

POLICY DISCRETIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS)

1. Who this policy statement applies to

- 1.1 The City Council has produced the following policy statement as required by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).
- 1.2 This policy applies to all employees of the City Council on permanent or temporary contracts who are members of the LGPS, apart from those employed within schools. This policy does not apply to casual workers, consultants, agency workers or any other workers who are not actual employees of the Council.

2. Early release of Pension Benefits

2.1 Pre-1 April 2014 (Ex-employees only)

- 2.1.1 The LGPS provides for a normal retirement age of 65. Ex-employees who left the Council prior to 1 April 2014 and are members of the LGPS may retire at age 60 and over without permission. Retirements below age 60 require permission from the City Council.
- 2.1.2 An ex-employee who opts to retire at or after age 60 but before the normal retirement age of 65 will have their pension benefits reduced on an actuarial basis to take account of the fact that pensions will be drawn earlier and for longer. The City Council is unlikely to agree to ignore the actuarial reduction. (Note that there are protections available under the old '85 year rule' for employees who were members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006.)
- 2.1.3 Where permission to retire is required, the Chief Executive will consider requests for early retirement for employees below second tier level¹ once a business case has been made that shows what possible net savings would be made taking into account the potential costs on the pension fund, the needs of the service and whether there would be operational benefits to be made that would facilitate a re-organisation.

2.2 Post 1 April 2014 members voluntarily drawing pension benefits

- 2.2.1 Post 1 April 2014 LGPS members may retire at age 55 or over without permission.
- 2.2.2 Under the revised Pensions regulations, the employing authority has the power to “switch on” the 85 year rule for post 1 April members if there is a sufficient business reason.
- 2.2.3 Where a scheme member retires (leaves employment) and elects to draw their benefits at or after age 55 and before age 60 those benefits will be actuarially reduced unless the City Council agrees to meet the full or part cost of those reductions as a result of the member otherwise being protected under the 85 year rule as set out in previous regulations.
- 2.2.4 To avoid the member suffering the full reduction to their benefits the City Council can “switch on” the 85 year rule protections thereby allowing the member to receive fully

¹ Discretionary decisions in respect of first and second tier officers can only be taken by the Appointment and Conditions of Service Committee (ACOS).

Appendix 8 – Policy on exercise of discretions under the LGPS

or partially unreduced benefits but subject to the City Council paying the pensions strain (capital) cost to the Pensions Fund.

2.2.5 Decisions on whether to agree to this for employees below second tier would be delegated to the Chief Executive supported by a business case although it is unlikely that the City Council would ordinarily agree to “switch on” the rule of 85 in such instances.

2.2.6 Waiving of Actuarial reductions

The City Council is unlikely to ignore actuarial reductions. Decisions on whether to agree to waive the actuarial reduction would be delegated to the Chief Executive supported by a business case.

3. Power of employing Authority to award additional pension

3.1 Decisions on whether to award additional pension below second tier level will be delegated to the Chief Executive supported by a business case.

3.2 Decisions to award additional pension for first and second tier officer shall be made at the discretion of the Appointments and Conditions of Service committee supported by a business case.

3.3 Additional pension that is granted will be at whole cost to the employer.

4. Shared Cost Additional Pension Scheme (SCAPC)

4.1 From 1 April 2014, colleagues can voluntarily choose to make Additional Pension Contributions; there is the option for the employer to share this cost under the Shared Cost Additional Pensions Contributions (SCAPC) scheme.

4.2 The City Council will consider awarding additional pension by way of a business case to Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee.

5. Flexible Retirement

5.1 This discretion was first adopted under the 2008 Regulations and is subject to the relevant section contained within the City Council’s Retirement Policy, within the People Management Handbook.

6. Contributions

6.1 The City Council will decide what contribution rate a member is liable to pay:

- a) On first joining the scheme.
- b) On 1 April each year with a review on 1 October each year to ensure the band is as expected.
- c) Upon each subsequent contractual change in pay.
- d) Upon a change of hours either reducing or increasing.

7. Injury Allowances

7.1 Any discretionary payments made to colleagues and or ex colleagues where an industrial injury has occurred are dealt with through the Corporate Liability Insurance and group Personal Accident scheme in operation.

7.2 The City Council will not formally adopt a separate Injury Allowance Scheme.

Appendix 8 – Policy on exercise of discretions under the LGPS

8. **Transfers in of Earlier Periods of Service - Late Applications**

- 8.1 A request for a transfer of previous pension rights from another scheme or previous service within the LGPS or arrangement into the LGPS must be made within 12 months of joining/re-joining the scheme.
- 8.2 The City Council's policy is to accept transfers in applied for outside the period of 12 months, provided that, at the time the transfer is being considered, there is no cost to the Council.

