

March 2020

Dear Member

In light of the ongoing situation relating to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, I wanted to reassure you that we have ensured we can continue to pay your BCSSS pension as usual. In addition, I wanted to explain some consequences of the issues we face in the short-term with regard to providing the right support to all of our members. Our focus is on the well-being of our Scheme members, but of course we also need to consider the welfare of the staff responsible for ensuring pensions continue to be paid.

Firstly, on the payment of your BCSSS pension, we have been working with the Scheme's administrators, Capita, to make sure that their contingency plans will ensure pensions payments will be made as usual. As a reminder, the next payday is 31 March.

However, over the coming weeks there will likely be a reduction in the staff available to deal with any telephone calls or enquiries, as staff will be working from home, and may be unwell or needing to care for others. As a result, we will prioritise our most critical services, for example putting a member's pension into payment or dealing with bereavements. This will most likely mean that other enquiries take longer than normal, and we would appreciate your patience at this time. We will, of course, continue to respond to all correspondence received, but this may not be as timely as we would usually expect.

You may be able to get the answer to an enquiry from the Scheme's website <https://www.bcsss-pension.org.uk/> which contains lots of useful information about the Scheme, the benefits we pay and past Scheme publications. We will also continue to provide any further updates, as necessary, through the news section of the Scheme's website at: <https://www.bcsss-pension.org.uk/scheme-publications/news>

Finally, I would also like to remind you that the Scheme has a Government Guarantee. The Guarantee means that irrespective of the short-term financial conditions, your pension and bonuses will continue to be paid at the current rate and that your guaranteed pension will continue to increase annually in line with the increase in the Retail Prices Index.

I would like to thank you in advance for your patience and understanding during this time

Yours faithfully



Dame Kate Barker
BCSSS Chairman