




National Federation of Voluntary Service Providers
Pension & Life Assurance Scheme
Annual Report 2022



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Pension Authority No: PB67866

Revenue Approval No: SF7346

PENSION TRUSTEES: Mr. John McHugo, (Chairman);
Ms. Pauline Brennan; Mr. Francis Coughlan; Ms. Deirdre Herlihy
and Mr. James Skehan (Professional Trustee).

APPOINTMENT OF SCHEME'S NEW REGISTERED ADMINISTRATOR – IRISH LIFE:

Following an extensive review, and with the assistance of Lane Clark & Peacock Ireland Ltd, who were appointed as Advisors by the Trustees to the Tender Process, Irish Life were appointed as the Administrators and Investment Managers for the Pension Scheme, effective from 1st January, 2022. As a result of the Scheme transfer to Irish Life, there has been significant benefits obtained for all, including a further reduction in the Annual Management Charge for members, improved member engagement and Trustee support.



To facilitate the transfer of all Scheme data and reconciliation of monies, and the creation of individual members' pension records on the Irish Life system there was what is known as a "Blackout Period" on the Scheme, which started on the 1st January 2022 until late March.

There was no loss to members funds as a result of the transfer of assets from New Ireland to Irish Life. This was achieved by Irish Life investing the assets of the Scheme in Irish Life funds on the same day as New Ireland encashed the assets. Any variation to member's pension fund was a result of market volatility during 2022; the invasion of Ukraine by Russia and an increase in interest rates.

After the Blackout Period, members were given access to make changes to their pension fund via the Irish Life "Member Portal".

The Member Portal allows members to:

- ✚ Review their personal contact information, including adding their mobile number and updating their personal email address onto their record.
- ✚ Check their current pension fund value, which includes the transfer amount from New Ireland, if they previously contributed to the Scheme.
- ✚ Review their investment choice and switch investments, if they wish.
- ✚ Check out the projections tool, which is a great help for targeting the income level they want to have at retirement.
- ✚ View their Document Library, which will in time contain all letters and correspondence sent to them.



Members were also given access to an easy-to-use smartphone and iPhone Irish Life EMPOWER app designed to help members with their retirement planning. iPhone users can go to the Apple Store to download the app. Android users can download the app from the Google Play Store.

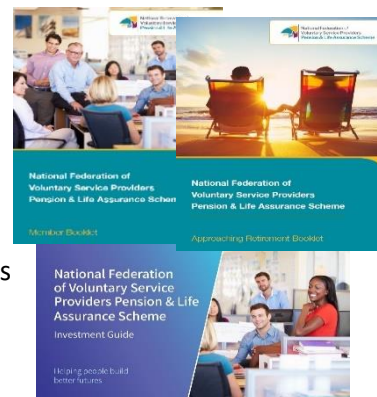


The EMPOWER app allow members to access a wealth of information, on the go, including:

- ✚ Scheme and investment details.
- ✚ Current values and contribution rates.
- ✚ Estimated fund value at retirement, and
- ✚ Investment literature relevant to the Scheme.



Documentation – To facilitate the transfer of the Scheme to a new Registered Administrator several documents were required to be prepared. New Scheme booklets and forms including, member booklet; investment booklet; approaching retirement booklet; member application form and switch form were also drafted. Data Sharing Agreements were prepared between each employer and Irish Life, which was considered best practice to help display that both parties are in compliance with data protection law / GDPR, as well as regulatory requirements concerning the transfer of personal data.



The Irish Life Engagement Teams engaged with employers to set up group presentations in members places of work, to ensure members are informed re:

- ✚ The structure and benefits of the Pension Scheme.
- ✚ The progression of members pension funds and whether they are on track to meet their retirement goals.
- ✚ The option for members to increase the level of their pension contributions and how this can be achieved.
- ✚ The costs and charges applied to members pension fund – particularly the difference in the management charges that apply to the different investment fund choices.
- ✚ The awareness of the benefit options available to members at retirement i.e., how they can draw down their pension fund at retirement.

ONLINE PRESENTATIONS:

The Trustees, in conjunction with Irish Life, hosted 4 online group presentations for members of the National Federation’s Pension Scheme in early April 2022. The presentations covered:

- ✚ an overview of the Scheme, including pension contribution guidance.
- ✚ investment choices available to members.
- ✚ an introduction to some of the great online tools Irish Life have made available to members to help them plan for their retirement.



A recording of the online presentation content is available to view on www.fedvol.ie (click on pensions tab).

