Meeting:	Pension Board
Date:	20/07/2023
Title:	Pension Administration
Author:	Meirion Jones, Pensions Manager
Purpose:	For information only

1. Introduction

This report provides a general overview of pension administration over the past year. It contains information on the work carried out over the period and an update on various previously mentioned projects.

2. Performance Management

The Pension Fund is committed to improving its service delivery and will review the measures in place to monitor performance on an annual basis to identify where improvements can be made. Where areas of poor performance are identified, The Pension Service will review the reasons for poor performance and put in place appropriate processes to improve the level of service provision in the future. The service's core duties performance for 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 is as follows:

Core Activities	Performance in 2021/2022		Performance in 2022/2023	
	Number of cases	Average days taken	Number of cases	Average days taken
Average number of work days taken to send a quotation letter offering a transfer in	194	53.28	351	26.60
Average number of work days taken to send a quotation letter detailing a transfer out	205	28.63	218	17.11
Average number of work days taken to send process a refund of pension contributions	206	1.42	287	0.72
Number of working days on average taken to send a letter informing of the value of the deferred benefits	987	5.98	2,015	7.86
Average number of work days taken to send a letter informing value of benefits – estimates	1,714	1.33	2,056	1.16
Average number of work days taken to send a letter informing value of benefits – actual	683	0.99	797	0.84

Average number of work days taken to notify dependents benefits	264	1.84	385	1.61
Monthly pension payments processed and paid on time (figure based on number of payments in Month 12 of each year)	11,609	100%	11,999	100%
Number of cases where amended payments were necessary as a result of an error in the section	0	n/a	0	n/a

As can be seen, overall, the performance of the service has improved. The performance of sending a letter informing of the value of the deferred benefits has worsened slightly. The main reason for this is the fact that new staff have been appointed in 2022/23 to undertake this work and it has taken time to train them. Although the number of days has increased for this aspect of the work, we have processed 2,015 cases during 2022/23 to compare with 978 cases during 2021/22 and this helps to improve the accuracy of our data.

We will continue to work to improve the performance for all tasks during 2023/24.
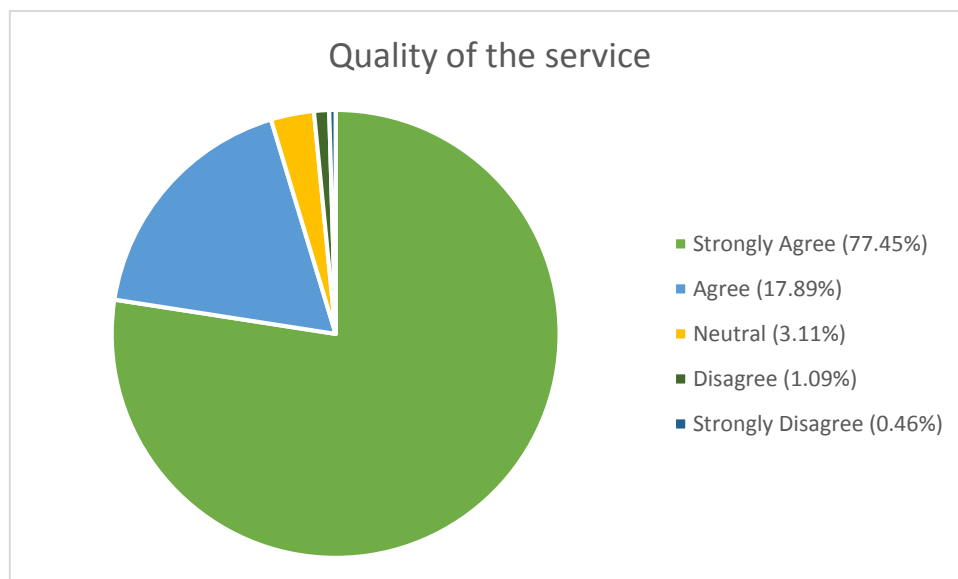
3. Member Satisfaction Survey

To ensure that we offer the best possible service to our members, a Member Satisfaction Survey is sent at the end of each process, e.g. retirements and payment of refunds for the members to give their opinion on the quality of the service received and their opinion about the service provided by the staff.

