

## Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee - 19 June 2020

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Revisions to the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 – Policy Statement	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Richard Henderson Director of HR and Customer	<b>Wards affected:</b> All
<b>Report author(s) and contact details:</b>	Ana Farenden, Employee Relations Specialist Tel: 0115 87 63192, Email: <a href="mailto:ana.farenden@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">ana.farenden@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> Andy Cross, Pensions Consultant Tel: 0115 87 62265, Email: <a href="mailto:andy.cross@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">andy.cross@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> Paul Slater, Employee Relations Specialist Tel: 0115 87 63829, Email: <a href="mailto:paul.slater@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">paul.slater@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant):</b>	Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark, Portfolio Holder for Health, HR and Equalities consulted on 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	
<b>Other colleagues who have provided input:</b>	Daljit Singh Nijran, Organisational HR Manager Arnold Gardner, Pensions Team Leader Jon Ludford-Thomas, Senior Solicitor Jo Worster, Finance Team Leader	
<b>Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:</b>		
Nottingham People		
Living in Nottingham		
Growing Nottingham		
Respect for Nottingham		
Serving Nottingham Better		
<p><b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/ service users):</b>          The Council approved its 2020/21 budget in March 2020, prior to the start of the COVID pandemic. The Council, prior to the pandemic, was operating in a very challenging financial environment and the 2020/21 budget included savings of £15.623m. The COVID pandemic has since added to this financial pressure and it is expected that the Government funding will not be sufficient to cover the increased costs and lost income. Assessing the financial impact of the pandemic and the impact on the 2020/21 budget is now a key priority for the organisation.</p> <p>Whilst a number of measures have recently been implemented to reduce in-year spending, including pausing and reviewing all current recruitment activity so that only the most business critical roles are recruited to, the scale of the savings required means that proposals to further reduce our operating costs will be required; this is likely to mean reductions in our workforce and has prompted a review to consider whether the Council's current policy statement in respect of the discretions available under regulations 5 and 6 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (DCR) is fit for purpose going forward.</p> <p>In light of the above, this report seeks approval to amend the Council's DCR Policy Statement to help facilitate and incentivise a voluntary redundancy (VR) programme.</p> <p>It is proposed, that for exits under a VR programme that is linked to corporate budget</p>		

proposals and to help provide the necessary incentive for volunteers to come forward, the Council's DCR Policy be amended for allow for enhancements to be made to applicants under age 55 years on the following basis:-

- The application of a two (2x) multiplier to the statutory payment for applicants that are on LGS grades A-K (or equivalent) and
- For payments to be based on an actual weeks pay, but with no multiplier, where applicants are on grade SLMG 5 or above.

No change is proposed for applicants aged 55 and over as, in line with the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) rules, they will also qualify for automatic release of their pension without actuarial reductions, in addition to their statutory redundancy payment.

### Recommendation(s):

1	<p>To approve the amendments to the Council's DCR Policy Statement, as contained within Appendix 1 of this report, to allow for enhancement to redundancy payments to be made on the following basis: -</p> <p><u>For employees under age 55</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any resultant redundancy payment payable to an employee aged under 55 on Local Government Services ("LGS") grades A to K (or equivalent) will be based on a multiplier of two (2x) weeks pay subject to the statutory limit on a week's pay imposed by section 227 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 ("ERA"); and</li> <li>• Any resultant redundancy payment payable to a Strategic Leadership Management Group ("SLMG") employee aged under 55 will be based on actual weeks pay and will not be subject to the statutory limit in section 227 of the ERA.</li> </ul> <p><u>For employees aged 55 or over</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount payable will be based on weeks pay subject to the statutory limit on a weeks pay imposed by section 227 of the ERA.</li> </ul>
2	<p>To note that these discretions will only be exercised where the Council's Corporate Leadership Team makes a determination to initiate a voluntary redundancy programme that is linked to corporate budget proposals and budgetary savings.</p>

## 1. Background

1.1 Regulation 7 of the DCR requires each employing authority to formulate, publish and keep under review the policy that they apply in exercise of their discretionary powers under regulations 5 and 6 of the DCR. In formulating and reviewing their DCR policy, the local authority must:-

- have regard to the extent to which the exercise of their discretionary powers (in accordance with the policy), unless properly limited, could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service; and
- be satisfied that the policy is workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to the foreseeable costs.

