

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL



EXECUTIVE SERVICES

Chief Executive

Julie Beilby BSc (Hons) MBA

Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill, West Malling
Kent ME19 4LZ
West Malling (01732) 844522

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

17 January 2023

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 in the Council Chamber, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill on Wednesday, 25th January, 2023 commencing at 7.30 pm.

Members of the Committee are required to attend in person. Other Members may attend in person or participate online via MS Teams.

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

1. Guidance for the Conduct of Meetings

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PART 1 - PUBLIC

2. Apologies for absence
3. Notification of Substitute Members 7 - 8
4. Declarations of interest 9 - 10

Members are reminded of their obligation under the Council's Code of Conduct to disclose any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests in any matter(s) to be considered or being considered at the meeting. These are explained in the Code of Conduct on the Council's website at [Code of conduct – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council \(tmbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/code-of-conduct).

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

5. Minutes 11 - 18

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of General Purposes Committee held on 23 November 2022 (extraordinary) and 3 October 2022

Matters for Recommendation to the Council

6. Localism Act - Pay Policy 19 - 26

The report summarises the requirements of the Localism Act and presents an updated Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 at Annex 1.

Decisions to be taken under Delegated Powers

7. Pay Award 2023-24 27 - 46

This report requests Members to consider a pay award of 5% for employees for 2023/24

8. Urgent Items 47 - 48

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

9. Exclusion of Press and Public 49 - 50

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

10. Establishment Report 51 - 72

This report sets out for Members' approval a number of establishment changes recommended by Management Team. Members should note that, in accordance with adopted conventions, all of the savings/costs referred to in this report reflect the salary at the top of the scale/grade plus associated on costs.

The background in respect of the Review of Sports Development is available as part of the Cabinet papers considered on [8 November 2022](#) (CB 22/100).

Decision Notice D220099CAB is attached for convenience.

11. Urgent Items 73 - 74

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 M R Rhodes (Chair)
Cllr B J Luker (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Mrs P A Bates
Cllr A E Clark
Cllr M A Coffin
Cllr D J Cooper
Cllr D A S Davis
Cllr N J Heslop

Cllr D Keers
Cllr D W King
Cllr D Lettington
Cllr W E Palmer
Cllr R V Roud
Cllr Mrs M Tatton

GUIDANCE ON HOW MEETINGS WILL BE CONDUCTED

- (1) All meetings of the Borough Council will be livestreamed to YouTube here, unless there is exempt or confidential business be discussed:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPp-IJISNgoF-ugSzxjAPfw/featured>
- (2) There are no fire drills planned during the time a meeting is being held. For the benefit of those in the meeting room, the fire alarm is a long continuous bell and the exits are via the doors used to enter the room. An officer on site will lead any evacuation.
- (3) Should you need this agenda or any of the reports in a different format, or have any other queries concerning the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk in the first instance.

Attendance:

- Members of the Committee/Advisory Board are required to attend in person and be present in the meeting room. Only these Members are able to move/ second or amend motions, and vote.
- Other Members of the Council can join via MS Teams and can take part in any discussion and ask questions, when invited to do so by the Chairman, but cannot move/ second or amend motions or vote on any matters. Members participating remotely are reminded that this does not count towards their formal committee attendance.
- Occasionally, Members of the Committee/Advisory Board are unable to attend in person and may join via MS Teams in the same way as other Members. However, they are unable to move/ second or amend motions or vote on any matters if they are not present in the meeting room. As with other Members joining via MS Teams, this does not count towards their formal committee attendance.
- Officers can participate in person or online.
- Members of the public addressing an Area Planning Committee can participate in person or online. Please contact committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk for further information.

Before formal proceedings start there will be a sound check of Members/Officers in the room. This is done as a roll call and confirms attendance of voting Members.

Ground Rules:

The meeting will operate under the following ground rules:

- Members in the Chamber should indicate to speak in the usual way and use the fixed microphones in front of them. These need to be switched on when speaking or comments will not be heard by those participating online. Please switch off microphones when not speaking.
- If there any technical issues the meeting will be adjourned to try and rectify them. If this is not possible there are a number of options that can be taken to enable the meeting to continue. These will be explained if it becomes necessary.

For those Members participating online:

- please request to speak using the 'chat or hand raised function';
- please turn off cameras and microphones when not speaking;
- please do not use the 'chat function' for other matters as comments can be seen by all;
- Members may wish to blur the background on their camera using the facility on Microsoft teams.
- Please avoid distractions and general chat if not addressing the meeting
- Please remember to turn off or silence mobile phones

Voting:

Voting may be undertaken by way of a roll call and each Member should verbally respond For, Against, Abstain. The vote will be noted and announced by the Democratic Services Officer.

Alternatively, votes may be taken by general affirmation if it seems that there is agreement amongst Members. The Chairman will announce the outcome of the vote for those participating and viewing online.

General Purposes Committee – Substitute Members (if required)

	Conservative	Liberal Democratic	Green	Ind. Kent Alliance	Note
1	Matt Boughton	Garry Bridge	Anna Cope	Tim Shaw	
2	Robert Cannon	Trudy Dean	Mark Hood	Mike Taylor	
3	Mark Davis	Frani Hoskins			
4	Dan Harman	Anita Oakley			
5	Andrew Kennedy	David Thornewell			

Members of Cabinet cannot be appointed as a substitute to this Committee

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Declarations of interest

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TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, 23rd November, 2022

Present: Cllr M R Rhodes (Chair), Cllr B J Luker (Vice-Chair), Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr A E Clark, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr D W King, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr R I B Cannon (substitute) and Cllr D Harman (substitute)

In attendance: Councillors D Thornevell was also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Virtual: Councillors R P Betts, M D Boughton, V M C Branson, M A J Hood, Mrs A S Oakley and K B Tanner participated via MS Teams and joined the discussion when invited to do so by the Chair in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M A Coffin, D A S Davis and D Keers

PART 1 - PUBLIC

GP 22/37 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Notification of substitute members were recorded as set out below:

- Cllr Cannon substitute for Cllr Davis
- Cllr Harman substitute for Cllr Coffin

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.

