

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE

15th MAY, 2012

At a Meeting of the Policy Committee held on 15th May, 2012:

PRESENT The Mayor (Councillor T. James) and Councillors V.J. Allan, R.M. Biggs (in the Chair), T.C.N. Harries, G.M. Jones, P.G. Mann and D.S. Roberts.

APOLOGY for absence was received from Councillor Trevor Jones.

52. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20th March, 2012, adopted by Council on 27th March, 2012, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

53. **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The Committee received and noted the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 27th March, 2012.

54. **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received and noted the Council's Management Accounts for the period ended 1st April to 30th April, 2012.

55. **SUNDAY CAR BOOT SALES MONIES**

Further to Minute 48(4) the Committee considered the report of the Financial Services Provider on the proposed transfer to the West Dorset District Council of the balance currently held by the Council in respect of unallocated income from the Sunday car boot sales.

It was

RESOLVED

That the balance of the Sunday car boot sales income presently held by the Council be transferred to the West Dorset District Council for allocation in accordance with the existing protocol established by the Dorchester Markets Joint Panel.

56. **THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL POSITION**

The Committee received and noted the joint report of the Town Clerk and the Financial Services Provider on the history of and background to the Council's misunderstanding of the value of the Reserves which it held and on the changes to the Council's financial management procedures which had resulted.

Arising from the consideration of the report it was

RECOMMENDED

That the Town Clerk and the Financial Services Provider be requested to submit a report to a future Meeting of this Committee setting out the various sums contributing to the shortfall and the extent and nature of Member-level involvement in them.

57. **POSSIBLE ECONOMIES**

Further to Minute 48(3) the Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk on possible ways of achieving savings of a minimum of £20,000 in the current year's Budget; the various decisions set out in (1) to (9) below would achieve savings of £29,450.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Budget provision in respect of the carrying out of external repairs to the Municipal Buildings be reduced by a minimum of £10,000 as a result of the aspiration to fund this work from borrowing.
- (2) That the contract with Ellis Whittam for the provision of employment law and health and safety advice be not renewed following its expiry in October.
- (3) That the contribution to Promote Dorchester be reduced to £1,000.
- (4) That the provision in respect of the visit of the Mayor of Lübbecke be reduced to £750.
- (5) That the provision for advertising of the Municipal Buildings be reduced to £500.
- (6) That the usual contributions to the Dorchester Heritage Committee generally and in respect of improvements to the Mill Stream be not made.
- (7) That the provision for the making of S137 grants be reduced to £1,250.
- (8) That all training budgets for both Members and staff be reduced by 50%.

- (9) That the provision in respect of the proposed provision of footpath lighting between Cornwall Road and St. Helen's Road be deleted.

Arising from the consideration of this matter it was also

RECOMMENDED

- (10) That the Town Clerk be requested to submit a report to the next Meeting of this Committee on the background to and costs of the Council's involvement in the Dorchester CCTV system to enable consideration to be given to the possibility of achieving economies in future financial years.

58. **ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12**

The Committee considered the draft 2011-12 Annual Report which was required to be published by the end of June 2012 and it was

RESOLVED

That the draft 2011-12 Annual Report as now submitted be approved so far as this Committee is concerned.

59. **CORPORATE PLAN 2011-12 – MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee received and noted this report.

60. **RISK MANAGEMENT PANEL**

Further to Minute 46(b)(3) the Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk on the future constitution of the Risk Management Panel and it was

RECOMMENDED

That the constitution of the Risk Management Panel be established as the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen for the time being of the Management, Planning and Environment and Policy Committees together with The Mayor ex-officio.

61. **DORCHESTER COMMUNITY JUSTICE PANEL**

The Committee considered whether to support the creation of a Dorchester Community Justice Panel. The Committee was informed that discussions were still ongoing about the funding of the proposal and it was

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the Council support the initiative in principle.
- (2) That consideration of the appointment of a representative to serve on it be deferred pending the receipt of further information but that, in the meantime, Councillor T. James be authorised to continue to be involved in the exploratory discussions started during her Mayoral year.

62. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME – EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS**

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk on this matter and the draft Policy attached to it.

It was

RESOLVED

That the Statement of Policy on Local Government Pension Scheme Discretions as set out at Appendix I be approved.

Chairman

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF POLICY LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME DISCRETIONS

Statement of Policy on:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 (as amended) [A]
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 [B]
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 [C]
- The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended) [D]

Part A – Compulsory Policy Matters

Regulation 12 [A] Power of employing authority to increase total membership of active membership	
Whether to augment membership of an active member (by up to 10 years).	This option will only be exercised in circumstances of redundancy or termination of service on the grounds of the efficiency of the service. In all such cases any reward will relate to age and length of service and will be determined by the Council on the recommendation of the Policy Committee.
Regulation 13 [A] Power of employing authority to award additional pension	
Whether to grant additional pension to a member (by up to £5,000 per year).	This option will not be exercised in addition to, or as an alternative, to augmentation (see above).
Regulation 18 [A] Flexible Retirement	
18(1) Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee reduces their hours or grade (flexible retirement).	There is no blanket consent for staff to flexibly retire and draw immediate payment of pension benefits. Each flexible retirement request will be considered on its merits and will only be agreed if it is in the Council's interests to do so.
18(3) Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement.	The Council will not normally exercise this discretion. This does not however preclude the Council from waiving the actuarial reduction in exceptional circumstances should it so decide.

<p>Regulation 30 [A] Choice of Early Payment of Pension</p>	
<p>30(2) Whether to grant application for early payment of benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.</p>	<p>Any such request will be determined by the Council on its merits taking into account factors such as the requirements of the service, effect on the staffing structure and cost.</p>
<p>30(5) Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to benefits paid early.</p>	<p>The Council will only exercise this discretion in exceptional cases.</p>

Part B – Non Compulsory Policy Matters

<p>Regulation 3 [A] Contributions Payable by Active Members</p>	
<p>Employers determine the contributions payable by members by attributing each member to one of the contribution bands set out in Regulation 3. Employers have the capacity to re-attribute the specific payband (upwards or downwards) where there is a material change in a member's contractual terms.</p>	<p>The Council will allocate employees to the appropriate contribution band according to salary on 1st April annually and amend it during the year if there is a contractual change.</p>
<p>Regulation 16(4)(b)(ii) [B] Facility to Extend Time Limits for Active Members to Aggregate Deferred Periods of LGPS Membership</p>	
<p>Where a deferred member becomes an active member, then the member can elect to aggregate his/her deferred membership with his/her active membership. The election to aggregate must be made by the member within 12 months of becoming an active member and the member must be active at the date of election. Employers may allow a longer period than 12 months.</p>	<p>The Council will normally only consider extending the time limit of 12 months to allow employees to transfer the value of a previous pension into the scheme if there is clear evidence that they had not been informed of, or could not reasonably have known of, the time limit.</p>

**Regulation 83(8) [B]
Facility to Extend Time Limits for Active Members to Request a Transfer of Previous Non Local Government Pension Rights into the LGPS**

<p>Where an active member requests to transfer previous non Local Government pension rights into the LGPS, the member must make a request within 12 months of becoming an active member. Employers may allow a longer period than 12 months.</p>	<p>The Council will normally only consider extending the time limit of 12 months to allow employees to transfer the value of a previous pension into the scheme if there is clear evidence that they had not been informed of, or could not reasonably have known of, the time limit.</p>
<p>Any other non compulsory discretions not listed above [A] – [D]</p>	<p>The Council will consider any other non compulsory discretions on an individual basis; the merits of each being fully investigated.</p>

The Council, in exercising the discretionary powers available under the above Regulations has acted with due prudence and propriety and considered the financial impact of applying the discretions.

The above Policies may be subject to review from time to time. Any subsequent change in this Policy Statement will be notified to affected employees.