

PENSIONS COMMITTEE

Monday, 29 September 2008

Present:

Councillor AR McLachlan (Chair)

Councillors G Davies R Moon
F Doyle L Rowlands
W Duffey H Smith
T Harney G Watt

Councillors A Ibbs (Sefton)
N Keats (Knowsley)
R Oglethorpe (Liverpool)
J Browne (Non-District Council Employers)

Apologies

Councillors G Pearl

30 **MINUTES**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management submitted the minutes of the meeting held 24 June 2008 which had been received by Council.

Resolved – That the minutes be received.

31 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to consider whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

Councillor Anne Ibbs (Sefton Council) declared a personal interest in minutes 50 and 51 relating to Admission Body Applications by Sefton Council to Merseyside Pension Fund by virtue of being an elected member of Sefton Council.

32 **MERSEYSIDE PENSION FUND - AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2008**

The District Auditor gave a presentation to the committee on the audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2008.

He reported that following discussions with officers of the Fund, some adjustments had been incorporated into the final version which had been circulated to the committee. He reported that there were no matters requiring further adjustment and the audit opinion would be unqualified.

Resolved

(1) That the financial statements of the Merseyside Pension Fund for the year ended 31 March 2008 be approved.

(2) That the District Auditor be thanked for his presentation to this committee.

33 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE OF ACCOUNTS (MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER)

The District Auditor gave a presentation on the Annual Governance Report summarising the findings of the 2007/08 audit of Merseyside Pension Fund.

The Director of Finance submitted a copy of the Management Representation Letter which was required to be signed by the Chair of Pensions Committee (Councillor Ann McLachlan) and himself.

Resolved – That the Management Representation Letter be signed.

34 LGPS REFORM UPDATE

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of progress with the production of regulations by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in connection with the introduction of the revised LGPS from 1 April 2008 and the impact of local government reorganisations.

He requested that Members note the report and agree that a response be submitted to DCLG supporting the automatic aggregation of employments for pension purposes in the event of local government reorganisation.

Resolved - That a response be submitted to DCLG supporting the automatic aggregation of employments for pension purposes in the event of local government reorganisation.

35 ILL HEALTH RETIREMENT REGULATIONS UPDATE

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of the latest information on the new ill health arrangements introduced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on 1 April 2008.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

36 GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE

The Director of Finance submitted a report providing details of the result of further consultation undertaken with pensioners and deferred pensioners on the governance of the Merseyside Pension Fund and of the publication of further draft statutory guidance on governance compliance issues by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Members were recommended to confirm that the current arrangements for employee representation with observer status be retained and, with the agreement of the relevant trade unions be formally extended to cover representation of pensioners and deferred members.

The Director reported that any requests for additional employer representation on the Pensions Committee be considered on an individual basis taking into account all the circumstances of the application.

Resolved –

1. That having regard to the results of the consultation undertaken with stakeholders the Committee confirms that the current arrangements for employee representation with observer status be retained and with the agreement of the relevant trade unions be formally extended to cover representation of pensioners and deferred members

2. That requests for additional employer representation on the Pensions Committee be considered on an individual basis taking into account all the circumstances of the application.

37 EMPLOYER REPRESENTATION ON PENSIONS COMMITTEE

The Director of Finance submitted a report recommending a change to the representation arrangements for non District Council employers on the Pensions Committee

He recommended the committee to agree to an increase to the representation on the Committee in respect of the Non-District Council Employers and therefore the total membership of the Committee from 15 to 16 members plus employee representatives.

It was moved by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Watt that a deputy be appointed for the co-opted Non District Council Employers representative when Jayne Brown is unable to attend.

The motion was agreed without a vote.

Recommended - That a deputy be appointed for the co-opted Non District Council Employers representative when Jayne Brown is unable to attend.

38 **ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT AND WORKFLOW SYSTEM**

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of the cost of carrying out a software upgrade required to the Civica electronic document management and workflow system.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

39 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHRONICLE AWARDS 2008**

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of the submission of an entry for the LGC Awards 2008.

He reported that attendance at the awards ceremony if the Authority is shortlisted should be referred to the Cabinet as an approved duty.

Resolved –

1. That Committee consider attendance at the awards ceremony on 3 November 2008 should the Authority be shortlisted.

2. That attendance be referred to the Cabinet for approval of duty.

40 **ANNUAL EMPLOYERS CONFERENCE**

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of the arrangements for the annual Employers Conference to be held on Tuesday, 18 November 2008.