GP 22/38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

GP 22/39 THE PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES BOUNDARY REVIEW

The report of the Chief Executive advised of the final proposals issued by the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) and invited Members to

consider a response on behalf of the Borough Council to be submitted by the consultation deadline of 5 December 2022.

Concerns raised previously in respect of the boundary review were summarised at 1.1.2. The final proposed maps for the constituencies encompassing Tonbridge and Malling were set out in Annex 2, whilst the first proposed and current maps for the constituencies were set out in Annex 3.

Members noted that the BCE proposed 3 County Constituencies (CC) of Chatham and Aylesford, Maidstone and Malling and Tonbridge to cover the Borough. None of which were co-terminus with the Borough boundary. The proposed Chatham and Aylesford CC lost Ditton and South Aylesford and gained more of Rochester/Chatham; the proposed Tonbridge CC lost some of the Mallings and gained New Ash Green, Hartley and part of Longfield and the new proposed Maidstone and Malling CC incorporated the Mallings, Barming, Allington and part of Maidstone.

Careful consideration was given to the proposals and Members reiterated concerns in respect of the loss of Aylesford South from the Chatham and Aylesford County Constituency; the weakening of community relationships as a result of dividing parishes and wards and the dislocated and inconsistent approach of the proposals. It was also felt that local knowledge and views should be reflected, as indicated in the consultation documents, and this point should be emphasised in the Borough Council's response.

Members were encouraged to submit either individual responses to the BCE or to provide feedback to the Head of Elections, the Chief Executive and the Leader which would be used to inform the Borough Council's final response.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the final proposals of the Boundary Commission for England in respect of the County Constituencies in Tonbridge and Malling, as set out in Annex 2, be noted; and
- (2) delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to submit the Borough Council's response to the proposals having due regard to the points and areas of concern raised by Members.

GP 22/40 SCHEME OF MEMBER'S ALLOWANCES

The report of the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive recommended that the Scheme of Member's Allowances remained unchanged for 2023/24 pending consideration of any proposals from the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (JIRP).

Members were reminded that the Borough Council could not adopt a revised Scheme without first considering recommendations from an independent remuneration panel. In August 2022 the Brough Council had appointed a new Panel, jointly with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council, to provide recommendations in relation to Member's Allowances. It was anticipated that the Panel would be in a position to provide recommendations by January 2023. Unfortunately, this would not allow sufficient time for Members to consider these recommendations and formulate proposals in time for budget setting for 2023/24.

In addition, following local elections in May 2023, the composition of the Borough Council would change from a cohort of 54 members to 44. Consequently, each Member would have a greater number of constituents and the Panel recommendations should take this into account.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Scheme of Allowances for the 2023/24 municipal year remain unchanged from the current Scheme for 2022/23; and
- (2) the Scheme of Allowances for 2023/24 be reviewed during the 2023/24 municipal year upon receipt of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

GP 22/41 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 TO BE TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

GP 22/42 ESTABLISHMENT REPORT

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

The report set out for Members' approval a number of establishment changes recommended by 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 the scale/grade plus associated on costs.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the additional 18 month funding from the Climate Change reserve to recruit to the established Climate Change Officer post on a full time fixed term, 3 year, contract at grade SO be noted;
- (2) the creation of the Internal Communications Officer post on a part time 18.5 hours per week fixed term, 2 year, contract at grade SO be noted;
- (3) a temporary allowance be paid for 12 months to the Head of IT for undertaking the duties of Senior Information Risk Officer, for the period 1 October 2022 – 30 September 2023;
- (4) the creation of a new Principal Enforcement Officer post, full time on scale M8 with immediate effect be agreed;
- (5) the creation of a new Planning Enforcement Officer post on a full time, two year fixed term contract on scale 5 with immediate effect be agreed; and
- (6) that post DJ0137 (Planning Enforcement Officer) 37 hours per week scale 5 be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Monday, 3rd October, 2022

Present: Cllr M R Rhodes (Chair), Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr A E Clark, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr D Keers, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr D Harman and Cllr D W King

Councillors J A Anderson, M Boughton, V Branson, S Hudson, A Oakley, H Rogers and K Tanner participated via MS Teams and joined the discussion when invited to do so by the Chair in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B J Luker, Mrs S Bell, M A Coffin, N J Heslop and D Lettington

PART 1 - PUBLIC

GP 22/30 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Notification of substitute members were recorded as set out below:

Cllr D Harman – substitute for Cllr S Bell
Cllr D King – substitute for Cllr N Heslop

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.

GP 22/31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

GP 22/32 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 15 June 2022 and of the extraordinary meeting held on 18 July 2022 be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL**GP 22/33 FINAL PROPOSALS FOR REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

Following receipt of the final recommendations for the warding arrangements from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, a Polling District and Polling Place review had been undertaken to implement the changes to warding arrangements and ensure that the Polling Districts lay within the Parish, Ward and Constituency boundaries.

The report provided an update on the recent consultation, which had ended on 21 August 2022. The responses received had been considered and reflected in the final proposals.

