

FLEXIBLE & EARLY RETIREMENT	
Background	<p>The Flexible Retirement Policy and Early Retirement Policy outline the principles and practices that govern the Council's approach to employee retirement.</p> <p>Since the last review, there have been no legislative changes that would have an impact on current policy.</p> <p>Benchmarking against a number of other Local Authorities, alongside general research into best practice has been carried out. Cases which had recently been taken to the Employment Appeals Tribunal demonstrated that there was a need to be particularly mindful of employees own flexibility over retirement and ensure there is not an expectation to retire once retirement age is reached.</p> <p>The policies required to be updated to bring them in line with current agreements, with scope to further improve their effectiveness and enhance their use within the workplace.</p>
Findings	<p>The Flexible Retirement and Early Retirement policies for Teaching and Local Government Employees respectively have the following amendments/additions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined the early and flexible retirement policies into one document • Ensured the eligibility is implicit (i.e. employees aged 55 years or over who have been a member of the pension scheme for at least 2 years) • Created a section on early retirement and the options/implications • Inserted a table providing an overview of the options available (i.e. option, scope, definition, risks/implications) • Made links to the Flexible Working Policy (where employees do not want to access their pension) and Health At Work Policy (Ill health retirement) • Added in links to support and further information (i.e. pre-retirement workshop from Organisational Development, links to LGPS and SPPA, link to DWP page on calculating retirement age) • Added in a flowchart outlining the process to ensure clarity • Outlined the right of appeal and associated process
Implications	<p>The above changes enabled the application of a single policy to be more effective in offering a supportive and flexible approach to retirement. The changes will also make the documents more intuitive, simplified and condensed making it easier for managers and employees to understand and apply.</p>