
This bulletin from the Staffordshire Pension Fund, focuses on current issues that you should be aware of relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

Issue October 2021

Pension Forum Annual General Meeting – Tuesday 2 November 2021 – 10am -12noon

Along with all the Fund's participating Employers, you are invited to attend our Pensions Forum Annual General Meeting commencing at 10am on Tuesday 2 November 2021. This year, the meeting will once again be a virtual meeting, held via Microsoft Teams and so, if you are interested in attending, please email martin.griffiths@staffordshire.gov.uk expressing your interest and he will forward you the meeting link.

The agenda for the meeting will include:

- Presentation of the 2020/21 Annual Report and Accounts
- Investment and LGPS Central pool update
- Actuarial update by the Fund's Actuary – Hymans Robertson

If you do have any specific questions for the Fund's Officers or the Actuary, please forward them in advance to the email address above, as it may be possible to pick them up in the presentations or alternatively, if not, we will arrange an opportunity to discuss your question with someone at a later date.

We would be delighted for as many representatives as possible from the Fund's participating Employers to join the meeting, so please forward this information to anyone else that you think might be interested in attending.



i-Connect – Forms Employers must complete

i-Connect enables relevant payroll data to be transferred directly from an Employer's payroll system automatically to update pay and contribution details, on the member's pension record, and also to identify any minor record amendments, new starters, leavers and opt outs. This enables the Fund and Employer to improve the accuracy and efficiency of member data and to speed up the processing of administration casework.

Employers using i-Connect will see a significant reduction in the amount of event notification forms they need to complete and return to the Fund.

Unfortunately, i-Connect does not completely eliminate the need to send notifications to the Pensions Section and we thought it would be helpful to remind i-connect users which event forms they do and do not need to complete.

Case Type	Description	Form Required Yes / No
New Starters	No additional forms required the new starter will be set up from the information provided on the i-connect submission	No
Amendments, name, title, address, dob, NI number, contribution rate, pay reference number	No additional forms required amendments will be made to the record through the i-connect submission	No
Leave of absence including Maternity	No further forms required but the i-connect data file does need to include breaks and report an Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP) correctly	No
Early Leavers prior to retirement – member with pre 2014 pension service	If the member has pre 2014 service – A leaver form will be needed as i-connect does not provide a Final Pay (The whole-time equivalent pay over the last 365 days of employment or proceeding two if this would be higher). A leaver form Staffordshire Pension Fund - login (staffspf.org.uk) should be returned promptly.	Yes



Case Type	Description	Form Required Yes / No
Early Leavers – no pre 2014 pension service (only CARE service)	No further forms required if the member has only CARE or under two years' pension service,	No
Retirements – over age 60	<p>A leaver form will be needed</p> <p>The form should be sent to Staffordshire Pension Fund with the CARE pay field completed up to the date of leaving as soon as you know the member is retiring and no later than the end of the pay period following retirement. A projection of the pay is still required although the data will be submitted through i-connect. The reason for this is to enable the Fund to have the pay information in advance, so that the member's pension can be paid as close as possible to their retirement date.</p> <p>Staffordshire Pension Fund - login (staffspf.org.uk)</p>	Yes
Retirement age 55 to 59 (member with pre 2014 pension service)	If the member has pre 2014 service – A leaver form will be needed as i-connect does not provide a Final Pay (The whole-time equivalent pay over the last 365 days of employment or proceeding two if this would be higher). Staffordshire Pension Fund will contact you for a leaver form if it is required – A leaver form Staffordshire Pension Fund - login (staffspf.org.uk) should be returned promptly upon the request being made	Yes
Retirement age 55 to 59 – no pre 2014 pension service (only CARE service)	No further forms required if the member has only CARE or under two years' pension service	No



New name for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

Following the Government's recent Cabinet reshuffle, the MHCLG will become the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), with Michael Gove taking on responsibility for the newly named department as Secretary of State.

Potential changes in Auto Enrolment rules.

In response to a written parliamentary question, the Pensions Minister Guy Opperman has said that the Government is committed to implementing the 2017 Automatic Enrolment Review recommendations in the "mid-2020s".

These changes would lower the age for being automatically enrolled from 22 to 18 and would make contributions payable from all earnings

As set out in the 2017 review, the changes will be subject to discussions with Employers, and others, on the right approach and finding ways to make them affordable. The Government will also consider "the impact of the pandemic and the overall support for economic recovery, while continuing to support long-term saving, balancing the needs of savers, employers and tax-payers".

In terms of the potential impact for the LGPS, currently there is no minimum age or salary to be eligible to be contractually enrolled into the LGPS, but the member must have a contract of employment for at least 3 months. Employers must re-enrol eligible jobholders (i.e. those who are currently aged over 22 and earn over £10,000) into the scheme every 3 years.)

The changes will likely result in employers needing to automatically enrol more members than they currently do, especially those members who are 'casual' employees, including "re-enrolling" those who opt out every 3 years.



If you require any further information or clarification about this update, please do not hesitate to contact Martin Griffiths, Communication Officer

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