

Welcome to January’s Bulletin, with news and updates from all our service areas.

Payroll

Upcoming Changes

Changes to SSP – Effective April 2026

There are significant changes to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) which will take effect from April 6th, 2026.

1. **Removal of the lower earnings limit (LEL)** - All employees will be entitled to SSP regardless of earnings. This means that even those earning below the previous (LEL) will now qualify for SSP.
2. **The rate for SSP will increase to £123.25 per week** - Employees will receive either this flat rate or 80% of their average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.
3. **Elimination of Waiting Days** - the current waiting period of three days before SSP kicks in will be removed. Employees will now receive SSP from the first full day of sickness.
4. **Transitional Protections** - employees who are already off sick on April 6th, 2026, will continue to receive their current SSP rate until they return to work or exhaust their entitlement. This ensures that those already receiving SSP are not adversely affected by the changes.
5. **Impact on Employers** - Employers will need to update their HR policies.
6. **Payroll System** - Our payroll system will upgrade to capture this change.

National Minimum Wage/National Living Wage

From April 2026, the National Living Wage (payable to workers aged 21 and above) will increase by 4% from £12.21 to **£12.71**

The National Minimum Wage will increase:

Current rates

The rates change on 1 April every year.

	21 and over	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice
April 2025	£12.21	£10	£7.55	£7.55
April 2026	£12.71	£10.85	£8	£8

This equates to a 8.5% increase for 18-20-year-olds and 6% for 16-17-year-olds and apprentices. These rates all exceed the expected inflation rates between April 2026 and April 2027, delivering a real-term pay increase for workers.

Statutory Parental Leave rates

From **April 2026**, the weekly rate of Statutory Maternity Pay, maternity allowance, Statutory Paternity Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay, Statutory Shared Parental Leave Pay, Parental Bereavement Pay, and Statutory Neonatal Care Leave Pay is expected to increase to **£194.32** (currently £187.18).

Contact Xentrall Payroll

If you have any queries, please email our Payroll Department, payroll.department@xentrall.org.uk or you can contact your dedicated Payroll Officer directly.

Pensions

Update from Teachers Pensions

If you pay your teachers' pension contributions to Teacher Pensions you need to be aware of the change to the Teacher Bank Account.



Changes to our bank details

From 2 January 2026, please use the following account details for all contribution payments due on or after this date:

Account name: TP Conts
Sort code: 60-70-80
Account number: 10030891

Please also be aware that for members, the bank account used for payments will change too. Please update any standing orders so future payments go to the new account:

Account name: TPReceipts
Sort code: 60-70-80
Account number: 10030921

If you've already processed your January payment to the current account due to payroll cut-offs or festive closures, don't worry, those payments will still be accepted and transferred.

From February 2026 onwards, all payments must be made to the new account for them to be accepted.

Teesside Pensions Year-End Preparations

Following the transition of Teesside LGPS administration from XPS to Tyne & Wear Pensions (TWP), we are working closely with TWP to prepare for Year End requirements. The expected deadlines provide a limited window to submit the large volumes of data involved, with the Easter period adding further time pressures.

To support a smooth Year-End process, we are undertaking early data preparation, including cleansing discrepancies between our records and TWP's and adding TWP UPM reference numbers to minimise post-submission queries. This work has generated a significant number of queries to resolve. To assist with this, TWP will contact employers in the Teesside Pension Fund to arrange additional portal access for Xentrall staff, enabling us to address queries and discrepancies ahead of submission.

Thank you in advance, for your cooperation in completing the Pen 99 form, which is essential for enabling access and progressing these updates efficiently.

If you have any questions, please contact Ann Robinson (ann.robinson@xentrall.org.uk) or Helen Umpleby (helen.umpleby@xentrall.org.uk).

Contact Xentrall Pensions

If you have any queries, please email our Pension Department, pension.department@xentrall.org.uk

Systems

MyHR System Upgrade

Our mandatory annual system upgrade will take place on **Wednesday, 25 February 2026**.

All users must log out of the system by **5:00pm**.

The upgrade will run overnight, and we expect the system to be fully operational the following day. A confirmation message will be sent on the morning of **26 February 2026** to let you know the system is back up and running.

If you have any questions, please contact the MyHR Helpdesk on **01642 52 4567**.

Contact Xentrall System Support

If you have any queries, please email our System Team, myhr@xentrall.org.uk