Here is a summary of the 2022/23 results:

Quality of Service

The chart below shows the percentage of users who are satisfied with four aspects of the service's performance based on: i) Service as a whole; ii) clear information; iii) Quality of service; iv) Time to deal with the enquiry.

Quality of the service

- Strongly Agree (77.45%)
- Agree (17.89%)
- Neutral (3.11%)
- Disagree (1.09%)
- Strongly Disagree (0.46%)

As can be seen, 95.34% of the users strongly agree or agree that the quality of the service provided is of a high standard.

Staff

The chart below shows the percentage of users who are satisfied with four aspects of staff performance based on: i) Courtesy; ii) Punctuality; iii) Assistance given; iv) level of knowledge.

Staff

- Strongly Agree(84.75%)
- Agree (13.29%)
- Neutral (1.8%)
- Disagree (0%)
- Strongly Disagree(0%)
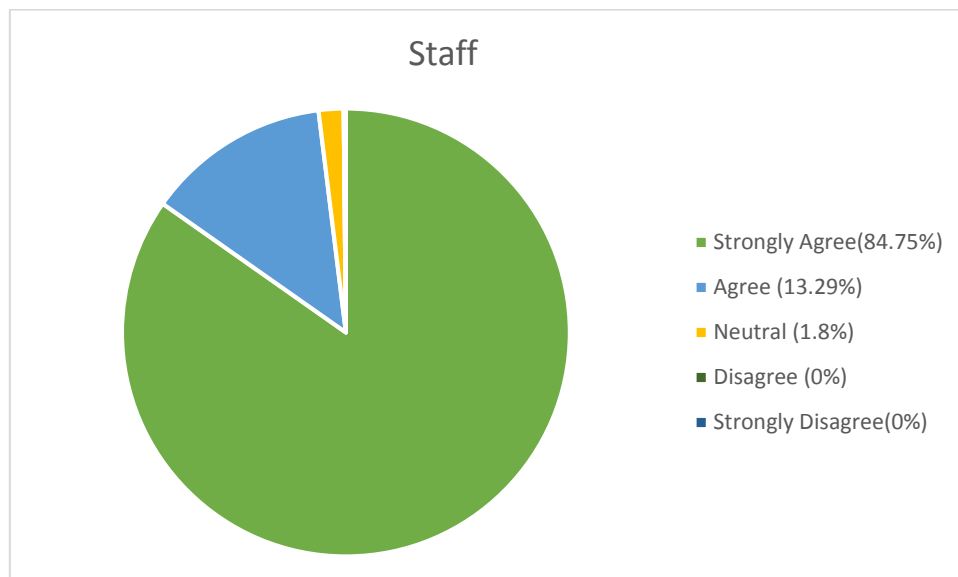
As can be seen, a high percentage once again (98.04%) of the users strongly agree or agree that the quality of the service provided is of a high standard in relation to the staff.

4. **Complaints**

Fortunately, the number of complaints we receive is very low. Here are the details of the complaints we have received during 2022/23:

Ill-health Retirement: Members unhappy that their application to retire under the ill-health retirement option was not successful. This decision is outside the fund's control - These complaints are referred back to the relevant employer.

Delay in transferring pension benefits: A member was unhappy with the time taken to transfer her benefits out of the pension fund to another pension fund. When looking into the complaint it was clear that the delay was due to the other pension fund, and therefore this was out of the hands of the Gwynedd Pension Fund.

We correct any errors as soon as possible and try to change our processes, if appropriate, to avoid the same mistake happening again.

5. **My Pension Online**

The 'My Pension Online' system continues to be very popular, with a large number of members visiting the site daily.

