

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Pension Fund Panel
Date:	17 June 2011
Title:	Appointment of the pensioners' representative on the Pension Fund Panel
Reference:	3003
Report From:	County Treasurer

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to set out for proposals for the appointment of the representative on the Pension Fund Panel of the Fund's pensioners.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Panel agreed at its meeting on 15 December 2010 to:

- invite Mr E.W. Hughes to continue as the pensioners' representative on the Pension Fund Panel until 31 March 2012
- request that the Treasurer reports to a future meeting of the Panel on appropriate procedures for the selection of the pensioners' representative from 1 April 2012.

- 2.2. The pensioners' representative has full voting rights as a member of the Panel and it is an unpaid position. There is also an employees' representative on the Panel who also has full voting rights. This position is filled by Mr Phillip Reynolds until 31 July 2013.
- 2.3. Mr E.W. Hughes has served the Pension Fund with distinction since he was appointed as the Panel's first pensioners' representative in 1994.
- 2.4. In deciding that it wished to consider the potential arrangements for the selection of a pensioners' representative, the Panel was concerned that pensioners had not been given the opportunity to put themselves forward to be the representative since 1994. The Panel was not expressing any criticism of Mr Hughes or the exemplary way in which he has carried out his duties.

- 2.5. A selection procedure that includes all the Pension Fund's pensioners (now more than 30,000) voting for the representative is likely to be a costly process. This report outlines how that procedure could work and includes some possible ways of saving costs, but it also suggests that Mr E.W. Hughes could be invited to continue as the representative on the existing basis of rolling one year appointments.

3. Selection process in 1994

- 3.1. In 1994, all the Pension Fund's pensioners were invited to express an interest in becoming the Panel's first pensioners' representative. About 70 pensioners responded, of whom 40 completed an application form. The County Treasurer and staff from the County Personnel Officer's department drew up a shortlist of five candidates who were interviewed by three members of the Pension Fund Panel including the Chairman. The successful candidate was Mr E.W. Hughes.

4. Possible selection processes in 2011

- 4.1. A similar process could be adopted in 2011. All the Pension Fund's 30,200 pensioners could be invited by an article in Pensions Services' newsletter for pensioners to express an interest in becoming the representative on the Pension Fund Panel. The next edition of the newsletter is unlikely to be circulated to pensioners until March 2012, however, which would delay the selection process until after 1 April 2012.
- 4.2. Those that express an interest would be asked to complete an application form giving details of their relevant experience and knowledge, and setting out the qualities they believe they would bring to the role.
- 4.3. The County Treasurer could prepare a short list of five to ten candidates, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Panel or a sub-group of Panel members.
- 4.4. The shortlisted candidates could be asked to prepare a one-page summary of their candidature which would be circulated to all 30,200 pensioners. The pensioners would then be invited to vote for their preferred candidate.
- 4.5. There would be significant costs involved, primarily postage, in sending details of the shortlisted candidates to all 30,200 pensioners by post, together with pre-paid envelopes for the return of the votes. Handling and counting 20,000 to 30,000 votes would be time consuming and costly. It is unlikely that the cost of postage and administration would be less than £25,000.
- 4.6. It may be possible to arrange for the voting to be undertaken online, saving the postage costs. Further thought would need to be given to this, particularly whether online voting would prevent a significant number of pensioners from taking part.
- 4.7. It would probably be necessary to repeat the selection process at intervals of, perhaps, four years. In 1994, the appointment was intended to be for "an indefinite period" but that might not be considered appropriate nowadays.

However, there are advantages in having continuity in the representatives on the Panel, so that the full benefit can be obtained from the training that would need to be provided for a newly selected representative.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1. The Panel may wish to consider the option of asking Mr Hughes to continue as the pensioners' representative from 1 April 2012 on the current rolling one-year appointment basis. Mr Hughes has indicated to the County Treasurer that he would be willing to continue if that is the Panel's wish.
- 5.2. The suggestions set out in this report for selecting the pensioners' representative could be noted for use when Mr Hughes does decide to stand down. In the meantime, the County Treasurer could investigate further the scope for reducing the costs, including the use of online voting methods.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1. That the Panel decide whether to invite Mr E.W. Hughes to continue as the representative from 1 April 2012 or a rolling one year basis, or undertake a selection process for the position of the Panel's pensioners' representative from 1 April 2012.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes/no
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes/no
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes/no
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because actions are required to appoint a representative of pensioners for the Pension Fund Panel.	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. Equality objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposals in this report.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. The proposals in this report are not considered to have any direct impact on the prevention of crime.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No specific impact.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No specific impact.