

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE AND PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, 26th May, 2010

Present: Cllr Mrs F A Kemp (Chairman), Cllr P J Homewood (Vice-Chairman), Cllr A W Allison, Cllr Mrs S J Boakes, Cllr D W P Evans, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr Miss A Moloney and Cllr A K Sullivan.

Councillors Aikman, Mrs Anderson, Baldock, Balfour, Bolt, Coffin, Dobson, Luker and Worrall were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clements, M Davis, Robins and Rogers.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

**FP
10/023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Aikman, Dobson and Homewood declared personal interests in the item on Financial Planning and Control on the grounds of being Council appointees to the Upper or Lower Medway Internal Drainage Boards.

**FP
10/024 MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting of the Finance and Property Advisory Board held on 5 January 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

**FP
10/025 APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF**

Decision Notice D100063MEM

The joint report of the Director of Finance and Cabinet Member for Finance gave details of renewal and new applications for discretionary rate relief which were considered in accordance with the revised guidelines for the grant of such relief.

RECOMMENDED: That the applications be determined as follows:

(1) Parochial Church Council of St Stephen, St Stephen's Church Hall, 37 Waterloo Road, Tonbridge – no discretionary relief be granted;

(2) MCCH Society Ltd, Unit 5 Britannia Business Park, Quarry Wood Industrial Estate, Aylesford – 20% discretionary relief be awarded, time limited to 31 March 2013; and

(3) Avante Partnership Ltd (Stepahead Support), 1st Floor, 51 St Mary's Road, Tonbridge – 20% discretionary relief be awarded, time limited to 31 March 2013.

**FP
10/026**

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONTROL

Decision Notice D100064MEM

The report of the Director of Finance provided information on the Council's key budget areas of salaries, major income streams, investment income and the trading position of the Leisure Services Business Unit. It also gave an update on the variations agreed in relation to the revenue budget and areas identified through budgetary control. This was summarised to provide an indicative overall budget position. An update was also given on capital expenditure and variations agreed in relation to the capital plan.

It was noted that the expected outturn for the year ended March 2010 showed a net favourable variance from the budget position and thanks were recorded to officers for their contribution to this achievement.

RECOMMENDED: That the contents of the report be noted and endorsed.

**FP
10/027**

TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Director of Finance provided an overview of treasury management activities undertaken during the financial year to date in the context of the national economy and in accordance with CIPFA's revised Code of Practice. It was noted that the Treasury Management Practices were being reviewed and would be presented to the Audit Committee on 21 June 2010. Members requested that they also be reported back to the Advisory Board.

Members expressed particular support for the decision not to call for premature repayment of the Barclays and Nationwide high yielding fixed term investments.

Reference was made to an offer by Sector to undertake an independent compliance audit at a cost of £2,500 but it was considered that there would be no advantage at present in obtaining a further audit.

RECOMMENDED: That the action taken by officers in respect of recent treasury management activities be endorsed, the Treasury Management Practices be reported back to the Advisory Board and the independent audit be not pursued.

***Referred to Cabinet**



**FP
10/028**

BENEFITS INVESTIGATION OUTTURN REPORT 2009/10

Decision Notice D100065MEM

The report of the Director of Finance gave details of the work undertaken by the Benefits Investigation Section during 2009/10 and presented the Section Business Plan for 2010/11.

RECOMMENDED: That the Benefits Investigation Section Business Plan for 2010/11, as set out at Annex 2 to the report, be adopted.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

**FP
10/029**

PUBLICATION OF ALLOWANCES PAID TO MEMBERS DURING THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2009/10

The Board received a copy of the statement of the actual allowances paid to Members during the course of the financial year 2009/10 which had been published in accordance with regulation 15 (3) of the Local Authorities (Member Allowance) (England) Regulations 2003.

**FP
10/030**

COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES UPDATE REPORT

The report gave details of recent developments in respect of council tax and business rates including the final collection rate for 2009/10, plans to increase the level of relief available to eligible small businesses and a review of council tax single person discounts. Congratulations were recorded to staff for the successful collection rates achieved during the difficult economic conditions over the past year.

**FP
10/031**

BENEFITS UPDATE

The report provided information on current issues arising in the benefits field including performance of the benefits service, workload, staffing and advice surgeries held by the Kent Benefit Partnership.

