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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**



**COUNCIL MINUTE BOOK**

**FEBRUARY – MARCH 2026**

**VOLUME 1**

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF COUNCIL, CABINET AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**VOLUME 1**  
**FEBRUARY – MARCH 2026**

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**NOTE:** In the case of items containing exempt information, the report must remain confidential but details of the decisions need not remain confidential.

**As part of the Council's environmental strategy, all Committee agenda, reports and minutes are produced with recycled paper and are available to view on line.**

**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**HOUSING AND PLANNING SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, 3rd February, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr D W King (Chair), Cllr Mrs S Bell (Vice-Chair), Cllr B Banks (substitute), Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr R W G Oliver, Cllr K B Tanner and Cllr D Thornewell

**In attendance:** Councillors S Crisp, R P Betts, L Chapman, Mrs A S Oakley and M Taylor were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

\*Participated via MS Teams

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G C Bridge and W E Palmer.

**HP 26/1 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Notification of a substitute Member was recorded as set out below:

- Cllr Banks substituted for Cllr Bridge

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 17.5 to 17.9 this Councillor had the same rights as the ordinary member of the committee for whom they were substituting.

**HP 26/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET**

**HP 26/3 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: PROPOSED REFORMS AND OTHER CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM**

The Government intended to reform the plan-making system under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023. A consultation on the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and related reforms, including data centres, on-site energy generation, standardised viability assessment inputs, and site thresholds was open from 16 December 2025 to 10 March 2026. The Government would publish an update after analysing responses, which was expected to be in Summer 2026.

The revisions proposed as part of the consultation sought to progress significant structural improvements to the Framework, introducing a clear set of separate policies for both plan making and decision making, the aim of which was to achieve three main objectives:

- To ensure that national policy was accessible and understandable for everyone who used it;
- To establish a comprehensive suite of national policies on general planning matters which would apply across the country; and
- To make the policy more 'rules-based' and certain.

The consultation document was split into chapters that generally aligned to the chapters provided in the draft NPPF. In terms of the implementation for the transitional phase, the consultation confirmed that for decision making that the NPPF be a material consideration from the date of publication. The new NPPF would apply to new style local plans that would be produced through the new system under the Planning and Infrastructure Act. The new NPPF would therefore not apply to the local plan currently being progressed by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. The consultation noted that inconsistencies with development plans would fall away over time as new development plans were adopted that did not duplicate, replicate or modify NPPF policies. For decision making, due weight should be given to development plan policies in relation to their consistency with the Framework. Where these were inconsistent, little weight should be afforded, except where a Plan had been examined against the new Framework.

The consultation also proposed a number of substantive reforms to unlock more homes in the right place and further support the commercial development needed to drive growth. The following significant reforms were proposed in the consultation:

- Permanent presumption in favour of suitably located development
- Building homes around stations
- Driving urban and suburban densification
- Securing a diverse mix of homes
- Supporting small and medium sites
- Streamlining local standards
- Boosting local and regional economies
- Supporting critical and growth materials
- Embedding vision led approach to transport
- Better addressing climate change
- Serving and enhancing natural environment
- Taking a more positive approach to heritage assets.

Members reviewed the Borough Council's response to the consultation attached at Annex 1 to the report and a number of amendments,

corrections and points of clarification were suggested. Attention was also brought to the Risk Assessment at Annex 2 to the report.

There was also detailed discussion in respect of securing clean energy and water, in particular the approach to planning for energy and water infrastructure in policy W1. Members expressed concern regarding household access to clean water as well as highlighting specific issues related to waste-water management. Members requested the inclusion of additional wording to strengthen the response including making the connection between increased housing growth. Furthermore, in instances where such infrastructure was deemed necessary, suppliers should be obligated to define the mechanisms by which the required improvements would be implemented.

Cllr King proposed, Cllr Davis seconded and the Committee

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the contents of the report, be noted;
- (2) the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council response to the Government's National Planning Policy Framework; proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system, be approved; and
- (3) delegated authority be granted to the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services to make any necessary minor changes to the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council's response to the National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system consultation prior to submitting the response, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Planning.

**\*Recommended to Cabinet**

#### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

##### **HP 26/4 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no matters considered in private.

The meeting ended at 9.54 pm



# **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **CABINET**

## **MINUTES**

**Tuesday, 10th February, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr M D Boughton (Chair), Cllr R P Betts, Cllr D Keers, Cllr A Mehmet and Cllr M Taylor

Cllrs S A Hudson, Mrs A S Oakley, M R Rhodes and K B Tanner were also present pursuant to Access to Information Rule No 23 and participated via MS Teams.

An apology for in person attendance was received from Councillor M A Coffin who observed via MS Teams.

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **CB 26/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

#### **CB 26/18 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL**

#### **CB 26/19 SETTING THE BUDGET 2026/27**

Further to the reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier in the cycle the joint report of the Chief Executive, the Head of Finance, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services updated the Cabinet on issues relating to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and gave details of the necessary procedures to be followed in order to set the budget for 2026/27.

Members noted that at the time of publishing the report the final settlement had not been confirmed and all figures contained in the report were based on the provisional local government settlement. Whilst the settlement for 2026/27 was better than expected within the MTFS there was an overall funding decrease on the notional equivalent funding for 2025/26 of £182,000 (2%). This decrease continued with further reductions of £335,000 (3.7%) and £378,000 (4.4%) in the 2027/28 and 2028/29 financial years respectively. This meant that in 2028/29 the

Borough Council would receive reduced grant of £895,000 (9.8%) compared to the notional amount for 2025/26.

Since the publication of the report, the Head of Finance advised that the final local government finance settlement had been confirmed. Whilst there was no fundamental impact on the proposed budget for 2026/27, there would be a reduction of £173,000 in 2027/28 resulting in a change to the General Revenue Reserve which would reduce to £4.6M (from £4.8M).

However, as the provisional settlement was better than the prudent approach taken in the MTFs this allowed additional funds to be targeted to key priorities, such as the regeneration of the Tonbridge Town Centre.

In addition, the Business Rates Reset had resulted in previous gains being eliminated from the baseline settlement. There were a number of properties awaiting valuation by the Valuation Office that could give additional growth above the current baseline level.

Referendum principles meant that council tax could only rise by greater than 3% of £5. A 3% increase in the Borough Council element of the council tax bill represented a council tax at Band D for 2026/27 of £252.65 a cash increase of £7.35 per annum.

Allowing for the issues summarised above, and detailed in the report, the Funding Gap had reduced to zero over the medium-term but was dependent on committed savings of £200,000 in relation to office accommodation, £200,000 costs in relation to temporary accommodation and £400,000 service fee income from the Leisure Trust.

Finally, it was recommended that six schemes be added to the Capital Plan 2026/27.

Due regard was given to the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications. Whilst the uncertainty surrounding local government finances had reduced, issues around longer-term funding could give rise to further funding gaps in later years. The impact of current economic conditions, such as inflation and interest rates, were difficult to predict and made financial planning challenging.

In recognition that the Borough Council was required to set a budget and the proposals presented best value for money, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Taylor seconded and Cabinet

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) The details of the final grant settlement and the associated adjustments to future years be noted and approved;

- (2) the Revenue Estimates, as presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 January 2026, together with the subsequent adjustments and transfers detailed at paragraph 9, be endorsed and adopted by Council;
- (3) the Capital Strategy as presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 January 2026, be endorsed and adopted by Council;
- (4) the Capital Plan be updated, as set out at paragraph 11.13 and adopted by the Council;
- (5) the prudential indicators listed in paragraph 12.7, including the liability benchmark indicator and 12.11, be endorsed and adopted by the Council;
- (6) for the financial year 2026/27, the Borough Council's annual minimum revenue provision be noted as 'nil'; subject to the comment at paragraph 12.8;
- (7) the updated MTFs, set out at Annex 10a be noted and endorsed;
- (8) the special expenses calculated in accordance with the Special Expenses Scheme and set out at Annex 13b, be endorsed;
- (9) the Statement provided by the Head of Finance as to the Robustness of the Estimates and the Adequacy of the Reserves, as set out at Annex 16a, be noted and endorsed; and
- (10) the calculation of the Borough Council's council tax requirement at Annex 17 be noted.

**\*Recommended to Council**

**CB 26/20 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX 2026/27**

The joint report of the Chief Executive, Head of Finance, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services set out the requirements under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for a billing authority to set an amount of council tax for each category of dwelling in its area. Members were advised of the position concerning the determination of their respective precepts for 2026/27 by the major precepting authorities.

Consideration was given to a draft resolution (attached at Annex 2) identifying the process to be undertaken in arriving at the levels of council tax applicable to each part of the Borough. The resolution and further information regarding the precepts of the other authorities would be reported to Council on 24 February 2026.

In recognition that Council Tax provided the major proportion of the Borough Council's Revenue Funding and to provide an efficient service for all residents, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Betts seconded and Cabinet

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the draft resolution, which would be completed and presented to the Council, be noted; and
- (2) the Council be recommended to approve a 3% or £7.35 per annum increase in the Borough Council's element of the council tax for 2026/27, representing a notional 'average' charge at Band D of £252.65.

**\*Recommended to Council**

#### **CB 26/21 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2026/27**

Consideration was given to the Draft Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27 (attached at Annex 1 to the report) which had been revised to bring it in line with statutory prescribed requirements from Government national benefit rates. The scheme had also been uplifted in line with new rates of National Living Wage (NLW), where NLW was used as a factor in calculating income discount bands.

Members noted that for pension age households the separate Government Scheme prescribed maximum help to 100% of council tax liability, a minimum requirement of a pension age scheme.

In recognition that the Borough Council's Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme provided essential support to residents who were on a low income and, where applicable, provided a reduction based on the personal circumstances of each applicant, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Keers seconded and Cabinet

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That the draft Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27 (attached at Annex 1) be commended to Council for adoption.

**\*Recommended to Council**

#### **CB 26/22 REVENUE ESTIMATES 2026/27**

All budgetary matters were considered in detail in the substantive item on Setting the Budget 2026/27 (Minute Number CB 26/19). However, the recommendations from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 22 January 2026 in relation to the formulation of the initial draft proposals in respect of the Budget, including Revenue Estimates

(Minute Number OS 26/4) were given due consideration as part of the substantive discussion.

**CB 26/23 CAPITAL PLAN REVIEW 2025/26**

All budgetary matters were considered in detail in the substantive item on Setting the Budget 2026/27 (Minute Number CB 26/19). However, the recommendations from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 22 January 2026 in relation to the formulation of initial draft proposals in respect of the Budget, including the Capital Plan (Minute Number OS 26/5) was given due consideration as part of the substantive discussion.

**CB 26/24 TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2026/27**

Consideration was given to recommendation AU 26/4 of the Audit Committee of 26 January 2026 in respect of treasury management.

Due regard was given to the views of the Audit Committee, the details of investments undertaken and return achieved in the first eight months of the current financial year, the financial and value for money considerations and legal implications. Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Taylor seconded and Cabinet

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the treasury management position as at 30 November 2025, be noted; and
- (2) the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy for 2026/27 (attached at Annex 5), be adopted.

**\*Recommended to Council**

**MATTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION**

**EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISIONS**

**CB 26/25 ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2026/27**

(Decision Notice D260014CAB)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Annual Service Delivery Plan. This was a performance management tool setting out the Borough Council's priority actions for the year, along with key milestones and targets that could be used to monitor progress with delivery.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications. The amendments, corrections and points of clarification raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been reviewed in liaison with Services and reflected in a revised Annual Service Delivery Plan (attached at Annex 1).

It was also reported that due to external factors, such as awaiting legislation or funding from Central Government, the current Plan was missing some information. It was hoped that this missing information would be provided as part of the Quarter 1 update.

In recognition that without an effective performance management framework in place the authority would not be able to identify any required improvements or achieve value for money, Cllr Keers proposed, Cllr Taylor seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the draft Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026/27 (attached at Annex 1) be approved; and
- (2) any updated information addressing current gaps in information be considered during Quarter 1 reporting of the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026/27.

## **CB 26/26 PROCUREMENT PARTNERSHIP - FORMAL REVIEW**

(Decision Notice D260015CAB)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of a number of options for the Procurement Partnership.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications. Cabinet was pleased to note that the Procurement Partnership had been very well received, an improvement in high quality procurement and contracting activity.

In recognition that membership of the Mid-Kent Procurement Partnership supported full compliance with relevant legislation, maintained an effective council and on the grounds of providing certainty and continuity for the future Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Mehmet seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) subject to ensuring appropriate budget provision, Option 3 to continue with the Procurement Partnership be approved; and

- (2) a further review of the Procurement Partnership be undertaken in 4 years' time.

## **CB 26/27 RISK MANAGEMENT**

(Decision Notice D260016CAB)

Consideration of recommendations of the Audit Committee in respect of the risk management process and the current status of the Strategic Risk Register (SRR).

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications.

Cabinet noted that the risks categorised as 'RED' were:

- Failure to adopt a Local Plan
- Recruitment and retention of staff
- Local Government Reorganisation in Kent

In recognition of the importance of efficient and effective risk management in protecting the Borough Council's assets, employees and customers and ensuring value for money, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Betts seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the updates to the Strategic Risk Register since the last iteration with particular emphasis on those risks categorised as 'RED' (summarised above) and set out in Annexes 1 and 1(a) be noted; and
- (2) the service risks identified in Annex 2 be noted.

## **CB 26/28 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: PROPOSED REFORMS AND OTHER CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM**

(Decision Notice D260017CAB)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Borough Council's response to proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other changes to the planning system. A draft response was attached at Annex 1.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, assessment of risk and the legal implications.

Particular reference was made to better decision-making on contaminated land (166) and Cllr Taylor proposed a further amendment to strengthen and emphasise the role of the developer in remediation. For example:

- (i) This includes the requirement that responsibility for securing a safe development principally rests with the developer and/or landowner where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues. The role of the Local Planning Authority is to monitor and approve.

This amendment was seconded by Cllr Boughton and supported by the Cabinet, subject to further consultation with the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services.

A further minor correction was also identified at (145) on page 40 of Annex 1 and this had been drawn to the attention of Officers.

In recognition that the Borough Council had to submit a response to the consultation by the deadline of 10 March 2026, Cllr Taylor proposed, Cllr Boughton seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council response to the Government's National Planning Policy Framework: Proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system be approved;
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Borough Council and the Cabinet Member of Planning, to make any necessary minor changes to the Borough Council's response before submission.

### **MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

#### **CB 26/29 DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET MEMBERS**

Details of the Decisions taken in accordance with the rules for the making of decisions by executive members, as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution, were presented for information.

#### **CB 26/30 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS**

The Notice setting out Key Decisions anticipated to be taken during the period March to April 2026 was noted.

**CB 26/31 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chairman moved, Cllr Taylor seconded and it was

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

**PART 2 - PRIVATE****MATTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION****EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISIONS****CB 26/32 TONBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE PROGRAMME BOARD - NOTES OF 16 JANUARY 2026**

(Decision Notice D260018CAB)

(Reason: Part 2 – Private LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

The report of the Director of Central Services presented the notes of the Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Board held on 16 January 2026.

Cabinet noted the comments of the Programme Board in respect of the delivery of a number of key priorities in connection with Tonbridge Town Centre.

