

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

RETIREMENT GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

An employee who decides to retire is required to resign from their post, providing the notice specified in their contract of employment in the normal way.

It is helpful to understand the intention of employees as far as possible to enable the Council to undertake long term workforce planning, and to assist employees in their own planning process. During the Annual Review process the Council will continue to discuss with all employees irrespective of age, their short, medium and longer term career aspirations.

The Council therefore encourages employees to engage in open and transparent discussions as early as possible in their planning process for retirement with their appropriate manager.

It is acknowledged that individual intentions to retire can change due to a variety of personal circumstances, and individuals are reassured that such informal discussions will only be progressed formally once notice to resign has been given.

OPTIONS PRIOR TO RETIREMENT

It is recognised that at whatever stage of their working life, employees may wish to change their working pattern to suit their individual circumstances. Subject to the operational needs of the Council it may be possible to agree a flexible working approach whether or not this is intended to lead directly to a full retirement.

A meeting to discuss retirement could however include a discussion around flexible working as it may be helpful to consider the different options available and how appropriate these might be to the Council and the individual at the same time.

Should an employee wish to work more flexibly (eg reduced hours) then that request would be considered as a change in terms and conditions.

Requests from employees for any changes to hours of work or variations in terms of conditions must be put to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk in writing. He/she will invite comments on the proposals from the relevant line-managers and the Assistant Executive Officer & Town Clerk who will make their observations in writing. The Executive Officer & Town Clerk will then consider any comments and submit a report and recommendations to the Council's Policy & Resources Committee for its consideration.

The Policy & Resources Committee may or may not agree to such recommendations. If an employee is unhappy with the Committee's decision they have the right to appeal (decisions can be challenged at an employment tribunal).

FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

The Council will consider each case on its merits and will not unreasonably withhold permission for an employee to reduce hours subject to the operation requirements of the Council.

Requests for flexible retirement will be considered as a change in terms and conditions of employment.

FEATURES OF FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

The employee will be required to gain written consent from the Council for flexible retirement. The Council will consider each case on its merits in line with these guidelines. The Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for a member of staff to reduce hours, subject to the operational requirements of the Council.

Once the flexible retirement request has been approved by the Council the employee will have a maximum of four weeks to decide if they wish to progress with the flexible retirement. Employees should also be aware that where a request for flexible retirement is agreed and implemented there is no automatic right to increase their hours at any point in the future, or decrease their hours further. However, this will not prevent a further request being made and is subject to the agreement of the Council.

Any further amendments may require the member of staff to fully retire from their post.

Longer term planning: where an employee makes an approach to their line manager to request flexible retirement it is reasonable for the manager to ask the employee about their longer term plans so that they can plan for any further reduction in hours and also for the time when the employee plans for fully retire. As part of the Annual Review process it is expected that reviewers will ask for all employees about their short, medium and long term plans.

PENSIONS

Employees approaching retirement may wish to investigate how certain options may affect their retirement benefits. If you are a member of the Local Government Pension scheme, advice can be obtained from Leicestershire County Council, Pension Section, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8RB.

Prior to agreement by the Council to flexible retirement, an FR1 Form will need to be submitted to Leicestershire County Council's Pension Department to establish if there are any costs to the Council.

REVIEW

The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, together with these Retirement Guidelines will be reviewed regularly in line with any legislative changes.

16th January 2014