

SHADOW BOURNEMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL



Report subject	LGPS Designation & Adoption of NALC/NJC Terms and Conditions
Meeting date	24 February 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report seeks approval for key employment and pension arrangements necessary to establish the new Bournemouth Town Council and enable the recruitment of a suitably qualified Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer. As a designating body under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations 2013, the Town Council may choose whether to participate in the LGPS and must formally resolve to designate eligible posts. Adoption of the National Joint Council (NJC) “Green Book” terms and conditions, together with associated NALC policies, is also recommended to provide a modern, lawful, and sector-standard employment framework.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Bournemouth Town Council shall participate in the Local Government Pension Scheme as a designating body;(b) the post of Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer shall be eligible for membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme administered by Dorset County Pension Fund, with effect from 1 April 2026;(c) the National Joint Council (NJC) “Green Book” Terms and Conditions of Employment and the associated NALC model employment policies be adopted for the post of Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer;(d) the Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter to any agreements or contracts for supplies and services for the Town Council which are deemed necessary for the effective operation of the Town Council.
Reason for recommendations	<p>The appointment of an appropriately qualified Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer will require the serving of appropriate contracts of employment, terms and conditions and pension provision. The recommendations contained in this report are</p>

	required to comply with Dorset Pensions service and standard employment expectations of town clerks.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. Under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, town and parish councils are classified as “designating bodies.” This means:
 - They are not required to participate in the LGPS.
 - - They may choose to offer LGPS membership to:
 - Named individuals, or
 - Specific posts (or classes of employees).
2. Participation is therefore voluntary but must be enacted through a formal council resolution. This is distinct from scheduled bodies (e.g., county/district councils), which must participate, and admission bodies, which join via an admission agreement (typically contractors).

Requirement for a Council Resolution

3. To join the LGPS, the Shadow Town Council must pass a resolution that:
 - States the Council’s intention to participate in the LGPS as a designating body.
 - Identifies the eligible post(s) — in this case, the post of Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.
 - Confirms the effective date of eligibility.
4. Dorset County Pension Fund requires a copy of the signed minutes as evidence of the resolution.

Dorset County Pension Fund (DCPF) Process

5. If the Shadow Council approves the designation, the following steps apply:
 - Notification to DCPF – The Council submits the signed resolution.
 - Actuarial Assessment – DCPF’s actuary calculates the employer contribution rate based on pay and membership data.

- A one-off actuarial fee is normally payable.
 - Employer contribution rates are reviewed every three years.
6. This is the standard process applied to all town and parish councils joining the Dorset scheme.

Rationale for Offering LGPS Membership

7. Providing access to the LGPS for the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer would align the Town Council with sector norms for senior officers, supports recruitment and retention of high calibre staff, provides a secure, defined benefit pension scheme, ensures parity with neighbouring councils and wider local government practice, and reflects the statutory nature and responsibilities of the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer role.
8. The LGPS is widely regarded as the appropriate pension provision for senior officers in local government.

Adoption of NALC/NJC “Green Book” Terms and Conditions

9. The National Joint Council (NJC) “Green Book” is the nationally recognised and sector standard framework for local government employment at a parish and town council level. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends its adoption for town and parish councils, which is supported by a suite of model policies.
10. Adopting the Green Book ensures:
- A consistent, lawful, and modern employment framework.
 - Clear alignment with national pay scales, conditions, and HR standards.
 - Access to nationally negotiated pay awards.
 - Reduced employment risk through use of established policies.
 - Transparency and fairness in employment arrangements.
11. The NALC/NJC framework includes a suite of policies covering but not limited to:
- Sickness and absence
 - Annual leave
 - Disciplinary and grievance procedures
 - Flexible working
 - Maternity, paternity, and parental leave
 - Health and safety
 - Code of conduct and standards of behaviour
12. These policies are widely used across the sector and provide a robust foundation for the Council's employment practices. Adopting the Green Book will provide clarity and security to prospective employees joining the Town Council.

Authority to enter Contracts and Agreements

13. To ensure the effective establishment of the new Town Council and to avoid unnecessary delay in the transitional period, delegated authority is requested for the Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer to enter into contracts and agreements for supplies, systems and professional services. The preparatory work needed before 1 April 2026 spans governance, finance, IT, HR, etc., which may require external support.
14. Delegating this authority provides an agile mechanism for ensuring the Council can meet its implementation milestones and that critical systems and services are in place for vesting day. It also reflects standard practice in local government during periods of organisational change, where officer-level decision-making is necessary to maintain momentum and manage practical matters within approved budgets and policies.

Options Appraisal

15. The Shadow Council could decide not to sign up to the Dorset Pension Scheme and not adopt the NJC Terms and Conditions and associated policies, however, bespoke terms and conditions and policies will need to be developed and it is unlikely that prospective candidates will accept the positions without certainty.

Summary of financial implications

16. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The anticipated budgets approved by BCP Council in December 2025 included provision for the employment of staff based on the NJC terms and conditions of employment and that all employees would referenced would be eligible to join the LGPS.

Summary of legal implications

17. The Council has the legal power to designate posts for LGPS membership under the LGPS Regulations 2013. A formal resolution is required to activate eligibility.
18. Adoption of the Green Book ensures compliance with employment law and reduces HR risk.
19. The Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer will be the Town Council's Proper Officer; appropriate employment terms are essential for governance stability.

Summary of human resources implications

20. Failure to adopt appropriate terms and conditions of employment, policies and pension scheme is likely to detrimentally affect the appointment of a suitably qualified Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

Summary of sustainability impact

21. There are no sustainability impacts arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

22. There are no public health impacts arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

23. The nationally agreed policies, terms and conditions comply with equality requirements and provide equal protections.

Summary of risk assessment

24. Failure to adopt these recommendations could increase the risk of failure to attract/retain a qualified Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, and could lead to employment disputes due to unclear policies.
25. Failure to participate in the Pensions Scheme could present financial uncertainty around pension costs and increase administrative burdens.

Background papers

Published works

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.