

Withyham Parish Council - Pensions Discretions Policy

Responsibility: Finance & Administration/Full Council
Review Cycle: Annually or earlier in the event of legislative changes

Date of Adoption/Renewal	Date for review
February 2022	February 2025

Introduction

Withyham Parish Council's (WPC) pension scheme operates under the National Employment Savings trust (NEST) according to the regulations relating to workplace pensions.

Employees eligible under auto-enrolment rules are entitled to enrolment in the NEST pension scheme at a 10% employer contribution, based on basic salary. The employee may make additional contributions. Enrolment for eligible workers should commence after the completion of successful probation (13 weeks) unless they choose to opt out.

This policy sets out Withyham Parish Council's approach to Pensions Discretions.

Principles

A key principle behind this policy is to set out the Council's approach to pension discretions, treating employees fairly and consistently whilst being open and transparent.

Employing Authority Discretions Regulations

The following table outlines Withyham Parish Council's approach to Discretions:

Discretion	Employer's policy on the exercise of this discretion
Whether to grant additional pension to a member	WPC does not exercise this discretion
Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee reduces their hours or grade on reaching 55 (flexible retirement)	WPC may exercise this discretion where there is no cost to the council and business needs are met.
Whether to grant application for early payment of benefits on or after 55 and before 60	WPC may exercise this discretion where a sound business case can be made for doing so.
Whether to grant employer contributions to members of staff who do not earn over £10,000 (current minimum earnings level for employer contributions to pensions)	WPC will abide by auto-enrolment guidelines (minimum earnings level) for employer contributions to pensions.

This policy is to be reviewed annually to ensure it complies with current legislation.