Approximately 20,000 have registered for the service to date. The graph below shows an increase in the number of members joining the self-service system over the last 10 years:
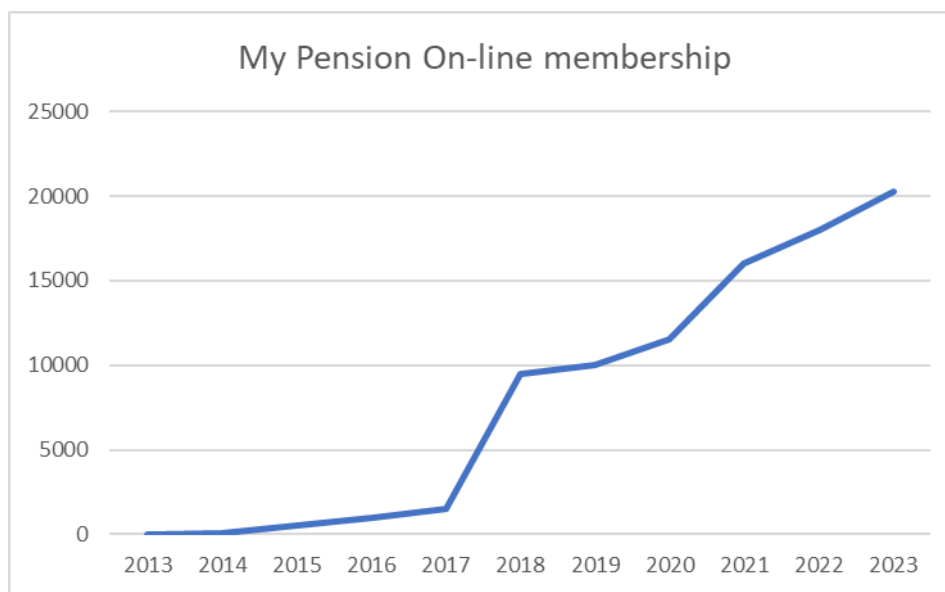
The system allows members to:

- View and update personal details and addresses
- Find out how much benefits will be worth at retirement
- Calculate the amount of extra lump sum they can take in retirement
- View their service history, including any transmitted service
- View and update their nominated beneficiaries
- View their Annual Benefit Statements

We have recently introduced an option for pension fund pensioners to view their monthly pension slips online. A paper pension payment slip is only sent to members when there is a difference in pension payments of £5.00 compared to the previous month's pension payment, so the new service enables pensioners to see their pension slip every month from now on. We will stop sending paper slips to new pensioners and encourage current pensioners to stop receiving paper slips, but it is likely that a large number will be reluctant to change at the moment, so there is no intention of forcing everyone to change to the new system at this time.

We hope that a brand-new version of the system will be introduced during 2023/24 and we plan to carry on developing the options available to members.

6. **The Pensios Regulator – Measuring Data**

In 2015, the Pensions Regulator (tPR) took over responsibility for Public Sector Pension Schemes. Before that, in June 2010, the tPR published guidance on what they consider to be good practice to measure the presence of members' data.

Over the last few years we have been commissioning our software provider, Aquila Heywood to produce a Data Quality Report for our Fund every September. We now have software to run this report internally.

The report is divided into two sections:

- **Common Data:** e.g. name, address, NI number, gender, date of birth, status and start date
- **Scheme Specific Data:** e.g. benefits in the scheme, transfer details, AVC, salary details, contributions, service, lifetime allowance, annual allowance and GMP.
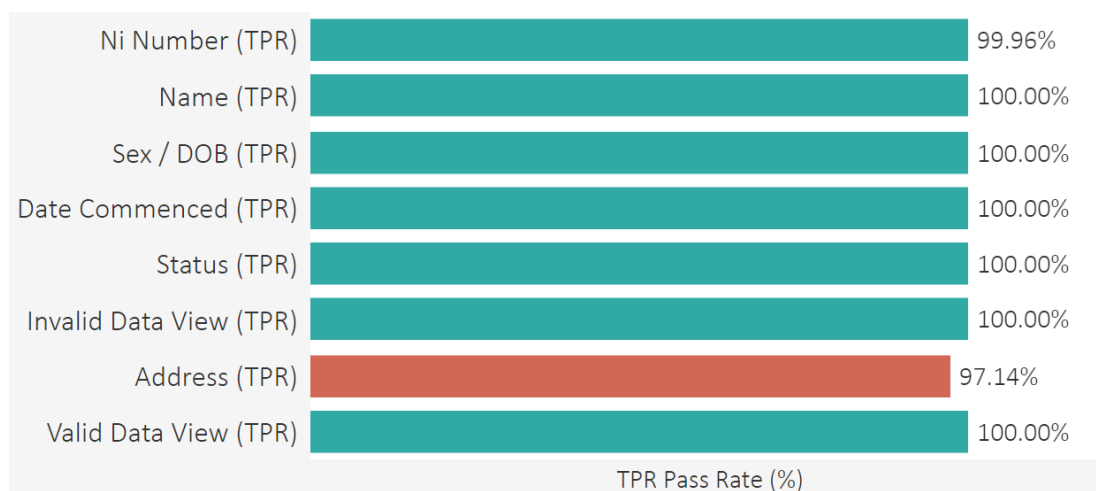
We provide below a summary of the results:

