

Fact Sheet – Top questions to ask your SIPP provider

Fact Sheet | November 2009

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With growing numbers of advisers now undertaking due diligence on SIPP providers we suggest some questions that should be asked – and give our replies:

Every SIPP provider claims to give great service - how can I know I can trust you to deliver?



Our 15 point service charter sets out the standards that we aim to deliver and allows you to compare with other providers. Our service has been consistently recognised with various industry awards including Pensions Management's Technology, Admin and Service awards in 7 out of the last 8 years. We have also received independent verification of our focus on customers, having been awarded the Investor in Customers two star "outstanding" award, in 2006 and 2008.



I'm worried about press reports of FSA and HMRC clamping down on small SIPP providers - how can I know your business is run in a totally compliant way?

In 2009 there were around 120 SIPP providers, some of whom administer just several hundred plans. Suffolk Life has established over 15,000 self-invested plans, starting back in 1996.

Our comprehensive due diligence guidance gives you all the information you need to make an informed decision about our business, including procedures, controls, administration and financial strength to name just a few.

Some SIPP providers have been reporting financial losses – are you profitable?

Suffolk Life's accounts can be accessed on our website at www.suffolklife.co.uk/companyreports. We gained a financially strong parent when we were acquired by L&G in 2008. However, we have been, and remain, a profitable business in our own right.

I've heard that some investment managers make mistakes in administering SIPP portfolios which can trigger tax charges - what do you do to protect my clients from this?

We aim to reconcile all cash accounts daily and our other investments regularly and have robust internal controls to mitigate such risks.

If there's a fire or flood in your building, or another disaster, and I need to get some information from you fast, how long will I have to wait before you're back up and running?

Our Business Continuity Plan (BCP) includes having a fully equipped 'dark site', in existence for several years, which is operational within an hour.

The press is reporting that many SIPP operators won't be in business in 3 years' time - how can I know you'll still be there to look after my clients?

Suffolk Life has been in the SIPP business since 1996. We have since written in excess of 15,000 plans and are approaching £4 billion total gross assets under administration. Operating SIPPs is all we do and we believe our long standing experience and expertise provide us with the solid foundations required to succeed even in the most testing of times.

How robust and scalable is your technology platform, and what online access can I expect?

Our bespoke IT platform has been specifically designed to provide fully integrated management, processing and reporting. It has been independently tested on several occasions and is only operating at a fraction of its total capacity.

Our secure portal allows advisers to have fingertip access to how their clients' SIPPs are performing, any day of the week.



The FSA suggests that advisers undertake additional due diligence on providers they recommend to their clients.

If you are making a recommendation, please contact us for our Due Diligence guidance document:

ifaenquiries@suffolklife.co.uk

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