The main changes were:

- Polling District boundary between Walderslade and Aylesford North & North Downs moved to match the new ward boundary.
- Polling District boundary between Aylesford North & North Downs and Aylesford South & Ditton moved slightly to match the new ward boundary.
- Creation of a new Polling District within Snodland West and Holborough lakes ward, called Holborough Lakes with the new Polling Place/station situated at the Holborough Lakes Village Hall.
- Creation of a new polling district within Tonbridge between Hildenborough and Judd. This Polling District created as the Ward and Parish boundaries were not co-terminus. The Oast Theatre to be used (with Stocks Green CP as a back-up in the event of not being able to use the theatre if an unscheduled election was called) as the Polling Place/Station.
- The other Polling Districts within Tonbridge moved to match the new Ward boundaries for each ward.
- The names of some of the Polling Districts changed to reflect the new ward names.
- The Polling Districts all been recoded.

RECOMMENDED: That, subject to the ward changes being laid to law in Parliament in October 2022, the final proposals, as detailed in the report, be approved

***Referred to Council**

GP 22/34 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - PUBLICATION SCHEME

The report of the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive presented an updated Publication Scheme which addressed the specific obligation under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to adopt and maintain a publication scheme and make certain information available to the public.

A revised Scheme was attached at Annex 1. The substance of the Scheme had not changed from the existing version. However, the opportunity was taken to review the Scheme to ensure that the website links remained current and to carry out some general minor updating.

RECOMMENDED: That the updated Publication Scheme, as set out at Annex 1 to the report, be adopted.

***Referred to Council**

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**GP 22/35 TRANSITIONAL WORKING ARRANGEMENTS - UPDATE**

The report provided an update on the Transitional Working Arrangements (including Hybrid Working). Members were advised that an analysis of the arrangements had indicated that these had been a success with positive outcomes across a range of measures, including climate change, productivity, financial implications and staff feedback.

A Remote Working Policy (attached at Annex 1) was also presented for consideration. The Policy promoted a longer term working model where staff could apply to work in a remote or hybrid way. It was reported that any remote working arrangement agreed under the Policy would be informal and flexible which allowed employees to divide their working time between the workplace (including site visits) and an agreed remote working location.

RESOLVED: That the Remote Working Policy (as set out in Annex 1 to the report) be approved.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**GP 22/36 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.43 pm

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

25 January 2023

Report of the Director of Central Services

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Council

1 LOCALISM ACT – PAY POLICY

1.1 Contents of the Pay Policy

1.1.1 **Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires English and Welsh local authorities to review their pay policy statement for each financial year. This report summarises the requirements of the Act and presents an updated Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 in Annex 1. Members will note that as there have not been any changes in the Council’s remuneration policy, the substantive content of the updated Pay Policy Statement in Annex 1 is identical to the Council’s first Pay Policy Statement (adopted by the Council on 16 February 2012).**

1.1.2 The title “chief officer” includes both statutory and non-statutory chief officers and their deputies. Therefore, within the Pay Policy Statement set out in Annex 1, the information about the remuneration of chief officers pertains to the Establishment on 1 April 2022 and therefore includes the posts of the Chief Executive, the Council’s four Directors as well as the senior officers that are directly accountable to these “chief officers”.

1.1.3 The Act’s definition of remuneration includes pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, enhancement of pension entitlements and termination payments. All of these elements have been covered in the pay policy statement attached in **Annex 1**.

1.1.4 In order to provide a holistic and transparent context for the remuneration of chief officers and their deputies, the pay policy in Annex 1 provides an overview of the pay elements for all Council employees.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 The policy set out in Annex 1 contains all of the elements of a statutory pay policy as stipulated in section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011.

1.2.2 The attached pay policy is also compliant with Regulation 7 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation)

(England & Wales) Regulations 2006 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 & 2014.

- 1.2.3 The definition of the terms “chief officer” and “deputy chief officer” is in accordance with section 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.3.1 As set out in Section A of the attached Pay Policy, the Council’s approach to setting a pay multiple is broadly calculated on a base salary multiple of 7.5 to 8 being the gap between the remuneration of the lowest and the most highly paid employees and is enshrined within the Council’s locally determined job benchmarking evaluation scheme. Such an approach places an emphasis on cash reward as the corner stone of the Council’s pay policy, and ensures that pay is based on job requirements.

1.4 Risk Assessment

- 1.4.1 The Council is legally obliged to comply with the Localism Act’s requirement to have reviewed the Pay Policy Statement by 31 March 2023.

1.5 Equality Impact assessment

- 1.5.1 The recommendation to adopt the Pay Policy Statement in Annex 1 ensures parity in the evaluation of the grade attaching to posts, and therefore mitigates against discrimination against those in protected characteristic groups.

1.6 Recommendation

- 1.6.1 It is recommended that this committee commends the pay policy in Annex 1 to this report for adoption at the Council meeting on 21 February 2023.

Background papers:

contact: Mathew Brooks
Head of HR & Development

Nil

Adrian Stanfield, Director of Central Services & Deputy Chief Executive

Pay Policy Statement 2023/24

Introduction

When determining remuneration levels, the Council is mindful of the requirement to balance the needs of managing scarce public resources with the need to secure and retain high-quality employees. The Council aligns its reward strategy with organisational needs by an emphasis on cash rewards, and ensuring that pay is determined by job requirements. The Council aims to operate a consistent and equitable organisation-wide reward system by placing the responsibility for remuneration decisions with a committee of elected councillors, the General Purposes Committee, and the responsibility for administering the pay policy within the Council's Human Resources team.

Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires the council to prepare an annual pay policy statement for 2023/24. The Act specifies that the following must be included in the pay policy statement:

- the level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer
- the policy on the remuneration of chief officers on recruitment
- increases and additions to their remuneration including performance related pay, bonuses, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind and termination payments
- a definition of the "lowest paid employees" and the policy on the remuneration of this group
- the policy on the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other officers
- the policy on re-employing someone who has been made redundant.

This statement will be published on the Council's website.

Section 1 – Remuneration of statutory and non-statutory Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers

The term "chief officer" within The Localism Act includes both statutory and non-statutory chief officers, and their deputies. The actual remuneration for these roles is available on the Council's website <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/council/council-works-constitution/2>

The salary scales for the statutory and non-statutory Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers in post on 1 April 2022 is set out below.

No of chief officers	Grade	% of M2 benchmark	Pay Point Range
12 (1 of whom work part time)	M7	51.0%	131-134
9 (1 of whom work part time)	M6	56.0%	141- 144
4	M5	61.0%	147 - 150
6	M4	70.0%	151- 154
3	M2a	97.5%	181- 184
1	M2	100%	186-189
1	M1	125.0%	191- 194

Fee for acting as the Returning Officer

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is required to appoint a Returning Officer by virtue of section 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. In Tonbridge & Malling, the Chief Executive has been appointed as the Returning Officer. This is a personal appointment, separate from their other duties. In this capacity they are the Returning Officer for UK Parliamentary elections and elections to the Borough Council and to Parish Councils within this Borough.

The Returning Officer fee is payable for the substantial additional duties undertaken, and leadership required of the Returning Officer in planning, delivering and undertaking the elections, and recognises the personal nature and personal responsibility of the role of the Returning Officer.

For Borough and Parish Council elections, the Returning Officer fee is calculated in accordance with an agreed Kent Scale of Fees. For National, and Police & Crime Commissioner elections the fee rate is set by central government.

Section 2 – Remuneration of the lowest paid employees

In compliance with Section 38 of the Localism Act, for the purposes of this statement the “lowest paid employee” has been defined as those who are engaged as cleaners. On 1 April 2022 employees in these posts received a full time annual salary equivalent of approximately £18,381.

Section 3 – Decision on pay

The pay of all council employees (including chief officers) is determined by the evaluated grade of the post. The pay band for most jobs within the council (including chief officers) is very narrow, based on 3 or 4 incremental points.

Progression through the pay band is based on length of service, subject to the achievement of expected performance standards, and thus recognises development in a role over time based on the accumulation of experience and knowledge.

It is anticipated that during 2022/23 the total number of permanent and fixed term contract staff on the Council's payroll will be approximately 250 in any one month.

The Council has not adopted the national local government job evaluation or grading schemes but has developed a locally negotiated framework that more closely reflects its own requirements. Within this framework there are two remuneration "families". The first has been developed for the Council's professional and senior managerial cohorts, and includes chief officers. The second is for supervisory, technical and clerical staff.

All staff (including chief officers) are appointed to the organisation at the bottom of the grade, unless there are exceptional circumstances based on business need.

Annual Pay Award

The salary of all council employees (including chief officers) may increase annually by an annual pay award which is locally determined taking into consideration:

- "caps" on public sector pay rates set by the Government
- the council's ability to pay
- inflation levels
- the "going rate" of pay awards in neighbouring authorities and nationally
- recruitment and retention levels.

Section 4 – Pay structure and pay relationships.

The Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency September 2011 requires that there is a process established to monitor the rate of growth of senior earnings compared to all other employees in the organisation.

During 2023/24 there will be a multiple of approximately 7.1 between the base level salary of the Chief Executive and a cleaner, reflecting the differences in skill sets, complexity and span of control from the lowest to the highest paid employees of the Council.

The total salary for the post of Chief Executive is in the region of £130,674 (as at 1 April 2022).

The median full time equivalent salary for all other employees in Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is in the region of £29,901, the mean full time equivalent salary is in the region of £35,153. The pay multiple is therefore approximately 4.37 against the median and 3.72 against the mean.

The Council's bespoke grading structure for employees with professional and specialised high level skill sets is entitled the "M" grade framework. All those referred to as chief officers within this pay policy statement fall within the "M grade" framework.

A feature of the M grade framework is that the remuneration levels for all M grade posts (including those of chief officers), are fixed as a percentage of the benchmark grade M2. Therefore, the grading structure specifies the pay multiples attached to each grade as a percentage of the lowest incremental point of grade M2.

Posts are positioned within the M grade framework on the basis of the required specialist knowledge, professional skills, depth of professional and managerial judgement, and managerial span of control. Broadly speaking the range of capabilities required for junior M grade posts (M9 – M7 inclusive) equate to professional and/or managerial capability equivalent to qualification Level 6.

Those occupying senior managerial posts graded M6 to M4 are required to possess both professional and managerial skill sets equivalent to Level 7. All three director level chief officer posts are graded as M2a. The professional and managerial capabilities and span of control required at director level broadly equate to Level 8.

A Level 8 degree of professional and managerial expertise is also required for the post of the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive. This, alongside the extensive span of control intrinsic to the role of paid head of service for the entire Council workforce, merits the grade of M1 for the Chief Executive and M2 for their deputy.

Supervisory, technical and clerical grades

The council has developed a bespoke grading structure for its supervisory, technical and clerical staff that ranges from the grade of senior officer to clerical scale 1. Broadly speaking the managerial, professional and skill set required for posts graded Senior Officer equate to qualification Level 5, posts

graded scale 5-6 equate to Level 4, posts graded scale 3-4 to Level 3, posts graded scale 1-2 require a Level 1-2 skill set.