**RESOLVED:** That the Notes of the Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Board of 16 January 2026 be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.04 pm



**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**AREA 1 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, 12th February, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr M A J Hood (Chair), Cllr D W King (Vice-Chair), Cllr L Athwal, Cllr K Barton, Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr J Clokey, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr A Mehmet, Cllr R W G Oliver, Cllr B A Parry, Cllr S Pilgrim, Cllr M R Rhodes and Cllr K S Tunstall

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Cope.

**PART 1 - PUBLIC**

**AP1 26/7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**AP1 26/8 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Area 1 Planning Committee held on 8 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AP1 26/9 GLOSSARY AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS**

Decisions were taken on the following applications subject to the pre-requisites, informatives, conditions or reasons for refusal set out in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services or in the variations indicated below. Any supplementary reports were tabled at the meeting.

Members of the public addressed the meeting where the required notice had been given and their comments were taken into account by the Committee when determining the application. Speakers are listed under the relevant planning application shown below.

**MATTERS FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS  
(IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION)**

**AP1 26/10 TM/25/01693/PA - LAND WEST OF 103 TONBRIDGE ROAD, HILDENBOROUGH, TONBRIDGE**

Permission in Principle for the development of between 5-7 residential dwellings as set out in Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning

(Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended) located on Land at Tonbridge Road, Hildenborough.

Due regard was given to the determining issues detailed in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services, as well as points raised by the speaker. Members expressed concerns regarding the location of the site falling within the Metropolitan Green Belt, while recognising there were unmet housing needs in the borough with regard to all types of development.

Members also noted that precise nature of the development would be assessed at the Technical Details Consent stage and that conditions could not be imposed on a grant of Permission in Principle, as the terms of such permission were limited to the site location, the type of development and the amount of development.

It was proposed by Councillor D King and seconded by Councillor M Rhodes that the application be refused, contrary to Officer's recommendation, for the following reason:

- (1) by reason of the provision of five to seven dwellings, the proposed development would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt, and the benefits of the development would not outweigh the harm to the Green Belt, contrary to Policies CP14 and CP3 of the Tonbridge and Malling Core Strategy 2007 and paragraphs 142 and 145 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Following a formal vote, the proposal was supported by majority of the Committee and on the grounds that the above refusal reason was not considered could be substantiated at an appeal, the vote taken was a recommendation only in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 Rules of the Constitution.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of the planning application be DEFERRED for a report from the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer on the risks arising from a decision contrary to the recommendation of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health\* (as set out in Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution).

[Speaker: Mr D Bedford (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

\*The post title of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health was renamed to the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services from 22 January 2026 and the relevant references within the Constitution were being updated accordingly.

**MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

**AP1 26/11 PLANNING APPEALS, PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND HEARINGS**

It was noted that there had been no planning appeals, public inquiries or hearings since the last meeting of the Planning Committee.

**AP1 26/12 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.25 pm  
with an adjournment between 8.09 and 8.13 pm



## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **FINANCE, REGENERATION AND PROPERTY SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES**

**Tuesday, 17th February, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr D Harman (Chair), Cllr M R Rhodes (Vice-Chair), Cllr A G Bennison, Cllr G C Bridge (substitute), Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr L Chapman, Cllr J Clokey, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr B A Parry, Cllr S Pilgrim, Cllr K B Tanner and Cllr C J Williams

**In Attendance:** Cllrs Mrs S Bell\*, R P Betts, M D Boughton\*, P M Hickmott, M A J Hood, D Keers\*, A Mehmet and Mrs A S Oakley\* were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

(\*participated via MS Teams)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Bishop and P Boxall

#### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

##### **FRP 26/1 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Notification of substitute members were recorded as set out below:

- Cllr Bridge substitute for Cllr Bishop

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 17.5 to 17.9 these Councillors had the same rights as the ordinary member of the committee for whom they were substituting.

##### **FRP 26/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

##### **FRP 26/3 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting of the Finance, Regeneration and Property Scrutiny Select Committee held on 16 September 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

**FRP 26/4 CABINET MEMBER REPORT - INFRASTRUCTURE AND  
TONBRIDGE REGENERATION**

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration provided an overview of activities undertaken over the past 12 months and set out the plan for delivery in the coming year.

Members welcomed the approach taken to encourage all infrastructure providers to respond to the Local Plan Consultation, supported the concerns raised with South East Water about their ability to meet the demands of new development and ensuring sufficient water supply; noted ongoing discussions with the Integrated Care Board to secure improved delivery of health facilities in the Borough and noted the commencement of officer level meetings with KCC Highways to review the specification for highways work so it adequately responded to concerns raised by communities.

With regard to Tonbridge regeneration, good progress continued to be made on the East of the High Street Masterplan and public engagement on the Angel Centre replacement was currently taking place in advance of a planning application being submitted. It was indicated that, whilst the replacement of the Angel Centre was the first step in the wider regeneration proposals for Tonbridge, the East of the High Street Masterplan would continue to be monitored to assess financial viability.

**FRP 26/5 CABINET MEMBER REPORT - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
PROPERTY**

Members were provided with an overview of the economic development and property-related activities undertaken over the past 12 months and the plan for delivery for the coming year was noted.

Particular reference was made to successful Shopfront and Vacant Unit Improvement, Green Business and West Kent Rural Grant Schemes which supported local communities and businesses.

A wide range of activities supporting the Borough Council's Corporate Strategy had been progressed and included renewables and energy efficiency measures at the leisure facilities; consolidation of the offices in Gibson Building East and the provision of directly owned temporary accommodation. Members were pleased to note that planning permission for a modular housing scheme at Blue Bell Hill for use as temporary accommodation had been granted.

Finally, the challenge in identifying further carbon offset and energy efficiency measures for the medium/long-term were recognised, although a number of options continued to be explored.

## **FRP 26/6 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

The report of the Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer provided details of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which supported the budget for 2026/27 and covered the period from April 2026 to March 2036.

Members were pleased to note that the savings target of £600,000 set by Council in February 2025 had been exceeded. In addition, the reductions in expenditure and increased income had been reflected in the 2026/27 estimates, as detailed in 5.2 of the report. Details arising from the Fair Funding Review and Business Rates Reset provisionally announced in December 2025 had also been incorporated into the budget.

The budget proposal to Council allowed for a Band D Council Tax of £252.65 and a total Borough precept of £13,812,921.

Particular reference was made to the final MTFS Projection for 2026/27 which showed that a balanced position was achieved in year 10, with a contribution to the General Revenue Reserve of £318,00 and General Revenue Reserve balance of £4.8m in 2023/26 and meeting the objectives set in paragraph 3.5

To achieve these results a zero-funding gap had been identified and it was decided that a Savings and Transformation Strategy would not be produced for 2026/27, although this could be revisited if the financial position changed.

Members were advised that the final local government finance settlement had been confirmed. Whilst there was no fundamental impact on the proposed budget for 2026/27, there would be a reduction of £173,000 in 2027/28 resulting in a change to the General Revenue Reserve which would reduce to £4.6M (from £4.8M).

Finally, a number of assumptions had been made in completing the MTFS and detailed explanations provided in 6.1 – 6.31 of the report were noted. However, these included council tax increases, inflation rates, local government reorganisation, the replacement Angel Centre and the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract.

## **FRP 26/7 TONBRIDGE SWIMMING POOL BOILER REPLACEMENT**

The report provided information on efforts to replace the end-of-life gas boilers at Tonbridge Swimming Pool.

Design engineers had conducted a feasibility study on a range of options, all of which included to a greater or lesser extent air or ground source heat pumps. The capital expenditure and estimated impact on

running costs was also estimated and a summary of the options was provided at 6.1 of the report.

Due to the considerable costs associated with all of the options outlined in the report, the fact that these would need to be funded by the Borough Council and that the boilers needed to be replaced to avoid potential significant disruption and a loss of income claim from the Leisure Trust, it was recognised that a scheme to replace the end-of-life boilers on a like for like basis represented best value for money.

Members expressed disappointment that efforts to decarbonise the building were not financially viable but acknowledged that modern technology would be more efficient than the now 30-year-old current boilers. It was noted that newer technologies would result in reduced gas usage, lower cost and CO2 emissions and an increased efficiency of around 20-30% could potentially be achieved with modern boilers operating at over 90%. Details of the carbon reduction expected for the new high-efficiency gas boilers would be clarified once the specification was known.

Finally, it was recognised that including energy efficient measures in a newly designed facility, such as the replacement Angel Centre, was simpler than trying to retrofit an older building constrained by space.

#### **FRP 26/8 WORK PROGRAMME 2026**

The Work Programme setting out matters to be scrutinised during the next year was attached for information. Members were invited to suggest matters for 2026/27 by liaison with the Chair of the Committee and the Scrutiny Officer.

#### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

#### **FRP 26/9 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **AREA 2 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 18th February, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr W E Palmer (Chair), Cllr B Banks, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr S Crisp, Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr K B Tanner, Cllr Mrs M Tatton and Cllr M Taylor.

**In attendance:** Councillor R I B Cannon was also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Brown (Vice-Chair), P Boxall, M A Coffin, Mrs T Dean, D Harman and J R S Lark.

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **AP2 26/7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

#### **AP2 26/8 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Area 2 Planning Committee held on 14 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **AP2 26/9 GLOSSARY AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS**

Decisions were taken on the following applications subject to the pre-requisites, informatives, conditions or reasons for refusal set out in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services or in the variations indicated below. Any supplementary reports were tabled at the meeting.

Members of the public addressed the meeting where the required notice had been given and their comments were taken into account by the Committee when determining the application. Speakers are listed under the relevant planning application shown below.

**MATTERS FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS  
(IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION)**

**AP2 26/10 TM/25/01412/FL - LAND NORTH OF DRAYHORSE MEADOW,  
FIELDS LANE, WATERINGBURY**

Erection of 66 new homes (including affordable homes), together with associated open space, landscaping, access and parking.

Due regard was given to the determining issues, conditions, reasons and informatives as detailed in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services. The views of public speakers were also taken into account.

Members expressed concerns regarding the proximity of the development to the existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), the loss of Best and Most Versatile land, the harmful impact of the layout on the landscape character and views of the Medway Valley. Furthermore, Members considered the proposal to be an inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Councillor R Betts proposed and Councillor S Hudson seconded that the application be refused, contrary to Officer's recommendation, for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposal by virtue of the proximity of the development to the existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) would lead to the worsening of the AQMA contrary to paragraph 199 of the National Policy Planning Framework and policy SQ4 of the Managing Development and the Environment Development Plan Document;
- (2) The proposal by virtue of the layout, loss of Best and Most Versatile land and loss of important views into and out of the Medway Valley would result in irreversible landscape harm to the detriment of this countryside location, contrary to paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework, policy CP14 of the Core Strategy and Maidstone Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment (Medway Valley); and
- (3) The proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt contrary to paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework for which no very special circumstances have been demonstrated.

Following a formal vote, the proposal was supported by the majority of the Committee and on the grounds that the above refusal reasons were not considered could be substantiated at an appeal, the vote taken was a recommendation only in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 Rules of the Constitution.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of the planning application be DEFERRED for a report from the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer on the risks arising from a decision contrary to the recommendation of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health\* (as set out in Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution).

[Speakers: Councillor K Hutchinson (on behalf of Wateringbury Parish Council), Mr P Coulling, Mr J Etheridge, Mr D Mitchell-Moore (statement read by the Democratic Services Officer), Ms J Northern, Ms E Peacock and Mr J Tilthorpe (statement read by Mr P Coulling) (members of the public); and Ms H Becker (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

\*The post title of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health was renamed to the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services from 22 January 2026 and the relevant references within the Constitution were subsequently updated following approval by Full Council.

**AP2 26/11 TM/25/01596/PA - BLACK HORSE INN, TUMBLEFIELD ROAD, STANSTED**

Proposed change of use of part of the public house to form 2 x 1 bed and 2 x 2 bed apartments with associated parking, amenity space and use of existing access.

Due regard was given to the determining issues, conditions, reasons and informatives as detailed in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services. Members expressed concern regarding the significant reduction in floor space, which would impact the viability of the remaining parts of the public house as a community facility and the absence of a viability report to demonstrate the sustainability of the public house. Concern was also raised regarding the likely harm that the proposed development would have on the conservation area, and the loss of a landmark and heritage asset.

It was proposed by Councillor R Betts, seconded by Councillor M Taylor and unanimously supported by the Committee, that the application be refused.

**RESOLVED:** That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposed development would result in the loss of part of the premises last used for the provision of community services and it had not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that the remaining facility was of an adequate scale to meet the identified significant need or of a size that was adequate to support the community facility contrary to Core Strategy Policy CP26; and

- (2) The proposal was contrary to Paragraph 98 (c) of the National Planning Policy Framework, in that the building provided a social recreation, cultural facility and service to the community.

[Speakers: Councillor Y Tisson (on behalf of Stansted Parish Council), Mr D Epps, Ms D Estrade (on behalf of Black Horse Project Steering Group), Mr T Seldon and Mr B Shaw and Mr G Whitaker (members of the public) and Mr P Nicholls (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

**AP2 26/12 TM/25/01771/PA - ALANS HECTARE, CEMETERY LANE, HADLOW, TONBRIDGE**

Change of use of land to a travellers caravan site consisting of 6 additional residential caravan plots to rear of existing site.

Due regard was given to the determining issues, conditions, reasons and informatives as detailed in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services. The views of public speakers were also taken into account.

During deliberation, Members took into consideration the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show-person Accommodation Assessment 2025 (GGTA) which set out an identified need for 33 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches across the Borough. Concern was raised regarding the landscaping and boundary treatment and to ensure that there was a level of control over the fencing, it was proposed by Councillor W Palmer (Chair), seconded by Councillor R Betts, and the Committee unanimously

**RESOLVED:** That planning permission be GRANTED in accordance with the submitted details, conditions and reasons and informatives set out in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services, subject to consultation with the Chair of the Area 2 Planning Committee and the local Ward Members on the details of the scheme of landscaping and boundary treatment to be submitted by the Applicant pursuant to Condition 9.

[Speakers: Councillor O Baldock (on behalf of Hadlow Parish Council) and Dr A Murdoch (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

**AP2 26/13 TM/25/01509/PA - ALLENS OAST, 4B OLD ROAD, EAST PECKHAM, TONBRIDGE**

Retrospective permission for the unauthorised erection of a summerhouse outbuilding.

Further to Minute AP2 26/4 of the meeting held on 14 January 2026, the Committee considered the above application with the report of the

Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer set out in Part 2 of the agenda (Minute AP2 26/16 refers).

On the grounds of Member's continued concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on the adjacent Grade II listed building, wider heritage impacts and landscaping, it was proposed by Councillor S Hudson and seconded by Councillor M Boughton, that retrospective permission be refused, contrary to Officer's recommendation, for the following reason:

- (1) That the unauthorised erection of a summerhouse outbuilding with flat roofed projection further towards the Grade 2 Listed building at Strettitt Place was contrary to Policies CP24 (design), S66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservations Areas) Act 1990 and 213A of the NPPF and created additional harm to the setting of the historic asset.

Following a formal vote, the proposal was carried with seven Members voting in favour and two Members voting against. One Member abstained from voting. On the grounds that the above refusal reason was not considered could be substantiated at any appeal and there was likely to be a risk of significant costs being awarded against the Council at any appeal, the vote taken was a recommendation only in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 Rules of the Constitution.

