

# Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council discretionary policies under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and other related Regulations

## Summary

1. This report makes recommendations for **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** policies on discretions to be exercised:
  - i) under the LGPS Regulations 2013 from 1 April 2014 in respect of members of the Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme,

## Background

2. In March 2011, the Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, chaired by Lord Hutton, published its final report of the review of public service pensions. The report made clear that change was needed to “make public service pension schemes simpler and more transparent, [and] fairer to those on low and moderate earnings”.
3. As a result, it was decided that the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) should be reformed so that, from 1 April 2014, benefits accrue on a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) basis rather than on a final salary basis.
4. The provisions of the CARE scheme, together with the protections for members’ accrued pre 1 April 2014 final salary pension rights, are contained in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014.
5. As a result of the changes, **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** is legally required to formulate, publish and send to the LGPS pension fund administering authority a written Statement of Policy on certain discretions under the LGPS which **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** has the power to exercise on and from 1 April 2014 in relation to members of the CARE scheme.
6. Overall, **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** is:
  - i) required to formulate, publish and keep under review a written Statement of Policy on certain discretions in accordance with:
    - regulation 60 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013,
    - paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 2 to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014,
7. In formulating and reviewing its policies under the LGPS Regulations referred to in paragraphs 8(i) and (ii) above **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** is required to have regard to the extent to which the exercise of its discretionary powers might lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service.

## Decisions required

8. **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** is asked:

- i) to approve the policies on the discretions to be exercised under the LGPS Regulations in respect of those employees who are active scheme members after 31 March 2014 and members and who cease active membership after 31 March 2014, as set out in the table at Annex 1

### **Consultation**

9.

**Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** is not required to consult with **any bodies** when **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** intends to adopt new, or change existing, discretionary policies. However, it was considered appropriate to give advance notification to **any appropriate bodies** that this report would be considered by **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council**

### **Effective date of policies**

10. The policies on discretions to be exercised under the LGPS Regulations 2013 take immediate effect from the date **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** agrees the policies.

### **Non-fettering of discretions**

11. The recommendations contained within this report, if approved, will form **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** on pension and compensation discretions. It should be noted that:

- the policies will confer no contractual rights
- subject to paragraph 10, **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** will retain the right to change the policies at any time without prior notice or consultation and
- only the policy which is current at the time a relevant event occurs to an employee / scheme member will be the one applied to that employee / member.

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## Annex 1

<b>Table A: Discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 under the LGPS Regulations 2013 in relation to active scheme members (other than local authority councillor members) and members who cease active membership after 31 March 2014 (other than local authority councillor members).</b>	<b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council policy</b>
<p>1. Whether, at full cost to <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> to grant extra annual pension of up to £6,822 (figure at 1 April 2018) to an active scheme member or, within 6 months of leaving, to a member who is dismissed by reason of redundancy or business efficiency or whose employment is terminated by mutual consent on the grounds of business efficiency.</p>	<p><b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will not make use of the discretion to grant extra annual pension of up to £6,822 (figure at 1 April 2018) to an active scheme member or, within 6 months of leaving, to a member who is dismissed by reason of redundancy or business efficiency or whose employment is terminated by mutual consent on the grounds of business efficiency except in exceptional circumstances where <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward.</p>
<p>2. Whether, where an active scheme member wishes to purchase extra annual pension of up to £6,822 (figure at 1 April 2018) by making Additional Pension Contributions (APCs), <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will voluntarily contribute towards the cost of purchasing that extra pension via a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution (SCAPC).</p>	<p><b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will only voluntarily contribute towards the cost of purchasing extra pension via a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution (SCAPC) where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an active scheme member returns from a period of authorised leave of absence, and</li> <li>- the member does not, within 30 days of returning from the leave of absence, make an election to buy-back the amount of pension 'lost' during that period of leave of absence, and</li> <li>- the member subsequently makes an election to do so whilst an active member and it can be</li> </ul>

