## MUNICIPAL YEAR 2006/2007 REPORT NO.

#### MEETING TITLE AND DATE: Cabinet Report 1 November 2006

**REPORT OF:** Assistant Director Human Resources

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Agenda – Part: 1	Item: 10
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Subject:

Revision of Redundancy/Early Retirement Compensation Provisions

Cabinet Member Consulted: Cllr Ann Zinkin

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To comply with the Age Discrimination legislation, which came into effect on 1 October, the Government has given notice of its intention to amend the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England & Wales) Regulations. While the consultation on the proposed amendments ended on 31 July, the new regulations have not yet been published. The Government has recently indicated that new Regulations will now be published before 1 December 2006. To ensure the Council's policy on the making of discretionary payments is consistent with the new Age Discrimination legislation, this report proposes an amendment to the method of determining compensation paid to staff who are redundant. As recommended by the Local Government Employees, the recommendations outlined in this report have been prepared on the basis of the draft revised Discretionary Compensation Regulations.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) That Option 3 is adopted as the basis for calculating the level of compensation to be paid to staff whose employment is terminated on the grounds of redundancy.
- b) That staff retiring in the interests of the efficiency of the service should be granted immediate access to their pension on an unreduced basis as outlined in section 3.11.

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The powers under which councils are able to make discretionary payments to employees whose employment has been terminated early either on the grounds of redundancy or in the efficiency of the service are set out in the Local Government (Early Termination of

Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000. The Council's current policy and discretionary payments arrangements were adopted in January 2001.

In the light of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations which came into force on 1 October 2006 it is the Government's view that the current discretionary compensation regulations need to be replaced on the grounds that the current age and length of service related formula that govern the amount of compensation that can be paid could not be objectively justified and therefore could be successfully challenged in the Employment Tribunals.

- 3.2 In summary, the powers currently available to Local Authorities to compensate employees are
  - discretionary powers to remove the weekly ceiling placed on statutory redundancy payments under the Employment Rights Act and instead to calculate payments on an actual week's pay;
  - ii) the discretionary power to award a one off lump sum payment of up to 66 weeks based on a service and age related formula;
  - iii) the discretionary power to award added years on top of benefits payable under the Local Government Pension scheme for eligible employees aged between 50 and 65.

#### 3.3 **Current Provisions**

Under the provisions adopted by the Council in 2001, the discretionary payments made to staff are as follows:

#### 3.3.1 Staff who are redundant

- Staff aged under 50 receive a one-off lump sum payment calculated in accordance with the table set out as Appendix 1. This payment incorporates a statutory redundancy payment and is based on the employee's actual week's pay as opposed to the statutory redundancy pay.
- ii) Staff aged 50 to 54 receive immediate access to unreduced pension based on their contributory service plus a redundancy payment calculated in line with tables as Appendix 2.
- iii) Staff aged 55 and over receive immediate access to unreduced pension based on their contributory service, enhanced by up to five added years, plus a redundancy payment based on the table set out in Appendix 2.

#### 3.3.2 Staff who are retired in efficiency of the service

- i) Staff under 50 there are no provisions.
- ii) Staff aged 50 to 54 receive immediate access to unreduced pension based on contributory service.
- iii) Staff aged 55 and above receive immediate access to unreduced pension enhanced by up to five added years.

#### 3.4 New Provisions

In summary, the new Discretionary Compensation regulations will

- i) retain the discretionary powers to waive the weekly pay ceiling placed upon statutory redundancy payments and instead calculate on an actual week's pay;
- ii) provide discretionary power to award a one off lump sum payment of up to but not exceeding two years (104 weeks) pay inclusive of any statutory redundancy payment made;
- iii) remove the power to award added years to enhance pension. There are still limited options to achieve this through the augmentation provisions within the pension scheme but given the complexity and potential cost, this option has not been developed (see para 3.12).
- 3.5 The new discretionary powers will be consolidated into revised Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006. While the extensive consultation exercise undertaken by the Government ended on 31 July, the new regulations have not yet been published. Consequently, to ensure that the Council's provisions comply with the new Age Discrimination Legislation, which took effect on 1 October 2006, the Local Government Employers have advised Local Authorities to review their discretionary compensation arrangements on the basis of the draft Regulations.
- 3.6 The new draft regulations continue the provisions that allow Local Authorities to develop a policy and approach to the awarding of a discretionary lump sum payment to staff whose employment is terminated on the grounds of redundancy or efficiency of the service. Subject to maximum award of two years (104 weeks) pay, authorities can determine their own approaches.
- 3.7 In theory, the Council could consider each case on its merit and determine the compensation to be paid on a case-by-case basis. While this would be consistent with the approach favoured by the Audit Commission, it would appear to run contrary to the requirement in the Discretionary Compensation Regulations to publish and keep under review a policy which outlines how discretion within the regulations is