The Council considers that the relationship between the base salaries of its highest and lowest paid employees, as well as the relationship between the highest paid and the mean and medial salaries of the entire workforce, represents an appropriate, fair and equitable internal pay relationship.

Section 5 – Policies common to all employees

The following elements of remuneration are determined by corporate policies or arrangements which apply to all permanent employees of the Council (including its chief officers and deputy chief officers), regardless of their pay level, status or grading. Full details on any of the policies listed below can be provided on request.

The Council aims to have a streamlined and transparent pay structure and therefore it does not pay performance related or total contribution bonuses, market premiums, location allowances, or subsidy towards child care costs. Pension contributions for all employees opting to join the Local Government Pension Scheme are nationally determined.

Payments on termination of employment

According to the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 the Council has the power to make discretionary payments on early termination of employment. The Council has determined that it will calculate payments made to any eligible employee (including chief officers) who are made redundant or who depart on the grounds of the efficiency of the service by using the Government's statutory redundancy payment calculator formula and the employee's actual weekly pay. For those who depart on the grounds of redundancy or efficiency of the service, or who chose to retire "early", the Council does not increase the employee's total pension scheme membership or award additional pension. This response to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 applies to all employees, including chief and deputy chief officers.

The Council's policy is that it does not re-employ anyone (including chief or deputy chief officers) who has left with a severance or redundancy payment, nor does it re-engage them on a self-employed basis with a contract for services.

Car allowances

For those posts where it is deemed that there is an essential requirement for the post holder to use a car to perform their job, and they are expected to travel in excess of 2,500 miles per annum in the course of their duties, the post holder receives a lump sum Essential Car User allowance to contribute

towards the associated running costs of the car in accordance with the rates previously set by the National Joint Council.

The Council has previously run a lease car scheme which has not been open to new staff to join since June 2020. The lease car scheme is now no longer in operation as of November 2022 when the last remaining lease car holder ceased their participation in the scheme. The Council no longer pays an equivalent payment as an alternative to a lease car but certain specific posts have been identified to receive a Car Allowance.

Telephone allowances

Those employees who are deemed to be essential users of mobile telephones receive a mobile telephone allowance or a Council issued mobile phone.

Professional fees

Annual professional subscription fees to one relevant professional body are reimbursed to those employees where it is deemed an essential requirement for the post holder to belong to a professional institute.

Reimbursement of removal/relocation costs on appointment and mortgage subsidy scheme

The Council's relocation and mortgage subsidy schemes provide financial assistance (within pre-defined limits) to employees who re-locate from outside a reasonable travel area to the Borough to take up an appointment with the Council.

Subsistence Allowance

The Council reimburses expenditure on meals, accommodation, and any other expenses necessarily (within pre-defined limits) incurred by employees who have to be away from home on Council business.

Standby and call out allowances

Any employee who is required to undertake standby and call-out duties will be recompensed at the appropriate rate in accordance with the negotiated policy and payment rate for their role.

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

25 January 2023

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 PAY AWARD 2023

Summary

This report requests Members to consider a pay award of 5% for employees for 2023/24.

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% in April 2022.

1.1.3 There is no indication as yet of what the national pay award offer for 2023/24 might be. The national pay award for 2022/23 was agreed on 1 November 2022. The agreed pay award was a flat rate of £1,925 applied to all pay grades. This award equated to between 10.5% - 4.04% increase depending on the salary.

1.1.4 This report considers a range of factors that are relevant to the issue of a pay award for 2023/24.

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 Council still faces a significant funding gap over the 10-year period of the MTFS.

1.2.2 The Government has announced that the National Living Wage (NLW) for those over the age of 23 will rise by 9.7% on 1 April 2023 from £9.50 per hour to £10.42.

- 1.2.3 Assuming a 5.0% pay award is recommended from 1 April 2023, this will impact on this Council's salary scales (**Annex 1**), as the hourly rate for the three lowest spinal column point – 310 (scale 1), 311 and 312 (scale 2), will still be below the NLW hourly rate at £10.42 per hour. There are presently three staff on these grades who will need to move to scp 313.
- 1.2.4 The Council has a legal obligation to not pay below the NLW. If a 5.0% pay award is not awarded, then it must be noted that some form of pay award will have to be applied to the Council's spinal column points 310, 311, 312, 313 and 314 to ensure staff on these grades do not fall below the NLW from 1 April 2023 or these staff will need to be moved to scp 315 which at present equates to £10.44 per hour.

1.3 Comparative Pay Settlements

- 1.3.1 At the time of writing, no Kent Authorities have settled their pay awards for 2023/24, and that most are engaged in ongoing negotiations.
- 1.3.2 It may be helpful to Members of this Committee to provide a historical context for the current recommended 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%, for 2021/22 it was 1% and for 2022/23 it was 2%.

1.4 Retail Price Index

- 1.4.1 The most recently published RPI rate of increase (in December 2022) was 14% and the Government's preferred measure of inflation, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) most recent published figure (in December 2022), was 10.7%.

1.5 General Discussion

- 1.5.1 The cost of living and Public Sector pay is currently a very high profile topic with strike action taking place across various public sector bodies.
- 1.5.2 The factors that are relevant to a consideration of a pay award have been identified in the previous sections of this report.
- 1.5.3 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 Council's priorities and future challenges ahead is also of vital importance.
- 1.5.4 The Council's employees have been fully informed of the financial challenges facing the Council, via both the JECC and through Unison.