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That consideration of the planning application stand ADJOURNED with the recommendation to refuse the planning application being referred for determination by Council in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution.

**\*Recommended to Council**

## **AP2 26/14 PLANNING APPEALS, PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND HEARINGS**

Members received a verbal report detailing the Planning Inspectorate's appeal decision regarding the site at Land north-east and south of 161 Wateringbury Road, East Malling. The appeal was allowed, and outline planning permission was subsequently granted. All matters were reserved except for access, with approval for the erection of up to 52 residential dwellings. The development included affordable housing, open space and landscaping, roads, parking facilities, drainage and earthworks, and a new access to be formed from Wateringbury Road, in accordance with application TM/22/01570/OA. The permission was subject to specified conditions.

The Planning Inspectorate considered the effect of the proposed development on:

- the setting of listed buildings, including Huntley Cottage, Ivy House Farm and Barn, and the on-designated heritage asset of Belvedere Oast.
- East Malling Conservation Area.
- the character and appearance of the landscape, including the 'historic landscape'
- highway safety
- ecology, in particular badgers; and
- the living conditions of the occupants of the adjacent No. 51 Wateringbury Road with particular regard to privacy and light intrusion.

In weighing up the proposal in the planning balance, the Inspector concluded that the proposal complied with numerous local policies, including the provision of affordable housing, the availability of sustainable transport and proximity to the local services, the protection of biodiversity, no harm to residential amenity and provision of open space.

The Inspector considered that the proposal would not cause a material increase in traffic or risk to highway safety and that it had been satisfactorily demonstrated that the development would have an insignificant effect on air quality including on the Wateringbury Air Quality Management Area.

The Inspector did identify some harm, specifically regarding the setting of the Conservation Area, local landscape character, and the loss of Grade II agricultural land. However, these harms were considered modest. Taking into account the Council's history of poor housing delivery and the very low five-year housing land supply, the Inspector concluded that any conflicts did not outweigh the benefits provided by the development.

#### **AP2 26/15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chair 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 INFORMATION**

#### **AP2 26/16 TM/25/01509/PA - ALLENS OAST, 4B OLD ROAD, EAST PECKHAM, TONBRIDGE**

At the meeting of the Area 2 Planning Committee held on 14 January 2026 consideration of the application was deferred for a report from the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer on the risks arising

from a decision contrary to the recommendation of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health (as set out in Council and Committee Procedural Rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution) (Minute AP2 26/4 refers). The report of the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer provided an assessment of the risks arising from a resolution to refuse planning permission and advised that any such resolution would be a recommendation only and the matter would stand adjourned to be considered and determined by Full Council (Minute AP2 26/13 refers).

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received and noted.

The meeting ended at 11.49 pm  
With an adjournment between 9.50 pm and 9.59 pm



# **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **COUNCIL MEETING**

### **MINUTES**

**Tuesday, 24th February, 2026**

At the meeting of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council held at Civic Suite, Gibson Building, Kings Hill, West Malling on Tuesday, 24th February, 2026

**Present:** His Worship the Mayor (Councillor C Brown), the Deputy Mayor (Councillor K B Tanner), Cllr B Banks, Cllr K Barton, Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr A G Bennison, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr P Boxall, Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr L Chapman, Cllr J Clokey, Cllr A Cope, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr S M Hammond, Cllr D Harman, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr D Keers, Cllr J R S Lark, Cllr A McDermott, Cllr A Mehmet, Cllr D W King, Cllr Mrs A S Oakley, Cllr R W G Oliver, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr S Pilgrim, Cllr B A Parry, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr D Thornevell, Cllr K S Tunstall and Cllr C J Williams

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Athwal, M A Coffin, S Crisp and Mrs T Dean, who all attended via MS Teams.

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **C 26/5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

#### **C 26/6 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the proceedings of the ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the Council held on 28 October 2025 and 27 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

#### **C 26/7 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor advised of a number of engagements attended since the last meeting of Council and made particular reference to the following civic and charity events:

- The Festival of Remembrance at Rochester Cathedral
- Aylesford Jobs Fair
- RBLI 'Special Announcement' Event

- Neurocafe Event at North Kent College
- TMBC's Community Awards Ceremony at the Council Offices, Kings Hill
- Rotary Club of Tonbridge's Young Musician Competition at Somerhill School
- Recognition Event for the Haydsen Country Park Volunteer Group at Tonbridge Castle
- Tonbridge Rotary Club's Christmas Festival
- Kent Charities Christmas Draw 2025
- Leybourne Grange Riding Centre for the Disabled Nativity
- Tonbridge Philharmonic Society and Tonbridge Round Table's Family Carols at Tonbridge School
- Hospice in the Weald's Carols at Christmas Event at Tonbridge School

Arrangements were being finalised for future civic and charity events and the following were noted:

- Primary School Visit and Schools Debate – 27 February and 12 March
- Tour and Afternoon Tea at Tonbridge School – 17 April 2026
- Cheque Presentation to Mayoral charities - TBC
- Annual Council – 12 May 2026

Finally, the Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor and Past Mayors for attending a number of events on their behalf.

**C 26/8 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 5.5**

No questions were received from Members pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 5.5.

**C 26/9 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 5.6**

No questions were received from members of the public pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 5.6.

**C 26/10 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader opened by reflecting on the recent deaths of two Honorary Freeman and paid tribute to Sir John Stanley MP and Mrs Jill Anderson by highlighting their significant contributions to the Borough and the impact of their loss on the Council and community.

Reference was made to the successful Tonbridge and Malling Community Awards ceremony which recognised outstanding community

achievements. It was intended to host another awards event later in the year.

Details were shared of the extensive Local Plan Consultation process undertaken by the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Planning, which had included 27 public meetings, 2150 attendees and over 6,400 comments. Feedback from the consultation would be reviewed by the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee before the Local Plan progressed to Regulation 19. The challenges related to infrastructure and water supply were recognised.

The ongoing Government consultation on local government reorganisation was outlined and the Borough Council's preference for Option 3A was reiterated. The importance of engaging with parish/town councils and the need for careful planning to avoid negative impacts was also emphasised.

A recent public engagement exercise on proposals for the replacement Angel Leisure Centre had finished at the weekend and responses were currently being assessed. However, the overall exercise had been positive.

Finally, the Leader advised that in response to local concerns about water supply resilience in light of recent outages and future housing developments the Borough Council had proactively sought input from infrastructure providers during the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation. Further professional advice on the weight of these concerns in reaching planning decisions was awaited.

Full Leaders announcements were available on the Borough Council's [YouTube channel](#).

### **MATTERS FOR DECISION**

#### **C 26/11 SETTING THE BUDGET 2026/27**

Item CB 26/19 referred from the Cabinet of 10 February 2026.

The Leader of the Borough Council proposed that Council Procedure Rule No 6.4 be suspended to allow the leading speakers from each Group to exceed the time limit on speeches when debating the budget proposals. Time limits on speeches would be reapplied following discussions on Setting the Budget and Setting the Council Tax. This was seconded by Cllr Betts and supported by the Council.

In presenting the budget proposals, which had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet on 22 January and 10 February 2026 respectively, both the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services and the Leader highlighted the positive financial outlook, the Borough Council's continued debt-free status, the

achievement of a balanced budget for 2026/27, the removal of savings targets and significant transfers to reserves totalling approximately £5.2 million.

The budget also included allocations for the replacement Angel Leisure Centre, a Local Plan reserve and a Local Government Reorganisation reserve.

Although Tonbridge and Malling faced the second highest reduction in core spending nationally strong financial planning had allowed for a balanced budget without the need for a Savings and Transformation Strategy. The importance of maintaining flexibility and investing in key capital projects was emphasised. Planned capital investments included digital CCTV, water safety systems, new sports facilities and improvements to public spaces. The Borough Council would also continue supporting services such as temporary accommodation and homelessness initiatives.

Members expressed support for the positive financial management and the focus on protecting services.

It was proposed by Councillor Boughton and seconded by Councillor Betts that the recommendations at Minute CB 26/19 be adopted. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 8.5 voting was recorded as follows:

Members voting for the motion:

Cllrs Banks, Barton, Bell, Bennison, Betts, Bishop, Boughton, Boxall, Bridge, Brown, Cannon, Chapman, Clokey, Cope, Dalton, Davis, Hammond, Harman, Hickmott, Hood, Hoskins, Hudson, Keers, King, Lark, McDermott, Mehmet, Oakley, Oliver, Palmer, Parry, Pilgrim, Rhodes, Roud, Tanner, Tatton, Taylor, Thornewell, Tunstall and Williams

Total: 40

Members voting against the motion: 0

Total: 0

Members abstaining: 0

Total: 0

(Total number of Members eligible to vote = 40)

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations at Minute CB 26/19 be approved.

**C 26/12 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX 2026/27**

Item CB 26/20 referred from the Cabinet of 10 February 2026 recommended that a 3% or £7.35 per annum increase in the Borough Council's element of the Council Tax for 2026/27, representing a notional 'average' charge at Band D of £252.65 be approved.

As the billing authority, the Council was required to resolve the levels of council tax for each Band and for each area within the borough consolidating the requirements from all precepting authorities. A Council Tax Resolution incorporating all this information was presented to Members as a supplement to the agenda (attached at Annex 1).

It was proposed by Councillor Boughton and seconded by Councillor Betts that the recommendations at Minute CB 26/20 be adopted.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 8.5 voting was recorded as follows:

Members voting for the motion:

Cllrs Banks, Barton, Bell, Bennison, Betts, Bishop, Boughton, Boxall, Bridge, Brown, Cannon, Chapman, Clokey, Cope, Dalton, Davis, Hammond, Harman, Hickmott, Hood, Hoskins, Hudson, Keers, King, Lark, McDermott, Mehmet, Oakley, Oliver, Palmer, Parry, Pilgrim, Rhodes, Roud, Tanner, Tatton, Taylor, Thornewell, Tunstall and Williams

Total: 40

Members voting against the motion: 0

Total: 0

Members abstaining: 0

Total: 0

(Total number of Members eligible to vote = 40)

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the recommendations at Minute CB 26/20 be approved; and
- (2) the Council Tax Resolution 2026/27, as set out as an Annex to these Minutes, be adopted.

**C 26/13 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2026/27**

Item CB 26/21 referred from Cabinet of 10 February 2026

It was proposed by Cllr Boughton and seconded by Cllr Betts that the recommendation of Cabinet be approved.

**RESOLVED:** That the draft Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27(attached as Annex 1) be approved.

**C 26/14 TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2026/27**

Item CB 26/22 referred from Cabinet of 10 February 2026

It was proposed by Cllr Boughton and seconded by Cllr Betts that the recommendation of Cabinet be approved.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the treasury management position as at 30 November 2025 be noted; and
- (2) the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy for 2026/27 (attached at Annex 5) be adopted

**C 26/15 LOCALISM ACT - PAY POLICY**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee of 21 January 2026 in respect of the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and an updated Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 as set out in Annex 1.

As there had not been many significant changes in the Borough Council's remuneration policy, the substantive content of the updated Policy was nearly identical to the Borough Council's Pay Policy Statement 2025/26. The key updates related to the actual pay received by staff, the pay multiple data and the number of officers in specific graded posts. A new section had been added to reflect the current Long Service Award scheme operated within the Council.

An amendment to recommendation GP 26/4 to include the Real Living Wage as a consideration in the Pay Policy was proposed by Cllr Clokey and seconded by Cllr Banks. It was clarified that this would not bind the Borough Council but would require formal consideration when setting the annual pay award.

Concern was expressed that including the Real Living Wage as a consideration would reduce the Borough Council's flexibility in setting local pay levels, potentially leading to prescriptive outcomes and

impacting its ability to address market conditions and recruitment challenges.

Following a formal vote, the amendment motion was lost with 20 Members voting in favour and 20 Members voting against. The Mayor used their casting vote against the amendment.

In recognition that having a robust Pay Policy Statement assisted in providing efficient services for residents and maintained an effective council, Cllr Rhodes proposed, Cllr Boughton seconded and Council

**RESOLVED:** That the Pay Policy Statement set out in Annex 1 be endorsed and adopted.

#### **C 26/16 PAY AWARD 2026/2027**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee of 21 January 2026 in respect of a proposed pay award for employees for 2026/27.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations and the challenges regarding recruitment and retention, particularly for professional M grade roles was recognised. Cllr Rhodes proposed, Cllr Boughton seconded and Council

**RESOLVED:** That a pay award of 4% for application to all salary scales be adopted with effect from 1 April 2026.

#### **C 26/17 TONBRIDGE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

The report of the Chief Executive and Electoral Registration Officer set out the results of the Community Governance Review process and recommended the creation of a Town Council for Tonbridge.

Due regard was given to the views of the Community Governance Review Member Working Group and residents. A further consultation seeking views on whether the Town Council should be warded, the potential number of Town Councillors and whether it should have a Mayor was undertaken and a detailed overview of the outcomes was attached at Annex 2.

In recognition that the establishment of a Town Council would contribute to or impact the efficient and effective delivery of local council services to the residents of Tonbridge, Cllr Brown proposed, Cllr Boughton seconded and Council

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the results of the Community Governance Review consultations be noted;
- (2) the creation of a new parish within Tonbridge (as set out in Annex 1) be approved;
- (3) the naming of the new parish as 'Tonbridge' be approved;
- (4) the new parish has a parish council called 'Tonbridge Town Council' comprising:
  - a) the division of the Town Council area into 6 wards that are the same as the existing 6 borough wards (as set out in Annex 2):
    - Cage Green and Angel
    - Higham
    - Judd
    - Oast (area outside of Hildenborough parish)
    - Trench
    - Vauxhall
  - b) 18 councillors sitting on the Town Council as outlined below:

Ward	Number of Cllrs
Cage Green and Angel	4
Higham	3
Oast	1
Judd	3
Trench	3
Vauxhall	4

- (5) the change taking effect for electoral purposes ahead of the publication of the revised register planned for 1 December 2026 be approved;
- (6) the parish coming into effect from 1 April 2027 for administration purposes be approved;
- (7) the first election for the Town Council taking place on 6 May 2027, and every four years thereafter, be approved;
- (8) delegated authority be granted to the Electoral Registration Officer to undertake the proposed next steps as set out in 7 of the report; and
- (9) support for a Mayor that carries out ceremonial duties and chairs meetings be noted.

**C 26/18 CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The report of the Monitoring Officer set out recommended changes to Committee Procedure Rules 15.24 and 15.25 to provide a definition for the term 'risk of significant costs' and to clarify the decision-making route for items of business covered by more than one Area Planning Committee.

The proposed amendment to CPR 15.25 would ensure that the determination of a planning application would remain a matter for Council, unless both Area Planning Committees were agreed on both the proposed recommendations and the reasons for refusal, or in the case of a proposed approval, the conditions to be attached to the planning permission. In this situation, the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services would determine the application with no further consideration by Full Council.

With regard to CPR 15.24, it was reported that the current threshold of £5,000 to represent 'significant costs' had led to some relatively minor planning applications being reported to Council for determination, which was not the intended use of this rule. CPR 15.24 was intended to ensure that, where planning determinations could have an unplanned impact on the authority's financial position that Members were fully aware of the implications and to ensure appropriate due diligence on decision making was provided. It was, therefore, proposed that a financial threshold of £50,000 be applied to represent a 'significant risk'.