to be exercised. Additionally, adopting such an approach would leave the Council open to allegations of inequality and unfairness of treatment. Consequently, for reasons of fairness and administrative efficiency is proposed to develop a formula for the calculation of discretionary lump sum payments.

- 3.8 While there is not yet any case law in relation to age discrimination, it will obviously not be possible to objectively justify the use of age criteria as the basis for determining discretionary compensation. It is also extremely doubtful whether a calculation based on service would be objectively justifiable. Consequently, an alternative to the current provisions has to be developed.
  - 3.8.1 The Local Government Employers Association has developed a number of possible models on which calculation could be based.

## 3.9 Options for the future calculation of discretionary redundancy compensation

- 3.9.1 **Option 1** make the same level of payment to all redundant staff e.g. 6/12 months pay or a predetermined fixed amount, regardless of age and/or length of service. Such a payment could either be in addition to or could subsume the statutory redundancy payment. Adopting such an approach whereby for example an employee with three years service would receive the same redundancy payment as someone with 30 years service is likely to be seen by the staff as not valuing their loyalty to public service and/or the Council and will undoubtedly damage employee relations. Depending on the level at which payment was set, it could also prove to be a very costly option.
- 3.9.2 Notwithstanding the Age Regulations, the Government has determined that the retention of the age/service formula for the calculation of statutory redundancy payments can be objectively justified – although this view is likely to be challenged in the European courts. As a consequence, employers wishing to base the calculation of discretionary redundancy benefits on a combination of age and length of service can do so provided the calculations have the statutory redundancy calculators as its base. This is achieved by applying a consistent multiplier to the statutory calculator of weeks payable and further using the Discretionary Powers in the Discretionary Compensation Regulations to base the payment on an actual week's pay as opposed to the statutory week's pay (subject to the total payment not exceeding 104 weeks pay). This gives an opportunity to develop a compensation package that most closely matches the current provisions. Under the statutory redundancy pay provisions the maximum service taken into account is 20 years with the maximum payment being 30 weeks Using this approach the following options could be pay. developed:

**Option 2** - basing calculation on the maximum new discretionary limit of 104 weeks – this could be achieved by applying a multiplier for 3.47 to the statutory calculators. This would result in an employee with 20 years service receiving the maximum payment of 104 weeks. While this has the potential to significantly increase the overall cost of redundancy, it would go some way towards offsetting the withdrawal of the added years provision for staff 55 and above. Overall this option would potentially be very costly in that it increases the level of compensation across the board (see Appendix 3).

**Option 3** - The Council could opt to maintain the maximum payment at the current 66 weeks' level. This could be achieved by applying a multiplier of 2.2 which would ensure that an employee with 20 years service would receive a maximum of 66 weeks redundancy pay. Adopting this approach would reduce the level of lump sum payments to some groups of staff while increasing them for others, particularly those staff over 50 who will be affected by the withdrawal of the added years provisions (see Appendix 4). Some of these costs would be offset by the changes and long term savings arising from the withdrawal of the added years provision. On balance in the long term the additional redundancy costs are likely to be lower than the capitalised cost of the current added years provision. This option could be adopted under either the current or the draft revised Regulations.

A comparison of the costs of adopting Options 2 & 3 are set out in Appendix 5.

**Option 4** - Adopt any other multiplier between 1 and 3.47.

**Option 5** - Base redundancy payments on the statutory calculator while exercising the Council's discretion to base sums payable on an actual week's pay rather than a statutory week's pay. A survey recently undertaken by the ALG shows that no other London Borough is currently considering this as an option.

**Option 6** - Exercise no discretion at all and make payments strictly in accordance with the statutory redundancy payment scheme, including the application of statutory weeks pay.

