**Flexible Retirement**

The regulations of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) permit flexible retirement.

Flexible Retirement is the process whereby an individual, aged 55 or over, may claim the pension benefits they have accrued while continuing to work. To qualify for flexible retirement the individual must simultaneously reduce either their pay grade or their working hours.

The regulations do not specify a minimum for a reduction in hours, however the spirit of flexible retirement is to allow individuals a phased path into retirement. It is not simply a vehicle for individuals to unlock pensions savings.

Flexible Retirement is awarded at the discretion the employer, for support staff in Local Authority schools, it is the council who is deemed to be the scheme employer. Therefore, if you have staff interested in flexible retirement this must be approved by the relevant officers of the council.

If an employee wishes to apply for flexible retirement, they should complete sections 1-3 of the attached form. The supporting manager / headteacher should then complete section 4 before forwarding the form to the schools HR team (SchoolsHR.Helpdesk@walthamforest.gov.uk). The Schools HR team will then contact the Pensions Shared Service in order to obtain the case particulars, including any strain cost the council may have to pay. Schools HR will then present the application to Directors of Human Resources and Director of Finance to make a decision on the council’s behalf. Once a decision has been made, the employee should be written to as soon as possible informing them of the decision.