Members welcomed the clarification in respect of CPR 15.25 and in recognition that the proposals would contribute to maintaining an efficient service for residents by ensuring that planning applications were determined in the most efficient and equitable way, Cllr Brown proposed, Cllr Boughton seconded and Council

**RESOLVED:** That the changes to Committee Procedure Rules 15.24 and 15.25, as set out in 4.4 and 4.9 of the report, be approved.

**MATTERS FOR INFORMATION****C 26/19 MINUTES OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

The Minutes of meetings of the Cabinet and Committees for the period October 2025 to January 2026 set out in the Minute Book (Volume 5), attached as a supplement, were received and noted.

Any recommendations to the Council from Cabinet or Committees were resolved elsewhere on the agenda.

**C 26/20 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

**RESOLVED:** That authority be given for the Common Seal of the Council to be affixed to any instrument to give effect to a decision of the Council incorporated into these Minutes and proceedings.

**C 26/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Mayor moved, it was seconded by Cllr Boughton and

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

**PART 2 - PRIVATE****MATTERS FOR DECISION****C 26/22 ESTABLISHMENT REPORT**

(Reason: Part 2 – Private – LGA 1972, Schedule 12A Paragraph 2 – Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee in respect of a number of establishment changes recommended by the Borough Council's Management Team.

Cllr Rhodes proposed, Cllr Boughton seconded and Council

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) a new full-time Information Governance Manager post at grade M8 be permanently established;
- (2) the hours of the Principal Planning Policy Officer (post DJ0318) (M8) be permanently increased from 32 to 37 hours per week; and
- (3) the hours of the Senior Planning Policy Officer (post DJ0319) (M8) be permanently increased from 30 to 37 hours per week.

**C 26/23 DISPENSATION - COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

(Reason: Part 2 – Private – LGA 1972 Schedule 12A Paragraph 1 – information relating to an individual)

The report of the Chief Executive sought approval for the continued absence of a Borough Councillor from meetings on the grounds of ill health and/or injury.

To give the Member sufficient time to recuperate, follow medical advice and focus on their recovery, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Betts seconded and Council

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) a waiver of the 6-month attendance rule, as set out in s85 of the Local Government Act 1972, be approved on the grounds of ill health/injury as detailed in the report (contains exempt information); and
- (2) the extension of the permitted non-attendance time for a further 6-month period until 21 October 2026 be approved.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm



**COUNCIL TAX****DRAFT RESOLUTION**

1. It be noted that on 24th February 2026 the Council calculated:

- (a) the Council Tax Base 2026/27 for the whole Council area as 54,672.16 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")] and,
- (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items (Special expenses and or a Parish precept) relates as follows:

Tonbridge	14,148.15
Addington	441.18
Aylesford	4,801.97
Birling	203.63
Borough Green	1,743.89
Burham	476.98
Ditton	1,904.65
East Malling & Larkfield	5,381.75
East Peckham	1,352.25
Hadlow	1,590.30
Hildenborough	2,341.77
Ightham	1,137.22
Kings Hill	4,897.61
Leybourne	1,932.53
Mereworth	467.08
Offham	428.08
Platt	920.53
Plaxtol	618.72
Ryarsh	380.68
Shipbourne	289.21
Snodland	3,954.80
Stansted	295.33
Trottiscliffe	280.79
Wateringbury	951.49
West Malling	1,333.33
West Peckham	186.11
Wouldham	1,355.83
Wrotham	856.30

2. £13,812,921 being the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding Parish Precepts).

3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

- (a) £118,999,427 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
- (b) £101,051,951 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) £17,947,476 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
- (d) £328.27 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year including Parish precepts.
- (e) £5,347,057 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Special expenses and Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (f) £230.47 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relate (this is the Council Tax for General Expenses to which Special expenses and Parish precepts are added as applicable).

(g) <b><u>Part of the Council's area</u></b>	£
Tonbridge	304.97
Addington	317.04
Aylesford	308.14
Birling	311.84
Borough Green	398.36
Burham	298.23
Ditton	396.77
East Malling & Larkfield	337.40
East Peckham	366.22
Hadlow	350.25
Hildenborough	295.76
Ightham	347.42
Kings Hill	332.56
Leybourne	332.85
Mereworth	342.68
Offham	318.11
Platt	321.03
Plaxtol	332.44
Ryarsh	310.22
Shipbourne	294.44
Snodland	325.35
Stansted	290.67
Trottscliffe	355.12
Wateringbury	389.83
West Malling	367.97
West Peckham	271.84
Wouldham	290.09
Wrotham	409.77

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items (Special expenses and Parish precepts) relate.

(h)

<u>Part of the Council's area</u>	<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
	<u>A</u> £	<u>B</u> £	<u>C</u> £	<u>D</u> £	<u>E</u> £	<u>F</u> £	<u>G</u> £	<u>H</u> £
Tonbridge	203.32	237.19	271.08	304.97	372.75	440.51	508.29	609.94
Addington	211.36	246.58	281.81	317.04	387.50	457.95	528.40	634.08
Aylesford	205.43	239.66	273.90	308.14	376.62	445.09	513.57	616.28
Birling	207.90	242.54	277.19	311.84	381.14	450.43	519.74	623.68
Borough Green	265.58	309.83	354.10	398.36	486.89	575.41	663.94	796.72
Burham	198.82	231.95	265.09	298.23	364.51	430.78	497.05	596.46
Ditton	264.51	308.59	352.68	396.77	484.95	573.12	661.28	793.54
East Malling & Larkfield	224.94	262.42	299.91	337.40	412.38	487.35	562.34	674.80
East Peckham	244.15	284.83	325.52	366.22	447.61	528.98	610.37	732.44
Hadlow	233.50	272.41	311.33	350.25	428.09	505.92	583.75	700.50
Hildenborough	197.18	230.03	262.90	295.76	361.49	427.21	492.94	591.52
Ightham	231.62	270.21	308.82	347.42	424.63	501.83	579.04	694.84
Kings Hill	221.71	258.65	295.61	332.56	406.47	480.36	554.27	665.12
Leybourne	221.91	258.87	295.86	332.85	406.83	480.78	554.76	665.70
Mereworth	228.45	266.53	304.60	342.68	418.83	494.98	571.13	685.36
Offham	212.08	247.41	282.76	318.11	388.81	459.49	530.19	636.22
Platt	214.03	249.68	285.36	321.03	392.38	463.71	535.06	642.06
Plaxtol	221.63	258.56	295.50	332.44	406.32	480.19	554.07	664.88
Ryarsh	206.82	241.28	275.75	310.22	379.16	448.09	517.04	620.44
Shipbourne	196.30	229.00	261.72	294.44	359.88	425.30	490.74	588.88
Snodland	216.91	253.04	289.20	325.35	397.66	469.95	542.26	650.70
Stansted	193.78	226.07	258.37	290.67	355.27	419.86	484.45	581.34
Trottiscliffe	236.75	276.20	315.66	355.12	434.04	512.95	591.87	710.24
Wateringbury	259.89	303.20	346.52	389.83	476.46	563.09	649.72	779.66
West Malling	245.31	286.19	327.08	367.97	449.75	531.52	613.28	735.94
West Peckham	181.23	211.43	241.63	271.84	332.25	392.66	453.07	543.68
Wouldham	193.40	225.62	257.86	290.09	354.56	419.01	483.49	580.18
Wrotham	273.18	318.71	364.24	409.77	500.83	591.89	682.95	819.54

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. That it be noted that for the year 2026/27 The Police & Crime Commissioner for Kent, the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority and the Kent County Council have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

<b><u>Precepting Authority</u></b>	<b><u>Valuation Bands</u></b>							
	<b>A</b> £	<b>B</b> £	<b>C</b> £	<b>D</b> £	<b>E</b> £	<b>F</b> £	<b>G</b> £	<b>H</b> £
The Police & Crime Commissioner for Kent	190.10	221.78	253.47	285.15	348.52	411.88	475.25	570.30
Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority	66.54	77.63	88.72	99.81	121.99	144.17	166.35	199.62
Kent County Council	1,172.40	1,367.80	1,563.20	1,758.60	2,149.40	2,540.20	2,931.00	3,517.20

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4. above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2026/27, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

<b><u>Part of the Council's area</u></b>	<b><u>Valuation Bands</u></b>							
	<b>A</b> £	<b>B</b> £	<b>C</b> £	<b>D</b> £	<b>E</b> £	<b>F</b> £	<b>G</b> £	<b>H</b> £
Tonbridge	1,632.36	1,904.40	2,176.47	2,448.53	2,992.66	3,536.76	4,080.89	4,897.06
Addington	1,640.40	1,913.79	2,187.20	2,460.60	3,007.41	3,554.20	4,101.00	4,921.20
Aylesford	1,634.47	1,906.87	2,179.29	2,451.70	2,996.53	3,541.34	4,086.17	4,903.40
Birling	1,636.94	1,909.75	2,182.58	2,455.40	3,001.05	3,546.68	4,092.34	4,910.80
Borough Green	1,694.62	1,977.04	2,259.49	2,541.92	3,106.80	3,671.66	4,236.54	5,083.84
Burham	1,627.86	1,899.16	2,170.48	2,441.79	2,984.42	3,527.03	4,069.65	4,883.58
Ditton	1,693.55	1,975.80	2,258.07	2,540.33	3,104.86	3,669.37	4,233.88	5,080.66
East Malling & Larkfield	1,653.98	1,929.63	2,205.30	2,480.96	3,032.29	3,583.60	4,134.94	4,961.92
East Peckham	1,673.19	1,952.04	2,230.91	2,509.78	3,067.52	3,625.23	4,182.97	5,019.56
Hadlow	1,662.54	1,939.62	2,216.72	2,493.81	3,048.00	3,602.17	4,156.35	4,987.62
Hildenborough	1,626.22	1,897.24	2,168.29	2,439.32	2,981.40	3,523.46	4,065.54	4,878.64
Ightham	1,660.66	1,937.42	2,214.21	2,490.98	3,044.54	3,598.08	4,151.64	4,981.96
Kings Hill	1,650.75	1,925.86	2,201.00	2,476.12	3,026.38	3,576.61	4,126.87	4,952.24
Leybourne	1,650.95	1,926.08	2,201.25	2,476.41	3,026.74	3,577.03	4,127.36	4,952.82
Mereworth	1,657.49	1,933.74	2,209.99	2,486.24	3,038.74	3,591.23	4,143.73	4,972.48
Offham	1,641.12	1,914.62	2,188.15	2,461.67	3,008.72	3,555.74	4,102.79	4,923.34
Platt	1,643.07	1,916.89	2,190.75	2,464.59	3,012.29	3,559.96	4,107.66	4,929.18
Plaxtol	1,650.67	1,925.77	2,200.89	2,476.00	3,026.23	3,576.44	4,126.67	4,952.00
Ryarsh	1,635.86	1,908.49	2,181.14	2,453.78	2,999.07	3,544.34	4,089.64	4,907.56
Shipbourne	1,625.34	1,896.21	2,167.11	2,438.00	2,979.79	3,521.55	4,063.34	4,876.00
Snodland	1,645.95	1,920.25	2,194.59	2,468.91	3,017.57	3,566.20	4,114.86	4,937.82
Stansted	1,622.82	1,893.28	2,163.76	2,434.23	2,975.18	3,516.11	4,057.05	4,868.46
Trottscliffe	1,665.79	1,943.41	2,221.05	2,498.68	3,053.95	3,609.20	4,164.47	4,997.36
Wateringbury	1,688.93	1,970.41	2,251.91	2,533.39	3,096.37	3,659.34	4,222.32	5,066.78
West Malling	1,674.35	1,953.40	2,232.47	2,511.53	3,069.66	3,627.77	4,185.88	5,023.06
West Peckham	1,610.27	1,878.64	2,147.02	2,415.40	2,952.16	3,488.91	4,025.67	4,830.80
Wouldham	1,622.44	1,892.83	2,163.25	2,433.65	2,974.47	3,515.26	4,056.09	4,867.30
Wrotham	1,702.22	1,985.92	2,269.63	2,553.33	3,120.74	3,688.14	4,255.55	5,106.66

## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

### MINUTES

Tuesday, 3rd March, 2026

**Present:** Cllr M D Boughton (Chair), Cllr R P Betts, Cllr D Keers and Cllr M Taylor

Cllr M R Rhodes\* was also present pursuant to Access to Information Rule No 23.

(\*attended via MS Teams)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M A Coffin and A Mehmet

### PART 1 - PUBLIC

#### **CB 26/33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

#### **CB 26/34 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### MATTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION

#### EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS

#### **CB 26/35 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES**

(Decision Notice D260032CAB)

Consideration was given to proposals to strengthen the Borough Council's capacity to deliver its Workforce Development Strategy, to ensure that key programmes were effectively implemented, monitored and evaluated and to provide organisational development support in preparation for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Due regard was given to the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and legal implications.

In recognition that the additional capacity would support the authority in maintaining an effective and resilient workforce, particularly during the transition associated with LGR, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Keers seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That the funding for a full-time two-year fixed-term Learning and Development Manager from the Local Government Reorganisation Reserve be approved.

### **MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

#### **CB 26/36 MINUTES OF PANELS, BOARDS AND OTHER GROUPS**

The Minutes of the meetings of the following Advisory Panels and other Groups were received, any recommendations contained therein being incorporated within the decisions of the Cabinet reproduced at the annex to these Minutes.

#### **CB 26/37 DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET MEMBERS**

Details of the Decisions taken in accordance with the rules for the making of decisions by executive members, as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution, were presented for information.

#### **CB 26/38 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS**

The Notice setting out Key Decisions anticipated to be taken during the period April to May 2026 was noted.

A further Notice explained that, in accordance with Rule 15 of the Access to Information Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution), the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been informed that a decision would be taken as a general exception due to the need to implement as soon as possible.

#### **CB 26/39 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was moved by Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Taylor and

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

**PART 2 - PRIVATE****MATTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION****EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS****CB 26/40    OPTIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND - PURCHASE OF PROPERTY**

(Decision Notice D260033CAB)

(Reasons: Part 2 – Private – LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

Consideration was given to the proposed purchase of a residential property in Aylesford from Clarion Housing to meet the requirement of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF).

Due regard was given to the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications.

In recognition of improving housing options for local people whilst protecting outdoor areas of importance, increasing options for temporary accommodation, delivering resettlement properties and making best use of LAHF, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Betts seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That the purchase of a residential property in Aylesford, as detailed in the report, be approved.

**CB 26/41    INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE**

(Decision Notice D260034CAB)

(Reasons: Part 2 – Private – LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

Consideration was given to the recommendation of the Audit Committee in respect of the provision of both Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Services. These were currently provided by Kent County Council through the Kent Audit Function and was due to end in September 2026. However, it was recommended that the service continue up to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Due regard was given to the views of the Audit Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications.

In recognition that the provision of Internal Audit Services was required under LGA 1972 to maintain sufficient governance and control on local

authority operations and to maintain an effective council, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Taylor seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendation from the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) to appoint Kent County Council to provide Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Services from 1 October 2026 to 31 March 2029 be approved.

The meeting ended at 7.41 pm

**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Wednesday, 4th March, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr S A Hudson (Chair), Cllr K S Tunstall (Vice-Chair), Cllr A G Bennison, Cllr S Crisp, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr J R S Lark, Cllr A McDermott, Cllr S Pilgrim, Cllr M R Rhodes and Cllr Mrs M Tatton

**In attendance:** Councillors R P Betts, M D Boughton, P M Hickmott, M A J Hood and D Keers were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs T Dean and W E Palmer\*.

