

Agenda Item:

Staffing Committee

Insert
Item
No.

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	13 September 2017
Officer	Head of Organisational Development
Subject of Report	Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Employer Discretions
Executive Summary	<p>LGPS pension regulations allow the employer discretion to make decisions on certain aspects of payment of benefits. As an LGPS employer, the council is required to publish and keep under review a statement of policy in relation to these discretions.</p> <p>The discretions cover a range of areas including, for example, whether the council will fund any Additional Pension Contribution arrangement or whether the council will extend the period of time allowed for employees to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS. This report focusses on the council's approach to awarding enhanced pension benefits payments in flexible and early retirement cases to existing staff, following feedback from directorates relating to recent cases.</p> <p>This report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers whether the current statement of policy continues to reflect an appropriate approach to effectively managing such requests in the current climate. • Considers options for revising the statement and includes a proposed revised statements.
Impact Assessment:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA):</p> <p>A full EqIA was completed when the policy statement was revised</p>

	<p>in 2014. Proposed revisions take account of the findings of the EqIA.</p>
	<p>Use of Evidence:</p> <p>A range of evidence has been used to develop the options including pension regulations, the approach of other councils, feedback from directors and the Chief Financial Officer and guidance provided by the Local Government Association.</p>
	<p>Budget:</p> <p>There are no direct cost implications arising from this report. If the proposed changes are agreed, the budgetary position remains unchanged. Cases are reviewed on an individual basis.</p>
	<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk LOW</p>
	<p>Other Implications:</p> <p>None.</p>
Recommendation	<p>It is recommended that the Staffing Committee agree to the implementation and publication of a revised statement of policy on or around 16 October 2017.</p>
Reason for Recommendation	<p>The Staffing Committee oversee matters relating to staff terms and conditions and people management policies.</p>
Appendices	<p>Appendix 1 : Definition of costs relating to early release of benefits Appendix 2: Existing Discretionary Policy Statement showing proposals for amendments to early retirement/waiver of reduction</p>
Background Papers	<p>None.</p>
Report Originator and Contact	<p>Name: Sarah Butcher, Principal HR & OD Adviser Tel: 01305 228505 Email: s.e.butcher@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

1. Background

- 1.1. The county council, as an employer providing the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), has discretionary powers under LGPS regulations and is required to formulate, publish and review a policy statement in relation to the exercise of these discretions. The discretions must be reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.
- 1.2. The discretions, which are published on the council's website, cover a range of areas including, for example, whether the council will fund any Additional Pension Contribution arrangement for which there would normally be a significant additional cost or whether the council will extend the period of time allowed for employees to transfer other pension rights from previous employments into the LGPS.
- 1.3. The Staffing Committee last reviewed the council's approach to LGPS discretions at its meeting on 6 June 2014 to align with the introduction of the amended 2014 pension scheme. One of the key changes to the discretions at that point was to loosen the wording of the provisions for awarding enhanced pension benefits payments in flexible and early retirement cases subject to monitoring and review.
- 1.4. The statement was then updated in April 2016 to reflect changes when the Personnel Appeals Committee was dissolved, delegating decision making to directors. No revisions were made to the discretions themselves at this time.
- 1.5. Since 2016, Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR&OD) has been monitoring the types of cases being considered by Directors and has consulted with the Corporate Directors, Heads of Service/Service Directors/Assistant Directors and Financial Services. The trade unions have also provided feedback. Feedback received suggests that:
 - the provisions are not prescriptive enough for employees to understand when a discretion may or may not be agreed;
 - guidance for Directors in considering applications lacks detail to reflect the policy statement and this has caused some concerns;
 - there are concerns that applying a consistent approach within Directorates and across the council is difficult when the discretions are loose; and
 - financial services are not routinely involved in the decision making process even though the cost to the council can be significant either through a capitalised cost to the pension fund of paying the pension for a longer period or 'topping up' the individual's pension that would otherwise be reduced for early payment (refer to Appendix 1).
- 1.6. Given the feedback received, and considering some of the cases which have been decided, proposals for change have been developed which also take account of the LGPS statement of policy requirements set out in the next paragraph.

2. The statement of policy

- 2.1. The council's existing policy statement is attached at Appendix 2. The policy statement itself sets out the council's approach to decision making and the council's message to staff about the circumstances in which cases might be approved.
- 2.2. In formulating the policy statement, the employer is required by legislation to consider:
 - discrimination;
 - cost;
 - fettering (making the policy unnecessarily restrictive); and

- the extent to which the exercise of its discretionary powers could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service.

2.3. In relation to each individual discretion, employers can decide:

- not to exercise their discretion, or
- to apply a standard approach (for example to grant the discretion to all applicants), or
- to exercise their discretion in certain circumstances, on a case by case basis, or
- to implement a more detailed policy document in relation to a discretion (for example, a flexible working policy outlining 'conditions' attached to flexible retirement applications/a definition of 'compassionate grounds').

3. Circumstances for approval of requests (existing approach)

3.1. The council's policy statement implements a broad approach, enabling the council to exercise discretion on a case by case basis, stating that 'such applications will normally only be approved on compassionate grounds or for business reasons'.

3.2. Whilst the council has not outlined specific conditions attached to flexible retirement or a definition of 'compassionate grounds', detailed flexible retirement guidance is available to managers, outlining considerations which should be taken into account when considering a flexible retirement request. A standard request form is also available.

3.3. Directors are concerned that neither the current policy statement or the flexible guidance places sufficient emphasis on circumstances being 'exceptional' and that this is likely to lead to both an increase in cases and an inconsistency in the types of cases that are put forward for approval.

3.4. Compassionate grounds or business reasons may be considered in relation to any application, whether the application is to agree to capitalised costs and/or a request to waive the actuarial reduction. In practice, the council has only agreed to waive the actuarial reduction in exceptional compassionate circumstances.

4. Decision Making (existing approach)

4.1. Requests to award discretionary payments to LGPS pension members which result in a cost to the council are considered by the pension member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager. Whilst in practice the Group Finance Manager (on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer) is also consulted, this is not specifically reflected in the statement. This can mean that consultation with Financial Services does not take place at an early enough stage and that expectations of individual staff members can be raised unnecessarily.

4.2. Requests to award discretionary payments to LGPS members at Head of Service/Service Director/Assistant Director level or above are referred to the Staffing Committee, as per the Staffing Committee terms of reference.

5. Approach of others

5.1. Other LGPS employers take a range of approaches. Some apply a broad policy statement as per the council's existing approach, others apply tighter restrictions for consideration and some do apply a policy of not using the discretion. Dorset councils generally:

- apply a broad policy statement whilst stating that circumstances must be 'exceptional'
- include reference to the Section 151 Officer in decision making

- do not include specific restrictions or define compassionate grounds.

5.2. There is a mixed approach to whether requests to waive the actuarial reduction on business or compassionate grounds or on compassionate grounds alone are enabled.

6. Proposals

6.1. In making proposals for change to the current statement of policy, the aim has been to alleviate concerns of Directors, continue to provide a robust approach to decision making and bring the council in line with the approach of other councils. The proposals take account of feedback from stakeholders and also the trade unions.

6.2. In respect of the circumstances for approval, it is proposed that a statement be included where appropriate that 'applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances'. Cases relating to approval of capitalised costs will only be agreed on exceptional business or compassionate grounds. Cases requesting to waive the actuarial reduction will only be agreed on exceptional compassionate grounds.

6.3. The supporting guidance will also be updated to provide further clarity on when requests will be considered and defining compassionate grounds.

6.4. In respect of decision making, one option is to align with the council's scheme of delegation on people management matters. This would mean that decisions could be made at a lower level. Feedback suggests that retaining decision making at Corporate Director level is appropriate.

6.5. All those consulted with as part of the review of the discretion statement would like to see specific mention of consultation with Financial Services and it is proposed to change the statement on that basis.

6.6. It is therefore recommended that the proposed revised statements (refer to proposal column attached at Appendix 2), relating to release of flexible and early retirement benefits for existing members of staff, are approved.

6.7. It is also recommended that discretion statements which relate to decisions on aspects of pension benefits which are not concerned with early/flexible retirement are updated along the same lines, for consistency (for example, those that relate to suspended ill health pensions).

6.8. Other statements will be revised to reflect the organisational structure/job title changes which have taken place since the last review.

7. Next Steps

7.1. Should the committee agree the proposals in respect of a revised statement, the council is required to give employees one month's notice of any change. Following a Staffing Committee decision, the revised statement of policy will be shared with the Dorset County Pension Fund and published on Dorsetforyou, taking effect one month after the publication date (on or around 16th October 2017). Any changes will be communicated as appropriate to managers and staff.

7.2. Flexible and early retirement guidance will be updated.

7.3. The Staffing Committee terms of reference will be updated to take account of new job titles of Assistant Director or Service Director, which are member appointments at Head of Service Level.

Jonathan Mair

Head of Organisational Development

13 September 2017

Definitions

Capitalised Cost: If a scheme member starts accessing pension benefits before their normal retirement age (NRA), the benefits will be paid over a longer period of time and there will be effects of lost investments and income in terms of contributions from the employee and employer. To ensure that the pension fund is not disadvantaged, the employer pays the 'capital cost' to the fund, which is calculated by the fund in accordance with government actuary's department (GAD) guidance. The capital cost payment is from the employer to the fund and does not result in the individual receiving more or less in their pension than they are entitled to. The pension the individual receives will be reduced if they take retirement benefits before normal retirement age.

Reduced Pension & Waiver: When a scheme member takes their benefits before NRA, the annual pension they receive will be reduced. The % by which it reduces depends on how close they are to NRA. If the council agrees to waive this reduction, they are topping up the individual's pension to the amount they'd receive if they were retiring at NRA.

The Rule of 85: Some individuals might meet 'the rule of 85' (depending on their age and scheme membership) which protects some or all of their benefits from the normal early payment reduction. The rule of 85 doesn't automatically apply if an individual chooses to draw their pension early (between age 55 and 60). The council can decide to 'switch on' the rule so that the individual can benefit from the protection.

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON:- The Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 Discretions

By Dorset County Council

Policy effective from 21 April 2016

Statement of Policy on :-

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 [R]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions and Savings) Regulations 2014 [TP]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 [A]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 (as amended) [B]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 [T]

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended) [L]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Miscellaneous Regulations) 2012 [E]

The Employing Body which is Dorset County Council has resolved that the following Discretions available in the Statutory Instrument, should be implemented in compliance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations as set out below:-

PART A - where formulation of policy is compulsory

	Existing Provision	Proposed Provision
<p>Regulation 16 [R]</p> <p><u>Power of employing authority to contribute to a shared cost APC scheme</u></p> <p>Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to a shared cost APC scheme.</p>	<p>The council will not normally fund (in whole or in part) any Additional Pension Contribution (APC) arrangement voluntarily entered into, except in cases specifically agreed by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager, on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required. Each case will be considered on its own merits, ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>	

	(This statement does not apply in cases where the shared cost APC is to cover a period of authorised unpaid leave).	
<p>Sch 2, para 2 (2) & (3) [TP]</p> <p><u>Power of employing authority to apply 85 Year Rule before age 60</u></p> <p>Whether to "switch on" the 85 Year Rule for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.</p> <p>Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to benefits from pre 01/04/2014 membership where the employer has "switched on" the 85 Year Rule for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.</p>	<p>The council will not normally switch on the 85 Year Rule, or waive the actuarial reduction in benefits from pre 01/04/2014 membership, for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60, except in cases specifically agreed by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager, on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required.</p> <p>Each case will be considered on its own merits, ensuring that the decision can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>	<p>The council will not normally switch on the 85 Year Rule, or waive the actuarial reduction in benefits from pre 01/04/2014 membership, for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60, except in cases specifically agreed by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member, the Group Finance Manager on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer and an HR & OD Service Manager, on exceptional compassionate grounds. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required.</p> <p>Each case will be considered on its own merits, ensuring that the decision can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>
<p>Regulation 30 (6) & (8) [R] and 11 (2) [TP]</p> <p><u>Flexible retirement</u></p> <p>Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee reduces their hours or grade (flexible retirement).</p> <p>Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial</p>	<p>The council will consider applications for flexible retirement, where there is a business case. Applications for flexible retirement are subject to approval by the council in accordance with the scheme of delegation on people management matters. The needs of the customer and service will be taken into account. Where there is a cost to the council, applications must be considered by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD</p>	<p>The council will consider applications for flexible retirement, where there is a business case. Applications for flexible retirement are subject to approval by the council in accordance with the scheme of delegation on people management matters. The needs of the customer and service will be taken into account. Where there is a cost to the council, applications must be considered by</p>

