

Notes for your Active Annual Benefit Statement 2020

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

We understand that in these uncertain times you may have some concerns about your Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) benefits. The following will hopefully help provide reassurance:

- **Business Continuity - Paying benefits and pensions**
Protecting against interruptions in service is of extreme importance. We would like to assure members that measures are already in place to ensure that we can continue to pay pensions, retirement lump sums and death benefits.
- **The value of your benefits**
There has been a lot of disturbing news lately about the volatility of stock markets and the potential resultant impact on defined contribution pensions. However, the LGPS is not a defined contribution scheme. Scheme members can be assured that both their contributions and their pension, whether in payment or built up to date, will be unaffected.

Fund Merger

We are pleased to confirm that following a successful shared service arrangement, Northumberland County Council Pension Fund (NCCPF) has merged into Tyne and Wear Pension Fund (TWPF). The legal document to bring about this came into force on 3 June and can be found at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/502/contents/made> .

Please be reassured that the merger will have no impact on your LGPS benefits which are set out in law within the LGPS Regulations and apply equally to both Funds. Members of the former Northumberland Fund will have received a letter about this.

Further information on the history of the merger can be found at www.twpf.info/article/69269/Fund-Merger-Complete .

Protections for members prior to 2014 – the McCloud Judgment

When the LGPS changed from a final salary to a career average pension scheme in 2014, protections for older scheme members were introduced. Similar protections were provided in other public sector pension schemes. The Court of Appeal ruled that younger members of the Judges' and Firefighters' Pension schemes have been discriminated against because the protections do not apply to them. The Government has confirmed that there will be changes to all main public sector schemes, including the LGPS, to remove this age discrimination. This ruling is often called the 'McCloud judgment'.

The Government have now launched a formal consultation on proposals to remove age discrimination from the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales (LGPS).

This consultation seeks views on changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales (LGPS). It outlines proposed changes to the current underpin protection to remove unlawful discrimination found by the Courts in relation to public service pension scheme 'transitional protection' arrangements.

The consultation will last for 12 weeks from 16 July 2020 to 8 October 2020. More information about the consultation can be found on our website www.twpf.info .

This means it has not been possible to reflect the impact of the judgment in your annual benefit statement this year. If you qualify for protection it will apply automatically - you do not need to make a claim. For more information, see the frequently asked questions on the national LGPS website at https://lgpsmember.org/news/story/mccloud_qanda.php .

Please note the enclosed Statement does not include any adjustment for McCloud.

Contacting us

Securely Online via mypension

This is our preferred method of communicating and we encourage you to use this which allows you to:

- Raise a query and receive a response
- View your membership record
- Carry out what if calculations to estimate the value of your benefits and plan your payment/retirement date
- Update your personal details and contact details
- View your annual benefit Statements
- Upload documents to your account.

This is the quickest way to communicate with us and if you have not already activated your account please do so at www.twpf.info/my pension .

Please note that members who were formerly in the Northumberland County Council Pension Fund, will still access their mypension accounts in the usual way. If you have records within both Funds, once the work has been completed to move the records to Tyne and Wear Pension Fund you will be able to see all of your records in one place. Until all of the work has been carried out your mypension account will still show as Northumberland County Council Pension Fund.

Our Website - www.twpf.info

This contains lots of useful information about the Fund and the Scheme Rules and links to other useful websites.

Our offices - The postal address is Pensions Office, PO Box 212, South Shields, NE33 9ER. If you are sending us recorded mail please use the full address which is Pensions Office, Town Hall and Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 2RL.

Our information can be produced in other ways on request. Please let us know if we can help in any way.

Please keep in touch

It is important that you keep us up to date with all your contact details (even if you use our online service). The quickest way to do this is by using the 'Change My Address' option on your mypension account. Please activate your account if you have not already done so.

Your State Pension

Further information on this can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/new-state-pension> .

Death Grants and Nomination Forms

If you die before your 75th birthday a death grant may be payable. The rules on death grants are complex. Further information can be found on our website.

If a death grant is payable, it will generally be paid to either:

- The person(s) named on your Death Grant Nomination Form
- Your estate, if you have not completed a Death Grant Nomination Form.

However, the Fund may have to take any financial dependents into account when deciding who should receive the death grant. If you are under age 75, and have not already done so, you can complete a Death Grant Nomination Form to let us know your wishes – please remember it is your responsibility to keep your Nomination Form up to date if your circumstances change or you wish to amend your nomination.

The Fund can choose to make payment to another person, for example if your Form appears invalid.

To make a Death Grant Nomination or update your nomination, please do so through your mypension account.

Information on the Fund

More information on the Fund will be available in the Annual Report and Accounts for 2019/20 which will be published on our website after the completion of the year end accounts. You can request a copy of the Annual Report and Accounts if you do not have access to the internet.

Privacy Notices – How we use Your Personal Information

South Tyneside Council holds information for the Tyne and Wear Pension Fund about you that is used for pension processing. Your information is treated as confidential; however, it may be shared with other organisations for the processing of benefits and, if we are required to by law, for the detection and prevention of fraud.

If you would like to know more about what information we hold about you, or the way we use it please write to the Pensions Office, PO Box 212, South Shields, NE33 9ER or view our website at www.twpf.info/privacynotices .