



Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Employer Discretions Policy

Status: Regulatory Requirement (LGPS 2014)
Policy Recommended by: Finance & Audit Committee
Approved by: Finance & Audit Committee
Date: April 2016
Review date: Annually or changes in regulatory requirement

References (Regulations)

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (“the 2013 Regulations”)

and

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions and Savings) Regulations 2014 (“the 2014 Regulations”)

Signature _____
Chair of Governing Body

Signature _____
Chair of Finance & Audit Committee

A- LGPS 2014 Discretionary Policies

Under the new LGPS scheme employers are required to formulate, publish and keep under review a statement of policy on how they will exercise certain discretions under the new scheme.

B- Overview

The Local Government Pension Scheme (“LGPS”) in England and Wales was amended with effect from 1 April 2014. The provisions of the amended LGPS are now contained in the 2013 Regulations and the 2014 Regulations. This policy statement relates to the exercise of the employer discretions contained in the above Regulations.

C- General principles to be adopted in exercising discretions

In formulating the policy statements outlined below, Burnage Academy for Boys has sought to ensure that its discretionary powers will be exercised reasonably. The discretionary powers;

- will be exercised in the public interest;
- will not be used for an ulterior motive;
- will be used with regard to all relevant factors (costs to the Academy will be balanced against benefit for the Academy);
- will only be used where there is a real and substantial benefit to the Academy in return for incurring extra costs;
- will only be used having considered the views of the scheme Actuary; and
- will be duly recorded when used.

The Academy will also consider the views of the pensions administering authority (currently Greater Manchester Pension Fund).

In support of its deliberations regarding requests made on compassionate grounds, the Academy will take into account all relevant factors and require whatever information, documentation and supporting evidence it considers appropriate.

The employer discretionary powers will be exercised having regard to the extent to which the exercise of any policy discretion would lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service.

The policy statements do not limit or fetter how the Academy exercises any of the discretions afforded by the pension scheme.

The Discretions

Regulation	Policy
<p>Regulations 16(2)(e) and 16(4)(d) of the 2013 Regulations (Funding of Additional Pension)</p> <p>Shared Cost Additional Pension Scheme</p> <p>An employer can choose to pay for or contribute towards a member's Additional Pension Contract via a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contract (SCAPC).</p>	<p>Burnage Academy for Boys will not make use of the discretions under regulations 16(2)(e) and 16(4)(d) in any circumstances on the grounds of additional cost.</p>
<p>Regulation 30(8) of the 2013 Regulations</p> <p>Waiving of Actuarial Reductions</p> <p>Employers have the power to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction (in whole or part) applied to members benefits paid on the grounds of flexible retirement.</p> <p>Employers may also waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction (in whole or part) applied to member's benefits for deferred members and suspended tier 3 ill health pensioners who elect to draw benefits on or after age 60 and before normal pension age.</p> <p>Employers also have the power to waive, in whole or in part, the actuarial reduction applied to active members benefits when a member chooses to voluntarily draw benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.</p>	<p>As a general rule the Academy's policy is not to exercise these discretions but it will consider individual cases on their merits having regard to the compassionate grounds of individual members and having regard to the cost to the Academy.</p>

<p>Regulation 30(6) of the 2013 Regulations & regulation 11(2) of the 2014 Regulations</p> <p>Flexible Retirement</p> <p>Employers may allow a member from age 55 onwards to draw all or part of the pension benefits they have already built up while still continuing in employment. This is subject to the employer agreeing to the member either reducing their hours or moving to a position on a lower grade.</p> <p>In such cases, pension benefits will be reduced in accordance with actuarial tables, unless the employer waives reduction on compassionate grounds or a member has protected rights.</p>	<p>When exercising its discretion in relation to flexible retirement, the Academy will look at its operating requirements; have regard to pension fund members' individual circumstances and the impact on services of granting flexible retirement together with the cost to the Academy.</p> <p>As a general rule the Academy will only grant flexible retirement to members where there is, in the opinion of the Academy, a financial or operational benefit to the Academy in granting the member's request for flexible retirement.</p> <p>As a general rule the Academy's policy is not to exercise this discretion but will consider individual cases on their merits having regard to the cost to the Academy.</p> <p>Any application by a scheme member must be supported by a business case in writing.</p> <p>The Academy will not -as a general rule- exercise its discretion to waive any actuarial reduction in benefits although each case will be considered on its merits (see further below).</p>
<p>Schedule 2, paragraphs 1(1)(c), 2(2) and 2(3) of the 2014 Regulations</p> <p>Power of employing authority to 'switch on' the 85 year rule</p> <p>An employer can choose whether to 'switch on' the 85 year rule for members who voluntarily retire on or after age 55 and before age 60.</p> <p>An employer can also choose to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to benefits for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.</p>	<p>The Academy's policy is not to switch on the 85 year rule or, as a general rule, to exercise the discretion to waive on compassionate grounds the actuarial reduction but the Academy will consider individual cases on their merits and having regard to the cost to the Academy.</p>

<p>Regulation 31 of the 2013 Regulations</p> <p>Power of employing authority to grant additional pension</p> <p>An employer can choose to grant additional pension to an active member or to a member within 6 months of ceasing to be an active member by reason of redundancy or business efficiency (by up to £6500* per annum).</p> <p>(*the figure of £6500 will be increased each April under Pensions Increase Orders)</p>	<p>As a general rule the Academy's policy is not to exercise this discretion, but it will consider individual cases on their merits and having regard to the cost to the Academy.</p> <p>An application for additional pension must be supported by a business case in writing.</p>
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Copy of this document is being published on Burnage Academy for Boys' website and is being sent to Greater Manchester Pension Fund as the appropriate pensions administering authority.

In preparing this policy statement we have had regard to the extent to which the exercise of the functions mentioned in this policy could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service. We are satisfied that our adopted policies would not lead to any such loss of confidence and that the policy individually and generally is workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to foreseeable costs.

This policy will be subject to review from time to time. Any subsequent change in this policy statement will be notified to affected employees and to Greater Manchester Pension Fund and will be published on the Academy's website.

LGPS Employer Discretionary Policies

Explanatory Note

The 2014 Scheme contains a provision that Employer discretionary policies under the 2014 Scheme must be prepared, published and copied to the Pension Fund administering authority within three months of 1st April 2014. Any subsequent revisions to the policies must be published and copied to the administering authority within one month of the change in policy.

All LGPS Employers MUST have a LGPS discretionary policy in place. Not only is this a regulatory requirement, but:

- Under revised CIPFA Guidance, pension fund administrators have to report on the number of Employers' LGPS discretionary policies they hold within their Pension Fund Annual Report
- They will not process any quotes for employers who have not submitted their LGPS discretionary policy.

The relevant discretions are:

- Whether to grant additional pension of up to £6,500* per annum (increased each April) 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.
- Whether, where an active Scheme member wishes to purchase extra annual pension of up to £6,500 by making Additional Pension Contributions (APCs), to (voluntarily) contribute towards the cost of purchasing that extra pension via a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution (SCAPC).
- Whether to permit flexible retirement for staff aged 55 or over who, with the agreement of the employer, reduce their working hours or grade.
- Whether, as the 85 year rule does not (other than on flexible retirement) automatically apply to members who would otherwise be subject to it and who choose to voluntarily draw their benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60, to switch the 85-year rule back on for such members.
- Whether to waive any actuarial reduction on benefits paid early.

A guide is available from the national LGPS Regulations and Guidance page at:

<http://www.lgpsregs.org/index.php/guides/hr-guide-to-the-2014-scheme?showall=&start=20>.