



Work and Pensions Committee

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From the Chair

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Lesley Titcomb
Chief Executive
The Pensions Regulator
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Dear Lesley

Johnston Press

I am writing to you following the news this weekend that Johnston Press has been sold to JPIMedia after entering administration. Its defined benefit pension scheme has now entered the PPF assessment period.

It is clear from Johnston Press's annual reports that it has been engaged in active discussions with the Pensions Regulator for some time now. Might I ask you please to provide the Committee with a detailed description of the Pensions Regulator's involvement to date with Johnston Press?

In particular, it would be helpful to have an explanation of why it was not possible to find a solution that would have avoided the pension scheme entering the PPF. It is difficult to understand why it is possible for JPIMedia to acquire the business, no doubt in the expectation of generating a profit from it, but without taking any responsibility for its pension scheme.

Might I ask whether, in the light of this and similar cases, you consider that adequate protections are in place to prevent schemes being dumped on the PPF, at cost to pensioners and levy-payers?

Best wishes and I look forward to hearing from you,

Rt Hon Frank Field MP
Chair