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BHP

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2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB  
071-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

The Rt Hon Tony Newton OBE MP  
Department of Social Security  
Richmond House  
79 Whitehall  
LONDON  
SW1A 2NS

8 November 1990

Dear Secretary of State

PENSIONS OMBUDSMAN: LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPERANNUATION SCHEME

Earlier this year we agreed that my Department should seek the views of the local authority associations and trades unions about the Government's proposal to give the Pensions Ombudsman jurisdiction in relation to the Local Government Superannuation Scheme rather than to use the Local Ombudsmen.

The consultation has now taken place. The local government response accords with your view that complaints about maladministration in the Local Government Superannuation Scheme should come within the scope of the Pensions Ombudsman rather than the Local Ombudsmen.

I understand that the necessary regulations to give effect to the Ombudsman's duties are being prepared. It would be most helpful if your officials could liaise with mine on the proposed scope of the draft regulations where these may affect the Local Government Superannuation Scheme.

However, I am concerned to learn that, even though our consultation letter, agreed with your officials, said that if the Pensions Ombudsman was used "the cost of dealing with such cases would fall on Central Government", it is now being suggested that after 3 years a sliding scale of charges should be applied. While I have no reason to think that the local government response was swayed by the statement on charging, I think it would be seen as an act of bad faith to renege on what was said in plain terms so very recently.

I am copying this to members of E(A), James MacKay, John MacGregor, Tom King, Norman Lamont, Kenneth Clarke, David Mellor and Sir Robin Butler.

Chris Patten

PP CHRIS PATTEN

(Approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence)



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