

# **STOCKSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME REGULATIONS 2014**

### **EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS POLICY STATEMENT**

DISCRETIONS		
Main Purpose of Regulation	Regulation	Discretion Exercised
Funding of Additional Pension through a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution - Where an active Scheme member wishes to purchase extra annual pension up to the maximum by making Additional Pension Contributions (APCs), the employer may choose to (voluntarily) contribute towards the cost of purchasing that extra pension via a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution (SCAPC).	Regulation 16 (2)(e) and/or 16 (4)(d)	Because of the costs involved and the likelihood of this provision either being of little or no benefit to the Town Council, or not being vital to the support and application of the Town Council's strategy, then the Town Council would not normally expect to exercise its discretion to fund additional pensions for members either through regular contributions or lump sum contributions. However each and every application will be considered in the light of the circumstances of the individual case concerned and a decision reached on the merits of that case.
Extend 12 month option – Whether to extend the 12 month option period for a member to elect that deferred benefits should not be aggregated with a new employment.	Regulation 22(8)(b)	The policy for late transfers for any member making such a request is for that member to satisfy the Town Council that they were not given the information at the time of joining the scheme and therefore missed the original deadline.
Flexible Retirement - This regulation allows the employer to consent to the early release of all, or part, of a member's LGPS benefits provided they have also consented to the reduction of hours worked or grade in which the member is	Flexible retirement, Regulation 30 (6)	The Town Council seeks to support the principal of allowing members to prepare for retirement in as many ways as possible. In this it also seeks to support Government Policy where that policy supports the Town Council in its efforts to run its services in the most efficient and cost effective manner. As such, subject to the following criteria,

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employed. The member must be aged 55 or over.		<p>the Town Council would normally expect to exercise its discretion to allow its members to retire flexibly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Any reduction in working hours or salary must be permanent</li> <li>- Any reduction in working hours or salary must be at least 40% of those hours or that salary being worked or earned immediately prior to the member's flexible retirement</li> <li>- The reduction in hours or reduction in responsibility allowing the member to be paid a reduced salary must not impact upon the organisations' ability to carry out its business efficiently and effectively</li> <li>- The individual flexible retirement concerned must support the organisations overall strategy</li> </ul> <p>The Town Council reserves the right, having considered each individual case, to refuse an application where any of the above criteria are not met.</p>
Waiving of actuarial reduction - This regulation allows the employer to consent to the early release of all, or part, of a member's LGPS benefits provided they have also consented to the reduction of hours worked or grade in which the	Regulation 30 (8)	<p>Because of the additional costs involved to the Town Council of waiving the actuarial reduction to member benefits in cases of voluntary retirement it is not envisaged that the Town Council would normally exercise its discretion in favour of waiving those reductions. However, each case would be considered on its merits and with</p>

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member is employed. The member must be aged 55 or over.		<p>reference to the circumstances involved of the individual concerned.</p> <p>A potential exception to this policy would be where the individual can make a case for the waiving of such a reduction to be granted on compassionate grounds. An example of compassionate grounds may be where the member has been forced to cease work to take up a caring role for an immediate family member, although it is recognised that other grounds could and may exist. Every application will be considered on the circumstances of the individual concerned. Financial hardship alone would not constitute compassionate grounds.</p>
<p>Switching on the 85-year rule for members voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 -</p> <p>Whilst the 85-year rule does not automatically apply in full if the employee decides to voluntarily draw benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60, this regulation allows the employer to switch the rule back on.</p>	Schedule 2 of the Transitional Regulations.	<p>Because of the potential retrospective impact on the 2013 fund valuation and the future additional costs that the exercise of this discretion would bring to the Town Council, and the fact that the Town Council does not deem the exercise of this discretion to be necessary in the pursuit of its overall strategy then it is not anticipated that there will be any instances where the organisation will switch on the Rule of 85 for members' wishing to retire voluntarily between the ages of 55 and 60. However, every application will be considered on its individual merits and the circumstances involved.</p>

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If the employer switches on the 85-year rule they will pick up any strain on Fund cost.		
The power of employing authority to award additional pension - this regulation allows an employer to resolve to award a member an amount of additional pension, up to the LGPS maximum, to an active scheme member or within 6 months of leaving to a member whose employment was terminated on the grounds of redundancy or business efficiency.	Regulation 31	Because of the costs involved and the likelihood of this provision either being of little or no benefit to the Town Council, or not being vital to the support and application of the Town Council's strategy, then the Town Council would not normally expect to exercise its discretion to award additional pension for members. However each and every application will be considered in the light of the circumstances of the individual case concerned and a decision reached on the merits of that case.
Extend normal time limit for acceptance of a transfer value beyond 12 months from joining	Regulation 100(6)	The policy for late transfers for any member making such a request is for that member to satisfy the Town Council that they were not given the information at the time of joining the scheme and therefore missed the original deadline.