1.2 In April 2013, Nottingham City Council revised its DCR Policy so that for employees with two or more years continuous service with the City Council (or

with an organisation covered by the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc.) (Modification) Order 1999 (“RPMO”), who are dismissed by reason of redundancy, compensation will be paid equivalent to the statutory redundancy payment to which they are entitled under the ERA. In other words, there would no longer be any entitlement to an enhanced redundancy payment.

- 1.3 These arrangements have applied to all redundancies at the Council since 2013. There has been no formal policy or mechanism to provide any enhancement for VR arrangements.
- 1.4 The statutory redundancy process, as complemented by the Council’s Restructuring Principles and Redundancy Guidelines, involves collective consultation with affected employees, via their trade union representatives (minimum of 2 meetings) as well as individual consultation meetings with those affected employees (minimum of 2 meetings per person).
- 1.5 Collective consultation with the Trade Unions is dependent on the number of people affected by the proposals: for less than 20 employees there is no minimum consultation timeline; for 20 to 99 employees consultation must take place for a minimum of 30 days before the first dismissal is proposed to take effect and for over 100 employees, consultation must take place for 45 days before the first dismissal is proposed to take effect with a further contractual notice period (which could be up to an additional three months).
- 1.6 The proposal to amend the current DCR policy, as recommended, would help to simplify and incentivise employees to opt for VR of their own free will and assist the Council in achieving speedier cost savings and avoid compulsory redundancy processes where these are linked to corporate budget proposals. A compulsory redundancy process can take an excessive time to conclude owing to a) the consultation requirements with both the trade unions and with individual employees, b) selection of employees using often complex selection criteria and c) the need to discharge statutory requirements to facilitate redeployment of employees wherever possible to mitigate redundancy.

## **2. Reasons for recommendations (including outcomes of consultation)**

- 2.1 The approved budget for 2020/21 included savings of £15.623m and contained within those proposals were 22.7 FTE reductions in posts. The budget was approved prior to the pandemic and as a result of the significant financial pressures arising as a direct result of the pandemic, the Council will have to review the impact on the budget. This is likely to require the Council to make further ongoing reductions in its operating costs and its workforce. Therefore, consultation regarding potential redundancies will need to commence with recognised trade union representatives as soon as possible.
- 2.2 The proposed DCR policy revisions will enable the Council to use an alternative approach to compulsory redundancy going forward; acting as a way of incentivising employees to volunteer to exit the organisation and help achieve required savings and reductions in the workforce, whether in this budget cycle or any or any future cycles. An incentivised voluntary process would allow the Council to achieve this outcome in a more compassionate way that minimises the damage to the morale of the workforce, whilst achieving planned savings. A

voluntary process will also have the added benefit of enabling people to leave the organisation more quickly.