**FP
10/032**

BETTER AND MORE COST-EFFECTIVE WAYS OF WORKING

The report of the Director of Finance indicated that the expected significant cut in general government grant highlighted the need to identify efficiencies and more cost-effective ways of working in order to minimise the negative impact on service delivery and council tax increases. A fundamental review of the Council's overall finances was currently in hand and details were given of a benchmarking analysis commissioned by the Kent Finance Officers Association, consideration of opportunities for joint/shared working and a peer review with Gravesham Borough Council.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

FP 10/033 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chairman moved, it was seconded and

RESOLVED: That as public discussion would disclose exempt information, the following matters be considered in private.

PART 2 - PRIVATE

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

FP 10/034 **DEBTS FOR WRITE OFF** **(Reason: LGA 1972 Sch 12A Para 2 - Information likely to reveal information about an individual)**

Decision Notice D100066MEM

Consideration was given to the writing-off of debts considered to be irrecoverable. Details were also given of debts under £1,000 which had been written off in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 17.2 together with cumulative totals of debts written off in the current and previous financial years and information on budgeted bad debt provision.

RECOMMENDED: That the 16 items shown in the schedule totalling £147,489.61 be written off for the reasons stated.

FP 10/035 **SALE OF CEMETERY LODGE, TONBRIDGE** **(Reason: LGA 1972 Sch 12A Para 3 - Financial or business affairs of any particular person)**

The joint report of the Chief Leisure Officer and Central Services Director updated the position on the successful sale of Cemetery Lodge, Tonbridge and proposals to provide replacement office accommodation for the Cemetery Registrar. It was noted that the full cost of the proposals could be met through the capital receipt from the sale of the Lodge but the project would require the creation of a new capital scheme, an evaluation matrix for which was set out at Annex 1 to the report.

RECOMMENDED: That

(1) the proposed alterations to provide appropriate office accommodation for the Cemetery Registrar, as highlighted within the report, be approved;

(2) the costs associated with the works be met from the capital receipt received from the sale of Cemetery Lodge; and

(3) the action taken to bring forward a new Capital Plan scheme be confirmed and the Council be recommended to approve a

supplementary estimate for the reasons outlined in the report.
***Referred to Cabinet**

**FP
10/036**

**PROPOSED NEW LEASE OF DANCE STUDIOS, LARKFIELD
LEISURE CENTRE
(Reason: LGA 1972 Sch 12A Para 3 - Financial or business affairs
of any particular person)**

Decision Notice D100067MEM

The report of the Central Services Director gave details of the proposed new lease of two dance studios and associated store room at Larkfield Leisure Centre.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposed new lease of the studios to Prima Dance School be approved on the basis outlined in the report.

**FP
10/037**

**PROPOSED NEW LEASES FOR SWANMEAD SPORTS PAVILION,
TONBRIDGE
(Reason: LGA 1972 Sch 12A Para 3 - Financial or business affairs
of any particular person)**

Decision Notice D100068MEM

Consideration was given to the report of the Central Services Director in relation to the proposed surrender of an existing lease and grant of two separate leases for the Swanmead Sports Pavilion at Tonbridge.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposed new leases, as outlined in the report, be approved.

The meeting ended at 2026 hours

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION

**Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR
Finance**

Decision No: D100063MEM

Date: 26th May 2010

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Applications for Discretionary Rate Relief

**(Joint report of Director of Finance and Cabinet Member for
Finance)**

(Annex 1)

(Annex 2)

**Details were given of renewal and new applications for
discretionary rate relief which were considered in accordance with
the revised guidelines for the grant of such relief.**

Following consideration by the Finance and Property Advisory Board,
the Cabinet Member for Finance resolved that the applications be
determined as follows:

- 1) Parochial Church Council of St Stephen, St Stephen's Church
Hall, 37 Waterloo Road, Tonbridge – no discretionary relief be granted;
- 2) MCCH Society Ltd, Unit 5 Britannia Business Park, Quarry Wood
Industrial Estate, Aylesford – 20% discretionary relief be awarded, time
limited to 31 March 2013; and
- 3) Avante Partnership Ltd (Stepahead Support), 1st Floor, 51 St
Mary's Road, Tonbridge – 20% discretionary relief be awarded, time
limited to 31 March 2013.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Finance and Property
Advisory Board of 26 May 2010.

