

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE (SPECIAL)**  
**Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2004 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor John (Chair) and Councillors Arnold (alternative for Coughlin), Kagan, D Long, Lyon, and R S Patel.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Coughlin, R Blackman, R Colwill and H B Patel.

**1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2004 be approved as an accurate record.

**3. Matters Arising**

None.

**4. Deputations**

None.

**5. Pension Arrangements for Transferred Staff/Council Policy on Augmentation of Pensionable Service**

The Committee received a report addressing Brent Council's responsibilities for pension provision for former Council staff under the Two Tier Workforce Code issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and proposed amendment to the Council's policy concerning the award of additional service under Regulation 52 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.

The Head of Exchequer and Investment advised that any changes to pension schemes were dealt with on a case by case basis and that staff had the option to transfer if they so wished.

After discussion members agreed that if the amount proposed to be paid from the General Fund to secure a bulk transfer on re-tendering was more than £100,000 then a report should be made to members seeking approval.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Council's policy concerning bulk transfer agreements should be as set out in paragraph 3.6 of the report, and that the Director of Finance be authorised to decide whether in any particular case there are exceptional circumstances justifying the Council departing from the normal approach to bulk transfer agreements set out in the ODPM's Code;
- (ii) that the Director of Finance should be authorised to decide in any particular case whether a payment should be made from the Council's general funds to secure a bulk transfer where a contract is being retendered, seeking member approval where the cost is more than £100 000;
- (iii) that the Council's policy concerning the securing of a pension scheme for former Council staff transferring to a private or voluntary sector employer should be as set out in paragraph 3.5 of the report and should be reviewed if and when directions are issued by the Government under sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 2003;
- (iv) that the Director of Finance be authorised to decide whether in any particular case where there are exceptional circumstances justifying the Council not requiring an alternative pension scheme to the LGPS being offered by a Contractor to be broadly comparable to the LGPS;
- (v) that the Council's approach to protecting the pension position of Council staff transferring to other public bodies operating non-local government pension schemes should be the same as the approach adopted by the Council in the case of staff transferring to private or voluntary sector contractors;
- (vi) that the Council's policy concerning the augmentation of additional service under Regulation 52 of the LGPS Regulations 1997 (as amended) should be as set out in paragraph 3.20 of the report.
- (vii) to note that this report (with appropriate amendments) will also be considered by the Executive to seek the Executive's agreement to recommendations (i) – (v).

## 6. **Amendments to the Policy on Admission Agreements**

The Panel received a report advising of changes to the Local Government Pension Regulations and recommending an amendment to the Council policy that allows outside organisations access to the Local Government Pension Scheme via an admission agreement with the Council.

RESOLVED:-

that it be noted:-

- (i) the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations have been amended so that a transferee admission body (non associated body) is now required to provide an indemnity or bond only in circumstances where the need for such an indemnity or bond has been identified following a risk assessment; and
- (ii) officers shall seek to agree with scheme employers and transferee admission bodies that where they have responsibility under the Regulations to undertake the risk assessment referred to in recommendation (a) above they will request the Council to undertake that assessment on their behalf.

## **7. New Procedure for Managing Sickness Absence**

The Panel had before them a report seeking approval for a new procedure to manage staff absence through sickness. The Director of Human Resources, Val Jones, explained that the report examined performance and attendance, with detailed examination of the reasons for the sickness absence procedure.

Members heard that sickness absence in workplaces throughout the country had risen, particularly in the public sector. Human Resources was considering examining stress management techniques.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the content of the attached new Managing Sickness Absence Procedure and its implementation with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004;
- (ii) that in introducing the new Managing Sickness Absence Procedure (other than in the case of Brent Financial Services) the sickness absence of all employees covered by the procedure will be reviewed to establish whether or not their sickness absence since no earlier than 1<sup>st</sup> November 2003 gives cause for concern and whether the procedure should be applied;
- (iii) that the new Managing Sickness Absence Procedure applies from the implementation date unless an employee's sickness absence is being currently managed in accordance with Stage 3 of the existing Incapability Procedure, in which case that procedure will continue to apply to the employee until the Stage 3 process is completed.

- (iv) that in the case of Brent Financial Services that because an earlier version of the new procedure had been successfully piloted in that area that the new procedure be immediately applied without the need for the six month calculation limit referred to in paragraph 7.5.

**8. Minutes of Sub-Committees**

RESOLVED:

that the following sets of minutes be received and agreed:-

- (i) Teachers' Joint Consultative Committee - 29<sup>th</sup> September 2003 and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2003
- (ii) Licensing Sub-Committee - 30<sup>th</sup> October 2003 and 18<sup>th</sup> February 2004
- (iii) Brent Pension Fund - 18<sup>th</sup> November 2003 and 24<sup>th</sup> February 2004
- (iv) Senior Staff Appointments – 13<sup>th</sup> February 2004 and 30<sup>th</sup> March 2004
- (v) School Disciplinary - 9<sup>th</sup> March 2004

**9. Appointments to Outside Bodies**

*Stonebridge Community Based Housing Association (CBHA)*

RESOLVED:-

that Councillor Moloney be appointed as a representative to the shadow board of the above body.

*Chalkhill Community Trust Fund*

that Councillor Harrod be appointed to the above body in place of Councillor McGovern.

**10. Sub-Committee Membership Changes**

None.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the General Purposes Sub-Committee will be agreed at the Special Council Meeting on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2004.

**12. Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

A JOHN  
Chair

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