- 2.3 To provide the necessary incentive to volunteer, consideration has been given to a number of factors, but also economic viability.
- 2.4 Employees who are of age 55 and over and members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), are already entitled to receive an unreduced pension, without actuarial reductions applied, as per the LGPS regulations. This is in addition to a statutory redundancy payment (calculated with a statutory limit on a weeks pay applied as per section 227 of the ERA). Those who receive an unreduced pension will do so based upon the number of years of pension membership and whether they have CARE benefits accrued to their date of leaving. In light of this and the fact that the employer is obliged to pay the associated pension strain costs, which can be considerable, for these employees, it is proposed that only a statutory redundancy payment based on the statutory limit of a weeks pay (s.227 ERA) be applied for those who are age 55 and over.
- 2.5 With regards to colleagues under age 55, it is proposed a) that a two (2x) multiplier to the statutory payment be applied to applicants that are on grades A-K (or equivalent) and b) for payments to be based on an actual weeks pay, but with no multiplier, where applicants are on grade SLMG 5 or above.
- 2.6 This mixed approach to the discretions under the DCR is more attractive to those who are prepared to volunteer enabling a shorter timeframe for consultation led by the applicant's willingness to take part and exit early. The mixed approach factors in variances that influence termination pay under a comparative compulsory redundancy process such as age, grade and pension membership and remodels the approach in a way which achieves a balanced outcome to reduce the disparity in pay across grades under a voluntary redundancy process. These proposals will help the Council to manage costs and provide a more even uplift across the two age groups.
- 2.7 Including a discretion to pay VR under the Council's DCR policy, in connection with VR processes linked to budgetary savings, will incentivise volunteers who come forward to help minimise compulsory redundancy processes, enabling business as usual activities to continue with minimal disruption and with less survivor guilt felt on those who remain with the Council. At the same time, limiting the use of the discretions to apply only as part of a VR process, will enable the Council to control its budget and spending and apply its discretions depending on business needs at the time of any given corporate budget proposals.
- 2.8 An average calculation exercise was undertaken to consider the impact of the recommended approaches:
- 2.9 Using a two (2x) multiplier for those aged under 55 in A-K roles, the average statutory redundancy payment increases from £3,811 to £7,622.
- 2.9 Using actual weeks pay for those aged under 55 and in SLMG roles, the average statutory redundancy payment increases from £8,324 to £20,717.

2.10 For those aged 55 and over, in either grades A-K or SLMG roles, the average statutory redundancy payment remains the same as per the statutory limit on a weeks pay. However LGPS members in this group will benefit from an unreduced pension, the average pension strain that will payable by the Council, on a per person basis, will be £9,755 for grades A-K and £57,702 for SLMG grades.

2.11 The table below provides a comparative illustration of payments using the current and proposed DCR policy, based on notional average workforce data:

		Grades A-K		SLMG	
Category		Age Under 55	Age 55 or over	Age Under 55	Age 55 or over
Average salary*		£21,558	£18,700	£66,341	£66,156
Average service		9.6 years	18 years	17.5 years	24.2 years
<b>Current DCR</b>	Average statutory redundancy payment ( <b>Current DCR Policy</b> )	£3,811	£6,973	£8,324	£11,558
	With 2x multiplier	£7,622	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Proposed DCR</b>	Based on actual weeks pay	n/a	n/a	£20,717	n/a
	Net gain from proposed DCR Policy	£3,811	£0	£12,393	£0
	Average statutory redundancy payment ( <b>Proposed DCR Policy</b> )	£7,622	£6,973 plus unreduced pension benefits	£20,717	£11,558 plus unreduced pension benefits
	Proportion to salary ( <b>Proposed DCR Policy</b> )	4.2 months pay	4.4 months pay	3.7 months pay	2.1 months pay

\*Based on actual pay and hours worked

2.12 Research of other local authorities found various discretionary compensation approaches to their DCR policy' these include:

- Using an actual weeks pay rather than the statutory limit on a weeks pay for a statutory redundancy payment.
- Using multipliers up to 104 weeks maximum pay i.e. 1.5, 2 and 2.2 inclusive of statutory redundancy.
- Paying a fixed lump sum and payment in lieu of notice i.e. £3K lump sum plus PILON.
- Using set weeks pay per year of service i.e. 3 weeks pay per year of service
- Using a flat percentage uplift e.g. 30%

2.13 The key finding was that nearly all local authorities that had been approached operated a DCR policy that enabled enhancement above statutory redundancy. The proposals in this report would, therefore, be consistent with approaches used by other local authorities in this regard.

