

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL



## EXECUTIVE SERVICES

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### Chief Executive

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**NB - This agenda contains proposals, recommendations and options. These do not represent Council policy or decisions until they have received proper consideration through the full decision making process.**

Contact: Democratic Services  
committee.services@tmbc.co.uk

15 March 2021

To: MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
(Copies to all Members of the Council)

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the General Purposes Committee to be held online via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 23rd March, 2021 commencing at 7.30 pm. Information on how to observe the meeting will be published on the Council's website.

Yours faithfully

JULIE BEILBY

Chief Executive

## A G E N D A

### PART 1 - PUBLIC

- |    |                          |       |
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| 1. | Apologies for absence    | 5 - 6 |
| 2. | Declarations of interest | 7 - 8 |

*Members in any doubt about such declarations are advised to contact Legal or Democratic Services in advance of the meeting*

3. Minutes 9 - 12

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of General Purposes Committee held on 25 January 2021

**Decisions to be taken under Delegated Powers**

4. Pay Award 2021 13 - 16

*This report requests Members to consider a pay award for employees for 2021/22.*

5. Urgent Items 17 - 18

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

**Matters for consideration in Private**

6. Exclusion of Press and Public 19 - 20

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

**PART 2 - PRIVATE**

**Decisions to be taken under Delegated Powers**

7. Establishment Changes 21 - 50

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

*This report sets out for Members' approval a number of proposed establishment changes recommended by Management Team.*

8. Urgent Items 51 - 52

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Cllr Mrs F A Kemp (Chairman)  
Cllr L J O'Toole (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Mrs P A Bates  
Cllr Mrs S Bell  
Cllr M D Boughton  
Cllr M A Coffin  
Cllr D J Cooper  
Cllr D A S Davis

Cllr M A J Hood  
Cllr K King  
Cllr B J Luker  
Cllr W E Palmer  
Cllr N G Stapleton  
Cllr Mrs M Tatton

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Apologies for absence

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Declarations of interest

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## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Monday, 25th January, 2021

**Present:** Cllr Mrs F A Kemp (Chairman), Cllr L J O'Toole (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr K King, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr N G Stapleton and Cllr Mrs M Tatton

Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, R P Betts, V M C Branson, A E Clark, N J Heslop, F A Hoskins, D W King, D Lettington, P J Montague, Mrs A S Oakley, M R Rhodes, H S Rogers and R V Roud were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

### PART 1 - PUBLIC

#### **GP 21/1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **GP 21/2 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 1 December 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

#### **GP 21/3 LOCALISM ACT - PAY POLICY**

The report of the Director of Central Services summarised the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and presented an updated Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22. Members noted that, as there had not been any changes in the Borough Council's remuneration policy, the substantive content of the updated Pay Policy Statement set out at Annex 1 to the report was identical to the authority's first Pay Policy Statement adopted by Council on 16 February 2012.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the Pay Policy Statement, as set out at Annex 1 to the report, be commended to Council for adoption.

**\*Referred to Council**

**DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION (RESPONSIBILITY FOR COUNCIL FUNCTIONS)**

**GP 21/4 ANNUAL REVIEW OF WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

The report advised of the outcome of the annual review of the Borough Council's Whistleblowing Policy, which identified that no changes were required at this time. It was noted that, to align with best practice, ownership of the Policy was being transferred to the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive as the officer responsible for personnel and Human Resources. Members were advised that this matter had also been considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting of 18 January 2021 (Minute number AU 21/6 refers).

**RESOLVED:** That the Whistleblowing Policy, attached as Annex 1 to the report, be approved.

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

**GP 21/5 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 PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION (RESPONSIBILITY FOR COUNCIL FUNCTIONS)**

**GP 21/6 ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES**

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

The report of the Director of Central Services set out for approval a number of establishment changes arising from the ongoing operational management of the Borough Council's services.