(\*apologies submitted for in-person attendance and participated via MS Teams)

**CE 26/1 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no substitute members.

**CE 26/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**CE 26/3 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee held on 5 November 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET**

**CE 26/4 SOUTH WEST KENT WASTE SERVICES CONTRACT RETENDER**

A comprehensive update was provided on the Borough Council's procurement process for the South West Kent Waste Services Contract. Members were reminded that the current contract for refuse, recycling and street cleansing was due to expire at the end of March 2027 and was being retendered on a partnership basis with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

The joint report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services and the Head of Finance provided details of the tender process and an assessment of the tenders received. As previously approved by Members, the tender was for a new contract of 12 years with an option to extend by up to two years subject to mutual agreement of all parties.

The outcome of the evaluation process, including the quality and price scores of the submissions and the overall tender scores, was attached in a restricted Annex 2 due to the inclusion of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information.

In light of the partnership with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in the procurement for the future delivery of the waste services across both boroughs, due regard had been given to aligning the decision-making processes as closely as possible by both local authorities, seeking to ensure synchronised Council approvals to enable final appointment of the successful contractor.

Additionally, Members were advised that a further report would be presented for consideration of the potential options for financing of vehicles under the new contract and for other discretionary works, such as the cleansing of high speed roads.

Taking into consideration the final tender scores detailed in the restricted Annex 2, Cllr S Hudson (Chair) proposed, Cllr M Rhodes seconded and it was

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That

- (1) Contractor A, identified in the restricted Annex 2 to the report, be awarded the South West Kent Waste Services Contract as detailed in the report; and
- (2) a further report setting out proposals relating to the options for the financing of vehicles deployed on the Contract, costs relating to the cleansing of High Speed Roads, and costs associated with the cleansing of a number of Public Open Spaces, be presented to the next meeting of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee for consideration.

**\*Recommended to Cabinet**

## **CE 26/5 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER**

Public Spaces Protection Orders were intended to address particular nuisances or problems in particular areas detrimental to the local community's quality of life by imposing conditions on the use of the area to ensure the law-abiding majority could use and enjoy public spaces,

safe from anti-social behaviour. The Borough Council's current Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was due to end in April 2026 and could be extended for a further three years.

The report of the Chief Executive provided feedback on the responses received on the PSPO consultation and sought approval for the PSPO attached at Annex 1.

A summary of the responses received to the consultation, undertaken between 15 September and 2 November 2025, was set out at Annex 2. The majority of those who had responded were in favour of retaining existing restrictions and supported implementing the new restrictions around the use of catapults and unauthorised camping in Tonbridge Memorial Garden.

The Police and Crime Commissioner had also responded to the consultation and given provisional support to the proposed order across the Borough. Additionally, Kent Police had been consulted and supported the restrictions as proposed in the PSPO.

Furthermore, requests arising from the consultation regarding further restrictions, such as the use of bikes or electric bikes/scooters, possession or misuse of spray paint, and unauthorised use of drones on Parish Council open spaces, were noted. While certain activities were already prohibited under existing laws, Members were reminded that any additional restrictions must satisfy the PSPO threshold test with appropriate evidence support. The challenges associated with enforcing these restrictions were highlighted, with particular reference made to driving or parking vehicles on public open spaces, as a concern shared by Members.

Cllr S Hudson (Chair) proposed, Cllr K Tunstall seconded and it was

**RECOMMENDED\***: That the proposed Public Space Protection Order, as presented at Annex 1, be approved.

**\*Recommended to Cabinet**

## **CE 26/6 BIODIVERSITY DUTY**

(Decision Notice: D260036MEM)

The report of the Chief Executive presented a Biodiversity Duty Report (attached at Annex 1) which set out the Borough Council's progress in delivering its statutory duty to conserve, enhance and protect biodiversity (habitats and species).

Members were asked to endorse the contents of the Biodiversity Duty Report and note the progress being made by the Borough Council in

delivering its statutory biodiversity duty under the Environment Act 2021 and the amended Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

The proposed future actions detailed in Section 6 of the Biodiversity Duty Report and the continuation of practical steps to conserve and enhance biodiversity across parks, open spaces and other land were summarised and noted by Members.

Cllr S Hudson (Chair) proposed, Cllr J Lark seconded and it was

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That

- (1) the Biodiversity Duty Report attached at Annex 1 be endorsed; and
- (2) the proposed future actions set out in Section 6 of the Biodiversity Duty Report, be approved.

**\*Decision taken by Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy**

#### **CE 26/7 REVIEW OF ROADSIDE NATURE RESERVES**

The report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services provided a review of the Borough Council's Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs) following ecological monitoring undertaken by the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership between April and September 2025.

Members were advised that Roadside Nature Reserves were introduced in 2022 and that the monitoring work had identified a wide range of plant species and invertebrates across the sites. It was reported that the RNRs were functioning as wildlife corridors, contributing positively to biodiversity and climate resilience.

A number of management recommendations were proposed with the aim of further enhancing biodiversity, including changes to mowing regimes, the sowing of seed mixes at selected locations, the provision of signage, the expansion of certain existing RNRs and the creation of new sites. It was noted that, subject to approval, the proposals would be implemented through a variation to the Grounds Maintenance contract.

During discussion, Members supported the principle of Roadside Nature Reserves and the wider objectives of enhancing biodiversity across the Borough. However, specific concerns were raised in relation to River Lawn in Tonbridge, with Members highlighting its established use as an amenity space by local residents and its status as the subject of an ongoing Village Green application. An amendment was therefore

proposed by Cllr S Pilgrim and seconded by Cllr F Hoskins that River Lawn be removed from the Roadside Nature Reserves programme and returned to a normal mowing regime. The motion was supported by the Committee.

The Committee then considered the remaining recommendations within the report and agreed to support them as set out. Cllr S Hudson (Chair) proposed, Cllr M Rhodes seconded and it was

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That

- (1) Priority 1 and 2 recommendations within the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership report, attached in Annex 1, be progressed;
- (2) Existing Roadside Nature Reserves, shown in Annex 2, be expanded, subject to the exclusion of River Lawn in Tonbridge from the Roadside Nature Reserves programme; and
- (3) New Roadside Nature Reserves, as shown in Annex 3, be created.

**\*Recommended to Cabinet**

**MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

**CE 26/8 CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO UPDATE**

The report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services provided an overview of the activities undertaken over the past 12 months in respect of waste, recycling, street scene, enforcement, parking, engineering and emergency planning within the Borough Council. Headline initiatives for the coming year were also outlined.

Discussion focused on the operation and review of parking arrangements across the Borough, including on-street and Sunday parking, the provision of free parking, and differences in parking approaches between areas. While recognising the benefits of introducing the new parking arrangements to support improved parking turnover, better availability of short-stay parking, and the role of parking management in enhancing town centre vitality, Members also noted the importance of monitoring the impact of the arrangements on residential areas, including displacement and enforcement issues.

Additionally, the supermarket parking refund schemes and their relationship to the wider town centre activity, alongside the need to review parking arrangements within the context of the Borough Council's overall financial position and service priorities, were also considered. The importance of continuing engagement with local stakeholders as

part of any future review process was acknowledged, and it was noted that a number of the issues raised would be considered further through future reviews with reports to Members in due course.

Overall positive progress being made within the Waste and Technical Services were noted and well received by the Committee.

**CE 26/9 WORK PROGRAMME 2026**

The Work Programme setting out matters to be scrutinised during the next year was attached for information. Members were invited to suggest future matters by liaising with the Chair of the Committee.

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

**CE 26/10 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no matters considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.48 pm

# **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **AREA 3 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

**Monday, 9th March, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr D Thornevell (Chair), Cllr R W Dalton (Vice-Chair),  
Cllr A G Bennison, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr R I B Cannon,  
Cllr L Chapman, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr D Keers,  
Cllr A McDermott and Cllr C J Williams

**In attendance:** Councillors S Crisp, Mrs T Dean, J R S Lark, W E Palmer,  
R V Roud, K B Tanner, Mrs M Tatton, D Harman\* and D W King\*  
were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

(\*participated via MS Teams)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Bell,  
S M Hammond and Mrs A S Oakley.

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **AP3 26/9 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

#### **AP3 26/10 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Area 3 Planning Committee held on 29 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **AP3 26/11 GLOSSARY AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS**

Decisions were taken on the following applications subject to the pre-requisites, informatives, conditions or reasons for refusal set out in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services or in the variations indicated below. Any supplementary reports were tabled at the meeting.

Members of the public addressed the meeting where the required notice had been given and their comments were taken into account by the Committee when determining the application. Speakers are listed under the relevant planning application shown below.

**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION****AP3 26/12 TM/24/00372/OAEA - LAND EAST OF KILN BARN ROAD AND WEST OF HERMITAGE LANE, AYLESFORD**

Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except for access, which is to include the Sustainable Movement Corridor from New Road East Malling to Kiln Barn Road) for development of land to west of Hermitage Lane and East of Kiln Barn Road comprised of: a residential-led development of up to 1,300 dwellings including affordable housing; a new village centre including a primary school; ancillary commercial, community and employment floorspace; strategic open space, parkland, child play provision and sustainable drainage infrastructure; new access points and associated transport infrastructure, including demolition of existing vacant buildings. Application supported by an Environmental Statement.

Members were reminded that, in accordance with the Borough Council's Constitution, Committee Procedure Rule 15.25, the application fell within the areas of more than one Area Planning Committee and must therefore be considered independently by both of the Committees concerned, with the recommendations of both Committees to be reported to Council for decision, unless both Committees were agreed on their recommendations (including reasons for their recommendations and any conditions to be attached to a grant of permission), in which case the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services might proceed to determine the application in accordance with those recommendations.

Due regard was given to the consultation responses and determining issues detailed in both the main and the supplementary reports of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services, as well as representations made by the speakers.

Members expressed concerns regarding highways and traffic impacts, the Sustainable Movement Corridor, heritage and landscape effects, loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, and the adequacy of potable water supply and infrastructure capacity.

Queries were raised and responded to in relation to highways modelling, cumulative impacts, heritage considerations, Biodiversity Net Gain provision, affordable housing viability, ecological matters and the Sustainable Movement Corridor, with particular discussion focused on representations received in respect of potable water supply and whether a Grampian-style condition could be imposed to control phased development and occupation pending approval and confirmation of adequate infrastructure to meet water supply needs arising from the development.

A motion was proposed and seconded to grant planning permission in accordance with the officer recommendation, subject to completion of a section 106 legal agreement, conditions and informatives as set out in both the main and the supplementary reports of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services, and the inclusion of an additional Grampian-style condition relating to potable water supply. On being put to the vote, the motion was lost with six Members voting against and five Members voting in favour.

A further motion was then proposed and seconded to defer consideration of the application to allow further information and evidence to be obtained in relation to the delivery capacity of South East Water to supply the development given the recent position change on their Water Resources Management Plan. This was carried with six Members voting in favour and five Members abstained from voting.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of the application be DEFERRED, to enable further information to be obtained in respect of potable water supply and related infrastructure capacity, and for the matter to be reported back to a future meeting of the Area 3 Planning Committee.

[Speakers: Cllr N Newman (on behalf of Ditton Parish Council), Cllr T Sharp (on behalf of Aylesford Parish Council), Mr A Waters, Mr J Newman, Mrs J Newman, Cllr S Jeffery, Mr R Dove and Cllr P Coulling (members of the public) and Mr G Evans (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

### **AP3 26/13 PLANNING APPEALS, PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND HEARINGS**

There were no updates provided on planning appeals, public inquiries or hearings since the last meeting of the Planning Committee. However, attention was drawn to a dismissed appeal relating to an application at Lunsford Lane, Larkfield, Aylesford, which was previously refused by the Committee, with appreciation recorded to both Members and Officers for their support and contribution in responding to the appeal.

### **AP3 26/14 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.20 pm  
having commenced at 5.30 pm



# **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **AREA 2 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

**Monday, 9th March, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr W E Palmer (Chair), Cllr B Banks, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr S Crisp, Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr Mrs M Tatton and Cllr M Taylor

**In attendance:** Councillors D Thornewell, Mrs S Bell\* and R I B Cannon\* were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

(\*participated via MS Teams)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Brown (Vice-Chair), P Boxall, M A Coffin, Mrs T Dean, D Harman\*\*, J R S Lark and K B Tanner.

(\*\*apologies submitted for in-person attendance and participated via MS Teams)

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **AP2 26/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

#### **AP2 26/18 GLOSSARY AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS**

Decisions were taken on the following applications subject to the pre-requisites, informatives, conditions or reasons for refusal set out in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services or in the variations indicated below. Any supplementary reports were tabled at the meeting.

Members of the public addressed the meeting where the required notice had been given and their comments were taken into account by the Committee when determining the application. Speakers are listed under the relevant planning application shown below.

### **MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

**AP2 26/19 TM/24/00372/OAEA - LAND EAST OF KILN BARN ROAD AND WEST OF HERMITAGE LANE, AYLESFORD**

Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except for access, which is to include the Sustainable Movement Corridor from New Road East Malling to Kiln Barn Road) for development of land to west of Hermitage Lane and East of Kiln Barn Road comprised of: a residential-led development of up to 1,300 dwellings including affordable housing; a new village centre including a primary school; ancillary commercial, community and employment floorspace; strategic open space, parkland, child play provision and sustainable drainage infrastructure; new access points and associated transport infrastructure, including demolition of existing vacant buildings. Application supported by an Environmental Statement.

Members were reminded that, in accordance with the Borough Council's Constitution, Committee Procedure Rule 15.25, the application fell within the areas of more than one Area Planning Committee and must therefore be considered independently by both of the Committees concerned, with the recommendations of both Committees to be reported to Council for decision, unless both Committees were agreed on their recommendations (including reasons for their recommendations and any conditions to be attached to a grant of permission), in which case the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services might proceed to determine the application in accordance with those recommendations. Members further noted that any discussion or outcome at the Area 3 Planning Committee did not bind the Area 2 Planning Committee.

Due regard was given to the consultation responses and determining issues detailed in both the main and the supplementary reports of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services, as well as representations made by the speakers.

Members expressed concerns regarding highways and traffic impacts, affordable housing provision, the Sustainable Movement Corridor, heritage and landscape effects, public transport provision and sustainability, loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, mineral considerations, local primary care capacity, and the adequacy of potable water supply and infrastructure capacity.

The Committee had an in-depth discussion in relation to highways modelling and cumulative impacts; the design, operation and enforceability of the Sustainable Movement Corridor; the bus gate at the nearby Chapelfield Way, Maidstone, and whether further evidence could be sought from Kent County Council Highways regarding its operation, long-term management and effectiveness; potential sterilisation of high-quality ragstone reserves and mineral extraction viability; and the

potential to strengthen a specific condition to ensure it adequately defined the permitted users of the Sustainable Movement Corridor.

