Cronfa Bensiwn
GWYNEDD
Pension Fund

Administrative Policy Statements

Title: Provision of Retirement Benefit Estimates

1. Purpose

This policy sets out Gwynedd Pension Fund's approach to providing retirement benefit estimates to members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

The policy is designed to ensure that members have access to sufficient information to support informed retirement planning while enabling the Fund to manage its resources efficiently, consistently and fairly. It also promotes the use of digital self-service tools, allowing members to access pension information quickly and conveniently.

2. Annual Benefit Statement (ABS)

All active members will receive an Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) each year in accordance with legislative requirements.

The ABS provides:

- The value of pension benefits accrued to date, payable unreduced from the member's Normal Pension Age (NPA); and
- An estimate of projected pension benefits at Normal Pension Age, based on the assumption that the member remains in employment on their current terms and pensionable pay.

The ABS is intended to provide members with a comprehensive overview of their pension benefits and should serve as the starting point for retirement planning.

3. Standard Provision of Retirement Benefit Estimates

In addition to the Annual Benefit Statement, the Fund will provide up to two (2) retirement benefit estimates per member in each financial year upon request.

This limit applies to estimates prepared manually by Fund officers following a request from a member, their employer, or an authorised representative.

Where a member requests estimates based on different retirement dates:

- The retirement dates requested must be a minimum of six (6) months apart; and

- The Fund reserves the right to decline requests for multiple estimates where the difference between the retirement dates is unlikely to have a material impact on the benefits payable.

This approach reflects the fact that retirement dates within a short period of each other often produce only marginal differences in pension benefits and do not justify the additional administrative resources required to produce multiple calculations.

Members should be aware that information provided are projections only and may differ from the actual benefits available at retirement. Outcomes will depend on a range of factors, including:

- Future pension benefits accrued within the LGPS;
- Changes in pensionable pay;
- Inflation and revaluation adjustments;
- The value of AVC funds at retirement (if applicable); and
- Relevant HMRC limits and pension taxation rules in force at the time benefits are taken.

4. Member Self Service and Additional Estimates

Members who require more than two retirement estimates in a financial year are encouraged to use the Fund's online Member Self Service facility, **My Pension Online**.

My Pension Online enables members to:

- Generate their own retirement benefit estimates;
- Model different retirement ages and retirement scenarios;
- Access pension information at any time; and
- Produce estimates as frequently as required without the need to contact the Fund.

The Fund may decline additional manual estimate requests where suitable information can reasonably be obtained through Member Self Service.

Promoting the use of My Pension Online allows members to access real-time pension information while ensuring Fund resources remain focused on statutory and time-sensitive work.

5. Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs)

Members who hold Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) can use the **Maximum AVC Lump Sum Calculator** available through the LGPS member website to explore the potential tax-free lump sum that may be available at retirement.

6. Exceptions

The Fund recognises that there may be circumstances where additional estimates are necessary and appropriate.

Requests exceeding the standard annual limit may be approved where there is a clear business, legal or member need. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Ill-health retirement applications;
- Divorce, pension sharing or other court-related proceedings;
- Redundancy or business efficiency retirement exercises initiated by an employer;
- Regulatory, legislative or legal requirements;
- Cases involving pension remedy calculations or other complex benefit issues; and
- Exceptional personal circumstances where additional information is reasonably required to support decision-making.

All requests outside the standard policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the circumstances of the member and the resources of the Fund.

7. Rationale for the Policy

This policy has been introduced to:

- Ensure a fair, transparent and consistent approach to all members;
- Maintain service standards and support the efficient use of Fund resources;
- Prioritise administrative capacity for statutory, regulatory, complex and time-critical work;
- Reduce duplication of effort where estimates would result in little or no material variation in benefit outcomes;
- Encourage greater use of digital self-service tools that provide instant access to pension information; and
- Support the Fund's wider digital engagement strategy and service improvement objectives.

8. Review and Governance

This policy will be reviewed periodically, and at least every three years, to ensure that it remains:

- Consistent with LGPS regulations and relevant legislation;
- Aligned with Fund administration practices and service standards;
- Appropriate to member needs and expectations; and
- Supportive of the Fund’s strategic objectives and available resources.

Any material changes to this policy will be approved through the Fund’s established governance arrangements.

9. Contact Details:

Members may contact the Fund at any time for assistance with this policy.

- **Phone:** 01286 679982
- **E-bost:** pens@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
- **Website:** www.gwyneddpensionfund.wales

Approved by: [Name] Gwynedd Pension Fund

Date: