

## **Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service discretionary policies under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and other related Regulations**

1. Discretions to be exercised:

- i) under the LGPS Regulations 2013 from 1 April 2014 in respect of members of the Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme,
- ii) under earlier LGPS Regulations in respect of former employees who were members of the LGPS and who left prior to 1 April 2014,

This document will form **Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service** policies on pension and compensation discretions. It should be noted that:

- the policies will confer no contractual rights.
- **Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service** will retain the right to change the policies at any time without prior notice or consultation, **but Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will endeavour to discuss changes with Unison and any other recognised union(s)**
- only the policy which is current at the time a relevant event occurs to an employee / scheme member will be the one applied to that employee / member.

## Annex 1

Table A: Discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 under the LGPS Regulations 2013 in relation to active scheme members and members who cease active membership after 31 March 2014.	Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service policy
<p>1. Whether, at full cost to <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b>, to grant extra annual pension of up to <b>£8,344 (figure at 1 April 2024<sup>1</sup>)</b> to an active scheme member or, within 6 months of leaving, to a member who is dismissed by reason of redundancy or business efficiency or whose employment is terminated by mutual consent on the grounds of business efficiency.</p>	<p><b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will not make use of the discretion to grant extra annual pension of up to <b>£8,344 (figure at 1 April 2024)</b> to an active scheme member or, within 6 months of leaving, to a member who is dismissed by reason of redundancy or business efficiency or whose employment is terminated by mutual consent on the grounds of business efficiency except in exceptional circumstances where Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward.</p>
<p>2. Whether, where an active scheme member wishes to purchase extra annual pension of up to <b>£8,344 (figure at 1 April 2024<sup>2</sup>)</b> by making Additional Pension Contributions (APCs), <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will voluntarily contribute towards the cost of purchasing that extra pension via a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution (SCAPC).</p>	<p><b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will only voluntarily contribute towards the cost of purchasing extra pension via a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution (SCAPC) in three situations. Firstly, where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an active scheme member returns from a period of authorised leave of absence, and</li> <li>- the member does not, within 30 days of returning from the leave of absence, make an election to buy-back the amount of pension 'lost' during that period of leave of absence, and</li> <li>- the member subsequently makes an election to do so whilst an active member and it can be demonstrated that the reason for the member missing the original 30 day deadline was because the member had not been made aware of that deadline, and</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> The figure of £6,500 that applied at April 2014 is increased each April (starting April 2015) under the Pension (Increase) Act 1971 (as if it were a pension with a PI date of 1 April 2013).

<sup>2</sup> The figure of £6,500 that applied at April 2014 is increased each April (starting April 2015) under the Pension (Increase) Act 1971 (as if it were a pension with a PI date of 1 April 2013).

	<p>- the election is made no more than 3 months after the member returns from the period of leave of absence or such longer period as <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> may deem reasonable in any individual case.</p> <p>A decision on whether the member meets the above criteria (and on whether the 3 month period referred to should be extended in any individual case) will be taken by the Chief Fire Officer and, where it is agreed that the conditions are met, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will be required to contribute 2/3rds of the cost of buying back the 'lost' pension via a SCAPC.</p> <p>Secondly, where a member has a string of odd days of authorised unpaid leave of absence throughout the Scheme year (1 April to 31 March). In such a case Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will, instead of requiring elections to buy-back the amount of pension 'lost' during the periods of leave of absence to be made within 30 days of returning from each day of absence, allow the member (whilst an active member) to make a single election during the Scheme year to cover each one of the absences that occur during the Scheme year.</p> <p>Thirdly, in exceptional circumstances where Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case to contribute to a SCAPC (and a decision on the amount to be contributed) will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward.</p>
<p>3. Whether to permit flexible retirement for staff aged 55<sup>3</sup> or over who, with the agreement of <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b>, reduce their working hours or grade and, if so, as part of the agreement:</p>	<p><del><b>This will be subject to management consent and will only be considered where there is a justifiable business case and the cost, if any, of early release of pension is managed within the section's budget.</b></del></p>

<sup>3</sup> Age 50 for those LGPS members transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to whom regulation 16A of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applies. Such members only need the employer's permission to reduce their working hours or grade but, if that permission is given, do not require their employer's permission to draw their benefits (as such members have the automatic right to take the benefits by virtue of regulation 18A of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 and regulation 24 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014).

- whether, in addition to the benefits the member has accrued prior to 1 April 2008 (which the member must draw if flexible retirement is agreed), to permit the member to choose to draw
  - all, part or none of the pension benefits they accrued after 31 March 2008 and before 1 April 2014, and / or
  - all, part or none of the pension benefits they accrued after 31 March 2014, and
- whether to waive, in whole or in part, any actuarial reduction which would otherwise be applied to the benefits taken on flexible retirement before Normal Pension Age (NPA)<sup>4</sup>.

~~**Employees who request a reduction in their hours or in the grade of their post should use the procedure outlined in the Flexible Working Framework<sup>2</sup>.**~~

~~**The authorisation for an employee to receive immediate payment of their pension under flexible retirement will be considered and determined by their Head of Department in discussion with the Assistant Chief Fire Officer.**~~

~~**This discretion will not be exercised by Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority**~~

Flexible retirement

**Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service** will not agree to flexible retirement except in circumstances where **Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service** considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case

- will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward,
- will set out whether, in addition to any pre 1 April 2008 benefits, the member will be permitted, as part of the flexible retirement agreement, to take
  - a) all, some or none of their 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2014 benefits, and /or
  - b) all, some or none of their post 31 March 2014 benefits, and
- will require the approval of the **Chief Fire Officer**.

Waiver of any actuarial reduction on flexible retirement

<sup>4</sup> NPA means the employee's individual State Pension Age at the time the employment is terminated, but with a minimum of age 65 (although, the NPA for membership accrued prior to 1 April 2014 is still linked to age 65, apart from those LGPS members transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to whom regulation 16A of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applies for whom the NPA for membership accrued prior to 1 April 2014 is, by virtue of that regulation and regulation 24 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014, still linked to age 60, and those LGPS members who are employees of the Meat Hygiene Service in the London Pension Fund Authority fund who are covered by regulation 144B of the LGPS Regulations 1997 for whom the NPA for membership accrued prior to 1 April 2014 is, by virtue of that regulation and regulation 24 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014, still linked to age 60). State Pension Age is currently age 65 for men. State Pension Age for women is currently being increased to be equalised with that for men and will reach 65 by November 2018. The State Pension Age will then increase to 66 for both men and women from December 2018 to October 2020. Under current legislation the State Pension Age is due to rise to 67 between 2026 and 2028 and to 68 between 2044 and 2046. However, the government has announced plans to link rises in the State Pension Age above age 67 to increases in life expectancy.

	<p>Where flexible retirement is agreed, the benefits payable will be subject to any actuarial reduction applicable under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014. Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will only waive any such reduction, in whole or in part, where it considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward and will require the approval of Chief Fire Officer including, where the reduction is only to be waived in part, approval for the amount of reduction to be waived.</p>
<p>4. Whether, as the 85 year rule does not (other than on flexible retirement – see 3 above) <u>automatically</u> 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 apply the 85 year rule<sup>5</sup> to such voluntary retirements.</p>	<p>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will not agree to apply the 85 year rule where members choose to voluntarily draw their benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 except in circumstances where Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward, and</li> <li>- will require the approval of Chief Fire Officer.</li> </ul>
<p>5. For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) active members voluntarily retiring on or after age 55<sup>6</sup> and before Normal Pension Age who elect under regulation 30(5) of the LGPS Regulations 2013 to immediately draw benefits, and</li> <li>ii) deferred members and suspended Tier 3 ill health pensioners who elect under regulation 30(5) of the LGPS Regulations</li> </ul>	<p>Where members choose to voluntarily draw their benefits on or after age 55 and before Normal Pension Age <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will not agree to waive in whole or in part any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to their benefits except in circumstances where <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> considers it is in its financial or operational</p>

<sup>5</sup> The 85 year rule does not apply to former members of the Metropolitan Civil Staffs Superannuation Scheme, or Meat Hygiene Service members, or civil servants transferred to the Environment Agency who by virtue of regulation 24 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 are subject to, respectively, regulation 144A of, and Schedule 7 to, the LGPS Regulations 1997, regulation 144B of the LGPS Regulations 1997 and regulation 15 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Age 50, by virtue of regulation 24 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014, for those LGPS members transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to whom regulation 16A of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applies and those civil servants transferred to the Environment Agency to whom regulation 15 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 applies.

<p>2013 to draw benefits (other than on ill health grounds) on or after age 55<sup>7</sup> and before Normal Pension Age</p> <p>who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- were <u>not</u> members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006 [Group 4 members], whether to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o waive on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits, if any, accrued before 1 April <u>2014</u>, and / or</li> <li>o waive, in whole or in part (on any grounds), any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits accrued after 31 March <u>2014</u></li> </ul> </li> <li>- <u>were</u> members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006 and <u>will</u> be 60 or more on 31 March 2016 [Group 1 members], whether to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o waive on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits accrued before 1 April <u>2016</u>, and / or</li> <li>o waive, in whole or in part (on any grounds), any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits accrued after 31 March <u>2016</u></li> </ul> </li> <li>- <u>were</u> members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006 and will <u>not</u> be 60 or more on 31 March 2016 and will <u>not</u> attain age 60 between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2020 [Group 3 members], whether to:</li> </ul>	<p>interests to do so or there are compelling compassionate<sup>8</sup> reasons for doing so.</p> <p>Each case</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward, or</li> <li>- will be considered on the merits of the compassionate case put forward, and</li> <li>- will require the approval of Chief Fire Officer including, where the reduction is only to be waived in part, approval for the amount of reduction to be waived</li> </ul>
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<sup>7</sup> Age 50, by virtue of regulation 24 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014, for those LGPS members transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to whom regulation 16A of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applies and who are electing for early payment of a deferred benefit (but not if they are electing for early payment of a suspended Tier 3 ill health pension) and those civil servants transferred to the Environment Agency to whom regulation 15 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 applies and who are electing for early payment of a deferred benefit or early payment of a suspended Tier 3 ill health pension.

<sup>8</sup> There is no definition in the Regulations of “compassionate grounds”. However, one could take the view that, for example, releasing benefits because the member is short of funds / out of work would not be appropriate (as the pension scheme is not a social security scheme); whereas, for example, releasing benefits because the member has had to give up work to look after orphaned grandchildren would clearly be a case where an employer might wish to exercise compassion.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ waive on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits accrued before 1 April <u>2014</u>, and / or</li> <li>○ waive, in whole or in part (on any grounds), any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits accrued after 31 March <u>2014</u></li> </ul> <p>- <u>were</u> members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006 and will <u>not</u> be 60 or more on 31 March 2016 but <u>will</u> attain age 60 between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2020 [Group 2 members], whether to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ waive on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits accrued before 1 April <u>2020</u>, and / or</li> <li>○ waive, in whole or in part (on any grounds), any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits accrued after 31 March <u>2020</u></li> </ul>	
<p>6. Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to a shared-cost Additional Voluntary Contribution (SCAVC) arrangement entered into on or after 1 April 2014 and whether, how much, and in what circumstances to continue to contribute to any shared cost Additional Voluntary Contribution (SCAVC) arrangement entered into before 1 April 2014.</p>	<p><b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will not enter into a shared cost AVC arrangement</b></p>
<p>7. Whether to extend the 12 month time limit within which a scheme member who has a deferred LGPS benefit in England or Wales following the cessation of an employment (or cessation of a concurrent employment) after 31 March 2014 may elect not to have the deferred benefits aggregated with their new LGPS employment (or ongoing concurrent LGPS employment) if the member has not made an election to retain separate benefits within 12 months of commencing membership of the LGPS in the new employment (or within 12 months of ceasing the concurrent membership).</p>	<p>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will only extend the 12 month time limit within which a scheme member who has a deferred LGPS benefit in England or Wales following the cessation of an employment (or cessation of a concurrent employment) after 31 March 2014 may elect not to have the deferred benefits aggregated with their new LGPS employment (or ongoing concurrent LGPS employment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) where Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service agrees that the available evidence indicates the member had not been informed of the 12 month time limit due to maladministration;</li> </ul>

