

**Report of the Chief Constable to the Chair and Members
of the Policy & Resources /Corporate Development Panel
24th November 2009**

Executive & Presenting Officer: Mr Derek Bonnard, Deputy Chief Constable

Status: For approval

Flexible Retirements - Police Staff

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Force has received a request from a member of staff who works within the Telephony section of the Special Operations and Communications Service Unit. She now wishes to work 18.5 hours per week on a job-share basis.
- 1.2 The Police Authority in June 2008 agreed to delegate to the Chief Constable, any future decisions relating to Flexible Retirement requests which may have associated financial cost implications up to the value of £1,000 per case.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members do not support the application. Police Authority approval is required if this request were to be supported.

3. Reasons

- 3.1 Flexible Retirement was introduced into the Local Government Pension Scheme in April 2006 as a discretionary provision which allows employees, with the employer's consent, to reduce their hours or move to a lower graded position and withdraw the pension benefits already accrued. Employees can also continue to pay into the LGPS under flexible retirement in order to accrue further benefits.

- 3.2 Cleveland Police's statement of policy in relation to Flexible Retirement is as follows:
Applications will be approved only where there are operational and financial grounds for doing so. Cleveland Police will only agree to waive any reduction to benefits if there is a clear operational and/or financial advantage to Cleveland Police. Cleveland Police must also have the ability to fund costs.
- 3.3 To date applications for Flexible Retirement have not been approved where there has been a cost to the Force. Those individuals willing to take actuarially reduced benefits, where there is normally no cost to the Force, have been able to take flexible retirement.
- 3.4 In this particular case, the member of staff may still take flexible retirement without cost to Cleveland Police, if she accepts a reduction in her lump sum of £853, and an annual reduction in her pension of £693.

4 Implications

4.1 Financial

The cost of approving this Flexible Retirement request would be £11,215 which is beyond the currently approved level of delegation. All figures quoted are estimates from the Pensions Unit, and actual costs will be calculated by the Pensions Unit at the point of retirement.

4.2 Diversity & Equal Opportunities

By enabling the Flexible Retirement process to be applied to a potentially wider group of employees it will support the retention of employees nearing the default retirement age and would ensure a more diverse range of skills and abilities are retained with the Force for a longer than anticipated period of time.

4.3 Human Rights Act

There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

4.4 Sustainability

In this particular case the Special Operations and Communications Service Unit would not require the 18.5 hours no longer being worked by the applicant to be filled as it is believed that the present levels of service can be maintained. Therefore there will be efficiency savings of £8,067 annually plus shift allowances to off-set the costs if this is agreed.

4.5 Risk

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Police Authority consider this application for flexible retirement, however due to the costs associated with it, that the application is not supported.

Sean Price
Chief Constable

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