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To: Daniel Pattingale
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Employer Newsletter
February 2024



i-Connect Updates

Checking members eligibility

As part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring your employees' pension records are accurate, you must check that no individuals aged 75 or over are currently contributing to the scheme. These checks need to take place on a monthly basis. Eligibility for membership in the LGPS ceases at the age of 75.

If you discover any cases of contributors aged 75 or above, please make sure they are made a leaver with a correct leaving date (day before 75th birthday) and a reason of "Over 75" on i-Connect. You must also refund any contributions that have been paid after they reached 75. Once they have been made a leaver, they should no longer be included in your i-Connect submission.

Please contact the Employer team on employerdata@cornwall.gov.uk if you have any queries on this matter.

National insurance numbers

Every member on i-Connect requires a National Insurance (NI) number, if you have a member who lacks a NI number then a temporary number will need to be used. Temporary NI numbers must start with the letters 'TN' e.g. TN123456F. It is essential to use this temporary measure until the member is issued a permanent NI number.

When a permanent NI number is issued, we request you contact the Employer team on employerdata@cornwall.gov.uk to facilitate the necessary changes. This step will reduce the likelihood of errors and prevent the creation of duplicate records.

CSV file common faults

We would like to draw your attention to two critical aspects: opting out and additional contributions.

1. Opt outs:

When a member opts out of the pension scheme, it is crucial that the opt-out date is correctly recorded in column AX. This ensures accurate tracking.

2. Termination of Additional Pension Contributions:

Members are eligible to make additional contributions, such as Additional Pension Contributions (APC), only if they are active members of the main scheme. If a member opts out or joins the 50/50 section, it is imperative that any APCs cease.

Exception:

Members in the 50/50 section are allowed to take out on APC for the sole purpose to buy back any 'lost' pension.

Entrant and Leaver Forms

We have recently received new entrant and leaver forms. We no longer accept these forms as all changes to a member are now recorded on your monthly i-Connect submission. We

may request additional information on entrants and leavers if pay protection or Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP) has been applied.

2024/2025 Employee contribution bands

Below are the new employee contribution bands, which will be effective from **1st April 2024**. They are calculated by increasing the 2024/25 employee contribution bands by the September 2023 Consumer Prices Index (CPI) figure of 6.7% and then rounding down the result to the nearest £100:

Contribution bandings 2024/2025		
Actual Pensionable Pay	Main Section	50/50 Section
Up to £17,600	5.50%	2.75%
£17,601 to £27,600	5.80%	2.90%
£27,601 to £44,900	6.50%	3.25%
£44,901 to £56,800	6.80%	3.40%
£56,801 to £79,700	8.50%	4.25%
£79,701 to £112,900	9.90%	4.95%
£112,901 to £133,100	10.50%	5.25%
£133,101 to £199,700	11.40%	5.70%
£199,701 or more	12.50%	6.25%

Please ensure that you apply the above employee contributions bandings from **1st April 2024** and inform your payroll provider accordingly.

Employer meetings

In March 2024 we will be running our half yearly employer meetings, if you aren't already booked onto these virtual meetings and would like to attend, please contact Daniel Pattingale on Daniel.pattingale@cornwall.gov.uk

We have made some changes for the upcoming employer meetings, all meetings have been opened up to all employers rather than grouping employers together, this is to offer greater flexibility in participating. The only exception is the meeting on Thursday 14 March at 10am, as we have already had high uptake for this session.

The meetings are scheduled for:

- Tuesday 12 March at 10am – Open to all employers
- Tuesday 12 March at 2pm – Open to all employers
- Wednesday 13 March at 10m - Open to all employers
- Wednesday 13 March at 2pm – Open to all employers
- Thursday 14 March at 10am – Cornwall Council only

Please ensure you book your place by Monday 4 March 2024.

Employer discretions

Under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations, each Scheme Employer **must** create, publish, and keep under review a discretions policy outlining certain pension

discretions they can exercise in relation to their employees. This is also stipulated in our Pension Administration Strategy.

Employers must provide a copy to the Fund within 3 months of joining the Fund and then every 3 years.

The discretions policy should include the following as a minimum:

- ❖ Whether you will permit flexible retirement and if so, under what circumstances, and whether you will waive any actuarial reduction and if so, under what circumstances
- ❖ Whether you will waive any actuarial reduction for early retirement and if so, under what circumstances
- ❖ Whether you will “switch on” the 85 Year Rule for early retirement and if so, under what circumstances
- ❖ Whether you will purchase additional pension for an employee and if so, under what circumstances
- ❖ Whether you will contribute to an employee’s Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) and if so, on what basis
- ❖ Whether you will permit early retirement on compassionate grounds and if so, under what circumstances
- ❖ Whether you will extend the 12-month time limit for transfers into the LGPS and if so, under what circumstances
- ❖ Whether you will extend the 30-day deadline for member to elect for a shared cost APC upon return from a period of absence from work with permission with no pensionable pay and if so, under what circumstances

Thank you to those employers who have already submitted their policy to us. To date, we have still not received the employer discretions policies from a considerable number of employers, **please forward this to us as soon as possible to comply with the LGPS regulations and the Pension Administration Strategy.** Additionally, if you have not submitted your discretions policy to us, you will not be able to exercise any of the options covered in those discretions. For example, you will not be able to permit any of your employees to take flexible retirement until your discretions have been submitted.

You will also need to ensure your employer discretions policy is reviewed at least on a 3 yearly basis and this should be forwarded to us accordingly after each review.

The Cornwall Pension Fund cannot influence the approach of Scheme Employers completing their policy. This should be decided by the employer and align with the organisation’s wider policies. However, we do offer a template with all the discretions required, this is available on request through Daniel.pattingale@cornwall.gov.uk.

Employer role training

The Local Government Association (LGA) is offering Employer Role training that you may find useful, these sessions are available to view and book via the [LGA events website](#). These workshops will provide an overview of the scheme rules for the LGPS in England and Wales as well as guidance on administration. It is aimed at those employers who have administrative responsibilities for members within the scheme.

The link for each course contains the course programme, pricing and booking link.

Training sessions available are as follows:

- [16 April 2024 – online](#)
- [22 April 2024 – online](#)
- [2 May 2024 – online](#)
- [14 May 2024 – online](#)
- [13 August 2024 – London](#)
- [29 August 2024 – online](#)
- [1 October 2024 – online](#)
- [7 November – online](#)
- [6 December – online](#)

All bookings are on a first come, first serve basis. For fairness, the LGA has capped each course at five delegates per organisation. If you are unable to book a place on a course, email training.lgps@local.gov.uk for assistance.

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