as the Secretary of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales) (LGPSAB).

Core Accountabilities:

1. Lead the delivery of assigned projects and programmes within resource and budget allocations that deliver the Local Government Association's (LGA) business plan and help pension schemes, funds and councils meet their challenges and priority outcomes.
2. Develop networks and partnerships that are of value to the LGA and work to maintain a positive reputation for the LGA with local authorities, central government, partners and stakeholders.
3. Work to maintain a culture of continuous improvement in the team, underpinned by effective performance management and monitoring.
4. Where required commission resources to supplement the LGA core resources in terms of capacity and expert knowledge, following agreed procurement processes and within budget allocations.
5. Lead/work as part of a team, building a culture of flexible and collaborative team working to ensure that the LGA meets its business objectives and responds effectively to new or changing requirements.
6. Model the LGA's values and work in accordance with health and safety, equal opportunities and environmental policies.
7. Undertake any other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the post.

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Specific Accountabilities:

8. To represent at a national strategic level the interests of local authorities to Government and other stakeholders including trade unions in relation to the appropriate public service pension schemes and related compensation matters with the objective of ensuring:
 - the schemes are developed, governed, administered and invested to reflect the views and needs of Local Authorities and related bodies; and
 - reflect the changing political, demographic, social, financial and legal environment.
9. To work closely with the LGA's finance policy team to represent the interests of councils in relation to regulations and guidance on investments by LGPS pension funds and pools.
10. To formulate and monitor the overall objectives of the Pensions Team and lead and support the team to ensure it:
 - delivers the workplans of the Scheme Advisory Boards of the LGPS and Firefighter Pension Scheme (FPS)
 - provides and delivers a service that users / subscribers are consulted on and want,
 - operates effectively, efficiently and viably.
11. To have overall responsibility for the preparation and monitoring of the annual Pensions Trading Accounts and authorise expenditure so as to ensure proper financial management (and that, being pure trading accounts, income covers expenditure).
12. To represent the LGA and LGPSAB at a wide range of national and regional policy groups and events to ensure the LGA/LGPSAB position on policy and technical aspects is known and that policy and technical developments are properly coordinated.
13. To report to and advise as required the appropriate LGA governing bodies to ensure elected members are provided with necessary information to enable them to provide views and make decisions on pensions policy developments.
14. To provide advisory and secretariat support services to the statutory LGPS and FPS Scheme Advisory Boards.
15. To build and manage effective relationships with key stakeholders in central and local government, other employer organisations, actuarial and investment service providers and with the national local government, firefighter and teacher unions.

Relevant Contacts:

Central Government Departments

Civil Servants

LGA

Programme Board Members

LGA Office Holders

LGA Executive

CMT

Other

LGPS Pension Managers

National Union Representatives

LGPS Pools

Professional Bodies

Actuaries

Investment consultants

Investment managers

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Person Specification: Head of Pensions

Qualifications	Degree or equivalent
<p>Knowledge and experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of representing employer interests at a national strategic level to Government, national unions and other bodies. • Detailed knowledge of the legislative and governance structures of local authorities • Experience of managing relationships and dealing effectively with internal and external customers, advising senior officers and elected members on a range of multifaceted issues in a complex technical and political environment. • An expert in pensions policy and practice with extensive technical and practical knowledge of the Local Government, Firefighter and Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations and their implementation, including related compensation regulations. • A working knowledge of the governance, asset types, vehicles, fund structures and regulatory framework of the investments of occupational pension schemes, preferably the LGPS. • Detailed knowledge of occupational pension matters including relevant social security law and other overriding legislation, case law and guidance from regulatory bodies. • A track record and experience of producing both technical and strategic / policy advice, guidance and information to a wide range of audiences with interests in the Local Government, Firefighters' and Teachers' Pension Schemes, including governmental bodies, pensions practitioners, elected members and employers. • Practical experience of setting, monitoring, reporting and keeping on target a substantial budget. • Practical experience of resolving and finding a path through conflicting interests and managing competing pressures in an ever-changing environment. • Practical experience of managing a team of technical experts.
<p>Skills & abilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and oral communication skills in order to communicate and present technical information in an understandable way to a wide and diverse audience, including pensions practitioners, employers, councillors, civil servants and union officials. • The confidence to represent the LGA and the LGPSAB when providing advice, information and / or training to a wide range of audiences including ministers, governmental bodies, pensions practitioners, councillors, and employers. • Good planning and co-ordination skills in order to develop and monitor the Business Plan for the pensions team. • Ability to understand and interpret a wide range of complex legislation. • A high degree of self-motivation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A high level of numeracy in order to understand and provide advice on Government Actuary materials and to prepare and monitor trading accounts for the pensions team.• Ability to work effectively using own initiative.• Ability to work effectively as part of a team.• Ability to quickly gain credibility and manage relationships with key national and other stakeholders.• Ability to effectively represent employer interests to Government, national unions and other bodies.• Ability to resolve and find a path through conflicting interests and to manage competing pressures in an ever changing environment. <p>Other Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the job will involve attending many events and other meetings across the UK (outside normal office hours and outside London) a flexible attitude to working hours and working away from the office and/or home is essential.
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