THE TRUSTEE COMPANY
A corporate Trustee company manages the plan. Under this structure, the Board of Directors of the company assumes the constitution of a Trustee Board and the Directors of the Trustee company act collectively as the Trustee. For ease of reference, Trustee Directors (including Member Nominated Trustee Directors) are often referred to as Trustees in any Plan communications. This is a widely used system of governance for occupational pension schemes, which offers two main advantages. It is administratively simpler to maintain the contractual relationships with the professional advisers and other parties, and it offers better protection against personal liability to the Trustees if they are Directors of the Trustee company. The Trustees are duty bound to carry out their responsibilities while considering members’ best interests at all times.

A NOMINATION FORM
Is enclosed with this bulletin if you have received a ‘hard copy’ and is available on the web page for those of you viewing it online. Remember, if you wish to stand for election, you must be nominated by five ‘voting’ Plan members (see page 2 for details of who can take part in the Plan elections).

NOMINATIONS CLOSE
At 9.00 am on Friday 10 March 2017. Remember, it’s your Plan, your vote and your choice.

PLEASE TAKE SOME TIME TO READ THIS NEWSLETTER
This is your chance to participate in the management of the Plan.

The MNTs share exactly the same roles and responsibilities in the running of the Plan as any other Trustees. You can play your part either by:

- standing for election;
- sponsoring another Plan member whom you would like to support; or,
- in the event of an election, by voting for your preferred candidate.

Each MNT is duty-bound to represent all Plan members without bias, regardless of their own status at the University. Full training on what the role of Trustee entails will be provided and you will gain valuable knowledge about pension provisions.

A chance to have your say
The Plan is managed by nine Trustees, three of whom are nominated by its members (Member Nominated Trustees or MNTs for short). The current MNTs were elected by the Plan members in 2012 and 2013 to serve until end June 2017. We are now starting the process of appointing the Plan’s MNTs for the next five years. This bulletin explains the role of MNTs and how you can nominate a candidate or stand for election yourself.

The University of Newcastle upon Tyne Retirement Benefits Plan (the Plan) has been set up by the University to help provide for your (and your family’s) welfare, now and in the future. To protect your savings under the Plan, it is set up under Trust law.

Your Pension Plan needs you!
Yes, it’s true. The Plan needs you to participate in the election process and this newsletter has been designed to give you details of how you can be involved in the Plan’s management.

Your chance to make a difference
Now is your opportunity to have a major say in the future running of your Plan. There are several ways in which you can make your voice heard. You can:

- **Stand for election** – you’ll need the support of five other ‘voting’ Plan members if you want to stand for election as an MNT.
- **Act as a sponsor** – if you’re a ‘voting’ Plan member you can sponsor a Plan member for election as an MNT.
- **Vote** – if there are more than three valid nominations for the position of MNT, an election will be held and you’ll be asked to vote for your preferred candidate.

Remember to return your Nomination Form by Friday 10 March 2017
This MNT newsletter tells you more about the Trustee role, how important it is to the successful running of the Plan and what you might be involved in if you decide to stand for election and are successfully nominated. See inside for information about:

- The Trustee role and responsibilities.
- Trustee training.
- Step by step guide to the election process.
- Your questions answered.
Who would want to become a Trustee and why?

Each Trustee represents all the Plan members and acts in their best interests to ensure that the Plan is managed effectively. All of the Trustees are duty bound to act for all members, not just colleagues in the group of staff where they are employed, and to take this obligation very seriously indeed.

The role of a Trustee is, without doubt, challenging and often hard work. Recent changes to pensions legislation have made the role more demanding, not only in terms of the level of expertise that is needed but in the required amount of personal time and commitment.

The role of Trustee allows a valuable insight into how the Plan works and an opportunity to make a real difference on behalf of Plan members. Like any other Trustee, an MNT must abide by legislation relating to the conduct of pension plan trustees. No formal qualifications are needed to become an MNT, although an interest in and knowledge of pensions is advantageous. The most important qualities include honesty, integrity and the ability to act impartially and in good faith at all times, for example not favouring one member or group of members over any other.