Signed Cabinet Member for D Aikman
Finance:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 28 May 2010

This decision will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 5
working days after publication unless it is called in.

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: **CABINET MEMBER FOR
Finance**

Decision No: **D100064MEM**

Date: **26th May 2010**

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Financial Planning and Control

(Report of Director of Finance)

(Annex 1)

(Annex 2)

(Annex 3)

The report provided information on the Council's key budget areas of salaries, major income streams, investment income and the trading position of the Leisure Services Business Unit. It also gave an update on the variations agreed in relation to the revenue budget and areas identified through budgetary control. This was summarised to provide an indicative overall budget position. An update was also given on capital expenditure and variations agreed in relation to the capital plan.

It was noted that the expected outturn for the year ended March 2010 showed a net favourable variance from the budget position and thanks were recorded to officers for their contribution to this achievement.

Following consideration by the Finance and Property Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Finance resolved that the contents of the report be noted and endorsed.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Finance and Property Advisory Board of 26 May 2010.

[Councillor Aikman declared a personal interest in this item on the grounds of being one of the Council's appointees to the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board.]

Signed Cabinet Member for D Aikman
Finance:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 28 May 2010

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION

**Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR
Finance**

Decision No: D100065MEM

Date: 26th May 2010

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Benefits Investigation Outturn Report 2009/10

(Report of Director of Finance)

(Annex 1)

(Annex 2)

The report gave details of the work undertaken by the Benefits Investigation Section during 2009/10 and presented the section Business Plan for 2010/11.

Following consideration by the Finance and Property Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Finance resolved that the Benefits Investigation Section Business Plan for 2010/11, as set out at Annex 2 to the report, be adopted.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Finance and Property Advisory Board of 26 May 2010.

Signed Cabinet Member for D Aikman
Finance:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 28 May 2010

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION

**Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR
Finance**

Decision No: D100066MEM

Date: 26th May 2010

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Debts for Write Off

(Reason: LGA 1972 Sch 12A Para 2 - Information likely to reveal information about an individual)

(Report of Director of Finance)

(Annex)

Approval of the writing-off of debts considered to be irrecoverable. Details were also given of debts under £1,000 which had been written off in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 17.2 together with cumulative totals of debts written off in the current and previous financial years and information on budgeted bad debt provision.

Following consideration by the Finance and Property Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Finance resolved that the 16 items shown in the schedule totalling £147,489.61 be written off for the reasons stated.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Finance and Property Advisory Board of 26 May 2010 (contains exempt information).

Signed Cabinet Member for D Aikman
Finance:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 28 May 2010

This decision will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 5 working days after publication unless it is called in.

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION

**Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR
Finance**

Decision No: D100067MEM

Date: 26th May 2010

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

**Proposed New Lease of Dance Studios, Larkfield Leisure Centre
(Reason: LGA 1972 Sch 12A Para 3 - Financial or business affairs
of any particular person)**

**(Report of Central Services Director)
(Annex)**

**The report gave details of the proposed new lease of two dance
studios and associated store room at Larkfield Leisure Centre.**

Following consideration by the Finance and Property Advisory Board,
the Cabinet Member for Finance resolved that the proposed new lease
of the studios to Prima Dance School be approved on the basis outlined
in the report.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Finance and Property
Advisory Board of 26 May 2010 (contains exempt information).

Signed Cabinet Member for D Aikman
Finance:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 28 May 2010

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working days after publication unless it is called in.

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION

**Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR
Finance**

Decision No: D100068MEM

Date: 26th May 2010

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

**Proposed New Leases for Swanmead Sports Pavilion, Tonbridge
(Reason: LGA 1972 Sch 12A Para 3 - Financial or business affairs
of any particular person)**

**(Report of Central Services Director)
(Annex 1)
(Annex 2)
(Annex 3)**

**Consideration was given to the proposed surrender of an existing
lease and grant of two separate leases for the Swanmead Sports
Pavilion.**

Following consideration by the Finance and Property Advisory Board,
the Cabinet Member for Finance resolved that the proposed new leases,
as outlined in the report, be approved.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Finance and Property
Advisory Board of 26 May 2010 (contains exempt information).

Signed Cabinet Member for D Aikman
Finance:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

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