3.10 In addition to redundancy pay, the Discretionary Compensation Regulation allows for staff age 50 and above who are made redundant to have immediate access to their pension based on their total contributory service. The Council has a discretion as to whether to apply an actuarial reduction to the early payment of pension. In the past, it has not been the practice of either this Council or other London Boroughs to apply the actuarial reduction where the employee's employment is being terminated for reasons beyond his or her control. It is proposed to retain the current arrangements and not reduce pensions.

#### 3.11 Early retirement in the efficiency of the service

- 3.11.1 Under the provisions adopted in 2001, staff 55 and above who are retired early in the efficiency of the service received an immediate access to their unreduced pension enhanced by up to five added years whilst staff age 50 to 54 receive immediate access to an unreduced pension based on their contributory service. In the draft Regulations, the discretion to grant added years to staff over a specified age has been withdrawn. While there is already a provision that allows Councils to grant discretionary one off lump sum payments to staff of all ages retiring in the interest of the efficiency of the service, the Council has not previously adopted this and no change is proposed in this report.
- 3.11.2 Consequently it is proposed that any qualifying staff retiring in the interests of the service should continue to be granted immediate access to their pension on an unreduced basis only.

## 3.12 Augmentation

The revisions to the regulations provide an opportunity to reconsider an option to increase an employee's pension through the use of the augmentation provisions in the 1997 LGPS Regulations. Under the terms of this provision, authorities could opt to make a proportion of the redundancy pay in the form of extra years' membership of the pension scheme. However, in order to comply with the new age regulations, before doing so, authorities would need to develop criteria for both the granting and the calculation of 'extra' years. Again to meet legislation requirements the criteria could not be based on age and/or service considerations. In the light of the potential costs and complexity of this provision, plus the fact that the Council has previously not chosen to adopt a policy in respect of augmentation, it is not proposed to make any proposals in respect of this, at this stage.

#### 3.13 **Compromise Agreements**

The current Council Policy allows for discretionary payments to be routinely made to employees without any conditions being applied. There are no requirements on the Council to make any discretionary payments in addition to the statutory payments. To protect the Council from subsequent legal challenges related to the ending of an employee's employment with the Council, it is proposed that in future, the Council reserves the right to make granting of any discretionary payments conditional upon the signing by the employee of an appropriate compromise agreement. The Council will only apply this condition where the risk of legal challenge is thought to be both real and significant.

## 4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

These are outlined in the preceding paragraphs.

### 5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The primary purpose of the Discretionary Compensation Regulations is to enable Councils to take reasonable measures to compensate staff who for reasons outside their control have their employment terminated. The granting of compensation is a measure that helps maintain relatively harmonious employee relations and continuity of service during periods of change to the workforce.
- 5.2 The recommended option is the one which, while not increasing the level of the discretionary payments to the maximum allowable, strikes the most appropriate balance between employee relations, above service provision and financial considerations.

# 6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

#### 6.1 **Financial Implications**

- 6.1.1 The financial implications of the proposals set out in the report cannot be quantified with any real certainty since the costs arising from individual cases will depend on the particular circumstances of the employees concerned.
- 6.1.2 However, there will be some reduction in costs as a result of the removal of the current discretionary power to award added years to enhance the pension entitlement of employees aged 55 and over who are made redundant or are retired on the grounds of efficiency. These costs are currently borne directly by the General Fund or HRA as appropriate.
- 6.1.3 With regard to redundancy payments, under current arrangements the level of compensation depends on whether the employee is under 50 or 50 and over as well as his/her length of service. Under the recommended option for applying the new regulations, a standard approach is proposed for all employees whatever their age but which also takes into account their reckonable service. The effect is to increase payments in certain cases notably for employees who are 50 and over, although this would be offset by the withdrawal of the added years enhancement for those aged 55 an over. Generally, for employees in their mid/late forties the payments would be less than at present.
- 6.1.4 Currently, all employees aged 50 and over have immediate access to their contributory pension benefits. The capital cost to the Pension Fund of employees receiving their benefits earlier than their normal retirement age is charged to the General Fund

or HRA as appropriate. This practice would continue under the proposed arrangements."

#### 6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 Section 3 of The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 provides that a person is discriminated against if because of his or her age s/he is treated less favorably than others or because a provision, criterion or practice is applied to him/her which puts him/her at a disadvantage when compared with other persons not of the same age group and the treatment, provision, criterion or practice cannot be "justified ".
- 6.2.2 The Council's current policy on discretionary payments will become discriminatory when the Regulations come into force. The recommendations in this report seek to ensure compliance with the regulations.