	<p>demonstrated that the reason for the member missing the original 30 day deadline was because the member had not been made aware of that deadline, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the election is made no more than 3 months after the member returns from the period of leave of absence or such longer period as <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> may deem reasonable in any individual case.</li> </ul> <p>A decision on whether the member meets the above criteria (and on whether the 3 month period referred to should be extended in any individual case) will be taken by <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> and, where it is agreed that the conditions are met, <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will be required to contribute 2/3rds of the cost of buying back the 'lost' pension via a SCAPC.</p> <p>conditions are met, <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will be required to contribute 2/3rds of the cost of buying back the 'lost' pension via a SCAPC.</p>
<p>3. Whether to permit flexible retirement for staff aged 55 or over who, with the agreement of <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> reduce their working hours or grade and, if so, as part of the agreement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- whether, in addition to the benefits the member has accrued prior to 1 April 2008 (which the member must draw if flexible retirement is agreed), to permit the member to choose to draw</li> </ul>	<p><u>Flexible retirement</u></p> <p><b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will not agree to flexible retirement except in circumstances where <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all, part or none of the pension benefits they accrued after 31 March 2008 and before 1 April 2014, and / or</li> <li>• all, part or none of the pension benefits they accrued after 31 March 2014, and</li> </ul> <p>- whether to waive, in whole or in part , any actuarial reduction which would otherwise be applied to the benefits taken on flexible retirement before Normal Pension Age (NPA).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward,</li> <li>- will set out whether, in addition to any pre 1 April 2008 benefits, the member will be permitted, as part of the flexible retirement agreement, to take <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) all, some or none of their 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2014 benefits, and /or</li> <li>b) all, some or none of their post 31 March 2014 benefits, and</li> </ul> </li> <li>- will require the approval of <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Waiver of any actuarial reduction on flexible retirement</u> Where flexible retirement is agreed, the benefits payable will be subject to any actuarial reduction applicable under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014. <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will only waive any such reduction, in whole or in part, where it considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward and will require the approval of Council including, where the reduction is only to be waved in part, approval for the amount of reduction to be waived.</p>
<p>4. Whether, as the 85 year rule does not (other than on flexible retirement – see 3 above) <u>automatically</u> apply to members who would otherwise be subject to it and who choose to voluntarily draw their benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60, to apply the 85 year rule to such voluntary retirements.</p>	<p><b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will not agree to apply the 85 year rule where members choose to voluntarily draw their benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 except in circumstances where <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so. Each case</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward, and</li> <li>- will require the approval of <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b></li> </ul>
<p>5. For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) active members voluntarily retiring on or after age 55 and before Normal Pension Age who elect under regulation 30(5) of the LGPS Regulations 2013 to immediately draw benefits, and</li> <li>ii) deferred members and suspended Tier 3 ill health pensioners who elect under regulation 30(5) of the LGPS Regulations 2013 to draw benefits (other than on ill health grounds) on or after age 55 and before Normal Pension Age</li> </ul>	<p>Where members choose to voluntarily draw their benefits on or after age 55 and before Normal Pension Age <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will not agree to waive in whole or in part any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to their benefits except in circumstances where <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> considers it is in its financial or operational interests to do so or there are compelling compassionate reasons for doing so.</p> <p>Each case</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- will be considered on the merits of the financial and / or operational business case put forward, or</li> <li>- will be considered on the merits of the compassionate case put forward, and</li> <li>- will require the approval of <b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> including, where the reduction is only to be waived in part, approval for the amount of reduction to be waived</li> </ul>
<p>6. Whether, with the agreement of the Pension Fund administering authority, to permit a Scheme member to elect to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS if he / she has not made such an election within 12 months of joining the LGPS.</p>	<p><b>Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council</b> will only extend the 12 month time limit within which a scheme member must make an election to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS after joining the LGPS:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- where the member asked for transfer investigations to be commenced within 12 months of joining the LGPS but a quotation of what the transfer value will purchase in the LGPS has not been provided to the member within 11 months of joining the LGPS. The time limit for such a member to make a formal election to transfer pension rights into the LGPS will be extended to one month beyond the date of the letter issued by the Pension Fund administering authority notifying the Scheme member of the benefits the transfer will buy in the LGPS;</li> <li>- where the available evidence indicates the member made an election within 12 months of joining the LGPS, but the election was not received by the Pension Fund administering authority (e.g. the election form was lost in the post);</li> <li>- where the available evidence indicates the member had not been informed of the 12 month time limit due to maladministration.</li> </ul>
<p>7. How the pension contribution band/rate to which an employee is to be allocated will be determined on joining the Scheme and at each subsequent April, and the circumstances in which the employer will, in addition to the review each April, review the pension contribution band/rate to which an employee has been allocated consequent upon a material change which affects the member's pensionable pay in the course of a Scheme year (1 April to 31 March).</p>	<p><b>The employee contribution band/rate is reviewed annually.</b></p>

8. Whether or not, when calculating assumed pensionable pay when a member (other than a returning officer<sup>1</sup>) is:
- on reduced contractual pay or no pay on due to sickness or injury, or
  - absent during ordinary maternity, paternity or adoption leave or paid shared parental leave, or during paid additional maternity or adoption leave (other than any part of that leave where the pensionable pay received is greater than the assumed pensionable pay for that part of the leave period), or
  - absent on reserve forces service leave, or
  - retires with a Tier 1 or Tier 2 ill health pension, or
  - dies in service
- to include in the calculation the amount of any 'regular lump sum payment' received by the member in the 12 months preceding the date the absence began or the ill health retirement or death occurred.

In assessing Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP) **Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council** will not, other than in exceptional circumstances, include in the calculation any 'regular lump sum payments' in which case the decision to include the 'regular lump sum payment' will be subject to the approval of Council.

**Date adopted: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018**  
**Next Review: December 2019**