Full training is provided for all Plan Trustees to ensure that they keep up to date with pensions legislation and that they understand the Trust Deed and Rules (the document governing the Plan). This is particularly important for new Trustees who will be invited to attend a Trustee meeting before beginning their role. The training provided for Trustees can often be put to good use outside the realm of pensions, as it brings with it a greater understanding of how the economy works, investment management, accounting and law.

Before considering standing for the position of a Trustee, please take some time to appreciate the importance of the role. As a Trustee, you would make decisions, as part of the overall Trustee Board, that affect the financial future of the Plan, worth over £228 million and its 1,672 active members, 1,245 pensioners and 1,084 members with preserved benefits (as at 31 December 2016). It’s a great challenge and a fantastic opportunity, but it’s also a huge responsibility. You will be expected to devote a certain amount of time to learning about, and keeping up to date with, the complexities of pension and investment matters, through: training sessions with people from other schemes around the country; specially targeted training for the whole board; and individual online work with the Pensions Regulator’s Trustee Toolkit.

Your personal assets will not be at risk as a result of any Trustee decision, provided that these have been exercised with care and are not unlawful.

Your future benefits – who has a say?

You can stand for election, sponsor a candidate and vote for a candidate provided you are a ‘voting’ Plan member. Under the Plan’s MNT election rules, a ‘voting’ member is anyone in the following categories:

- Active contributing Plan member;
- Retired Pensioner Plan member;
- A member who is receiving a pension from the Plan in respect of their spouse’s membership.

For those wishing to stand for election as an MNT, it is important to be aware that you cannot undertake the role if you are currently disqualified as a trustee. Anyone who does intentionally act as a trustee while disqualified faces criminal prosecution.

It is also important to note than in line with the Plan Trust Deed and Rules you must not have been convicted of any offence involving dishonesty or deception or have been declared bankrupt.

Constitution

Appointed members:

B Three lay members appointed by the University Council.
C Three senior managers of the University, nominated by Executive Board, appointed by Council.
D Three Member Nominated Trustees.

Terms of Reference

The Trustees are responsible for:

1. Safeguarding the benefit to which members may become entitled on retirement.
2. The operation of the Plan within the defined Retirement Benefits Plan rules and statutory legislation.
3. Ensuring that the Plan is operated in accordance with the objectives of the University, as Principal Employer.
A step-by-step guide to the MNT election process

Step 1 The Nomination Form
Enclosed with this Trustee Election newsletter is a Nomination Form. If you would like to stand for election or nominate a ‘voting’ Plan member, please complete this form and send it to Louise Edwards-Holland at the following address:

Louise Edwards-Holland, Secretary to the Trustees, Human Resources Section, Newcastle University, King’s Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU.
tel: 0191 208 2538

Please remember that all Nomination Forms must be signed by the ‘voting’ Plan members (see page 2 for details of ‘voting’ Plan members).

In addition, all Nomination forms must include a Campaign Statement of less than 100 words, providing details of what you feel you have to offer.

Please also send a photo, either by post or electronically by email to Louise Edwards-Holland as this always helps to personalise nominations; however this is optional.

Nomination Forms must reach Louise Edwards-Holland by 9am on Friday 10 March 2017.

Step 2 If there are three or fewer nominations
The nominated candidates will duly be declared elected as Trustees for a period of five years, after which they may stand for re-election. If there are insufficient nominations to fill the Trustee positions, these will be left vacant for six months, after which time we will ask for further nominations.

Step 3 If there are more than three nominations
In this case, we will hold an election and ask you to vote for your preferred candidates. The election will be conducted by the Electoral Reform Services. Voting will be by the Single Transferable Vote (STV) method, whereby you are asked to number candidates in order of preference. If your first choice candidate is not elected, your preferences will still influence the outcome for the other candidates. The STV system is used in many countries and is regarded as being more representative than the traditional ‘first past the post’ method used in UK political elections.