### 3. Other options considered in making recommendations

3.1 Other options considered were:

- 3.2 Retain the DCR policy as is at the statutory rate: This option was discounted as it will not incentivise employees to come forward and will inevitably force the Council to adopt a compulsory redundancy approach. A compulsory redundancy process will be lengthy and could take up to 90 days before the first terminations start to take effect; it will take up considerable management and HR time to develop selection criteria and candidate pools and ensure employees are put through robust selection processes that will could involve reapplication for roles and associated interview and selection processes. The Council will also have to consider possible redeployment processes to mitigate redundancy. In the current financial circumstances, the Council's ability to achieve required budgetary savings, through a compulsory redundancy and redeployment process, will hinder the realisation of those savings to make in-year savings
- 3.3 Apply a different multiplier: A range of multiples were used to assess different levels of costs at multipliers of 1.5, 1.7, 2 and 3.46 (which is equivalent to the 104 weeks maximum discretionary compensation payment payable under the Local Government Discretionary Compensation Regulations). These can be seen in the table at para 3.4 below. Where a multiplier has been proposed (under age 55 and grade A-K), a 2x multiplier is deemed to be sufficient enough to incentivise colleagues to apply, where their roles would normally be at risk as part of a compulsory redundancy procedure and help keep a balanced approach against the rising costs of the council and budgetary savings required as mentioned earlier.

#### 3.4 Table illustrating impact of multipliers:

Multiplier	Payment	Additional amount above the statutory redundancy payment
Current DCR Policy based on statutory redundancy pay only	£4,194	£0
1.5 multiplier	£6,291	+2,097
1.7 multiplier	£7,130	+2,936
2 multiplier	£8,388	+4,194
3.46 multiplier (equivalent to 104 weeks max under a DCR policy)	£14,511	+10,317

## 4. Financial implications (including value for money/vat)

- 4.1 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as approved at February 2020 included budget savings of **£15.623m** for 20/21, the budget gap for 21/22 is **£24.565m** rising to **£30.075m**. It should be noted that this report was approved prior to the COVID pandemic and the impact from the pandemic will be significant and is currently being assessed however the expectation is that the funding received from Government is unlikely to meet the additional financial pressures and therefore it's likely there will be ongoing significant pressures to the budget for the medium to long term.
- 4.2 Included within the Medium Term Financial Plan is an annual contribution to the workforce reserve of **£1.500m**, this assumption is to fund costs such as redundancy and any potential associated pension strain costs across all levels within the organisation which result from budget saving proposals.
- 4.3 The changes outlined in this report will increase costs and if the annual provision isn't sufficient will be a pressure on the in year budget and will need to be

considered in future MTFPs. However the scale and size of this for 2020/21 is as yet unknown and will fluctuate each year depending on the size and scale of redundancies.

- 4.4 The in-year budget is monitored on a monthly basis and reported quarterly to Executive Board, therefore the impact of changes to the redundancy policy will be reported to Corporate Leadership Team and Executive Board through this process.

## **5. Risk management issues (including legal implications and crime and disorder act implications)**

### **5.1 Legal Implications**

- 5.2 The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, SI 2006/2914 (“the DCR”), which are made under the Superannuation Act 1972, provide for a limited regime for discretionary compensation as follows:-

- Regulation 5 of the DCR gives a local authority the power to pay enhanced redundancy payments on an actual week’s pay basis (statutory redundancy payments are capped at a statutory maximum for a week’s pay).
- Regulation 6 of the DCR gives a local authority the power to pay discretionary compensation on termination of employment, but:-
  - This is limited to a maximum of 104 weeks’ pay; and
  - Any statutory redundancy payment must be deducted from any such discretionary compensation.
- Regulation 7 of the DCR requires each employing authority to formulate, publish and keep under review the policy that they apply in exercise of their discretionary powers under regulations 5 and 6 of the DCR. In formulating and reviewing their DCR policy the local authority must:-
  - Have regard to the extent to which the exercise of their discretionary powers (in accordance with the policy), unless properly limited, could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service; and
  - Be satisfied that the policy is workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to the foreseeable costs.
- Regulation 8 of the DCR places a duty on a local authority that pays a sum in error under the DCR to a person to issue that person with a notice and if that error entails an overpayment and the person fails to re-pay the overpayment, the local authority is then required to recover that overpayment from the person.

- 5.3 Currently, the Nottingham City Council (“NCC”) DCR policy:-

- In terms of regulation 5 of the DCR, limits redundancy payments to statutory entitlement.
- In terms of regulation 6 of the DCR, only provides for discretionary compensation of up to 52 weeks’ pay to be paid to an employee who is dismissed in the interests of the efficient exercise of the Council’s functions, where there is a demonstrable business benefit to the Council arising from the payment and this is in exceptional circumstances.