<p>reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement.</p>	<p>Service Manager before a final decision is made.</p> <p>Where an application for flexible retirement includes an application to waive the actuarial reduction at a cost to the council, this must be considered by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager before a final decision is made. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required. Such applications will normally only be approved on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. Each case will be considered on its own merits ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>	<p>the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member, the Group Finance Manager on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer and an HR & OD Service Manager before a final decision is made. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required. Such applications will normally only be approved on exceptional compassionate grounds or for exceptional business reasons. Each case will be considered on its own merits ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p> <p>Where an application for flexible retirement includes an application to waive the actuarial reduction at a cost to the council, this must be considered by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member, a Group Finance Manager on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer and an HR & OD Service Manager before a final decision is made. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required. Such applications will normally only be approved on exceptional compassionate grounds.</p>
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		Each case will be considered on its own merits ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.
<p>Regulation 30 (8) [R]</p> <p><u>Power of employing authority to waive actuarial reduction</u></p> <p>Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits which a member voluntarily draws before normal pension age.</p>	<p>Any actuarial reduction applied due to voluntary early access to pensions benefits will normally be met by the member. Any application to waive the actuarial reduction at a cost to the council must be considered by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager, on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required. Each case will be considered on its own merits ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>	<p>Any actuarial reduction applied due to voluntary early access to pensions benefits will normally be met by the member. Any application to waive the actuarial reduction at a cost to the council must be considered by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member, the Group Finance Manager on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer and an HR & OD Service Manager, on exceptional compassionate grounds. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required.</p> <p>Each case will be considered on its own merits ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>
<p>Regulation 31 [R]</p> <p><u>Power of employing authority to grant additional pension</u></p> <p>Whether to grant additional pension to an active member or within 6 months of ceasing to be an active member by reason of redundancy or business efficiency (of no more than the higher additional pension limit that applies at the time of the decision).</p>	<p>Additional pension will not normally be awarded except in cases specifically agreed by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager, on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required.</p> <p>Each case will be considered on</p>	

	its own merits ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered	
<p>Regulation 30 (2) & (5) [B]</p> <p><u>Power of employing authority to grant early payment of deferred benefits</u></p> <p>Regulation 30 (2) Whether to grant application for early payment of deferred benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.</p> <p>Regulation 30 (5) Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to deferred benefits paid early under Regulation 30(2) [B].</p>	<p>The council will not normally grant early payment of deferred benefits, or waive any actuarial reduction, except in cases specifically agreed by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager, on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required.</p> <p>Each case will be considered on its own merits, ensuring that the award of augmented membership can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>	<p>The council will not normally grant early payment of deferred benefits except in cases specifically agreed by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member, the Group Finance Manager on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer and an HR & OD Service Manager, on exceptional compassionate grounds or for exceptional business reasons. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required. Each case will be considered on its own merits, ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p> <p>Where there is an application to waive the actuarial reduction at a cost to the council, this must be considered by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member, a Group Finance Manager on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer and an HR & OD Service Manager before a final decision is made. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing</p>

		Committee is required. Such applications will normally only be approved on exceptional compassionate grounds. Each case will be considered on its own merits ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.
<p>Regulation 30A (3) & (5) [B]</p> <p><u>Power of employing authority to grant early payment of suspended tier 3 ill health pension</u></p> <p>Regulation 30A (3) Whether to grant application for early payment of a suspended tier 3 ill health pension on or after age 55 and before age 60.</p> <p>Regulation 30A (5) Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to benefits paid early under Regulation 30A [B].</p>	<p>The council will not normally grant early payment of a suspended tier 3 ill health pension, or waive any actuarial reduction, except in cases specifically agreed by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager, on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required.</p> <p>Each case will be considered on its own merits, ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>	
<p>Regulation 31 (2) & (5) [L]</p> <p><u>Power of employing authority to grant early payment of deferred pension</u></p> <p>Regulation 31 (2) Grant application from a post 31.03.98 / pre 01.04.08 leaver or from a councillor for early payment of benefits on or after age 50 / 55 and before age 60.</p> <p>Regulation 31 (5) Waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to benefits paid early under Regulation 31</p>	<p>The council will not normally grant early payment of benefits, or waive any actuarial reduction, except in cases specifically agreed by the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager, on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. In respect of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required.</p> <p>Each case will be considered on its own merits, ensuring that the award of augmented membership can be objectively justified and</p>	