Resolved –

1. That the arrangements for the annual Employers Conference be noted.

2. That attendance at the Conference be referred to Cabinet for approval of duty.

41 **ATTENDANCE BY THE CHAIR AT LAPFF CONFERENCE**

The Director of Finance submitted a report recommending that the attendance by the Chair at the Local Authority Pension Fund Forum (LAPFF) Annual Conference, organised by PIRC, to be held in Bournemouth on 3 – 5 December 2008 be approved.

Resolved - That attendance at the LAPFF conference by the Chair of Pensions Committee be approved and referred to Cabinet for approval of duty.

42 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Resolved – That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1072, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that act.

43 **PENSIONS ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM**

The Director of Finance submitted a report updating Members on progress with the procurement exercise for the pension administration and integrated pensioner payroll IT system.

Resolved – That the procurement arrangements and timetable for the pensions administration and pensioner payroll IT systems be agreed.

44 **ADMISSION BODY APPLICATION - DEAFABILITY PRODUCTIONS**

The Director of Finance submitted a report seeking the approval of the Pensions Committee to the application for admission to the Merseyside Pension Fund received from Deafability Productions, with effect from 1 February 2007.

He recommended that the application be approved subject to the provision of the recommended bond or other financial indemnity to the satisfaction of the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management.

Resolved - That the application for admission in respect of Deafability Productions to Merseyside Pension Fund be approved in principle, subject to the provision of acceptable financial security to the satisfaction of the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management.

45 **REFURBISHMENT OF CASTLE CHAMBERS, LIVERPOOL**

The Director of Finance submitted a report updating Members in respect of reinstatement and improvement works at Castle Chambers, Liverpool, which is both owned and occupied by MPF as part of the direct property investment portfolio.

Resolved - That the recommended tender now submitted to this Committee for the refurbishment of Castle Chambers Liverpool be accepted.

46 **CUNARD BUILDING , LIVERPOOL - PART LOWER GROUND FLOOR**

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of the outcome of the recent tendering exercise in respect of reinstatement, repair and redecoration work to an office property located in Liverpool which is owned by MPF as part of the direct property investment portfolio. The tendering exercise had been conducted on behalf of MPF by CB Richard Ellis (CBRE), the property managers.

Resolved - That the acceptance of the lowest tender for works on the lower ground floor, Cunard Building, in the sum of £61,903.33 plus VAT be noted.

47 **CUNARD BUILDING LIVERPOOL - CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (CMP)**

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of the outcome of the recent tendering exercise in respect of preparing a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) which was a recognised document in accordance with English Heritage guidelines.

He reported that the CMP stated why the Cunard building was of significant importance and set out a strategy to ensure that any future works do not adversely affect the significance of the building.

Resolved - That the acceptance of the lowest tender for the provision of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Cunard Building, Liverpool, in the sum of £34,500.00 plus VAT be noted.

48 **MINUTES OF THE INVESTMENT MONITORING WORKING PARTY HELD 10 SEPTEMBER 2008**

The Director of Finance submitted the minutes of the Investment Monitoring Working Party held 10 September 2008.

Resolved – That the minutes be agreed.

49 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair reported that she had accepted the following two items of urgent business on the grounds that decisions were required before the next scheduled meeting of this committee.

50 **ADMISSION BODY APPLICATION - CAPITA SYMONDS**

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of his decision, taken under delegated authority to approve the application received from Capita Symonds, for admission to Merseyside Pension Fund. He reported that the company was to take over the provision of Technical Services from Sefton Council from 1 October 2008.

Councillor Anne Ibbs (Sefton Council) declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of being an elected member of Sefton Council.

Resolved - That the approval of the application by the Director of Finance for admission body status, received from Capita Symonds be noted.

51 **ADMISSION BODY APPLICATION - ARVATO GOVERNMENT SERVICES (SEFTON)**

The Director of Finance submitted a report informing Members of his decision, taken under delegated authority to approve the application received from Arvato Government Services (Sefton), for admission to Merseyside Pension Fund. He reported that the company was to take over the provision of Finance and ICT services from Sefton Council from 1 October 2008.

Councillor Anne Ibbs (Sefton Council) declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of being an elected member of Sefton Council.

Resolved - That the approval of the application by the Director of Finance for admission body status, received from Arvato Government Services (Sefton), be noted.