**RESOLVED:** That the proposals and establishment adjustments set out in the report be endorsed as follows:

- (1) post DA0301 be re-designated from Principal Administrator Democratic Services to Principal Democratic Services Officer, re-graded M7 (from M6) and the hours attached to the post be increased from 22.5 to 30 hours per week with immediate effect;

- (2) the hours pertaining to the vacated M9 post DA0304, Democratic Services Officer, be reduced from 29.5 to 22.5 hours per week with immediate effect;
- (3) a new full-time, scale 6, post of Animal Welfare Officer be established in the Licensing Team with immediate effect;
- (4) the release of the ring fenced sum of £10,000 in the Land Charges team, plus the saving of £8,353 resulting from the review of Democratic Services, be utilised to partially offset the cost of the establishment of the post of Animal Welfare Officer;
- (5) the hours pertaining to the post of Senior Revenue and Benefits Officer, agreed at the 1 December meeting of the Committee, be reduced from 37 to 27 hours per week, with effect from 1 March 2021;
- (6) the hours pertaining to the post of Senior Revenue and Benefits Recovery Officer, agreed at the 1 December meeting of the Committee, be reduced from 37 to 22 hours per week, with effect from 1 March 2021;
- (7) a new post of Senior Revenue and Benefits Officer (Processing), grade SO, 32 hours per week, be established with effect from 1 March 2021;
- (8) post DF0527, Overpayment Recovery Officer, scale 5/6, 22 hours per week, be deleted from the establishment with effect from 1 March 2021; and
- (9) a contingency provision of £13,750 be made in the re-structure of the Revenues and Benefits Team to enable further adjustments to working hours in the light of experience of the working reality of the proposed amended structure.

The meeting ended at 8.14 pm

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## TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

23 March 2021

#### Report of the Chief Executive

#### Part 1- Public

#### Delegated

### 1 PAY AWARD 2021

#### Summary

This report requests Members to consider a pay award of 1% for employees for 2021/22.

#### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Council employees have a term in their contracts which reads “Salaries will be revised on 1 April each year by an amount determined by the Authority having regard to movements in the Retail Price Index, comparative pay settlements and prevailing economic conditions.” In other words, this Council determines its own pay awards, and is not tied into the national process of collective bargaining.

1.1.2 The last increase in employees’ salaries was an award of 2.5% in April 2020. This was below the national pay award which was 2.75%.

1.1.3 This report considers a range of factors that are relevant to the issue of a pay award for 2021/22.

#### 1.2 Prevailing Economic Conditions

1.2.1 Members will be aware of the on-going need to make savings and transformation contributions in the context of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Savings and Transformation Strategy. The latest projected ‘outstanding’ funding gap which has yet to be both identified and implemented is in the region of £475,000 although this is subject to change due to the ongoing impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the economy, and the consequent changes to funding streams for Local Government in general and this authority in particular.

1.2.2 The Government has announced that the National Living Wage (NLW) for those over the age of 25 will rise on 1 April 2021 to £8.91 per hour. Assuming a 1.00% pay award from 1 April 2021, this will not impact on this Council’s salary scales (as the hourly rate for the lowest spinal column point – 310, will be marginally above the NLW hourly rate).

### **1:3 Comparative Pay Settlements**

- 1:3:1 It may be helpful to Members of this Committee to provide a 10 year historical context for pay awards within TMBC for the current recommend pay award. In 2010, 2011, and 2012 there were no pay awards and salaries remained “frozen” at the 2009 level. In June 2013, April 2014 and April 2015 there were pay awards of 1%; an award of 2% over 2 years was made for the period April 2016 to March 2018, the award for 2018/19 was 2%, for 2019/20 it was 2.5%.
- 1:3:2 At the time of writing we understand that one Kent Authority will not have a pay award this year (0%), 4 are proposing settlements of 1%, one of 1.3%, two are proposing a 2% award, one has settled at 2.5%, and 2 are tied to the national collective bargaining process (Unison have requested a 10% pay award).
- 1:3:3 Members may also be aware of the Government’s intended pay freeze for the “public sector”. This refers to those pay awards for approximately 45% of the public sector (including the armed forces, the police, teachers, the senior civil service and the NHS) that are decided by government ministers based on the recommendations of eight Pay Review Bodies.

