

## Teachers' Pensions Service Specification

### 1. SERVICE SPECIFICATION

#### 1.1 Schools' Choice will provide to the Customer:

- Make supplier payments into the corporate Accounts Payable system. This requires maintained schools to either send invoices and/or credit notes in paper form to the RM Finance Team or in electronic format via the SIMS Invoice integration process. These must have suitably completed coding/authorisation to enable processing to take place and payment to be made
- Generate payments on a daily basis to ensure suppliers are paid in accordance with credit terms wherever possible
- Make payment via BACS direct credit wherever possible as it is more secure and certain than payment by cheque
- Send a remittance advice to the supplier to notify them of the payment made and the invoice(s) the payment relates to
- Perform a full bank transaction reconciliation on a daily basis on payments drawn to minimize any attempted fraud in relation to cheques issued
- Retain all primary records for the statutory periods
- Provide a telephone helpdesk from 09.00 to 17.00 Monday to Friday to provide suppliers and schools staff with a professional and informed response on any queries they may have regarding payments made or in relation to invoice processing. Schools must provide relevant information in the event of supplier query to enable a full response to resolve any issue.
- Aim to process all invoices within five (5) working days from the date of receipt. Suffolk County Council, via the Resource Management (RM) Finance Team, will provide an Income allocation and debt recovery service to maintained schools in Suffolk as a product through Schools' Choice

In doing so the Payments team will:

- Record invoices that are raised by the school in the corporate Accounts Receivable system. This requires maintained schools to send a copy of the debtor invoice raised to the RM Finance Team. This invoice is recorded as a debt to enable formal debt monitoring and any necessary debt recovery action to take place
- Allocate monies received to debts on a daily basis
- Where a debt remains unpaid after 28 days the first of two debt chasing letters is sent
- Where the debt remains unpaid after a further 14 days a second debt chasing letter is sent
- Inform schools of unpaid debts via a monthly report. The team will then work with the school to maximize recovery of any such debts. They will consult with the school where a query is raised regarding the validity of the debt and/or to assist with tracing. In circumstances where it is deemed that a debt is not recoverable or, where

it is deemed that it would not be cost effective to continue recovery action, a school representative will be contacted and further action agreed upon or arrangement made for write off in accordance with school write-off policy. Debts can be referred to the Council's legal representatives to pursue through the legal system where deemed appropriate. This may result in additional costs being incurred by the school. The likely costs of such action and chances of success are available prior to any action being taken

- Allocate monies that have been banked by schools to the school's income codes. This requires schools to bank monies in accordance with school policy and to provide all necessary information to enable those bankings to be allocated accurately and in a timely fashion. Schools must also issue credit notes as required and send certified copies of those credit notes to the Income Team to enable such credits to be applied to outstanding debt.

Aim to keep the average number of debtor days, calculated on an average over any period of 365 consecutive days, to below 65 days

## 2. SERVICE AVAILABILITY

- 2.1 Schools' Choice will supply the Service on Business Days between 8.30am and 5.00pm.

## 3. SERVICE LEVELS

- 3.1 The following response times will apply in respect of Customer enquiries relating to the Service:

Communication	Response time
letter	within five Business Days of receipt;
email	within three Business Days of receipt;
telephone	if made within the times referred to in paragraph 2.1, calls will be answered as soon as possible;
telephone voicemail message	within two Business Days of receipt of the message.

#### 4. **MONITORING SUCCESS**

4.1 To monitor the success of the Service, representatives of Schools' Choice and the Customer shall:

4.1.1 hold regular meetings during the term of the Service; and

4.1.2 conduct an annual review of the Service.