	<p>b) where Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service agrees that the available evidence indicates the member had made an election within 12 months of joining the LGPS but the election was not received by the Pension Fund administering authority (e.g. the election form was lost in the post); or</p> <p>c) where the member has pre 1 April 2014 membership and <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> agrees the available evidence indicates that, due to maladministration, the member had not been informed of the implications of having benefits aggregated and would, in consequence, suffer a detriment to their pension benefits (for example, where member's whole-time equivalent pensionable pay on commencing with <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> is, in real terms after allowing for inflation, significantly less than the whole-time equivalent pensionable pay upon which the deferred benefits were calculated).</p> <p>d) Where the member did not become a member of the 2014 scheme by virtue of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 [SI 2014/525] to elect that pre 1 April 2014 deferred benefits should be aggregated with a new employment.</p>
<p>8. Whether, with the agreement of the Pension Fund administering authority, to permit a Scheme member to elect to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS if he / she has not made such an election within 12 months of joining the LGPS.</p>	<p><b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will only extend the 12 month time limit within which a scheme member must make an election to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS after joining the LGPS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- where the member asked for transfer investigations to be commenced within 12 months of joining the LGPS but a quotation of what the transfer value will purchase in the LGPS has not been provided to the member within 11 months of joining the LGPS. The time limit for such a member to make a formal election to transfer pension rights into the LGPS will be extended to one month beyond the date of the letter issued by the Pension Fund administering</li> </ul>



	<p>authority notifying the Scheme member of the benefits the transfer will buy in the LGPS;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- where the available evidence indicates the member made an election within 12 months of joining the LGPS, but the election was not received by the Pension Fund administering authority (e.g. the election form was lost in the post);</li> <li>- where the available evidence indicates the member had not been informed of the 12 month time limit due to maladministration.</li> </ul> <p>In any of the above exceptional circumstances, where an employee can show good cause, they may seek an extension to the first twelve months by up to a further 12 months before making a decision on making an application to transfer their pension rights subject to confirmation that they are not likely to retire, or be subject to ill- health retirement in the near future. In all instances, the employee should write to the Head of Human Resources and Administration requesting an extension to the twelve months, detailing any extenuating circumstances.</p>
<p>9. How the pension contribution band/rate to which an employee is to be allocated will be determined on joining the Scheme and at each subsequent April, and the circumstances in which the employer will, in addition to the review each April, review the pension contribution band/rate to which an employee has been allocated consequent upon a material change which affects the member's pensionable pay in the course of a Scheme year (1 April to 31 March).</p>	<p>The Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, in conjunction with its payroll provider, is required to reassess the appropriate band and rate each April. In addition, it has the discretion to review the frequency of reassessment when pensionable pay changes and re-band at that point. The re-banding process is carried out on an annual basis.</p> <p>In addition, re-banding will take place following any contractual changes such as an increase or decrease in hours, a move to another job or the award of a temporary change in pay such as through an honorarium. There may be other occasions when it is appropriate to review the banding and as such any changes will be authorised by the Human Resources Manager. Elements included in the calculations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual salary and Non-variable pensionable pay elements (e.g. allowances) for the year commencing on 1st April, plus</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variable pensionable pay elements paid during the previous year ending on 31st March (e.g. honoraria payments, non-contractual overtime and additional hours paid to part-timers)</li> </ul> <p>Employees who work under a Variable Hours Contract and Casual Employees are allocated to a band based on the payments they have received during the previous 12-month period. Where employees have less than 12 months service in post their earnings should continue to be factored up to give an equivalent annual pay figure which then determines a banding rate.</p> <p>Where salary sacrifice reduces the pensionable pay, bands will be applied on the reduced salary.</p>
<p>10. Whether or not, when calculating assumed pensionable pay when a member (other than a returning officer<sup>9</sup>) is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on reduced contractual pay or no pay on due to sickness or injury, or</li> <li>- absent during ordinary maternity, paternity or adoption leave or paid shared parental leave, or during paid additional maternity or adoption leave (other than any part of that leave where the pensionable pay received is greater than the assumed pensionable pay for that part of the leave period), or</li> <li>- absent on reserve forces service leave, or</li> <li>- retires with a Tier 1 or Tier 2 ill health pension, or</li> <li>- dies in service</li> </ul> <p>to include in the calculation the amount of any ‘regular lump sum payment’ received by the member in the 12 months preceding the date the absence began or the ill health retirement or death occurred.</p>	<p>In assessing Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP) <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will not, other than in exceptional circumstances, include in the calculation any ‘regular lump sum payments’ in which case the decision to include the ‘regular lump sum payment’ will be subject to the approval of <b>Chief Fire Officer</b>.</p>
<p>11. Whether in the Employer’s opinion, the pensionable pay received in relation to an employment (adjusted to reflect any lump sum payments) in the 3 months (or 12 weeks if not paid monthly)</p>	<p>In assessing Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP) <b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will not, other than in exceptional circumstances, substitute a higher level of pensionable pay in</p>