Summary of Common Data Results

The graph below shows Gwynedd's performance for each data category.

7 of the 8 categories achieved the highest benchmark of more than 98% with 5 categories not recording a single failure. The only category that did not reach the highest benchmark in question was **members' addresses** with a score of **97.14%.** With the exception of members' addresses, the general quality of common data in Gwynedd is of a high standard. In order to improve the member address score we will be working with a company called ATMOS to carry out work to track the address of members recorded as having "disappeared".

The percentage of member records without a common data failure is **97.9%** (97.7% last year) at the date of preparing this report (09/06/2023).

TPR Pass Rate % by Test Category

Category	TPR Pass Rate (%)
Ni Number (TPR)	99.96%
Name (TPR)	100.00%
Sex / DOB (TPR)	100.00%
Date Commenced (TPR)	100.00%
Status (TPR)	100.00%
Invalid Data View (TPR)	100.00%
Address (TPR)	97.14%
Valid Data View (TPR)	100.00%

Summary of Scheme Specific Data Results

The graph below shows Gwynedd's performance for each data category against the agreed plan benchmarks.

The percentage of member records without individual data failure that is specific to the scheme is **98.78%** (94.89% last year) at the date of preparing this report.

Grand Total | TPR Pass Rate % by Test Category

Category	Pass Rate %
Member Details	100.00%
Member Benefits	99.68%
CARE	98.96%
HMRC	99.77%
Contracting Out	98.33%
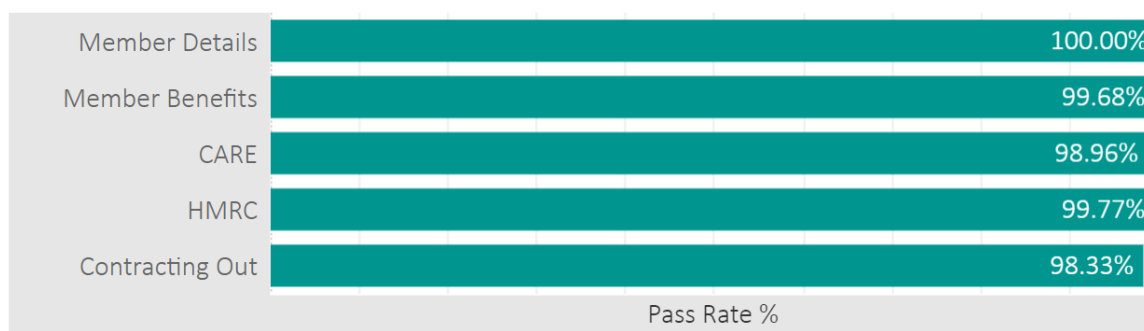
An action plan is being developed in relation to the implementation of any data cleansing highlighted as part of this exercise and this data cleansing is expected to improve the data scores for next year.

7. Eisteddfod

The pension fund will have a stand at the National Eisteddfod in Boduan this year (stall 208).