Following debate, a motion was proposed and seconded to defer consideration of the application to allow further information to be obtained, including in relation to potable water supply, mineral extraction considerations, the operation of the bus gate at Chapelfield Way, Maidstone, and the wording and enforceability of Condition 7 as set out in the main report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried with the Committee voting in favour unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of the application be DEFERRED, to enable further information to be obtained and investigated in respect of the following areas, and for the matter to be reported back to a future meeting of the Area 2 Planning Committee:

- (1) potable water supply and related infrastructure capacity;
- (2) clarification on mineral extraction and whether this could be extracted prior to the development of housing;
- (3) assessment of impact of the bus gate at Chapelfield Way, Maidstone and its effectiveness; and
- (4) strengthening of the wording and enforceability of Condition 7 relating to the definition of permitted users of the Sustainable Movement Corridor to secure future consistent use of the road as designed.

[Speakers: Ms K Moore, Cllr S Jeffery and Cllr P Coulling (members of the public) and Mr G Evans (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

#### **AP2 26/20 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 11.27 pm  
having commenced at 8.35 pm



## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 11th March, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr M R Rhodes (Chair), Cllr A McDermott (Vice-Chair), Cllr B Banks, Cllr K Barton, Cllr J Clokey, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr B A Parry, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr K B Tanner and Cllr R P Betts (substitute).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor L Chapman.

#### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

##### **GP 26/1 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Notification of a substitute member was recorded as set out below:

- Councillor R Betts substituted for Councillor L Chapman

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 17.5 to 17.9 this Councillor had the same rights as the ordinary member of the committee for whom they were substituting.

##### **GP 26/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

##### **GP 26/3 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 21 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **MATTERS FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

##### **GP 26/4 STANSTED PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

The report of the Chief Executive set out a request received from Stansted Parish Council for a Community Governance Review to consider increasing the number of Parish Councillors from seven to nine. The request, appended as Annex 1 to the report, followed a resolution of the Parish Council and referred to increasing workloads, use of committees and succession planning as key reasons for seeking additional Councillor capacity. The electorate of Stansted Parish Council as at 2 March 2026 was recorded as 452.

The Committee noted that Community Governance Reviews were undertaken in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Local Government Act 1972, and that the General Purposes Committee had delegated authority to determine whether such a review should be undertaken. Reference was made to national guidance and to the Aston Business School model for parish representation, which indicated that for a parish with an electorate of fewer than 500 electors an optimum council size would normally be between five and eight Councillors.

Comparative information on Parish Councillor numbers elsewhere in the Borough was provided in Annex 2 to the report. The Committee had regard to the fact that all seats on Stansted Parish Council were filled at the last parish elections and to the explanations given by the Parish Council.

Members considered the proposed timetable and methodology for the Community Governance Review, including publication of Terms of Reference, an initial consultation with residents and stakeholders, the preparation and publication of draft recommendations and the formulation of final recommendations with a view to implementation at the Parish Council elections in May 2027. The consultation arrangements set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report included the use of an online survey, letters to electors, direct communication with stakeholders, press releases, social media, local publicity and the availability of paper copies in the locality.

The financial implications were noted, with the £600 cost of the consultation exercise, to be funded from the General Revenue Reserve.

The Chair proposed, seconded by Councillor McDermott (Vice-Chair) and the Committee unanimously

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) a Community Governance Review be undertaken to ascertain whether residents of Stansted wished for the number of Parish Councillors to be increased from seven to nine;
- (2) the budget of £600, funded from the General Revenue Reserve, be approved;
- (3) the draft timetable, as set out in Annex 3, be approved;
- (4) the Terms of Reference, as set out in Annex 4, be approved; and
- (5) the consultation process as set out in paragraph 5.1, be approved.

**MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION****GP 26/5 GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2025**

The report of the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive summarised the legislative context of gender pay gap reporting and incorporated the outcomes of the Borough Council's gender pay gap analysis for 2024-25. The Committee noted that the Council was required to publish annual gender pay gap data in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 and that the latest data would be published on the Council's website by 30 March 2026.

Over the past twelve months, both the mean and median gender pay gaps had decreased by 0.02% and 0.41% respectively, when compared to the previous year. Despite these marginal improvements, the overall gender pay gap had largely remained unchanged. It was noteworthy, however, that there had been an increase in the proportion of male employees within the upper quartile.

The analysis suggested that the extent of the gender pay gap was primarily attributable to the lower number of men occupying the lowest graded positions within the Council. Furthermore, several council services were contracted out, and these roles, often lower graded, were predominantly filled by men. This arrangement might contribute to the Council's gender pay gap being higher than that observed in comparable councils across Kent.

Members questioned the extent to which the Borough Council's decision to align the Real Living Wage to the lowest spinal column point in 2025 might influence future gender pay gap figures. Officers clarified that the published figures related to the workforce position as at 31 March 2025 and therefore preceded the period in which the Council's lowest spinal column point was temporarily aligned with the Real Living Wage, and that any impact of that decision would be reflected in subsequent reporting years.

Members expressed differing views on the value of the gender pay gap. Some Members commented that, provided that the role attracted appropriate remuneration and recruitment was based on merit, the headline figures were of limited relevance, whilst other Members emphasised the importance of monitoring the gender pay gap as a means of identifying structural barriers and informing actions such as flexible working arrangements, menopause support and wider equality initiatives.

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE****GP 26/6 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 DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS****GP 26/7 ESTABLISHMENT REPORT**

(Reason: LGA 1972 – Sch 12A Paragraph 2 – Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

The report set out for Members' approval a number of establishment changes recommended by the Borough Council's Management Team. Members noted that, in accordance with adopted conventions, all of the savings/costs referred to in the report reflected the salary at the top of scale/grade plus associated on costs.

In addition, Members noted a number of changes and updates to the Establishment since the last meeting of the Committee, as outlined in Section 5 of the report.

The Chair proposed, seconded by Councillor McDermott (Vice-Chair) and the Committee unanimously

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) four full time, Housing Allocations Officer posts be permanently established from 1 April 2026 at scale 5/6;
- (2) the Parking Manager post be regraded from M8 to M7 from 12 March 2026;
- (3) the Accountancy Assistant post be regraded from scale 4 to scale 5/6, and the post title be redesignated to Finance Officer from 1 April 2026; and
- (4) the fixed term Safeguarding Officer post be permanently established at 18.5 hours per week from 1 April 2026.

The meeting ended at 7.56 pm

## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **HOUSING AND PLANNING SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES**

**Tuesday, 17th March, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr D W King (Chair), Cllr Mrs S Bell (Vice-Chair), Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr R W G Oliver, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr K B Tanner, Cllr D Thornewell and Cllr C J Williams

**In attendance:** Cllrs A G Bennison, R P Betts\*, S Crisp\*, Mrs A S Oakley\* and M R Rhodes\* were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

(\*participated via MS Teams)

#### **HP 26/5 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no substitute Members nominated for this meeting.

#### **HP 26/6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

#### **HP 26/7 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee held on 2 December 2025 and 3 February 2026 respectively be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **HP 26/8 PRESENTATION BY THE KENT HOUSING GROUP**

The Chair of the Kent Housing Group provided an overview of the organisations structure and activities and highlighted the current challenges facing affordable and social housing delivery in Kent.

Particular reference was made to reduced capacity amongst housing associations to deliver affordable housing due to financial constraints, compliance costs and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. It was noted that local authorities also faced increasing difficulty in securing registered providers to deliver new homes.

Recent changes to Housing Revenue Account regulations permitted councils that had transferred their housing stock to own up to 1,000

homes prior to establishing a housing revenue account. Additionally, it was clarified that grant funding from Homes England could be accessed for eligible projects, provided the affordable housing was not required as part of Section 106 planning obligations.

Finally, there was in-depth discussion on Section 106 dynamics, viability, “grey/green belt” affordability expectations, grant rules, and the practical constraints of delivering social rent without grant funding.

### **MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET**

#### **HP 26/9 HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2026-2031**

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services sought approval of a draft Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031 and Action Plan for consultation.

Particular reference was made to central Government’s long-term vision for homelessness, as set out in the ‘National Plan to end Homelessness’, which formed the policy basis for the Borough Councils new Strategy and Action Plan (attached at Annexes 1 and 2 respectively).

There was detailed discussion in respect of the high demand for one-bedroom homes, the prevalence of out of borough placements and the Borough Council’s efforts to increase local temporary accommodation. The challenges in funding and delivering suitable units, especially given grant rate limitations and operational risks was noted. It was also explained that whilst funding opportunities could be explored, priorities had focused on managing financial risks associated with temporary accommodation. Unfortunately, the Borough Council was not currently set up for large-scale operational management of additional units and any expansion would require careful consideration of ongoing costs.

Finally, it was explained that a proposed ‘lived experience’ advisory panel aimed to ensure that feedback from those with direct knowledge and experience of accessing homelessness services informed ongoing improvements.

In recognition that preventing homelessness and ending rough sleeping was a key priority area for the Borough Council, Cllr King proposed, Cllr Dalton seconded and it was

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the draft Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031 (attached at Annex 1) be approved for consultation.

**\*Recommended to Cabinet**

**HP 26/10 LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18 (STAGE 2) CONSULTATION -  
UPDATE**

Members were provided with an update on the Local Plan Regulation 18 (stage 2) Consultation that took place between 10 November 2025 and 2 January 2026. An update on Local Plan transport work and the associated financial implications was also provided.

Summaries of the feedback received, individual question responses and analysis and supporting information was available on [www.tmbc.gov.uk/local-plan-responses](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/local-plan-responses)

General key themes from those responding to the consultation had expressed views in respect of overall housing numbers, scale / location of proposed site allocations, infrastructure capacity especially highways, water, healthcare and schools, greenbelt protection and the adequacy of supporting evidence. Concerns about the impact of development on local character, heritage and the environment were also raised.

With regard to the emerging risk from South East Waters response to the Local Plan consultation and concerns around their capacity to provide sufficient water supply to new development, it was confirmed that discussions with Government, South East Water and neighbouring authorities was ongoing. Further guidance was awaited and Members would be updated as soon as possible.

Particular reference was made to the further transport related work required to inform and support the next stage in plan-making for the Regulation 19 Local Plan, as detailed in 12.3 to 12.7 of the report. In summary this included further testing for a preferred growth scenario for Regulation 19, more detailed junction design and mitigation testing and integrating the findings into the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Microsimulation modelling was currently being investigated for Tonbridge and M20 Junction 6. This could be in the region of £45,000 up to £80,000 respectively, dependent on whether an existing model could be updated and built upon.

There was detailed and robust discussion in relation to the perceived adequacy of junction analysis and the realism of modal shift assumptions, the risks associated with missing the statutory deadline for plan submission, including potential Government intervention, speculative development and uncertainty due to local government reorganisation. The importance of maintaining progress and meeting the December 2026 deadline for submission of a Local Plan was recognised. Members would receive regular updates via the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee and wider engagement sessions.

In recognition that the Local Plan, once adopted, would be the key planning document for Tonbridge and Malling, Cllr King proposed, Cllr Thornewell seconded and it was

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the responses received to the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation and their publication on the Borough Council's website be noted and endorsed;
- (2) the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation question response summaries and associated officer comments, as published on the Borough Council's website be endorsed;
- (3) the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation responses be fully considered in the preparation of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Regulation 19 Local Plan; and
- (4) the update provided in relation to progress on transport evidence for the Local Plan and the potential cost implications of the work proposed be noted.

**\*Recommended to Cabinet**

## **HP 26/11 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT PLAN REVIEW**

A number of proposed changes to the Planning Enforcement Plan (attached at Annex 1) and associated activities were presented for consideration. In addition, options for a pro-active approach were outlined.

Members were advised that the Planning Enforcement Plan (PEP) would be updated to reflect the current National Planning Policy Framework. This would ensure it was up to date, correct and that Members and the public were clear on the changes to national policy and submission requirements for retrospective applications.

In addition, to streamline the submission of a complaint of a breach of planning control, it was proposed that a link be inserted into the PEP directing to the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (technical guidance). This would ensure that stakeholders understood the planning process and what was considered to be a breach of planning control.

Following stakeholder feedback, consideration had been given to a more pro-active approach to enforcement within legislative and capacity constraints. The proposed approach included the issuing of letters outlining the breach and offences requiring immediate cessation without the invitation of a retrospective planning application. New letters had

been drafted (attached at Annexes 2-5) to ensure clear messaging was given to contraveners as to whether enforcement action was initiated, a retrospective planning was invited, no further action was required.

Whilst Members welcomed the proposed improvements to planning enforcement, concern was expressed about the timeliness of enforcement, communication with complainants and the lack of regular updates. In response, ongoing efforts to improve responsiveness and transparency were outlined.

Finally, it was confirmed that third-party evidence, such as photographs, was accepted for enforcement cases. However, it was clarified that for legal proceedings, the Borough Council must gather its own evidence to avoid relying on untrained individuals in court.

In recognition that having an effective Planning Enforcement Plan in place ensured that there was a framework of prioritisation and decision making that reduced the risk of legal challenge, Cllr King proposed, Cllr Palmer seconded and it was

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the proposed changes to the Planning Enforcement Plan and the associated activity and timescales, set out in section 5 of the report, be agreed; and
- (2) the pro-active approach, proposed letter templates and direct action against s215 notices being issued and resourcing options, set out in section 7 of the report, be agreed.

**\*Recommended to Cabinet**

### **MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

#### **HP 26/12 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE - HOUSING**

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy provided a detailed update on housing service delivery and highlighted reductions in temporary accommodation numbers, progress on the Blue Bell Hill development and challenges with Local Lettings Plans.

Members noted that the number of households in temporary accommodation had reduced to below 100, the reluctance of applicants to bid for apartments, despite their quality, and that the Borough Council continued to refine processes and consider policy adjustments to encourage uptake.

It was also noted that the Borough Council's Section 106 agreements now specified rent levels to align with local housing allowance aiming to improve affordability of future development schemes.

#### **HP 26/13 RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT 2025**

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services provided an overview of the key changes introduced by the Renters' Rights Act 2025, set out the implications for the Borough Council's responsibilities in regulating and supporting the private rented sector (PRS); outlined the forthcoming implementation timetable; highlighted new duties for landlords and local authorities and sought to ensure that the organisation was prepared for the phased introduction of the reforms.

Members noted that the Act abolished assured shorthold tenancies and Section 21 'no fault' evictions, with all tenancies converting to periodic status and requiring landlords to provide specific grounds for possession. A national private sector database and landlord ombudsman would be established.

As a result of local authorities gaining strengthened enforcement powers and new reporting obligations, new burdens funding would be provided to support implementation.

#### **HP 26/14 PLANNING ADVISORY SERVICE (PAS) ACTION PLAN - PROGRESS**

Members noted the good progress being made in respect of the recommendations of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Review. Two actions remained pending due to legislative or IT system constraints but would be progressed as soon as possible.

Regular reporting would continue at future meetings.

#### **HP 26/15 ESTATE MANAGEMENT COMPANIES**

The report provided information in relation to the role of estate management companies (EMC); the issues being experienced by residents; the regulatory environment and ongoing reforms; local concerns and the role of section 106 agreements; the approach and views of Registered Providers and implications for homeowners and local authorities.

Members noted that residents faced high and unpredictable service charges, poor standards of work and limited dispute resolution options. These issues affected both private and affordable housing with some registered providers expressing concern over additional management burdens.

Whilst the Borough Council recognised the issues, it currently had limited direct influence to affect change, pending further national action. However, recent and forthcoming consultations and potential legislation aimed to improve regulation, transparency and resident rights.

**HP 26/16 WORK PROGRAMME 2026**

The Work Programme setting out matters to be scrutinised during 2026 was attached for information. Members were invited to suggest future matters by liaising with the Chair of the Committee.