<sup>9</sup> i.e. a returning officer or acting returning officer at local government elections, or elections for the National Assembly of Wales, or Parliamentary elections or European Parliamentary elections.

<p>preceding the commencement of Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP), is materially lower than the level of pensionable pay the member would have normally received, decide whether to substitute a higher level of pensionable pay having had regard to the level of pensionable pay received by the member in the previous 12 months.</p>	<p>which case the decision will be subject to the approval of <b>Chief Fire Officer</b>.</p>
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## Annex 2

Table B: Discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 under the LGPS Regulations in relation to scheme members who ceased active membership between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2014	Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service policy
1. Whether, on compassionate grounds <sup>10</sup> , to waive any actuarial reduction that would normally be applied to deferred benefits which are paid before age 65 <sup>11</sup> .	<b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will consider an application to waive, on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would normally be applied to deferred benefits which are paid before age 65. Each case will be considered on its merits and will be subject to the approval of <b>Chief Fire Officer</b> .
2. Whether, on compassionate grounds <sup>12</sup> , to waive any actuarial reduction that would normally be applied to any suspended Tier 3 ill health pension benefits which are brought back into payment before age 65 <sup>13</sup> .	<b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will consider an application to waive, on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would normally be applied to a suspended Tier 3 ill health pension which is brought back into payment before age 65. Each case will be considered on its merits and will be subject to the approval of <b>Chief Fire Officer</b> .

<sup>10</sup> There is no definition in the Regulations of “compassionate grounds”. However, one could take the view that, for example, waiving a reduction because the member is short of funds / out of work would not be appropriate (as the pension scheme is not a social security scheme); whereas, for example, releasing benefits because the member has had to give up work to look after orphaned grandchildren would clearly be a case where an employer might wish to exercise compassion.

<sup>11</sup> Age 60 in the case of members transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to whom regulation 16A of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applies, and for employees of the Meat Hygiene Service in the London Pension Fund Authority fund who are covered by regulation 144B of the LGPS Regulations 1997, and for former members of the Metropolitan Civil Staffs Superannuation Scheme and who are covered by regulation 144A of, and Schedule 7 to, the LGPS Regulations 1997, and for former NHS Scheme members who are covered by regulation 23 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 1997.

<sup>12</sup> There is no definition in the Regulations of “compassionate grounds”. However, one could take the view that, for example, waiving a reduction because the member is short of funds / out of work would not be appropriate (as the pension scheme is not a social security scheme); whereas, for example, releasing benefits because the member has had to give up work to look after orphaned grandchildren would clearly be a case where an employer might wish to exercise compassion.

<sup>13</sup> Age 60 in the case of members transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to whom regulation 16A of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applies, and for employees of the Meat Hygiene Service in the London Pension Fund Authority fund who are covered by regulation 144B of the LGPS Regulations 1997, and for former members of the Metropolitan Civil Staffs Superannuation Scheme and who are covered by regulation 144A of, and Schedule 7 to, the LGPS Regulations 1997, and for former NHS Scheme members who are covered by regulation 23 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 1997.

