



**PROTECT
OUR PENSIONS**

THE LGPS & YOU

UNISON knows just how important your pension is to you. That's why we want you to know the government's latest proposals for the LGPS. Read on and let your steward or pension contact know what you think or email lgps@unison.co.uk by 5 February

What's the government saying?

Recent negotiations between UNISON and the employers have resulted in some positive new proposals for the LGPS which would come into play on 1 April 2008. There are still some which are not acceptable and we are continuing to negotiate on those. In the meantime we want to know what you think about the proposals which include:

- Keeping a final salary pension scheme.
- An improved accrual rate of 1/60 – rather than 1/80.
- Pensions for unmarried partners.
- Backdating of unmarried partners' pension to 1988.
- Increased death in service benefit from twice to three times the lump sum.

To pay for those, the government proposes a variable contribution rate which will raise the average employee contribution from 6% to 6.3%. This helps the lower paid, as those earning up to £20,000 will pay less than the average 6.3%. After tax, this would result in a maximum increase of 0.7% for the highest earners. This compares well with the new NHS and teachers' schemes.

Carry on talking...

UNISON's local government, police, higher education, water and transport service groups have agreed that we should continue negotiations to:

- Improve on current protection for existing members from 2016, tapered to 2020 to reflect UNISON's policy of fair and equal treatment for LGPS members.
- Remove proposals slipped in by civil servants without warning which would remove the right to a pension on redundancy after 50.
- Ensure that there is no discrimination in the way that part timers' contributions are calculated.

Where do you come in?

UNISON's regions have been asked to consult on the proposals so far and to report back to further meetings on 7/8 February. Your steward or pension contact needs to know what you think. A more detailed briefing is available on the UNISON website at www.unison.org.uk/pensions or from your branch.



Trade unions' position on the key proposals and next steps

Benefit	Action/Comment
Final salary scheme	Meets trade unions' objectives
Benefit accrual improved from 1/80th 1/60th	Meets trade unions' objectives
Transfer arrangements to the new scheme:	Meets trade unions' objectives All members earning benefits on the same basis after 1 April 2008
Final pensionable pay	Meets trade unions' objectives but seek clarifications and possible amendment.
Employee contribution	Meets trade unions' objectives but seek clarification and possible changes for part timers. Seek further details for those currently on 5%.
Protection for the Rule of 85	Push for greater protection within legal framework and possibly improve early retirement factors.
Ill Health	Partially meets trade unions' objectives - seek agreement on criteria.
Retirement on redundancy or efficiency grounds	Not acceptable. Seek talks to change proposals.
Death Benefits – cash lump sum increased from two to three times annual salary	Meets trade unions side objectives, but seek further clarification and possible change on related survivor benefits.
Unmarried partners/co-habitees pensions with backdating from 1 April 1988	Meets trade unions' objectives but seeking further clarification
Power to increase service and pension	Meets trade unions' objectives.
Sharing the future risk of the Scheme	Review mechanism agreed, further talks to take place.

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