In recognition of the importance of the Local Plan, it was suggested that the Work Programme provide a detailed outline of which topics and evidence would be covered in the updates provided at the May and July meetings. This would ensure that Members had advance notice to review materials.

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

**HP 26/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no matters considered in private.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm  
having commenced at 6.30 pm



**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Wednesday, 25th March, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr K S Tunstall (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Cllr B Banks, Cllr C Brown, Cllr A Cope, Cllr D Keers, Cllr D W King, Cllr J R S Lark, Cllr R W G Oliver, Cllr R V Roud and Cllr M Taylor

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C J Williams (Chair)

**PART 1 - PUBLIC**

**LA 26/1     DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**LA 26/2     MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and Appeals Committee held on 26 November 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**LA 26/3     MINUTES OF PANEL**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meetings of the Licensing and Appeals Committee sitting as a Panel held on 10 November 2025 be received and noted.

**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL**

**LA 26/4     RESULTS OF CONSULTATION ON STREET TRADING POLICY RENEWAL**

Further to Minute Number LA 25/19, as detailed in the [Minutes of 26 November 2025](#), a consultation on renewing the Borough Council's existing Street Trading Policy was undertaken and one response received from a responsible authority was presented for consideration.

The response from Environmental Health (attached at Annex 2) highlighted concerns that the requirement for staff working without the consent holder's supervision to hold a basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check was overly burdensome given potential high staff turnover.

As the Street Trading Policy was yet to be implemented and the exact number of staff likely to be working without the direct supervision of the consent holder for any length of time and requiring a DBS certificate was currently unknown, it was not proposed to amend this section of the Policy. However, this would be revisited if an undue burden on consent holders was identified. Members also noted that neighbouring local authorities had the same requirement in respect of DBS checks and this was considered best practice.

In recognition of ensuring that all licensable activities taking place within the Borough were granted the appropriate permissions under the relevant legislation, Cllr Tunstall proposed, Cllr Keers seconded and it was

**\*RECOMMENDED:** That the Street Trading Policy (attached at Annex 1) be commended for adoption.

**\*Recommended to Council**

### **MATTERS FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

#### **LA 26/5 REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY 2023-2028**

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services presented a revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy for consideration (Annex 1).

Attention was drawn to the key revisions proposed to the adopted policy including changes to window specifications and visible light transmission; permanent signage to front side doors of vehicles to improve vehicle identification in the event of disputes; removal of reference to outsourcing Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and making it a mandatory requirement for all new driver applicants and all existing driver renewal applicants to sign up to the online DBS service.

Members recognised the importance of ensuring only fit and proper persons and suitable vehicles were licensed in the interests of public safety. However, concern was expressed regarding the proposed changes to window specifications which could exclude a large proportion of available vehicles and impact local taxi businesses due to cost and inability to change windows to compliant variants. It was noted that the proposal was considered best practice and in line with the Department for Transport's 2023 guidance.

There was in-depth discussion on whether the Borough Council should adopt the figure proposed in the report or consider manufacturer settings instead. Concern was expressed about the fairness and practicality of the current and proposed window standards.

On the basis that the revised Policy would be subject to public consultation, Cllr Lark proposed, Cllr King seconded and the Committee supported the new wording for Appendix A Section 8.4 on window light transmission values as detailed in 3.1.2 of the report.

Reference was made to the proposals in respect of door signage and disappointment was expressed that the previously requested use of a QR code linking to a complaint form was no longer referenced. In response, there was a commitment to revisit this request and options to include a functional, dedicated online form and QR code would be explored as part of the public consultation.

**RESOLVED:** That

(1) the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (attached at Annex 1) be agreed for publication consultation, subject to:

(i) the inclusion of new wording of Appendix A Section 8.4 on window light transmission values (VLT) as set out below:

- All Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicle windows must meet the requirements as prescribed by the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations. (75% light transmission (VLT) windscreen, 70 % light transmission (VLT) front passenger windows)
- In line with Department for Transport Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance, windows rear of the vehicle B pillar shall have a VLT figure of 30% or above to maintain passenger confidence whilst ensuring a wide range of vehicles may be licensed.
- Vehicles already licensed at the date when this revised policy came into effect will continue to be licensed until they are replaced. Replacement vehicles (permanent or temporary) must comply with this condition.

(ii) Section 3.12 (and associated references in the appendices) be amended to require Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles to affix permanent signage to the front side doors of the vehicle (unless exempt under Section 3.13), with options to include a functional, dedicated online form and QR code to be explored;

(iii) Section 4.6 be amended to remove reference to outsourcing Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks;

(iv) Section 4.7 be amended to make mandatory a requirement for all new driver applicants and all existing driver renewal applicants to sign up to the online Disclosure & Barring

Service update service and to give Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council authority to access DBS records at any time. Six monthly DBS checks will be carried out throughout the duration of a licence or more frequently should this be necessary; and

- (v) Section 4.11 be amended to make clear the requirement for drivers to report to the Council as the licensing authority any convictions or orders affecting them within 7 days of such an occurrence, irrespective of the offence.
- (2) if there were no responses arising from the public consultation, delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services to approve the Policy.

**LA 26/6 AMENDMENT OF LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27 - PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE**

Careful consideration was given to a proposed amendment to the licensing fees and charges for 2026/27 in respect of pre-application advice.

Further to Minute Number LA 25/17, as set out in the [Minutes of 26 November 2025](#), where the Committee had approved fees for licences, consents and registrations for 2026/27, a review had confirmed that no charges had been levied to date in respect of the pre-application advice service.

Currently, applicants were given the opportunity to send an application form in for checking it was correct. There was no charge levied for this service. It was therefore proposed that the pre-application advice fee structure be simplified as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report.

In recognition of ensuring that all licensable activities taking place within the Borough were granted the appropriate permissions under the relevant legislation, Cllr Tunstall proposed, Cllr King seconded and it was

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the proposed scale of fees for pre-application advice, as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report, be adopted with effect from 1 April 2026; and
- (2) these supersede the pre-application advice fees agreed on 26 November 2025.

**MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION****LA 26/7      CONSULTATION ON SEX ESTABLISHMENTS AND SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUES POLICY 2026-2031**

Further to Minute Number LA 25/18, as set out in the [Minutes of 26 November 2025](#), a consultation on renewing the Borough Council's existing Sex Establishments and Sexual Entertainment Venues Policy 2026-2031 was undertaken.

As there had been no responses submitted and in accordance with resolution (3) the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services would approve the policy under delegated authority.

**LA 26/8      EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.09 pm



**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**AREA 1 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, 26th March, 2026**

**Present:** Cllr M A J Hood (Chair), Cllr D W King (Vice-Chair), Cllr L Athwal, Cllr K Barton, Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr J Clokey, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr A Mehmet, Cllr R W G Oliver, Cllr B A Parry, Cllr S Pilgrim, Cllr M R Rhodes and Cllr K S Tunstall

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Cope.

**PART 1 - PUBLIC**

**AP1 26/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**AP1 26/14 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Area 1 Planning Committee held on 12 February 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AP1 26/15 GLOSSARY AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS**

Decisions were taken on the following applications subject to the prerequisites, informatives, conditions or reasons for refusal set out in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services or in the variations indicated below. Any supplementary reports were tabled at the meeting.

Members of the public addressed the meeting where the required notice had been given and their comments were taken into account by the Committee when determining the application. Speakers are listed under the relevant planning application shown below.

**MATTERS FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS  
(IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION)**

**AP1 26/16 TM/25/01693/PIP - LAND WEST OF 103 TONBRIDGE ROAD, HILDENBOROUGH, TONBRIDGE**

Permission in Principle for the development of between 5-7 residential dwellings as set out in Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning

(Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended) located on Land at Tonbridge Road, Hildenborough.

Further to Minute AP1 26/10 of the meeting held on 12 February 2026, the Committee considered the above application with the report of the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer set out in Part 2 of the agenda (Minute AP1 26/19 refers). Some Members continued to express significant concerns in respect of the potential impact of the proposed development on the open setting and the character of the Hildenborough Conservation Area as well as the designated heritage assets.

However, it was acknowledged that neither the Conservation Officer nor the Tree Officer had objected to the proposed development at this stage and that no expert evidence had been provided to demonstrate that the proposed reasons could be substantiated at any appeal. Furthermore, the limited remit of Permission in Principle was clarified, confirming that issues such as drainage, water infrastructure, access detailing and tree impacts would be fully assessed only at the Technical Details Consent stage.

On the grounds of Members' continued concerns regarding potential harm of the proposed development to the Conservation Area and the designated heritage asset, it was proposed by Councillor M Rhodes and seconded by Councillor K Barton that the application be refused, contrary to Officer's recommendation, for the following reasons:

- (1) The principle of residential development at this location would result in a harmful erosion of the open setting of the Conservation Area, which contributes positively to its character. The public benefits of 5 – 7 houses would not outweigh this harm and the proposal would also be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area, conflicting with policies CP24 of the TMBC Core Strategy, SQ1 of the Manging Development and the Environment Development Plan document, and paragraphs 210, 212, 213 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework; and
- (2) The principle of residential development at this location would result in conflict with footnote 7 policies relating to a designated heritage asset, and is therefore considered to be a strong reason for refusing development, due to the modest public benefits of 5 – 7 houses not outweighing the harm to the setting of the Conservation Area. The development would therefore not meet the definition of Grey Belt and would not comply with paragraph 155 of the National Planning Policy Framework. It would therefore be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt in conflict with policies CP3 of the TMBC Core Strategy, and paragraphs 153 and 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Following a formal vote, the motion was carried with eight Members voting in favour and five Members voting against. On the grounds that the above refusal reasons were not considered could be substantiated at an appeal and there was likely to be a risk of significant costs being incurred by the Council in defending any appeal (including any potential liability to pay the costs of the appellant in the event of an adverse costs award), the vote taken was a recommendation only in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 Rules of the Constitution.

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That consideration of the planning application stand ADJOURNED with the recommendation to refuse the planning application being referred for determination by Full Council in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution.

**\*Recommended to Council**

### **MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

#### **AP1 26/17 PLANNING APPEALS, PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND HEARINGS**

The Committee were informed of an appeal decision issued on 24 March 2026 concerning the Trench Farmhouse, where both appeals relating to Green Belt and Conservation Area issues were dismissed.

### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

#### **AP1 26/18 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chair 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 INFORMATION**

#### **AP1 26/19 TM/25/01693/PIP - LAND WEST OF 103 TONBRIDGE ROAD, HILDENBOROUGH, TONBRIDGE**

**(Reason: LGA 1972, Sch 12A, Paragraph 5 – information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings)**

At the meeting of the Area 1 Planning Committee held on 12 February 2026 consideration of the application was deferred for a report from the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer on the risks arising from a decision contrary to the recommendation of the Director of

Planning, Housing and Environmental Health\* (as set out in Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution) (Minute AP1 26/10 refers). The report of the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer provided an assessment of the risks arising from a resolution to refuse planning permission and advised that any such resolution would be a recommendation only and the matter would stand adjourned to be considered and determined by Full Council (Minute AP1 26/16 refers).

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received and noted.

\*The post title of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health was renamed to the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services from 22 January 2026 and the relevant references within the Constitution were subsequently updated accordingly.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**Decision Taken By: Cabinet**

**Decision No: D260014CAB**

**Decision Type: Non-Key**

**Date: 10 February 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026/27**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Annual Service Delivery Plan. This was a performance management tool setting out the Borough Council's priority actions for the year, along with key milestones and targets that could be used to monitor progress with delivery.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications. The amendments, corrections and points of clarification raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been reviewed in liaison with Services and reflected in a revised Annual Service Delivery Plan (attached at Annex 1).

It was also reported that due to external factors, such as awaiting legislation or funding from Central Government, the current Plan was missing some information. It was hoped that this missing information would be provided as part of the Quarter 1 update.

In recognition that without an effective performance management framework in place the authority would not be able to identify any required improvements or achieve value for money, Cllr Keers proposed, Cllr Taylor seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the draft Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026/27 (attached at Annex 1) be approved; and
- (2) any updated information addressing current gaps in information be considered during Quarter 1 reporting of the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026/27.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 22 January 2026

Signed Leader:

*M Boughton*

Signed Chief Executive:

D Roberts

Date of publication:

12 February 2026

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.

**Decision Taken By: Cabinet**  
**Decision No: D260015CAB**  
**Decision Type: Non-Key**  
**Date: 10 February 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Procurement Partnership - Formal Review**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of a number of options for the Procurement Partnership.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications. Cabinet was pleased to note that the Procurement Partnership had been very well received, an improvement in high quality procurement and contracting activity.

In recognition that membership of the Mid-Kent Procurement Partnership supported full compliance with relevant legislation, maintained an effective council and on the grounds of providing certainty and continuity for the future Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Mehmet seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) subject to ensuring appropriate budget provision, Option 3 to continue with the Procurement Partnership be approved; and
- (2) a further review of the Procurement Partnership be undertaken in 4 years' time.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 22 January 2026

Signed Leader:

*M Boughton*

Signed Chief Executive:

*D Roberts*

Date of publication:

12 February 2026

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.

**Decision Taken By: Cabinet**  
**Decision No: D260016CAB**  
**Decision Type: Non-Key**  
**Date: 10 February 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Risk Management**

Consideration of recommendations of the Audit Committee in respect of the risk management process and the current status of the Strategic Risk Register (SRR).

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications.

Cabinet noted that the risks categorised as 'RED' were:

- Failure to adopt a Local Plan
- Recruitment and retention of staff
- Local Government Reorganisation in Kent

In recognition of the importance of efficient and effective risk management in protecting the Borough Council's assets, employees and customers and ensuring value for money, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Betts seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the updates to the Strategic Risk Register since the last iteration with particular emphasis on those risks categorised as 'RED' (summarised above) and set out in Annexes 1 and 1(a) be noted; and
- (2) the service risks identified in Annex 2 be noted.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Audit Committee of 26 January 2026

Signed Leader:

*M Boughton*

Signed Chief Executive:

*D Roberts*

Date of publication:

12 February 2026

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.

**Decision Taken By: Cabinet**  
**Decision No: D260017CAB**  
**Decision Type: Non-Key**  
**Date: 10 February 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**National Planning Policy Framework: Proposed Reforms and other Changes to the Planning System**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Borough Council's response to proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other changes to the planning system. A draft response was attached at Annex 1.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, assessment of risk and the legal implications.

Particular reference was made to better decision-making on contaminated land (166) and Cllr Taylor proposed a further amendment to strengthen and emphasise the role of the developer in remediation. For example:

- (i) This includes the requirement that responsibility for securing a safe development principally rests with the developer and/or landowner where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues. The role of the Local Planning Authority is to monitor and approve.

This amendment was seconded by Cllr Boughton and supported by the Cabinet, subject to further consultation with the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services.

A further minor correction was also identified at (145) on page 40 of Annex 1 and this had been drawn to the attention of Officers.

In recognition that the Borough Council had to submit a response to the consultation by the deadline of 10 March 2026, Cllr Taylor proposed, Cllr Boughton seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council response to the Government's National Planning Policy Framework: Proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system be approved;
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Borough Council and the Cabinet Member of Planning, to make any necessary minor changes

to the Borough Council's response before submission.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee of 3 February 2026

Signed Leader: M Boughton

Signed Chief Executive: D Roberts

Date of publication: 12 February 2026

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.

