

Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited With-Profits Sub-Fund (formerly Norwich Union Life & Pensions)



Summary of changes to the Principles and Practices of Financial Management (PPFM)

Introduction and Background

This document summarises changes made to the With-Profits Sub-Fund PPFM in recent years.

The PPFM was first published on 29 April 2004 and has subsequently been amended on a number of occasions. The Aviva website now displays the latest version of the PPFM.

1. Changes effective from 1 January 2022

The PPFM has been amended from 1 January 2022. A number of practices were amended following an internal review.

(a) Practices 2.2

We have reduced the upper limit of the target payout range for conventional business to achieve a better balance of the cost of smoothing between generations of policyholders as outlined in the Principles.

(b) Practices 2.4

We have corrected the wording for the tax deducted from asset shares to reflect actual practice.

(c) Practices 3.2

We have clarified the upper limit for the benchmark equity backing ratio.

2. Changes effective from 1 January 2021

The PPFM has been amended from 1 January 2021. Two practices were amended following an internal review.

(a) Practices 2.2

We have corrected the wording for the change in payouts to be less than or equal to the smoothing limits following final bonus rates changes.

(b) Practices 4.2

Following the introduction of the new MSA, the treatment of the Staff Pension Scheme is no longer a fund risk and the wording has been corrected to reflect this.

3. Changes effective from 1 January 2020

The PPFM has been amended from 1 January 2020. A number of practices were amended following an internal review. We have amended some principles following the closure of the fund to new business.

(a) General changes

We have made some minor corrections and clarifications to wording. These have not been described here as they make no material change to the PPFM.

(b) Principles 4.1, 6.1, 7.1 & 8.1 and Practices 2.6, 4.2, 7.2 & 8.2

We have updated the wording to reflect that the Sub-Fund was closed to new business from 1 July 2019. We still accept increments to existing policies and business written following the exercise of options on existing contracts. Changes are required to the principles to reflect the closure and we are permitted to make these changes as we have already written to policyholders communicating the closure of the Sub-Fund.

(c) Practices 2.6 & 6.2

We have made some changes to the description of our approach to estate distributions to make it clearer for customers to understand the main risks and rewards of maintaining a with-profits policy in the Sub-Fund.

(d) Practices 5.2

The PPFM referred to a management services agreement which ceased at the end of 2018. We have amended the wording to reflect the revised Management Services Agreement which took effect from 1 January 2019.

(e) Practices 3.2 & 6.2 and Glossary

We have updated the wording to reflect the changes in the Risk Appetite Framework. The aim of the Risk Appetite Framework is to manage the Sub-Fund so that the inherited estate is within a preferred range.

4. Changes effective from 1 January 2019

The PPFM was amended 1 January 2019. A number of practices were amended following an internal review.

(a) General changes

Where possible we have standardised wording and removed any Practices that are no longer applicable. They have not been described here as they make no material change to the PPFM.

(b) Practices 2.2 & 2.6

We have made some changes to the way we apply smoothing of payouts to better achieve the way smoothing is described in the Principles.

(c) Practices 3.2

We have clarified the approach to reviewing investment strategy and how it is described within the PPFM.

5. Changes effective from 1 January 2018

The PPFM was amended 1 January 2018. One practice was amended following an internal review.

(a) General changes

We have made some minor corrections and clarifications to wording. These have not been described in detail here as they make no material change to the PPFM.

(b) Practices 6.3

We have amended the risk appetite framework to simplify our process and to better achieve our Principles.

6. Changes at 1 October 2017

The PPFM was amended with effect from 1 October 2017. Most of the changes were as a result of the transfer of the policies of Friends Life Limited and Friends Life and Pensions Limited into Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited, known as the Scheme. This gave us an opportunity to consolidate a lot of the information on how we run the sub-fund into the PPFM, rather than having it duplicated in the Scheme.

