

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Monday, 5th October, 2015

Present: Cllr P F Bolt (Vice-Chairman - in the Chair), Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr Mrs S M Hall, Cllr D Markham, Cllr H S Rogers and Cllr T C Walker

Councillors B J Luker and M R Rhodes were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms S V Spence (Chairman), M A C Balfour, N J Heslop, S C Perry and C P Smith

PART 1 - PUBLIC

GP 15/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

GP 15/20 MINUTES

With reference to Minute GP 15/13, an update was given on progress of the review of Kent County Council electoral arrangements. A further period of consultation had been opened due to representations made in the Sevenoaks area and the final recommendations for the whole of Kent were now due in January 2016 and would take effect from the KCC elections in May 2017.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 29 June 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

GP 15/21 RESPONSE TO HMT CONSULTATION ON A PUBLIC SECTOR EXIT PAYMENT CAP

The joint report of the Leader and Chief Executive gave details of the Government's consultation on its proposals to cap the total amount of redundancy and other exit payments payable to individuals leaving the public sector to £95,000. Due to the timing of the consultation during August with a closing date of 27 August, there had been no opportunity for the matter to be brought to the Committee for consideration. However, since the proposed cap had potentially significant implications for the Council as an employer, a representative group of key Members

had been formed to agree a response to the consultation by the deadline.

A copy of the Council's response, drawn up by the group of Members comprising the Leader, Deputy Executive Leader/Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property/Chairman of the Joint Employee Consultative Committee, Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and General Purposes Committee and the Leader of the Opposition, was set out in the Annex to the report. It was noted that the response broadly supported the £95,000 cap but not the proposal to include within the cap the employer cost of funding early access to unreduced pensions for employees within the Local Government Pension Scheme, referred to in the consultation as the "strain cost". It was explained that the latter could have an adverse impact on a potentially large number of employees and was currently unlawful and likely to be discriminatory on grounds of age.

Members were advised that the Treasury had published its response to the consultation and intended to proceed with the cap as proposed, including the strain cost in the event of redundancy, although costs of any back-dated annual leave payments would be excluded. The Committee expressed concern at the timing and scope of the consultation and the impact of the change on the Council's ability to retain and recruit suitably experienced and qualified staff.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

GP 15/22 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

DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 3, PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION

GP 15/23 ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 1 – Information relating to an individual)

The report of the Management Team presented for approval a number of establishment changes arising from the ongoing operational management of the Council's services. Members noted that whilst

generating an overall saving of £42,948, this would not all contribute to a reduction in the anticipated savings target to be achieved in 2016/17 due to the loss of income arising from the cessation of a number of Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust service level agreements for which some compensatory savings were identified in the report.

RESOLVED: That the following proposals and establishment adjustments be endorsed with immediate effect:

- (1) post DF0405 Payroll Assistant (scale 3/4, 37 hours) be deleted;
- (2) post DF0509 Senior Benefits Officer (scale 6/SO, 28 hours) be transferred to Exchequer Services Team and re-designated Payroll Officer (scale 6/SO, 28 hours);
- (3) payroll temporary staff provision in the sum of £3,100 be deleted;
- (4) the hours of post DF0407 Senior Exchequer Assistant (scale 4/5) be reduced from 37 to 30 hours;
- (5) post DA0207 Administration Support Officer (scale 2/3) be deleted;
- (6) post DA0211 Administrative Assistant (scale 2/3) be deleted;
- (7) the hours of post DB0003 (scale 3/4) be reduced from 24 to 23 per week;
- (8) the reduction of the overtime budget for Legal Services by £2,000 be noted;
- (9) the proposed agreement with Kent County Council for the provision of management support for the Internal Audit and Fraud functions be noted;
- (10) post DF0803 Senior Internal Auditor (scale 6/SO, 37 hours) be deleted from the establishment;
- (11) the addition of post DF0805 Internal Auditor (scale 2/4, 37 hours) be formalised on the establishment;
- (12) the adjustment of the grade of post DF0804 Internal Auditor (37 hours) to scale 2/4 from scale 3/4 be formalised;
- (13) a new post of Senior Technical Support Officer at grade SO/M8, 37 hours be created;
- (14) the hours of post DN0212 Help Desk Administrator (scale 3) be increased from 19 to 37 hours;

- (15) the placement of an undergraduate student for a 12 month period through the Kent IT Alliance be noted;
- (16) a new post of DJ0314 Senior Planning Policy Officer (grade M9, 37 hours) be created;
- (17) the hours of post DJ0309 Conservation Officer grade M8 be reduced from 37 to 14 per week;
- (18) the post of DJ0313 Technical Assistant (scale 3/4, 22.5 hours) be deleted;
- (19) the increase in hours of post DJ0125 Development Control Admin Support scale 5/6 from 30 to 37 per week (as previously approved by General Purposes Committee of 29/6/15) be noted;
- (20) the hours of post DJ0303 Planning Assistant/Senior Planning Officer grade 4/M9 be reduced from 24 to 20 per week;
- (21) the hours of post DJ0312 Senior Planning Technician scale 5/6 be reduced from 37 to 21 per week;
- (22) the deletion of post DJ0215 Building Control Officer (grade M9, 37 hours) be noted; and
- (23) the extension of the contract of the supernumerary post of Welfare Adviser up to 24 December 2015 be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.07 pm