We hope the Eisteddfod will be a good opportunity for us to meet the members of the pension fund face to face and try to encourage them to register for the My Pension Online service, complete forms and ask questions etc.

8. New logo

In preparing marketing material for the National Eisteddfod, we thought it would be a good idea to have a new logo designed for the Pension Fund as the current logo is now looking a bit dated.

Here is the current logo:

We commissioned a graphic designer in the IT department to come up with a new logo and gave him a theme of castles, mountains, and sea as we felt these 3 elements are common for Gwynedd, Anglesey and Conwy.

Please see below the ideas he has come up with:

Idea 1:

Idea 2:
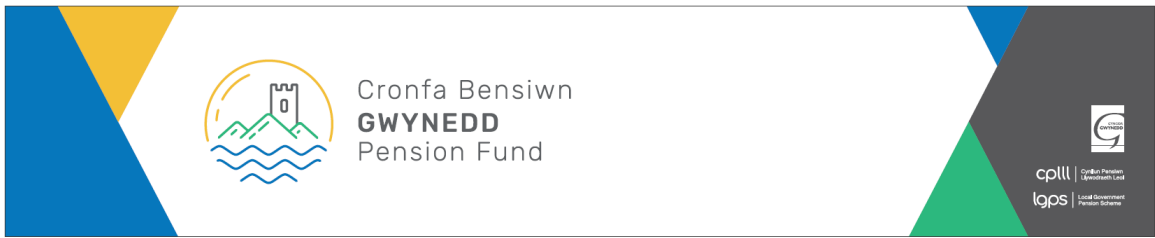
We like both designs and feel that we could utilise both ideas in different ways. Idea 1 could be used as the main logo and idea 2 could be use as page footer on annual reports and other publications etc.

Due to time constraints with design and printing work, we did not have time to share the ideas with the Board and ask the Committee to approve the new logo, but the ideas were shared with the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Committee and permission was received that they were happy to adopt the new logo.

Here are some ideas for marketing material the fund could use the promote the scheme:
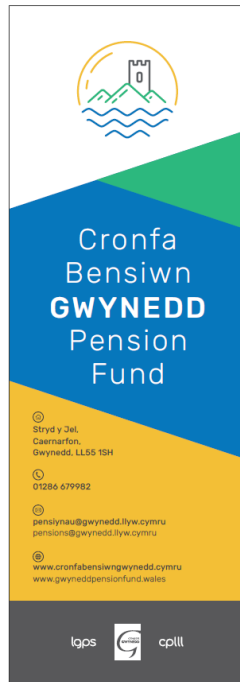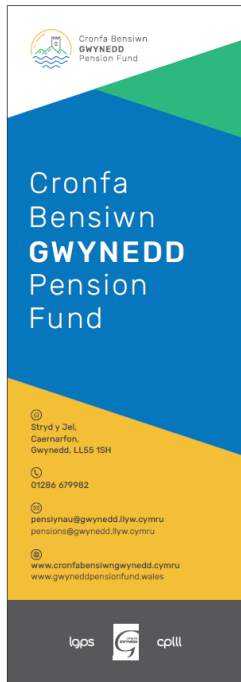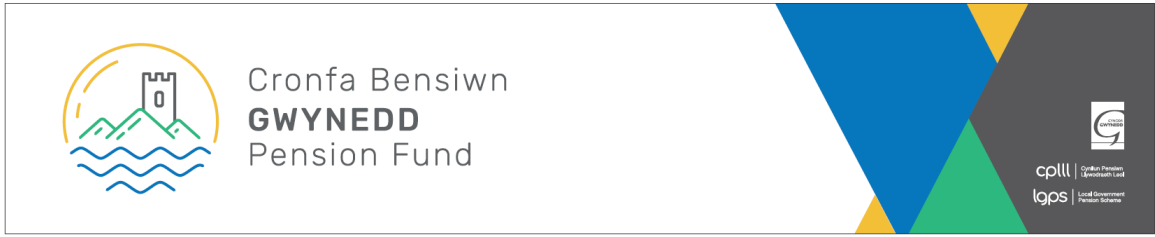
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