

Greater Manchester Pension Fund

Opt Out Survey 2011





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Survey 2011

A report on a recent survey of members who opted to leave the Fund

During April & May 2011 we wrote to 295 members who had requested to leave the Fund during the January to April period. We ask them why they had left. We wanted to understand why members who had been in the Fund for some time would now leave. We wanted to know this because there had been an increase in members leaving. The survey did not include those that opted out within the first three months of service.

We gave ex-members some options to choose from, with replies being as follows:

I left the Greater Manchester Pension Fund because,

I do not earn enough to be paying into the pension;	25%
I was expected to pay in too much;	11%
the benefits are not worth the money I was paying in;	20%
my personal circumstances have changed since I joined;	45%
I'm too old for a pension to matter;	-
I'm too young for a pension to matter;	-
I just do not understand why I should be in a pension scheme;	2%
I want to organise my own retirement fund.	9%

We also asked if they would indicate if they were part time workers: 27%

We provided space to write in other reasons why they had opted out: 12%
or to expand on the selection they had made: 45%

Results...

Of the 295 questionnaires issued, 56 were returned (19%).
Of the 56 returned, 32 people (57%) gave more information.

The main reasons for leaving were a change in personal circumstances or financial pressures. Not all of those opting out considered it permanent, some expressed a desire to rejoin some time in the future.

Conclusions...

The survey results indicate that the main reason for opting out is because of financial pressures. Sometimes these arise because of a change in circumstances, with one ex-member writing:

"Due to cutbacks I have lost £2,500 pa. Freezing my pension is temporary until I can get something sorted."

Others are beset with the effects of increased outgoings:

"In these current times, and being single with a hefty mortgage, car to run, child maintenance, salary freeze, petrol increases, I find it too much, and the extra £100 or so on my bottom line has become more important."

The decision to opt out does not appear to be taken lightly, but sometimes substantial household economies have to be made, with membership of the Fund being a legitimate item of expenditure to be considered.

About those surveyed...

Whilst required by law to monitor the equalities of our service, we also wanted to know if any groups of people were more likely to opt out than others. So we asked some questions about their background.

We asked them to only answer the questions they were comfortable with.

We asked about:

gender;
disability;
ethnic background;
age group;
sexual orientation;
religion or faith.

The survey demonstrated a wide diversity amongst the people who have opted out and that none of the groups were more likely than another to opt out.



**I would like to thank all those who
took part in this survey.**

Thank you for your time.



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