(2).	that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.	
<p>Regulation 31 (7A) [L]</p> <p><u>Power of employing authority to grant early payment of deferred pension for pre 01.04.08 employee optants out and councillors.</u></p> <p>Councillor optant outs and pre 01.04.08 employee optants out only to get benefits paid from NRD if employer agrees.</p>	<p>Additional pension will not normally be awarded except in cases specifically agreed by the the member's Director, after consultation with the cabinet member and an HR & OD Service Manager, on compassionate grounds or for business reasons. In respect of Councillors, the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Directors, Statutory Officers and Heads of Service, approval of the Staffing Committee is required.</p> <p>Each case will be considered on its own merits ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>	

PART B - where formulation of a written policy is **not** compulsory

<p>Regulation 9 (1) & (3) [R] Contributions payable by active members Employers determine the contributions payable by members by attributing each member to one of the contribution bands set out in Regulation 9 (2) [R]. Employers have the capacity to re-attribute the specific payband (upwards or downwards) where there is a material change in a member's contractual terms.</p>	<p>The council will allocate employees to LGPS pay bands based on an estimation of their annual pensionable pay.</p> <p>The council will review the allocation to pay bands at least once a year. Reviews will normally be undertaken at 1 April each year and may also be undertaken during the year if the council considers it is reasonable to do so, following a material change which affects the member's pensionable pay.</p> <p>Each case will be considered by the Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development or their nominated representative on its own merits, ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>
<p>Regulation 22 (7) (b) and (8) (b) [R] Facility to extend time limits for active members to not aggregate deferred periods of LGPS membership Whether to extend the 12 month option period for a member to elect that deferred benefits should not be aggregated with a new employment or ongoing concurrent employment.</p>	<p>The council will not normally extend the twelve month option period except in cases where the available evidence indicates that it had not reasonably been possible for the member to meet the timeframe. Each case will be considered by the Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development or their nominated representative on its own merits, ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>
<p>Regulation 100 (6) [R] Facility to</p>	<p>The council will not normally extend the twelve</p>

<p>extend time limits for active members to request a transfer of previous pension rights into the LGPS Where an active member requests to transfer previous pension rights into the LGPS, the member must make a request within 12 months of becoming an active member. Employers, with agreement of Administering Authority, may allow a longer period than 12 months.</p> <p>JOINT DISCRETION WITH ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY</p>	<p>month option period except in cases where the available evidence indicates that it had not reasonably been possible for the member to meet the timeframe. Each case will be considered jointly by the Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development and the Pension Benefits Manager, Dorset County Pension Fund, or their nominated representative(s), on its own merits, ensuring that it can be objectively justified and that potential discrimination issues are fully considered.</p>
<p>Other non-compulsory discretions are available for Dorset County Council to consider, and cases where these may arise in the future will be considered on an individual basis; the merits of each case being fully investigated.</p> <p>The county council in exercising the discretionary powers available under the above Regulations has acted with due prudence and propriety and considered the financial impact of applying the discretions.</p> <p>These policies may be subject to review from time to time. Any subsequent change in this Policy Statement will be notified to affected employees.</p> <p>Signed on behalf of Dorset County Council</p> <p>Signature _____ Date _____</p> <p>Please PRINT name of person signing:</p> <p>The LGPC Secretariat's understanding of the discretions which exist within the LGPS regulatory framework and the parties responsible for exercising those discretions can be found at the website below. In particular, it details their understanding of the new discretions applicable from April 2014.</p> <p>Also on this webpage is a discretions policies document, setting out in more detail the LGPC Secretariat's understanding of the discretions that employers should have a policy on. This will be of use while compiling your policy.</p> <p>www.lgpsregs.org/index.php/guides/administration-guides-to-the-2014-scheme</p>	