- 1.5.5 Provision for pay award inflation for 2023/24 has been made in the Medium Term Financial Strategy at 5.0%.
- 1.5.6 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, in addition to the implications of overall cost reduction through re-structuring and the deletion of posts.
- 1.5.7 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 5.0% is offered to staff for 2023/24 in order to maintain a competitive position with other employers in the recruitment market.
- 1.5.8 The UNISON Regional Officer has been informed of the Council's likely pay award and has undertaken to discuss this with the local branch.
- 1.5.9 Unison presented their claim to the Chief Executive and Director of Central Services & Deputy Chief Executive in December 2022. Unison also separately presented their claim to the Leader and Deputy Leader. UNISON's pay claim for 2023/24 can be found, in full, in **Annex 2** of this report.

1.6 Annual Leave

- 1.6.1 On 1 November 2022 the National Employers and the NJC Trade Union Side reached agreement on the 2022/23 pay award.
- 1.6.2 In addition to the pay award it was also agreed that an additional one day's leave entitlement should be added in order to increase the minimum annual leave entitlement from 22 to 23 days for all 'Green Book' employees with less than 5 years' service and to continue to give an additional minimum of 3 days to employees with over 5 years' service. This change is due to take effect on 1 April 2023 and will directly apply to and impact Council staff on grades 1-6 with less than 5 year's service.
- 1.6.3 The national agreement also committed to giving all staff who work for Councils which determine their pay award by the agreed nationally accepted offer, to give an additional one day annual leave to all staff regardless of whether they have a separate annual leave policy. This change does not apply to TMBC but it is important to note for awareness. Members will also note in, **Annex 2**, that the Tonbridge and Malling Branch of UNISON have requested an extra day's annual leave is applied to all staff.
- 1.6.4 The below chart shows the current annual leave entitlement for staff on different grades.

Grade	Under 5 years' continuous local government service	Over 5 years' continuous local government service
1 – 4	22	26
5 – 6	22	27
Senior Officer	23	28
M9 - M5	24	29
M4	25	30
M3 - M1	30	33

- 1.6.5 In addition to the annual leave entitlement set out above, staff have an entitlement to two extra statutory days holiday as set out in the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (Green Book), these days are pro-rata'd for part time staff.
- 1.6.6 The Council's contracts for all staff state 'Changes in leave entitlements will be determined by reference to local or national agreements, or to statute'. As a minimum, the Council must adjust the annual leave entitlements for all its current staff within leave bands 1-4 and 5-6 (with less than 5 years' service) from 22 to 23 days. This change needs to be implemented to take effect from 1 April 2023.
- 1.6.7 The Council's annual leave entitlements have not been reviewed for a number of years. Having undertaken a review of the annual leave entitlements offered by neighbouring local authorities, it is clear the Council offers less annual leave than some neighbouring authorities.
- 1.6.8 It is proposed to increase the leave entitlement by one day for all staff with effect from 1 April 2023.
- 1.6.9 The below table, which incorporates the one day annual leave increase for all staff, was considered by the Council's Management Team and it is proposed to increase the leave entitlements accordingly with effect from 1 April 2023.

Grade	Under 5 years' continuous local government service	Over 5 years' continuous local government service
1 – 4	23	27
5 – 6	23	28
Senior Officer	24	29
M9 - M5	25	30
M4	26	31
M3 - M1	31	34

1.7 Legal Implications

- 1.7.1 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.

1.8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.8.1 I believe that the recommended award for 2023/24 is an appropriate response in the light of the Council's budget position.
- 1.8.2 Financial provision in the 2023/24 Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy assumes 5.0% pay inflation and would therefore be 'within budget'.

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.

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.

1.11 Recommendations

- 1.11.1 I RECOMMEND a 5.0% pay award, from 1 April 2023.
- 1.11.2 I RECOMMEND an increase of one day to the annual leave entitlements of all Officers as detailed in section 1.6 this report, from 1 April 2023.

contact: Julie Beilby

Background papers:
Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
FULL TIME SALARIES**

LOCAL FROM 01.04.22		
Scale		£
1	301	10,338
	302	11,031
	303	11,931
	304	12,648
	305	13,542
	306	14,391
	307	15,204
	308	16,164
	309	17,226
	310	18,381
2	311	18,381
	312	18,774
	313	19,263
3	314	19,650
	315	20,073
	316	20,565
	317	21,093
4	318	21,516
	319	22,347
	320	23,181
	321	24,054
5	322	24,687
	323	25,425
	324	26,262
	325	27,117
6	326	27,993
	327	28,929
	328	29,901
SO	329	31,095
	330	32,136
	331	33,171
	332	34,140
	333	35,169
	334	36,198

NATIONAL FROM 01.04.21	
	£
1	18,333
2	18,516
3	18,887
4	19,264
5	19,650
6	20,043
7	20,444
8	20,852
9	21,269
10	21,695
11	22,129
12	22,571
13	23,023
14	23,484
15	23,953
16	24,432
17	24,920
18	25,419
19	25,927
20	26,446
21	26,975
22	27,514
23	28,226
24	29,174
25	30,095
26	30,984
27	31,895
28	32,798
29	33,486
30	34,373
31	35,336
32	36,371