RETIREMENT & LIFE PLANNING SEMINARS:

The Pension Trustees, in association with Irish Life, organised Retirement Planning Seminars to support and provide valuable information to members of the Pension Scheme as they approach retirement. This year, the event was again hosted in a hotel and employers were requested to invite Pension Scheme Members in their organisation who were due to retire over the next 5 years to attend. 3 seminars took place in May 2022, one each in Dublin, Tullamore and Claremorris, where a total of 89 attendees participated.



IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTITUTIONS FOR OCCUPATIONAL RETIREMENT PROVISION 11 (IORP 11) DIRECTIVE AND THE CODE OF PRACTICE PUBLISHED BY THE PENSIONS AUTHORITY:

The Pension Scheme Trustees continued its engagement with the Pensions Authority during 2022 as part of the Authority’s engagement work with Pension Schemes to examine how well the National Federation of Voluntary Service Providers Pension & Life Assurance Scheme is equipped to meet the enhanced governance and risk management requirements that have been transposed into law under the IORP 11 Director, including:



- ✚ Minimum qualification and experience standards for Trustees.
- ✚ The appointment of key function holders for internal audit and risk management.
- ✚ Requirement for written policies on risk management, internal audit, remuneration, conflict of interest and, where relevant, outsourced activities.
- ✚ Standards for internal controls, administrative and accounting procedure, contingency plans.
- ✚ Communication and information to be provided to active members, prospective members, deferred members and those nearing retirement.

As a result of the Trustees engagement, the Pensions Authority confirmed that our Pension Scheme, by its nature and structure, i.e., a multi-employer Scheme in composition, is a Master Trust. The Authority confirmed that all multi-employer Pension Schemes carry a higher level of risk when compared to single employer schemes, and therefore additional governance requirements have to be adhered to i.e., the Scheme is required to meet all the governance and risk obligations under the EU IORP 11 Directive, as well as the specific requirements for Master Trusts as published by the Pensions Authority. One of the additional requirements is for the Pension Scheme Trustees to be set up as a Designated Activity Company (DAC). The Trustees commenced work on this requirement in 2022 and it is expected to have this work concluded in 2023.

As part of the DAC establishment, the Trustees have engaged A&L Goodbody to carry out a review of the Scheme’s Trust Deed & Rules. This work is also expected to be concluded in 2023.



The Trustees appointed 2 external Key Function Holders (KFHs) to the Scheme in May 2022 as follows:

✚ Internal Audit:

Mr. Tom Gilligan, Align Advisory Limited, The Charlemont Exchange, Dublin 2.

✚ Risk Management:

Mr. Frankie Cronin, Grant Thornton, 13-18 City Quay, Dublin 2.

The Trustees continued to review existing Scheme policies and develop new policies where required to ensure IORP 11 and the Code of Practice requirements are adhered to. Copies of the Scheme’s policies are available on www.fedvol.ie (click on pensions tab)



WEBSITE WWW.FEDVOL.IE (PENSIONS TAB):

The Trustees updated the Pensions Tab on www.fedvol.ie where a full range of all member booklets and forms, and other pension publications, including the following, were updated and uploaded on the National Federation's website www.fedvol.ie (click on the Pensions Tab):



Booklets:

- Pension Scheme Booklet
- Investment Choice Member Booklet
- Approaching Retirement Member Booklet



Forms:

- Member Application Form
- Beneficiary / Expression of Wishes Form
- Investment Fund Switch Form



Other Booklets / Updates:

- Investment Updates
- Trustees Annual Report & Financial Statements
- Statement of Investment Policy Principles
- Group Life Policy Document
- Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure
- Data Protection Notice
- Pension Scheme Newsletters
- Salary Protection Scheme Booklet & Application Form



Videos:

- Scheme Information Video
- How to get access to your Irish Life Member Portal
- What is the Personal Lifestyle Strategy (PLS) and how does it work?
- Approaching Retirement Video
- Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) video - outlines how Irish Life are committed to growing your money and doing it responsibly.
- Nature of long-term investing.



The Trustees in 2022 made available a dedicated “Approaching Retirement” section on www.fedvol.ie which is specifically aimed at members approaching retirement, where the following information is available:

- Approaching Retirement Video.
- Approaching Retirement Booklet.
- Contact details for the Irish life Advice Team point of contacts.
- Pension Trustees summary document outlining how a member can draw down their pension fund at retirement.
- Outline of what documentation a member will be required to submit to Irish Life to process their retirement claim.
- Timeframe of how long it will take to draw down pension benefits at retirement.
- Summary of what an Annuity and An Approved Retirement Fund (ARF) is, and the advantages and disadvantages of each retirement option.



TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT (TAR) & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

As required by Pension Legislation, the Trustees prepared a Trustees Annual Report (TAR) and Financial Statements for year ended 31/12/21 and circulated same to each participating employer and recognised Trade Union in line with the 30th September, 2022, deadline for completion.



A copy of the TAR and Financial Statements for year ended 31/12/21 are available on the National Federation’s website www.fedvol.ie (click on pensions tab).



The Scheme as at 31/12/22 currently comprises of 24 participating employers: 7,383 members (5,049 Active members and 2,334 Deferred members).



The Scheme’s fund value under management is over €279m as of 31st December, 2022, most of which is invested in the Default Strategy for the Scheme.

TRUSTEES TRAINING:

Pension Trustees Training took place in December 2022, in line with requirements that Trustees must undergo Refresher Training every 2 years. The Trustees of this Scheme have agreed to undergo training on a yearly basis having regard to the number of new requirements / regulations etc. This decision will be kept under review.



TRUSTEES MEETINGS:

The Trustees convened 5 meetings in 2022. The Trustees also participated in other Team / Zoom meetings with Irish Life, Cornmarket, Key Function Holders for Risk and Internal Audit; the Scheme's External Auditor; legal advisors etc.

PENSION SCHEME NEWSLETTERS:

The Trustees produced 2 newsletters in 2022 covering the following topics:

April 2022: Update on Pension Scheme's Move to Irish Life; Trustees workplan for 2022; Review of Trustees' activity undertaken in 2021 and other relevant pension information.



October 2022: Update on Pension Scheme Move to Irish Life; Financial Update on Scheme following production of Trustees' Annual Report & Financial Statements for year ended 31st December, 2021; Market Update; Outline of how members can make lump sum AVC payments into their pension fund and claim back tax for 2021 before the Revenue deadline of 28th October, 2022; Update on Implementation of IORP 11 and Pension Authority's Code of Practice; Other relevant pension information.



Copies of the above newsletters are available to view on www.fedvol.ie (click on pensions tab).

PENSION SCHEME WORKSHOP FOR PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS:

A Pension Scheme Workshop for all participating employers in the Scheme was held on 9th November, 2022, in the Midland Park Hotel. The event was attended by CEOs and personnel from both management and operational level to ensure they are fully aware of all their legal and compliant requirements under relevant pension / employment legislation & regulations, and implications of same on (a) Pension Scheme (b) Life Assurance Scheme and (c) Salary Protection Scheme.



James Skehan, the Scheme's Professional Trustee, provided an overview of the Scheme; update on the State Pensions changes; new pension regulations; market review and transition of Scheme to Irish Life; Investment Markets / Sustainable Investment and employers were reminded of their responsibilities and work timelines they are required to adhere.

Irish Life presenters introduced their dedicated Team appointed to our Pension Scheme and recapped on their responsibilities and roles in respect of the Admin Team, Engagement Team and Advice Team. A



review of administration requirements was outlined and information on the Member Portal was provided, which included the key features and benefits of the online tool.

Cornmarket presenters outlined details of the Group Life Scheme and in particular, the fact that only members who join the Pension Scheme on the same day they join their organisation for employment are covered for group life. Any member joining on a later date is deemed a late joiner and employers must follow and apply the late joiner procedures. Their life cover is not automatic until confirmed by Zurich, the current Group Life underwriter.



Cornmarket also provided information on the Salary Protection Scheme (SPS) and the new benefits added as part of the SPS review which was finalised on 1st March, 2022, and includes:

- ✚ MyDoc - an online healthcare service.
- ✚ Tax Return Service for Disability Benefit Claimants.

Further details on the SPS and the new enhancements are available on www.fedvol.ie (click on pensions tab).

ADMINISTRATION & COMPLIANCE:

The National Federation Secretariat via the Pension Scheme Manager continued to provide administrative support to the Pension Scheme Trustees in 2022 and acted as point of contact for all key stakeholders to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the Pension Scheme i.e., Pension Trustees; Participating Employers; Irish Life; Cornmarket; Risk and Internal Audit Key Function Holders; External Auditor and legal advisors etc.



All employers co-operated with their monthly return of pension contributions to both Irish Life and Cornmarket by their required timelines in 2022. All death claims, applications for retirement on grounds of ill health; pension adjustment orders, transfers applications and purchase of annuity forms etc., were all duly processed in a timely fashion.



In this regard, the Trustees would like to thank all employers for their co-operation in assisting the Trustees in discharging their duties and ensuring the Scheme is run efficiently and in compliance with the Scheme Rules.



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