- 5.4 Therefore if NCC is to introduce a discretion to pay enhanced redundancy payments, it will need to amend its DCR policy.

5.5 This report addresses the above points. It sets out a proposed revised NCC DCR policy that seeks to extend the discretions available to NCC under regulations 5 and regulation 6 of the DCR where there are proposed redundancies linked to corporate budget proposals and budgetary savings to offer an enhanced voluntary redundancy payment to an employee affected by that restructure. Therefore this proposal envisages NCC using available discretionary powers in a rational and proportionate way, which would be lawful.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 The proposed changes to the DCR relate to voluntary redundancy, should a planned programme be invoked by Corporate Leadership and do not introduce any limiting criteria regarding who can and cannot come forward.

6.2 Whilst it is unknown who might apply on a voluntary basis and, therefore, be affected by the proposals, it is anticipated that colleagues with a greater length of service will be more likely to apply under any such scheme. On average, colleagues aged 55 and over have more service than those colleagues aged 54 and under, therefore, the impact may lean more towards older age groups. It is proposed, therefore, that an equality impact assessment be undertaken across any pool of initial applicants, prior to any decisions being taken in relation to voluntary redundancy.

6.3 In the majority of cases, acceptance of voluntary redundancy applications will require the service to redesign and potentially reduce the services it provides. At this point, a further equality impact assessment would be undertaken by the relevant service manager to understand the potential equality impact on both the workforce profile and on service provision.

6.4 Whilst the proposed DCR Policy statement introduces enhancement for employees under age 55, employees aged 55 and over, will also benefit, where they are LGPS members, from the immediate payment of an unreduced pension benefit in addition to any statutory redundancy payment. The Pension Strain cost relating to the payment of an unreduced pension will be borne by the Council.

6.5 The proposals may also impact on employees that are absent from work due to ill-Health/ Pregnancy/ Maternity/ Shared Parental/ Adoption leave as detriment may result from the potential quicker timelines that might apply in a voluntary redundancy process. To mitigate this risk, any potential voluntary redundancy process should take into account the following:

- Consider all the methods of applications to include those who do not have access to email or those who are on absent due to ill-health
- Any individual consultation meetings should take place with sufficient notice with those who are absent due to parental leave to organise a KIT day to come into the office to meet with their manager
- Ensure the Voluntary Redundancy Restructuring principles capture how to contact those who are absent and every effort is made to contact this group
- Ensure all personal data such as telephone numbers and email addresses are up to date for those who are affected by any redundancy proposals
- Offer a consultation date with those who are absent from work to take place by telephone at a mutually agreed time and date

- Write to the employee at their home address and also consider hand delivery, secure mail, voicemail and email to notify if the employee is uncontactable to inform them of the proposals
- Allow a wider timeframe for applications

**7. List of appendices**

Appendix A: Revised Discretionary Compensatory Regulations Policy.

**8. List of Background Papers other than published works or those disclosing confidential or exempt information**

None

**9. Published documents referred to in compiling this report**

None

**Appendix A:  
Discretionary Compensatory Regulations Policy**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (EARLY TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT)  
(DISCRETIONARY COMPENSATION) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS  
2006 - POLICY STATEMENT**

**1. Preamble**

1.1 In accordance with the requirements of regulation 7(1) of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (“the DCR”), Nottingham City Council (“the Council”) has formulated and published the following policy statement in respect of the discretions available under regulations 5 and 6 of the DCR.

**2. Regulation 5**

2.1 For employees with two or more years continuous service with the Council (or with an organisation covered by the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc.) (Modification) Order 1999) (“the RPMO”), who are dismissed by reason of redundancy, compensation will be paid equivalent to the statutory redundancy payment to which they are entitled under the Employment Rights Act 1996 (“ERA”).

2.2 Continuous service with an organisation covered by the provisions of the RPMO will count towards the redundancy compensation calculated under regulation 5 of the DCR.

2.3 In calculating the amount of redundancy compensation to which an employee is entitled under regulation 5 of the DCR resulting from a compulsory redundancy process, the statutory limit<sup>1</sup> on a week’s pay as imposed by section 227 of the ERA will apply.