Table C: Discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 under the LGPS Regulations in relation to scheme members who ceased active membership between 1 April 1998 and 31 March 2008 (and in relation to local authority councillor members who ceased or will cease active membership on or after 1 April 1998)	Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service policy
1. Whether <sup>14</sup> to grant applications for the early payment of pension benefits on or after age 50 <sup>15</sup> and before age 55 (on grounds other than permanent ill health).	Where a former scheme member who left the scheme between 1 April 1998 and 31 March 2008 requests early release of deferred benefits on or after age 50 and before age 55 (on grounds other than permanent ill health), approval will only be given on compassionate grounds <sup>16</sup> . Each case will be considered on its merits and will be subject to the approval of <b>Chief Fire Officer</b> . Subject to entry 2 below, the benefits payable in such circumstances will be subject to any actuarial reduction applicable under the relevant LGPS Regulations.
2. Whether, on compassionate grounds <sup>17</sup> , to waive any actuarial reduction that would normally be applied to deferred benefits which are paid before age 65 <sup>18</sup> .	<b>Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service</b> will consider an application to waive, on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would normally be applied to deferred benefits which are paid before age 65. Each case will be considered on its merits and will be subject to the approval of <b>Chief Fire Officer</b> .
Table D: Discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 under the LGPS Regulations in relation to scheme members who ceased active membership before 1 April 1998	Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service policy

<sup>14</sup> This discretion does not apply to those LGPS members who are former members of the Metropolitan Civil Staffs Superannuation Scheme and who are covered by regulation 144A of, and Schedule 7 to, the LGPS Regulations 1997 or to former NHS Scheme members who are covered by regulation 23 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 1997 (as such members have the automatic right to take benefits on or after age 50 and before age 60).

<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that, except in the case of LGPS members who are former members of the Metropolitan Civil Staffs Superannuation Scheme and who are covered by regulation 144A of, and Schedule 7 to, the LGPS Regulations 1997, or former NHS Scheme members who are covered by regulation 23 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 1997, benefits paid on or after age 50 and before age 55 will be subject to an unauthorised payments charge under the Finance Act 2004 and, where applicable, an unauthorised payments surcharge under that Act, and a Scheme sanction charge on any benefits built up after 5 April 2006.

<sup>16</sup> There is no definition in the Regulations of "compassionate grounds". However, one could take the view that, for example, waiving a reduction because the member is short of funds / out of work would not be appropriate (as the pension scheme is not a social security scheme); whereas, for example, releasing benefits because the member has had to give up work to look after orphaned grandchildren would clearly be a case where an employer might wish to exercise compassion.

<sup>17</sup> There is no definition in the Regulations of "compassionate grounds". However, one could take the view that, for example, releasing benefits because the member is short of funds / out of work would not be appropriate (as the pension scheme is not a social security scheme); whereas, for example, releasing benefits because the member has had to give up work to look after orphaned grandchildren would clearly be a case where an employer might wish to exercise compassion.

<sup>18</sup> Age 60 in the case of employees of the Meat Hygiene Service in the London Pension Fund Authority fund who are covered by regulation 144B of the LGPS Regulations 1997 and members who are former members of the Metropolitan Civil Staffs Superannuation Scheme and who are covered by regulation 144A of, and Schedule 7 to, the LGPS Regulations 1997 and for former members of the Metropolitan Civil Staffs Superannuation Scheme and who are covered by regulation 144A of, and Schedule 7 to, the LGPS Regulations 1997, and for former NHS Scheme members who are covered by regulation 23 of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 1997 .

<p>1. Whether to grant applications for the early payment of deferred pension benefits on or after age 50 and before age 65 on compassionate grounds .</p>	<p>Where a former scheme member who left the scheme before 1 April 1998 requests early release of deferred benefits on or after age 50 and before age 65 on compassionate grounds, the case will be considered on its merits and will be subject to the approval of <b>Chief Fire Officer</b>.</p>
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