### **1.4 Retail Price Index**

- 1.4.1 The most recently published RPI rate of increase for the 12 months to January 2021 was 1.4% and the Government's preferred measure of inflation, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) most recent published figure was 0.7% in the 12 months to January 2021.

### **1.5 General Discussion**

- 1.5.1 The factors that are relevant to a consideration of a pay award have been identified in the previous sections of this report.
- 1.5.2 The current rate of inflation suggests that a pay award is necessary. An overriding imperative for the Council is to contain its expenditure on salaries in order to retain a stable employment position that, in turn, will be to the overall benefit of staff, continue the delivery of good quality services, and help to achieve a balanced budget. Maintaining our ability to recruit and motivate staff with the appropriate skill sets to meet the challenges ahead as the country enters the recovery stage of the pandemic is also of vital importance.
- 1.5.3 The Council’s employees have been fully informed of the financial challenges facing the Council, via both the JECC and through Unison.

- 1.5.4 Provision for pay inflation for 2021/22 has been made in the Medium Term Financial Strategy at 1.00%.
- 1.5.5 I feel that it is appropriate to consider an award that recognises the continuing efforts of staff to 'do more with less'. An award will reinforce a message of support and encouragement to our staff who continue to face significant challenges in dealing effectively with the pandemic, in addition to the implications of overall cost reduction through re-structuring and the deletion of posts.
- 1.5.6 It is important from a recruitment and retention point of view (particularly for those with professional skills) that we do not fall significantly behind other employers. Therefore, I recommend that an award of 1.0% is offered to staff for 2021/22 in order to maintain a competitive position with other employers in the recruitment market.
- 1.5.7 The UNISON Regional Officer has been informed of the Council's likely pay award and has undertaken to discuss this with the local branch (who have been sent a copy of this report).

## **1.6 Legal Implications**

- 1.6.1 The Council has a contractual requirement to review our salary levels annually but no obligation to increase them by any set amount or in response to movement in either the RPIJ or the CPI.

## **1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.7.1 I believe that the recommended award for 2021/22 is an appropriate response in the light of the Council's budget position.
- 1.7.2 Financial provision in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy allows for 1.0% pay inflation.

## **1.8 Risk Assessment**

- 1.8.1 I see no significant risk in the recommendation. However, the Council will need to closely monitor movements in pay awards in future years not only amongst neighbouring authorities but also in the private sector as there is a slight risk that some staff, whom it may be in the Council's interest to retain for the future, may be attracted to the potentially higher rewards elsewhere as the economy recovers post pandemic.

## **1.9 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 1.9.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## **1.10 Policy Considerations**

### 1.10.1 Pay Policy Statement.

1.10.2 It is appropriate to note that, the Borough Council received a report from an Independent Remuneration Panel containing recommendations for amendments to the Scheme of Members' Allowances which were considered in detail by the Full Council at its meeting on 11 April 2017. The Council resolved to accept the Panel's recommendation that with effect from the Borough Council elections in 2019 allowances have been increased in line with the staff pay award. Should any Member not wish to take the increase to their Member allowance they should contact the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive Adrian Stanfield.

## **1.11 Recommendations**

1.11.1 I RECOMMEND a 1.0% pay award, from 1 April 2021.

Background papers:

contact: Julie Beilby

Nil

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive



# Agenda Item 5

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

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# Agenda Item 6

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

**ANY REPORTS APPEARING AFTER THIS PAGE CONTAIN EXEMPT  
INFORMATION**

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# Agenda Item 8

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

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