2.4 Where the Council’s Corporate Leadership Team makes a determination to initiate a voluntary redundancy programme that is linked to corporate budget proposals and budgetary savings:-

- Any resultant redundancy payment payable to a Strategic Leadership Management Group (“SLMG”) employee aged under 55 will be based on actual week’s pay and will not be subject to the statutory limit in section 227 of the ERA; and
- Any resultant redundancy payment payable to an SLMG employee aged 55 or over will be based on a week’s pay subject to the statutory limit on a weeks pay imposed by section 227 of the ERA.

**3. Regulation 6**

3.1 For an employee who is entitled to a statutory redundancy payment resulting from a compulsory redundancy process, no discretionary compensation element will be paid under regulation 6 of the DCR to enhance that redundancy payment.

Where the Council’s Corporate Leadership Team makes a determination to initiate a voluntary redundancy programme that is linked to corporate budget

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<sup>1</sup> With effect from 6 April 2020, the statutory limit of a week’s pay is £538 per week.

### 3.2 proposals and budgetary savings:-

- Any resultant redundancy payment payable to an employee aged under 55 on Local Government Services (“LGS”) grades A to K (or equivalent) will be based on a multiplier of two (2x) weeks pay subject to the statutory limit on a week’s pay imposed by section 227 of the ERA; and
- Any resultant redundancy payment payable to an employee aged 55 or over on LGS grades A to K (or equivalent) will be based on a week’s pay subject to the statutory limit on a week’s pay imposed by section 227 of the ERA.

3.3 For an employee who is dismissed in the interests of the efficient exercise of the Council’s functions, the Council will have the discretion to make a payment to the employee up to a maximum of 52 weeks’ pay in circumstances where there is a demonstrable business benefit to the Council arising from the payment. Discretionary compensation payments paid in the interests of the efficient exercise of the Council’s functions will not normally exceed £30,000.00 (excluding the Council’s pension strain) unless prior approval is obtained from the Council’s Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee. It is expected that discretionary payments made under regulation 6 of the DCR in the interests of the efficient exercise of the Council’s functions will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

3.4 Discretions under paragraph 3.3 of the DCR Policy will be applied in the following manner:-

- Payments to officers at the level of Head of Service and above<sup>2</sup> in the efficient exercise of the functions of the Council will be made at the discretion of the Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee.
- Payments to officers below the level of Head of Service in the efficient exercise of the functions of the Council will be made at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

3.5 In accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations, employees who have attained the age of 55 or over and who are members of the local government pension scheme with at least two years qualifying membership in the pension scheme or transferred pension rights into the pension scheme from another scheme, are also entitled to receive and must take immediate payment of an unreduced pension if they are dismissed by reason of redundancy or business efficiency, or if their employment is terminated by mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency.

## 4. **Overpayment or sums paid in error**

4.1 In accordance with regulation 8 of the DCR where a sum is paid in error and that error entails an overpayment, the Council is required to recover the overpayment. In line with the DCR should this happen then the Council reserves the right to seek recovery of any overpayments made in error.

## 5. **Changes to this policy**

5.1 In accordance with regulation 7 of the DCR, any changes to this policy and its

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<sup>2</sup> This includes Corporate Directors and officers within the Strategic Leadership Management Group (SLMG).

application will not have effect until one month after a statement setting out the intended changes has been published. The policy will be periodically reviewed to ensure its continued effectiveness.

## Version Control

<b>Current version no.</b>	3
<b>Status</b>	Final
<b>Approved by</b>	ACOS
<b>Approval date</b>	19/06/2020
<b>Review date</b>	
<b>Author</b>	Daljit Singh Nijran / Ana Farenden
<b>Organisation</b>	Nottingham City Council

## Document history

Revision date	Version number	Author of changes	Summary of changes
04.04.2016	1	Della Sewell	Statutory change
06.06.2017	2	Sheena Yadav-Staples	Statutory change to limit to a week's pay.
19.06.2020	3	Daljit Singh Nijran/Ana Farenden	Revision to regulation 6 to allow for payment above the statutory minimum where redundancies are through a voluntary redundancy process linked to corporate budget proposals.