

LGSS Pensions Employer Newsletter

Issue 6

Summer 2018

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Welcome to the Summer edition of our Employer newsletter. I hope you all have enjoyed the amazing weather we have had recently and have not suffered too much with the heat. This summer has been one of the warmest on records, even if it did not manage to break the records. One of the benefits of the UK is having such different seasons in which they can change from snow fall in the winter to blazing sun in the summer. One of the changes that is being made in the LGSS Pensions processes is the way in which you will submit your monthly pension contributions via an automated system from November 2018 We give you all the information you need on this in this newsletter.

We have now had the new website up and running over the summer and we would love to get your feedback on what is working and what is not, so please see the article inside and give us your feedback as it is always used to improve our services.

Our main feature this month talks about the key scheme regulation amendment changes that have come in, these are briefly discussed in this on a full page article with a more detailed bulletin to be issued shortly. It is worth taking note of these changes in case staff ask you about them.

Along with our usual features we have also released the dates for the next Employer Forums. Please make a note in the diary for these as we will be discussing some key topics.

Thanks for reading and continue to bask in the glorious weather we are having because, if the past is anything to go by, it may not last!

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News in Brief

ACCESS agrees first 16 Sub Funds

ACCESS, the LGPS asset pool, has agreed its first 16 investment sub funds. The sub funds focus on active investments including UK and global equities and fixed income investments. This is expected to generate fee savings in line with government expectations, building on savings already made of over £5m per annum in fees.

For more information about ACCESS, visit: <http://www.accesspool.org/>

The Pensions Regulator publishes report on future of regulating the industry

The Pensions Regulator has published a report reviewing the way it works and how it can improve in the future.

The bulk of the report focuses on five opportunities for change: 1. clarifying its identity; 2. setting clear expectations; 3. improving regulatory oversight; 4. using a wider range of interventions and 5. being more efficient and effective.

You can read the report in full on the Regulator's website

www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/tpr-future-protecting-workplace-pensions.pdf

High Court Ruling- Cohabiting Partners

A recent high court ruling has determined that a nomination form is not required for cohabiting partners to receive a survivors pension, if their partner dies with pension benefits. As a result of the ruling, it is now possible to pay a backdated pension where a member has already died, without a nomination.

This has been the case for the LGPS since 1 April 2014, so the ruling only affects those whose partners died, with LGPS benefits, before that date.

If you know of any previous employees whom this may affect, please advise them to contact us.

Dates for your Diary

2 October	10am	Ill Health Retirement Webinar
2 October	2pm	Discretions Policy webinar
12 November		Northamptonshire Employer Forum (Knuston Hall)
13 November		Cambridgeshire Employers Forum (Grafham Water)

Pensions Quiz

- 1) What type of pension scheme is the LGPS?
- 2) When is the next pension triennial valuation?
- 3) How many ways are there that you, as an employer, can send data to LGSS Pensions?
- 4) Can you name 3 pensions schemes that are part of the pensions transfer club?
- 5) Can you name the differing types of retirements the LGPS offers?

Changes to how you report your contributions

The way in which you report your employer and employee contributions to us is changing. Instead of completing a monthly contribution return and emailing this to us, you will just need to complete a few details on our website and the details will be sent directly to us. There is no change to the information required, we are only changing the way you send it to us.

Simply go to the Employers Hub of our website and choose 'Contribution reporting' from the LGPS menu. Once you have submitted your contribution details through the website, you will also be able to pay your contributions through the website using a debit or credit card. Simply press the payment button, after entering all the details, if you wish to pay by card.

We will be piloting this new approach with selected employers in the coming months and will be rolling this out to all employers from 1 November 2018. Any returns emailed to us after this date will be returned and you will be asked to submit the details through the website.

We will be offering assistance during this time and will provide full details and guidance for the process through our website and direct communications. We will also be providing webinars to demonstrate the new process.

If you would like to know more or take part in the pilot, please contact the contributions team by emailing pencontributions@northamptonshire.gov.uk.