**Decision Taken By: Cabinet**  
**Decision No: D260018CAB**  
**Decision Type: Non-Key**  
**Date: 10 February 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Board - Notes of 16 January 2026**

(Reason: Part 2 – Private LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

The report of the Director of Central Services presented the notes of the Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Board held on 16 January 2026.

Cabinet noted the comments of the Programme Board in respect of the delivery of a number of key priorities in connection with Tonbridge Town Centre.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the Notes of the Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Board of 16 January 2026 be noted.

Reasons: As set out in the report to Cabinet of 10 February 2026 (contains exempt information)

Signed Leader:

*M Boughton*

Signed Chief Executive:

*D Roberts*

Date of publication:

12 February 2026

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 AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By:</b>  <b>Leader of the Council</b>  <b>(acting on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services.</b>	<b>Decision Number:</b>  <b>D250019MEM</b>
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**Date: 11 February 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>RESCISSION OF FIXED PENALTY NOTICES FOR BUSINESS DUTY OF CARE – ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990</b>
Following consideration of the options and to reflect a lack of awareness amongst local businesses of the requirements of the legislation and to enable a programme of education to be actioned in partnership with Kingdom, the Leader of the Council:  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That  (1) The terms of a mutually acceptable agreement between the Council and the Council's waste enforcement contractor (Kingdom) for the rescission of all Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued by the Council's waste enforcement contractor (Kingdom) for Business Duty of Care offences during enforcement activity (1 September – 10 November 2025) be approved.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>  The enforcement process did not fully align with the Council's principles of proportionality and engagement, and it was apparent that most businesses affected claimed not to have sufficient awareness of their statutory responsibilities relating to management of their waste. Rescinding the notices demonstrated transparency and fairness. The decision enables a period of education to be actioned.  <b>Financial Implications:</b>  Negotiations have been entered into with Kingdom and a mutually acceptable financial agreement has been reached. This decision also avoided potential costs associated with defending appeals.  <b>Next Steps:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Notify affected businesses of their legal duties under the relevant legislation and provide compliance guidance.</li></ul>

- Review and agree future enforcement guidance for the contractor.

Signed Leader:	M Boughton
Signed Chief Executive:	D Roberts
Date of publication:	13 February 2026

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 AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260020MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY RELIEF AWARDS</b>
Application received from a Post Office. For 2025/26, the business received 40% Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief but the government ended this relief for 2026/27. However, the business would be eligible for the new 'Supporting Small Business relief' and would have the rates increased capped to a maximum of £800, which represented a significant reduction on the full bill. They stated how important the post office was for the local community.
Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:
(1) The application for discretionary rate relief, be refused.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
Statutory reliefs will be awarded as a matter of course to mitigate the normal increase in the business rates for 2026/27.

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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 AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260021MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY RELIEF AWARDS</b>
<p>Applications received after the two-yearly review of business rates discretionary relief awards. This was in respect of a continuation of the relief previously awarded. The circumstances from the previous award had not changed. These applications had been reviewed and a list passed to the Cabinet Member for approval.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:</p> <p>(1) The previous level of discretionary relief for a period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027, be awarded.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
<p>Business ratepayers receiving discretionary relief awards are required to reapply for their awards every two years. The latest tranche of applications received were reviewed by officers and a list of awards that should be continued were passed to the Cabinet Member for approval. These awards will run for two years from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027, at which time an application to continue the awards will be needed, if still applicable.</p>

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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 AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260022MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
<p>A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C) for a property. They had originally been receiving single person discount, which was removed back into previous financial years as a result of a data match exercise. Given the complicated family circumstances involved, it was very likely that the taxpayer did not realise that they should have informed the Council of the new situation.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:</p> <p>(1) The discount to the value of £1,101.00, be awarded to cover the extra Council Tax charged as a result of this amendment.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
<p>The taxpayer acted in good faith and the complicated family circumstances involved led to the error in notifying the Council.</p>

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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 AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260023MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
<p>A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C) for a property. They had originally been receiving single person discount, which was removed back into previous financial years as a result of a data match exercise. Given the complicated family circumstances involved, it was very likely that the taxpayer did not realise that they should have informed the Council of the new situation.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:</p> <p>(1) The discount to the value of £1,101.00, be awarded to cover the extra Council Tax charged as a result of this amendment.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
<p>The taxpayer acted in good faith and the complicated family circumstances involved led to the error in notifying the Council.</p>

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260024MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C) for a property for which they were the landlord. Their previous tenant passed away leaving the property in poor condition and various works had been required to bring it up to a standard where it could be re-let. The application was for the 2025/26 council tax balance of £941.03.  Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:  (1) the award of a discount under Section 13a 1(C), be refused.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>  These are not exceptional circumstances and one of the costs of being a landlord is the upkeep of a property between tenants.

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260025MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C) for a property for which they took on in October 2025. The property was in poor condition with mould and rising damp (photographic evidence provided). A reduction for uninhabitable status was unavailable as this discount had been set to a level of 0%.
Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:
(1) the award of a discount under Section 13a 1(C), be refused.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
The property was in this condition when they took it on so these are not unforeseen circumstances.

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260026MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
<p>A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C) for a property for which required major works including structural repairs, rewiring and plumbing. A reduction for uninhabitable status was unavailable as this discount had been set to a level of 0%.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:</p> <p>(1) The award of a discount under Section 13A 1(C), be refused.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
There are no particular exceptional circumstances to warrant a discretionary award.

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260027MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
<p>A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C) for a property which was badly damaged by a house fire in January 2026. The property was clearly uninhabitable and significant work would be required to bring it back to a habitable state.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:</p> <p>(1) A discount under Section 13a 1(C) for a 6-month period, be awarded. For 2025/26, this would be £510.68 and for 2026/27 the relevant discount level would be determined once the council tax had been set.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
These are clearly exceptional circumstances beyond the taxpayer's control

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260028MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
<p>A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C) via a friend. The taxpayer had had some very difficult personal circumstances and a complicated and difficult family situation. They had a sole council tax account in their name from August 2024 and the balances for these years were with the enforcement agents for collection. The application was to cover this debt. The taxpayer had not made a claim for council tax reduction, which would be the first step to claiming support if they were on a low income.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:</p> <p>(1) The award of a discount under Section 13a 1(C), be refused.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
<p>The taxpayer should be invited to claim council tax reduction as a first port of call and if that is successful, an exceptional hardship payment could also be considered. These are the correct steps to take before considering the award of a s13a 1(C) discount.</p>

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260029MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
<p>A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C) on the basis that they felt their payments were unaffordable. They previously had a Council Tax Reduction award for being on a low income but this ended in August 2025 because the household income exceeded the entitlement threshold. They mentioned in the application, elements of disability but when they claimed Council Tax reduction, it did not appear that they had claimed any disability benefits.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:</p> <p>(1) The award of a discount under Section 13a 1(C), be refused.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
<p>The first port of call should be to advise and signpost the taxpayer to claim the relevant disability benefits. Depending on the outcome of this, it may be that their entitlement to Council Tax Reduction may be revisited.</p>

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260030MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>APPLICATION FOR SECTION 13A 1(C) COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT</b>
<p>A taxpayer had applied for a S13A 1(C). They are the executor for the deceased liable party. In good faith they have been attempting to sell the property with a sale agreed in April 2025 but there had been many delays in this sale going through and now a premium has been charged.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:</p> <p>(1) A discount under Section 13a 1(C) to the value of the 2025/26 premium (£2413.78), be awarded.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
<p>The taxpayer has acted in good faith trying to sell the property at the earliest opportunity and unforeseen delays have led to the premium being charged.</p>

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number: D260031MEM</b>
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**Date: 2 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>WRITE OFF OF UNRECOVERABLE DEBTS OVER £5,000.00</b>
A list of debts over £5,000 where efforts to recover the debts have been exhausted was provided to the Cabinet Member to consider for write off.  Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:  (1) 13 Council Tax debts totalling £82,315.44, be written off;  (2) 4 Business Rates debts totalling £64,178.45, be written off; and  (3) 1 Housing Benefit debt totalling £29,272.73, be written off.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>  All avenues available to recover the debts have been exhausted and, therefore, the only action left available is to write off the debts.

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	4 March 2026

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**

**Decision No: D260032CAB**

**Decision Type: Key**

**Date: 03 March 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Learning and Development Resources**

Consideration was given to proposals to strengthen the Borough Council's capacity to deliver its Workforce Development Strategy, to ensure that key programmes were effectively implemented, monitored and evaluated and to provide organisational development support in preparation for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Due regard was given to the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and legal implications.

In recognition that the additional capacity would support the authority in maintaining an effective and resilient workforce, particularly during the transition associated with LGR, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Keers seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the funding for a full-time two-year fixed-term Learning and Development Manager from the Local Government Reorganisation Reserve be approved

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to Cabinet of 3 March 2026

Signed Leader:

*M Boughton*

Signed Chief Executive:

*D Roberts*

Date of publication:

5 March 2026

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.

**Decision Taken By: Cabinet**  
**Decision No: D260033CAB**  
**Decision Type: Key**  
**Date: 03 March 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Options for Local Authority Housing Fund - Purchase of Property**

(Reasons: Part 2 – Private – LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

Consideration was given to the proposed purchase of a residential property in Aylesford from Clarion Housing to meet the requirement of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF).

Due regard was given to the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications.

In recognition of improving housing options for local people whilst protecting outdoor areas of importance, increasing options for temporary accommodation, delivering resettlement properties and making best use of LAHF, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Betts seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the purchase of a residential property in Aylesford, as detailed in the report, be approved.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to Cabinet of 3 March 2026 (contains exempt information).

Signed Leader:

*M Boughton*

Signed Chief Executive:

*D Roberts*

Date of publication:

5 March 2026

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.

**Decision Taken By: Cabinet**  
**Decision No: D260034CAB**  
**Decision Type: Key**  
**Date: 03 March 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Internal Audit Service**

(Reasons: Part 2 – Private – LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

Consideration was given to the recommendation of the Audit Committee in respect of the provision of both Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Services. These were currently provided by Kent County Council through the Kent Audit Function and was due to end in September 2026. However, it was recommended that the service continue up to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Due regard was given to the views of the Audit Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications.

In recognition that the provision of Internal Audit Services was required under LGA 1972 to maintain sufficient governance and control on local authority operations and to maintain an effective council, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Taylor seconded and Cabinet

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the recommendation from the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) to appoint Kent County Council to provide Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Services from 1 October 2026 to 31 March 2029 be approved.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to Cabinet of 3 March 2026 (contains exempt information).

Signed Leader:

*M Boughton*

Signed Chief Executive:

*D Roberts*

Date of publication:

5 March 2026

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,  
Waste and Technical Services**

**Decision No:  
D260035MEM**

**Date: 02 March 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Parking Action Plan - Phase 15 - Formal Consultation**

(Report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services)

The report covered the formal consultation stage of the parking restriction proposals contained in Phase 15 of the Parking Action Plan and sought approval to implement the changes.

Following the meeting of the Joint Transportation Board in March 2025, investigations into proposed changes were undertaken at 30 sites across the Borough. The proposals were then reported back to the Joint Transportation Board in June 2025, where it was decided that 16 locations should proceed to formal consultation and invitation of objections. A list of all the locations, the issues raised and a summary for each was attached at Annex 1. A location summary and a more detailed response rate, analysis and recommendation was attached at Annex 2.

The view of local members were sought and where appropriate and/or practical, these would be reflected in the final proposals.

Following consideration by the Joint Transportation Board, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services resolved that:

- (1) the recommendation for Ph 15-01, 15-14, 15-21 and 15-22 for Phase 15, as set out in Annex 1 to the report, be adopted and where appropriate the proposals be implemented; and
- (2) the views of local members having been sought; the following recommendations be adopted:
  - (i) Ph 15-03, 15-06, 15-08, 15-10 and 15-15, be abandoned;
  - (ii) Ph 15-07, 15-09, 15-18, 15-24, 15-27, 15-29 to 15-30, be taken forward; and
  - (iii) Ph 15-16 (Booth Close, Snodland), the recommendation to reduce the proposal, as set out at Annex 5, be taken forward.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Joint Transportation Board of 2 March 2026.

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Chief Executive:	<i>D Roberts</i>
Date of publication:	5 March 2026

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**

<b>Decision Taken By: Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy</b>	<b>Decision No: D260036MEM</b>
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**Date: 04 March 2026**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Biodiversity Duty**

(Report of Chief Executive)

The report presented a Biodiversity Duty Report (attached at Annex 1) which set out the Borough Council's progress in delivering its statutory duty to conserve, enhance and protect biodiversity (habitats and species).

Members were asked to endorse the contents of the Biodiversity Duty Report and note the progress being made by the Borough Council in delivering its statutory biodiversity duty under the Environment Act 2021 and the amended Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

The proposed future actions detailed in Section 6 of the Biodiversity Duty Report and the continuation of practical steps to conserve and enhance biodiversity across parks, open spaces and other land were summarised and noted by Members.

Following consideration by the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee, the Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the Biodiversity Duty Report attached at Annex 1 be endorsed; and
- (2) the proposed future actions set out in Section 6 of the Biodiversity Duty Report, be approved.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee of 4 March 2026.

Signed Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy:	<i>R Betts</i>
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Signed Leader:	M Boughton
Signed Chief Executive:	D Roberts
Date of publication:	6 March 2026

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 AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By:</b> Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services	<b>Decision Number:</b> D260037MEM
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**Date: 13 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>Application for Section 13A 1(C) Council Tax Discount</b>
<p>A taxpayer has applied for a S13A 1(C) for a property that was purchased on 6 March 2025 and was uninhabitable and in a structurally unsafe condition. An application was made to the Valuation Office Agency to have the property removed from the Council Tax Valuation list on these grounds but the request was declined. A planning application was made to do the work to convert it into dwelling(s) fit for habitation. The application was for a discount under section 13a from the date of purchase until such time as the works are complete.</p> <p>Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services RESOLVED that:</p> <p>(1) the discount to the value of 100% of the council tax due from the date of purchase of the property (6 March 2025) for a period of one calendar year, up to and including 5 March 2026, be awarded.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>
<p>The length of the award mirrors the old one-year 100% discount for uninhabitable properties and this decision is in line with the Council's objective to bring properties back into use.</p>

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Deputy Chief Executive:	<i>A Stanfield</i>
Date of publication:	17 March 2026

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 AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISION**

<b>Decision Taken By:</b> <b>Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services</b>	<b>Decision Number:</b> <b>D260038MEM</b>
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**Date: 13 March 2026**

<b>Decision(s) and Reason(s)</b>
<b>Application for Section 13A 1(C) Council Tax Discount</b>
A taxpayer has applied for a S13A 1(C) discount for the period 19 September 2025 to 31 October 2025 due to “essential refurbishment” of the bathroom and kitchen in the property.  Following consideration of the policy, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services RESOLVED that:  (1) the application for the award of the discount, be refused.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>  Based on the information provided, the work being carried out does not meet the threshold for “uninhabitable” status so there are no exceptional circumstances in this case.

Signed Cabinet Member for Finance, Waste and Technical Services:	<i>M Coffin</i>
Signed Leader:	<i>M Boughton</i>
Signed Deputy Chief Executive:	<i>A Stanfield</i>
Date of publication:	17 March 2026

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.

