

**REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 25 APRIL 2016**  
**REPORT ON: HOSPITAL FUND AND JOHNSTON BEQUEST**  
**REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**  
**REPORT NO: 132-2016**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This Report sets out information to allow members to consider extending by a further 12 months the post of Welfare Rights Officer (Elderly People) from 01 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that-

1. this post within the Older People Advice Service (OPAS) should continue to be carried out by Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Dundee and be funded via the Hospital Fund and Johnston Bequest.
2. The individual lifetime grant payments to pensioners continue at the current level of £80 per year.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The costs of the above post of £25,000 and the lifetime grant payments estimated to be £10,400 can both be met from the surplus income from the Hospital Fund and Johnston Bequest.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

The Hospital Fund and Johnston Bequest were vested in and administered by the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Councillors of Dundee under a special Act of Parliament entitled "The Dundee Churches and Hospital Act 1864" for the benefit of the poor of the town. The funds are currently vested and administered by the City Council under the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994.

The income from the capital assets held by these Funds has been utilised principally for distribution to pensioners in financial need. The Fund's income is derived from a combination of interest on temporary loans and rental income on property owned in Reform Street. The Fund's capital account currently stands at £680,953 and annual rental income was £46,734 as at 31st March 2015.

Expenditure for the year to 31st March 2015 was £44,622 comprising Rates and Repairs and Maintenance (£9,062), payment of pensions to beneficiaries (£10,560) and Older People Advice Service (£25,000).

At its meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013 approval was given to report no 452-2012 when it was agreed to allocate £25,000 from the above trust funds to pilot a targeted welfare benefit advice service for older people in the city. By creating a welfare benefits advice post it was anticipated that £200,000 to £250,000 additional income would be injected into the pensioner community per annum.

This service, delivered via CAB Dundee has successfully generated in excess of £200,000 income for pensioners in every year since the pilot was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently extended until the end of March 2016.

Given the success of the pilot it is proposed that the OPAS is continued for a further financial year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 at a cost of £25,000. Lifetime grant payments to individual pensioners will continue at the current level of £80 per annum. The estimated cost in 2016/17 is circa £10,400.

A peer review will be carried out during 2016/17 with a view to making a more permanent recommendation on future funding.

## **5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality and Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no issues in this regard to report on.

## **6 CONSULTATIONS**

The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Head of Legal and Democratic Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

MAJORY STEWART – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES DATE: 30 MARCH 2016