M GRADE FROM 01.04.22			
			£
M9	41.0%	111	36,801
		112	37,542
		113	38,283
		114	39,024
		115	39,765
		116	40,512
		117	41,250
M8	46.0%	121	43,785
		122	44,616
		123	45,453
		124	46,281
M7	51.0%	131	48,543
		132	49,464
		133	50,394
		134	51,309
M6	56.0%	141	53,304
		142	54,315
		143	55,335
		144	56,340
M5	61.00%	147	58,062
		148	59,163
		149	60,276
		150	61,371
M4	70.0%	151	66,732
		152	67,995
		153	69,270
		154	70,527
M4a	75.0%	161	71,490
		162	72,846
		163	74,211
		164	75,558
M3	80.4%	171	76,629
		172	78,081
		173	79,545
		174	80,991
M3a	85.0%	176	81,009
		177	82,545
		178	84,090
		179	85,620
M2a	97.5%	181	92,907
		182	94,668
		183	96,444
		184	98,196
M2	100.0%	186	95,286
		187	97,092
		188	98,913
		189	100,710
M1a	110.0%		
M1	125.0%	191	119,082
		192	121,341
		193	123,615
		194	125,862

PROTECTED SCALES	
Scale	Protected scp
1	312 to 313
2	314 to 315
3	318 to 319
4	322 to 323
5	326 to 327
6	329 to 330

Years of LG Service	Long Service Award
20-24	175
25-29	200
30-34	240
35-39	280
40-44	370
45 or more	410

TMBC GRADES	
	scp
1	301 to 311
2	311 to 313
3	314 to 317
4	318 to 321
5	322 to 325
6	326 to 328
SO	329 to 334

First Aid Allowance	
2022/23	£178.80

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PAY CLAIM FOR 2023/2024

Submitted by the Tonbridge and Malling Branch of UNISON to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

1. Introduction

This pay claim is submitted by the Tonbridge and Malling Branch of UNISON on behalf of all staff working for Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.

This year's pay claim is submitted in unprecedented times for our members, with the cost of living rising fast. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI), rose by 11.1% over the 12 months to October 2022, which was the highest inflation rate in over 40 years. The Retail Price Index (RPI), which measures a slightly different "basket of goods", rose by 14.2% over the year to October. The value of staff wages is therefore significantly eroded.

Our members were not happy with last year's pay award of 2% from April 2022, but they reluctantly accepted it. In our recent member survey, respondents made it clear that in the current climate they are not prepared to accept 2% again from next April – or even the recently-announced 5% proposed by management.

2. Summary of Claim

We are seeking:

- **A 12.5% increase on all salary points;**
- **An additional increase for any staff at the bottom of the pay scale to bring their pay up to a minimum of £15 per hour;**
- **A 12.5% increase on all allowances, including car allowances;**
- **An increase in the business mileage rate to 63p/mile;**
- **Introduction of a working from home allowance to reflect the need to set aside a quiet space at home and raised utility bills;**
- **An extra day's annual leave.**

The claim is set at a level that we believe recognises the following key points:

- For many years, rates of inflation have been running above our pay awards - in reality our pay has been cut once inflation was factored in;
- In the last year alone, substantial increases in the cost of living have significantly reduced the value of staff wages;
- The rise in prices facing workers is now at a 40-year high;
- Appropriate reward is needed to sustain the morale and productivity of staff in their crucial role of delivering high quality services;
- TMBC already has a number of long term vacancies. With average earnings and pay settlements rising across the economy, TMBC salaries are lagging behind, which increases the likelihood of ongoing recruitment and retention problems;
- Appropriate reward is needed for the increased workload and stress placed on staff when vacancies are not swiftly filled or posts are deleted;
- Nobody should be paid less than the nationally-recognised Living Wage rate, but UNISON are now campaigning for a minimum wage of £15 per hour in order to support the lowest paid.

3. Background

3.1 Inflation and the Cost of Living in relation to TMBC salaries

The 'cost of living crisis' refers to the fall in 'real' disposable incomes (adjusted for inflation and after taxes and benefits) that the UK has experienced since late 2021. It is being caused predominantly by high inflation outstripping wage and benefit increases and will be further exacerbated by tax thresholds being frozen.

The following inflation rates were released by the ONS on 19th October 2022:

Retail Prices Index (RPI)	14.2%
Consumer Prices Index (CPI)	11.1%
CPI including owner occupiers housing (CPIH)	9.6%

"The largest upward contributions to the annual CPIH inflation rate in October 2022 came from housing and household services (principally from electricity, gas and other fuels, food and non-alcoholic beverages), and transport (principally motor fuels)." *ONS*

This will have affected every member of staff (though those on lower incomes would have felt it even more acutely), and especially those whose roles require them to drive for work.

Table 1 below shows TMBC pay awards compared to the rising cost of living over the last 12 years. It highlights that our pay was completely frozen for 3 years and most other years the pay rise was outstripped by inflation, which means these pay awards have effectively been pay cuts, year on year. It shows that TMBC staff were already under some financial pressure, even before the current crisis.

Table 1: TMBC Pay Awards compared to the rising Cost of Living

Year	Pay Award %	Annual CPI %	Annual RPI %	
2011	0	4.5	5.2	
2012	0	2.8	3.2	
2013	1	2.6	3.0	
2014	1	0	1.0	
2015	1	0.7	1.8	
2016	2	0.7	1.8	
2017	0	2.7	3.6	
2018	2	2.5	3.3	
2019	2.5	1.8	2.6	
2020	2.5	0.9	1.5	
2021	1	2.6	4.0	
2022	2	11.1*	14.2 *	*at Oct 2022

Source ONS

Table 2 shows the average price rises for everyday goods at Oct 2022.

Table 2: Rise in prices for everyday goods	
Item	Average % increase to Oct 2022
Furniture and Household Goods	10.6
Transport	9.3
Clothing and Footwear	8.5
Housing and household services	11.7
Food and catering	16.4
Alcohol and tobacco	6.2
All goods	14.8
All services	5.3

Source: ONS

Current inflation rates can mask longer term changes in the cost of living that have taken place since 2009. The examples in Table 3 below show major increases in costs that have surpassed average prices increases over the period.