#### 7. PUTTING ENFIELD FIRST

This proposal supports the delivery of excellent services.

#### **Background Papers**

Draft Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England & Wales) Regulations 2006.

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15												22.0	24.0	26.5	28.5	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.5	37.5	38.5	39.5	40.5	42.0	43.0	44.0	10.0	40.0	18.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	10 5
14											20.0	22.0	24.0	26.5	27.5	28.5	29.5	31.0	31.0	31.0	31.0	31.0	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.5	37.5	38.5	39.5	40.5	42.0	10.0	45.0	18.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	10.04
13										17.5	20.0	22.0	24.0	25.5	26.5	27.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	29.5	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.5	37.5	38.5	39.5 40 E		42.0	42.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	
12									15.5	17.5	20.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	27.5	28.5	29.5	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.0	36.5	37.5	20.0	30.5 30.5	20 E	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	1 4 4
<u> </u>								13.0	15.5	17.5	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	25.5	26.5	27.5	28.5	29.5	31.0	32.0	33.0	34.0	35.U	20.0	20.0 26 F	36 F	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	* • • •
101							11.0	13.0	15.5	17.5	18.5	20.0	21.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.5	26.5	27.5	28.5	29.5	31.0	32.0	33.0	0.00	33.0	22.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	000
6					_	9.0	11.0	13.0	15.5	16.5	17.5	18.5	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.5	26.5	27.5	28.5	29.5	29.5	23.3	20.5	20 5	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	
8					6.5	9.0	11.0	13.0	14.5	15.5	16.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	18.5	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	40.0	26.5	20.04	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	
				4.5	6.5	9.0	11.0	12.0	13.0	14,5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	16.5	17.5	18.5	20.0	21.0	22.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	20.0 20.0	23.0	2.00	23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	4
9			3.5	4.5	6.5	9,0	10.0	11.0	12.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	14.5	15.5	16.5	17.5	18.5	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0		20.02	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	000
S.		2.0	3.5	4.5	6.5	7.5	9,0	10.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	12.0	13.0	14.5	15.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	0.0	10.0	10.0	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	
		2.0	3.5	4.5	5.5	6.5	7.5	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	0.6	9.0	10.0	11.0	12.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	0.51	13,0	100	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	0 4
3		2.0	3.5	3.5	4.5	5.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	7.5	9.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	0.0	10.01		10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	ļ
2		2	2	2	3.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	5.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	0.0	0.0 9	2 4	0.0	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	!
A DATA A	Age	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	22	22	5 t	20	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	Ī

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Rear	Redundancy Corr								
							<b>Recommendations Post Oct 06</b>	ons Post Oct 0	6
		Current Enti	nt Entitlements pre -Oct 06	e -Oct 06		Redundancy	Redundancy Max 66 weeks	Redundancy Max 104 wks	Max 104 wks
Age	Service	Annual	Weekly	Redundancy	Amount	TIMES 2.2	AMOUNT	TIMES 3.46	AMOUNT
		Salary	Salary	Entitlement					
40	10 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	20 wks	£10,110	22 Wks	£11,121	35 Wks	£17,692
40	20 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	40 wks	£20,220	42 Wks	£21,231	66 Wks	£33,363
49	10 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	44 Wks	£22,242	31 Wks	£15,670	48 Wks	£24,264
49	20 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	64 Wks	£32,352	53 Wks	£26,791	83 Wks	£41,956
49	30 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	66 Wks	£33,363	53 Wks	£26,791	83 Wks	£41,956
53	10 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	15 Wks	£7,582	33 Wks	£16,681	52 Wks	£26,286
53	20 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	26 Wks	£13,143	57 Wks	£28,813	90 Wks	£45,495
* 57	10 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	15 Wks	£7,583	33 Wks	£16,681	52 Wks	£26,286
* 57	20 Yrs	£26,358	£505.50	28 Wks	£14,154	62 Wks	£31,341	97 Wks	£49,033
°Cu ×	Currently (Pre-Oct		mployees ov	06) employees over age 55 also receive upto 5 added years	receive L	upto 5 added y	/ears		
Age	Service	5 Added	Capital						
		Years	Cost						
- 57	10 Yrs	£1,647	£30,937						
27	20 Yrs	£1,647	£30,937						

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