LGSS Pensions website: We want your feedback

It's been a few months now since we launched our new look website, and we would be grateful for your thoughts and experiences, as this will help us to continue developing our website and concentrate on the areas that would provide real benefits to you.

Our short questionnaire that should take just a few minutes to complete but will provide us with valuable feedback about your experience using our website. Please click the following link to access the survey <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WZTBWW2>

If you haven't visited our new website, then you can enjoy the more user friendly, mobile compatible site here: <http://pensions.northamptonshire.gov.uk>

We look forward to hearing your thoughts!

Pension Quiz Answers

1. Defined Benefit Scheme
2. 2019
3. 3 (Employer Self Service, I-Connect & Monthly Online returns)
4. LGPS, Teachers Pensions, NHS Pensions
5. Flexible, Early, Normal, Ill Health and Redundancy

LGPS scheme amendment changes

On 14 May 2018, new LGPS amendment regulations came into force, with some back-dated to 1 April 2014.

A summary of the key changes affecting employers can be found below with a more comprehensive review of these due to be issued via a Pensions Bulletin shortly.

Payment of Deferred Benefits

Employees who left your employment after 31 March 1998 and before 1 April 2014, without immediate payment of their pension benefits, can now access their benefits at any point from age 55 without requiring your permission. Previously, they could only do so, if you agreed to release their benefits.

Please note, if such a member takes their benefits before their normal pension age, their benefits may be reduced to account for the early payment.

Discretion over Assumed Pensionable Pay

You now have greater flexibility over how you calculate Assumed Pensionable Pay - the pay used when a member is on certain types of unpaid leave.

If you believe the Assumed Pensionable Pay calculated for a member is a materially lower figure than the member would have usually received, you now have the option to use a higher pensionable pay figure closer to what the members normal pay would be. In doing so, you must consider the level of pensionable pay received by the member over the previous 12 months.

Requirement to pay any surplus back to exiting employers

Before the new regulations came into force, employers exiting the Fund with a funding surplus were not permitted to receive this surplus back when they exited but were expected to pay off any deficit, if they had a shortfall instead.

The changes in the regulations have now equalised this position and the Fund is now allowed to pay any surplus back to the employer, as an 'exit credit'.

Changes affecting members

There are also a number of changes that affect active and non-active members of the LGPS. We have produced a guidance note for members advising them of these changes and this is available via their online pension account, on our website.

Please could you encourage your employees to log on or register to view their online account and read this important information.

2 Minutes with... Tracy Pegram

Tracy is one of the Finance Managers on the Investments Team. Her team are responsible for the management of the fund investments to get the best returns.

How long have you worked in Pensions?

I have worked for LGSS Pensions for two years, but I used to audit pension funds whilst I was training as a Chartered Accountant.

What is your favourite part of the job?

Every day is different and I enjoy most of it. Thinking about how investments work is fascinating and there is always something new to learn!

What is the most challenging part of your job?

Juggling the work. There are times where there are not enough hours in the day.

What is your greatest achievement?

Being licenced as a Lay Minister for the church. It took a lot of study and hard work and is definitely great, and a real personal achievement.

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be?

Back to Australia. My family lived there for a short time when I was young.

What's the one thing you could not live without?

Music. I love all sorts of music and find that it helps to keep me balanced.

And now for something completely different...

Whilst we are in the midst of this amazing heatwave we are experiencing here are some facts about summer that you might not know:

1. The popsicle, known as the Ice Lolly in the UK, was mistakenly invented by an 11 year old boy in 1905. He left a stirring stick in his soda outdoors overnight and the Ice Pop was created. He later went on to start selling them at an Amusement Park in New Jersey.
2. A Watermelon is a vegetable not a fruit, there are over 1200 varieties world wide.
3. The hottest temperature ever recorded in the UK was on 10 August 2003 in Faversham in Kent recorded a sweltering 38.5 degree celsius



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