If an election is necessary ballot papers will be issued by the end of March 2017. You must register your vote by the deadline specified by the Electoral Reform Services. The ballot results will be announced within two weeks of the ballot closing and elected candidates will be appointed officially as Trustees on 1 July 2017.

Notification of the result will be confirmed on our website at www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/pensions/rbp-scheme.php

Trusteeship
The Trustees are responsible to the members and the University for the prudent direction and management of the Plan in respect of:
1. The requirements of the Plan Trust Deed.
2. Relevant statutes.
3. Investment policy.
4. The appointment of Investment Managers/Advisers.
5. The appointment of Administrators, Consultants and Actuaries.
6. The maintenance at all times of appropriate administrative systems so as to meet the requirements of the Trustees in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Projected timetable for the MNT nominations
- MNT newsletter to members by 15 February 2017.
- Return of Nomination Forms by 9am on Friday 10 March 2017.
- If there is to be an election, ballot papers will be issued by the end of March 2017.
Why are these Trustee elections necessary?
The Pension Acts (1995 and 2004) give pension plan members the right to choose one-third of their plan trustees from amongst the membership. Elections for our Plan have been held every five years from 1997 until 2012 when the current Member Nominated Trustees were appointed for a maximum period of five years. That period expires on 30 June 2017 and fresh elections are needed to appoint Trustees for the next five years.

Can anyone stand for election as a Trustee?
Only ‘voting’ Plan members can take part in the Trustee election process, by standing for election, sponsoring a candidate or voting. A ‘voting’ Plan member is an active contributing member, a pensioner member or the spouse of a deceased member currently in receipt of a pension from the Plan. Current MNTs can stand for re-election.

How much do I need to know about pensions to become a Trustee?
There are no formal qualifications required to become a Trustee and you don’t need any previous knowledge of pensions. However, it does help if you have an interest in the subject and are committed to the successful running of the Plan. Both formal and ‘hands on’ training is provided for new and current Trustees to ensure that everyone has in-depth knowledge of technical pensions matters such as relevant legislation, actuarial valuation reports and investments. The Trustees appoint specialist advisers to run the Plan on a daily basis, including an actuary, auditor, lawyer and administration consultants. All Trustees must gain an understanding of the Trust Deed and Rules that govern the Plan and any issues that affect the Plan at any time. The advisers help the Trustees to maintain their knowledge of current pensions issues with regular updates and reports.

How much time does the Trustee role take up?
The Trustee Board meets formally three times a year for about two hours, usually during working hours, and all Trustees are required to attend these meetings. In addition, each Trustee must spend some personal time reading investment reports, financial statements and any other material issued in advance of Trustee meetings. All Trustees are provided with formal training, also during working hours where possible. It is therefore important that you make your manager aware of your intention to stand for election as a Trustee.

More than ever before, the official bodies that regulate UK pension plans place onerous requirements on trustees to develop and maintain in-depth knowledge of the technical details of pensions and investments. The Trustees have formed sub-committees to manage specific areas of the Plan such as administration, communications and investment. Each Trustee is likely to be a member of one of these sub-committees, reflecting to some extent the expertise and interests of the Trustee. This can often prove to be extremely rewarding, but it does require a significant personal commitment from Trustees. The sub-committees also meet up to three or four times a year.

Are Trustees paid for their time and effort?
The role of a Member Nominated Trustee does not attract any financial reward. You will, however, be reimbursed for any expenses you incur in your role as a Trustee and you will be given the necessary time, on full pay, away from your place of work to attend Trustee meetings.

Need more information?
If you would like more details about the Trustee election process or if you simply have a question, please contact:

Louise Edwards-Holland, Secretary to the Trustees, Human Resources Section, Newcastle University, King’s Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU.
tel: 0191208 2538
email: Louise.Edwards-Holland@ncl.ac.uk