

CORPORATE CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Sponsors of final salary schemes are facing increasing cash demands from pension fund trustees, extreme volatility in their P&L and balance sheet items and spiralling PPF levy and pension administration/consultancy costs. In addition, corporate transactions can be complicated by pensions issues and it is vital that this is dealt with appropriately to avoid any unpleasant surprises.

Taking the stress out of pensions

Our approach is to provide proactive and independent advice to employers whilst weighing the cost against the eventual benefits before undertaking any piece of work. We are experienced in working with different pension scheme stakeholders and our advice considers the view from all sides.

Funding negotiations: Negotiations should consider the ultimate goal, whether that be buy-out or self-sufficiency. The aim should be to leave the employer in the strongest position possible without damaging relationships between the sponsor and the pension scheme trustees. We have found that by using clear and open communication, Trustees can understand the value of the sponsor covenant in a more practical way and innovative alternatives to cash contributions can be considered.

Pension accounting disclosures: Instead of treating this as just a compliance exercise, we believe assumptions advice should provide a full, clear and current picture of the most appropriate assumptions to use in your pensions disclosures to enable directors to make fully informed decisions. We will explain the impact of any alternatives that may be available to you, and can provide projections so that future costs can be budgeted.

Liability & risk reduction exercises: Despite all the negative press, exercises can be carried out which are a win-win for all parties concerned. For the sponsor, this can reduce the amount of liabilities or reduce the funding volatility. For trustees, risks can be reduced or removed. For members, options on the shape of their benefits can increase the value of benefits in their particular circumstances.

PPF levy management: The levy calculation methodology is complex but there are some simple steps that employers can take to review their levy and potentially reduce the amount payable in future.

Auto-enrolment: Smaller employers will be hit by the impending auto-enrolment deadlines in the next few years. Recent surveys suggest that many have not yet put a plan in place for meeting the requirements, and it is likely that, due to capacity in the market, there may be limited options for those that leave it too late. Our auto-enrolment factsheet can give employers a nudge in the right direction, and we can provide access to our specialist team to support you in your decisions.

Corporate transactions: It is important not to take pension schemes at face value. Schemes and their Trustees can have a very real impact on the value of any transaction and it is therefore vital to engage with the Trustees early and to carry out detailed and through due diligence exercise.

Other services: Including investment strategy review, scheme design and modelling, member communications (e.g. written communications, seminars and workshops), covenant assessment, independent trustee services, executive benefits, fee benchmarking and tendering, pensions and financial training.

By appointing Atkin & Co, you will enjoy direct access to our experienced team who will be your partners in addressing the challenges of managing your pension schemes. The cornerstones of our services are:



Affordable

Our low hourly charge out rates, efficient management, small scheme focus and streamlined business structure mean we are **always competitive**.



Commercial common sense

As a smaller firm that specialises in smaller schemes our consultants are experienced in **thinking commercially** about pensions issues and the impact on their clients.



Expert and experienced

We are experienced in working in many areas of pensions. We can work closely with sponsors and trustees to design **innovative and practical solutions**.



Bespoke and personal service

We **focus on your specific circumstances** to avoid a one size fits all solution which is often inappropriate.