

EARLY RETIREMENT / REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 23rd October, 2025.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor P. Drake (Chair); Councillors J.E. Charles, A.M. Ernest, G. John and N.C. Thomas.

394 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the following statement was made: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

395 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

396 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

397 AMENDMENT TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF EARLY RETIREMENT AND REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE (DCR) –

The report was presented to seek the Committee’s views surrounding a proposal to amend its Terms of Reference.

The Operational Manager Democratic Services advised the Committee of the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference following the previous discussion on the matter at the last meeting of the Early Retirement and Redundancy Committee held on 18th September, 2025. If Members were minded to agree to the updated proposals as contained in Paragraph 2.12 of the Report, the matter would be progressed through amendments to the Constitution at the next Full Council meeting on Monday, 1st December, 2025.

The Operational Manager - Employee Services said that the Committee had asked for clarity on a number of matters at the last meeting and those were contained in Paragraph 2.12 of the report.

It was advised that the proposed revisions to the Committee's Terms of Reference would still require a robust process of consideration, with all applications being supported by the Directorate, with a full business case outlining all operational and financial issues. Paragraph 2.12 sections a) - g) were detailed to the Committee which ensured that all matters relating to each individual request would undergo full consideration.

Work was in progress to process the reduction of hours through Oracle Fusion by the relevant Manager and the business case would be attached to the Oracle Fusion system as part of the approval process. The process would be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure consistency and that it was up to date with current legislation.

The revisions to the Committee's Terms of Reference would still provide Committee with an opportunity to question and challenge reports put forward to the Committee for consideration.

Matters considered by Members included:-

- Councillor Charles said she had questioned previously how long some flexible retirement had been allowed to take place and whether training was in place for staff who remained in post. She said that removing flexible retirement from the Committee would leave the Committee with little to consider and felt it was an unnecessary burden for Officers to deal with and should be determined by Members.
- The Operational Manager – Employee Services said that the proposed amendments concerning flexible retirement related to 63% of the Committee's work since 2024 and all requests made during that time had been approved by the Committee, based on all the work that had been done by the relevant Directorates to produce the proposal for consideration. The proposal would increase the efficient use of resources and time for both Elected Members and relevant Directorate Officers and was an opportunity to remove that burden from the Committee as the full and robust process was in place for each individual application.
- Councillor Charles felt that any decision should still be taken by Councillors rather than Officers, and Councillors should still have an opportunity to consider each case and be able to say no if required. Staff should be provided with an opportunity to re-train for roles that would eventually become vacant. Taking away 63% of the Committee's responsibilities would leave it with little to consider.
- Councillor Ernest agreed with Councillor Charles that taking flexible retirement matters away from the elected Members left the Committee with little to consider.
- Councillor Thomas said that although the Committee had not declined a request for flexible retirement in some time, but it was important that Committee understood the outcomes rather than the procedure. Committee did not receive detail of the effects each individual request would have on each Department and any reduction of hours, and the same could be said for redundancy applications or redeployment. He felt it would be helpful for the Committee to be given an annual presentation on the position within each Department which included the number or percentage of people on flexible

retirement and how that affected the total hours required to run the Department. The presentation could also then reflect the same for redundancies or redeployment. He proposed that the presentation take place at the first meeting after the start of the new financial year to provide the Committee with a better understanding of the workforce. The Chair asked if an annual presentation was too long a time frame and asked if six-monthly may be better. Councillor Thomas was content with that suggestion if the Committee agreed with that proposal.

- Councillor John said he understood that flexible retirement requests were agreed as those concerned were valuable members of staff who would provide advice to those coming after them and asked if training of that nature was being provided to staff. The Operational Manager – Employee Services confirmed that anyone taking flexible retirement would use that opportunity to pass on knowledge and skills to other members of staff as part of ongoing workforce planning.
- Councillor John said that if the proposed revisions were agreed that the Committee would still consider early retirement and redundancy matters. He asked that any six-monthly report detailed those posts that had had their hours reduced by the Department. Officers were already going through the process in order to propose individual requests to the Committee currently.
- Councillor Charles said that once Officers had made a decision that there was no control over that decision. She felt that the matter should have more information provided and be looked at again.
- Councillor Ernest agreed the proposal made by Councillor Thomas regarding a six-monthly review in April/May and October/November and would support that proposal.
- The Operational Manager – Employee Services said that a six-monthly report could be produced as part of providing an overview of the wider picture for the Committee rather than just considering individual requests which would detail the number of flexible requirement requests received, the associated number of hours reduced as a result of the requests and an overview by Directorate. The report could also detail the numbers of redundancies and redeployments over the same period.
- Councillor Thomas agreed with the proposal for the six-monthly report and if the proposal concerning the delegation of the flexible retirement were to be agreed, that report would also provide the Committee with that detail also and whether the change was working or had to be brought back to the responsibility of the Committee.
- Councillor Ernest noted that any proposal would move forward for consideration by Full Council also.
- Councillor Charles felt that the Committee should understand the detail regarding the effects of agreed flexible retirement within the various Departments prior to the decision being taken rather than before. Councillor Thomas said the proposed six-monthly report would provide that detail for Members and give an understanding of the position within each Directorate, rather than just as individual cases.
- Councillor Thomas proposed that as the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for November 2025, that Departments could provide an update for the Committee based on the previous six months from April 2025 concerning flexible retirement, redundancy and redeployment matters. The Committee could

then accept the Recommendation of the Report, along with those considerations.

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting, it was subsequently

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T a report be produced for the Committee to consider at its meeting on 27th November, 2025 which would provide an update for the Committee based on the previous six months from April 2025 concerning flexible retirement, redundancy and redeployment matters.

(2) T H A T, subject to Resolution (1) and the Committee's agreement, the proposed revisions to the Committee's Terms of Reference, to be progressed through amendments to the Constitution at the next Full Council meeting on Monday, 1st December, 2025.

(3) T H A T a six-monthly report be produced for the Committee detailing the number of flexible requirement requests received, the associated number of hours reduced as a result of the requests and an overview by Directorate. The report would also detail the numbers of redundancies and redeployments over the same period.

(4) T H A T the Committee would review whether the removal of the flexible working aspect from the Terms of Reference for the Committee be reviewed at the same time of the first six-monthly report and there be a discussion whether the change was working or should be brought back within the responsibility of the Committee.

Reason for decisions

(1-4) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

398 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC –

RESOLVED – T H A T under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act, the relevant paragraphs of the Schedule being referred to in brackets after the minute heading.

399 APPLICATION FOR FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT – W (DSS) (EXEMPT INFORMATION – PARAGRAPHS 12 AND 13) –

Consideration was given to consider and determine an application to extend the flexible retirement in respect of W.

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting, it was subsequently

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the extension of flexible retirement of W be agreed in accordance with the Council's policy, subject to no other circumstances arising in the interim whereby the employment was to be terminated for a different reason.

(2) T H A T the retirement of W from employment with the Council would take place on or before 12th November, 2026 providing no other circumstances arose in the interim whereby the employment was to be terminated or extended for a different reason.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To determine the flexible retirement application within the regulations and to allow for eventualities that may not be known at the time.

(2) To achieve the necessary change to the employee's flexible retirement date, to assist service continuity, provide appropriate support to assist the employee's transition to retirement and to contribute to the work of Long-Term Care Service.