(a) General changes

As a result of the transfer, some general changes were made throughout the document, as follows:

- In a number of places where the PPFM referred to the Scheme and the information is now covered in the PPFM instead, the Scheme reference was removed and appropriate wording added in its place.
- 'Fund' was changed to 'Sub-Fund' in line with the formal With-Profits Sub-Fund name.
- The transfer was made through a Court scheme, and unless historic reference to the existing Scheme (known as the Demutualisation Scheme) is needed, we now refer in the PPFM to the new Scheme under which the Sub-Fund is managed, and any paragraph references were updated to refer to the relevant section of the new Scheme.

(b) Introduction

The previous introduction in section 1 was replaced by a new introduction that is common to all PPFM documents for Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited. This provides a brief overview of the Company, an explanation of PPFM documents and their governance and some general information on with-profits policies.

(c) Principles 2.1

We have added a sentence to state that the costs of shareholder transfers and associated tax will not reduce the asset shares for conventional policies in force on 15 June 1997, the date that Norwich Union demutualised, and increments to those policies. This was always the case and the wording was previously included in the Scheme but has now been brought into the PPFM Principles instead.

(d) Practices 2.4

In the section on shareholder transfers, we already stated that the cost of shareholder transfers in respect of conventional with-profits business is not charged to asset shares. The wording has been updated to include incremental tax on those shareholder transfers and to note that this policy will not be changed in future.

(e) Principles 3.1

The investment strategy was stated as aiming to provide the highest long-term returns commensurate with acceptable levels of solvency risk. We now also explicitly state that the returns should be commensurate with the interests of policyholders, although this was our practice anyway.

A sentence has also been added to state that the investment strategy will not be set assuming that any support is available from outside the Sub-Fund unless otherwise determined by the Board. This wording was previously in the Court Scheme.

(f) Practices 3.2

We have added further explanation of stock lending activity. The section outlines that we may lend some assets to selected financial institutions to generate extra income for the Sub-Fund. This would always be subject to a number of controls including obtaining security from each borrower.

(g) Practices 4.2

Following the transfer, the Company now guarantees the repayment of some loan instruments issued by Friends Life Holdings plc and Aviva plc. The PPFM sets out the actions the Company will take to mitigate this risk.

We have also clarified that no new non-profit business has been written in the Sub-Fund since October 2002.

(h) Practices 5.2

This section describes the various expenses relating to the With-Profits Sub-Fund business, and has been updated to clarify that these expenses are paid by the Company and then charged to the With-Profits Sub-Fund.

The previous wording stated that fees for defined benefit pension schemes and for developments will be charged at cost plus a margin; reference to the margin has now been removed.

The section now states that the allocation of investment management fees between the sub-funds will be decided by the Board, having taken appropriate advice and consulted the With-Profits Committee. Similarly, other than expenses explicitly covered by the PPFM, no further expenses will be charged unless agreed by the Board, having taken appropriate advice and consulted the With-Profits Committee.

(i) Practices 6.2

An additional paragraph has been added to explain that when the value of the assets attributable to with-profits policies in the With-Profits Sub-Fund become sufficiently small, below £250m, we may take certain actions to protect the interests of the remaining policyholders. These are to declare a one-off bonus or a series of fixed future bonuses to use up the surplus in the Sub-Fund, determine to add no further bonuses, and move the policies to the Non-Profit Sub-Fund.

In addition, we have added the information that, at any time after 1 October 2017, we may merge any with-profits or non-profit sub-funds, subject to certain constraints including taking appropriate actuarial advice and consulting the With-Profits Committee to ensure that the proposal is fair to policyholders.

(j) Practices 7.2

We have changed the Practices that describe how we assess the maximum level of new business that the Sub-Fund will write.

(k) Glossary

The glossary has been updated to reflect the changes described above.

(l) Appendices

We have added appendices to show the new sub-fund structure within Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited and to summarise the company history including that of the With-Profits Sub-Fund. We have also added an appendix that shows the original issuing companies for all the with-profits sub-funds in Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited.

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