Table 3: Highest cost of living rises 2009-21				
Expenditure item	House prices	Bus & coach fares	Electricity	Childcare
Price rise 2009-21	53%	88%	65%	55%

3.2 Food

In the 5 months between April and Sept 2022, two of the three largest average price rises for foods were for the following basic essentials needed in every household:

Veg Oil up 80p to £2.58 per litre

Milk up 25p to £1.52 for 4 pints

The Food Foundation estimates that the cost of their “Basic Basket” of food shopping has increased by 15% in six months, so even those buying the *cheapest* brands are affected.

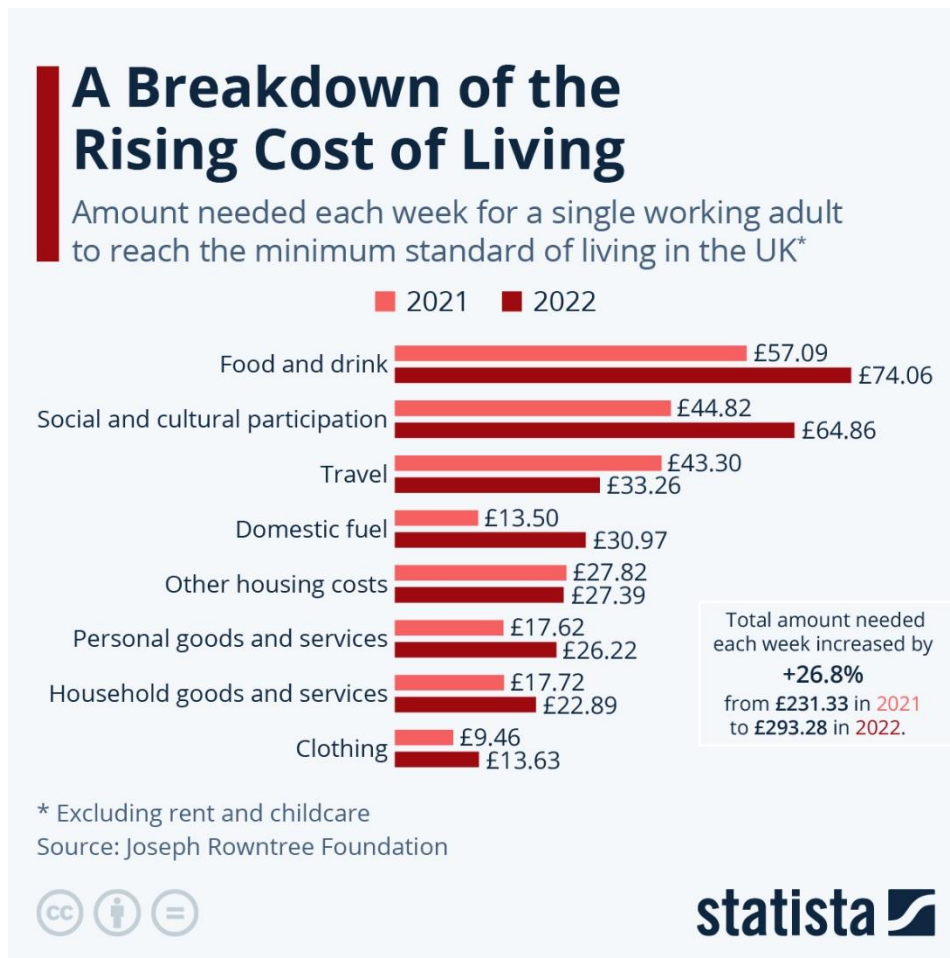
3.3 Living on the Lowest Incomes

Below is Bar Chart 4: A Breakdown of the Rising Cost of Living for a single working adult to reach the minimum standard of living in the UK – comparing 2022 against 2021.

The extent of inflation within the UK is clarified by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s latest report, which shows how a single working adult living in the UK needs to earn at least £293.28 each week in order to reach the minimum standard of living (equivalent to £15,250 per annum). This is a 26.8% increase since 2021, when the average adult needed £231.33 per week.

As always, the lowest paid are borrowing the most, saving the least and will be the least likely to be able to cope with unexpected bills.

Bar Chart 4:



ref. Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Statista

Please note: these figures do *not* include rent or childcare, so many of our members will have even higher outgoings for these essentials. In addition, rents and childcare prices have also gone up (see below).

However, the cost of living does not just affect the lowest paid: a recent BBC News report stated that anyone earning less than approximately £45,000 per annum would feel the squeeze of this cost of living crisis.

As one of our survey respondents pointed out, they are on a middle-income but still affected by the cost of living and having to make choices about what aspects of their lifestyle they should cut.

Sadly, a third of the parents responding to our survey reported that their children are already having to miss out on activities and experiences because the household cannot afford them.

3.4 Rental

Renters are more likely to struggle to pay than mortgage owners, according to the ONS, and private rental prices paid by tenants in the UK increased by 2.0% in the 12 months to January 2022, representing the largest annual growth rate since February 2017.

On 21st October 2022, Rightmove announced that the typical advertised private rent outside London had now risen to a new record of £1,162 per calendar month.

A recent drop of 9% in the properties available means a shortage of rental properties is now pushing rents up even further.

3.5 Mortgages

The reaction of the markets to the Government's recent "Mini Budget" have also led to a significant rise in mortgage interest rates to approx. 3%, adding hundreds of pounds to monthly repayments. This will be affecting staff across all the pay grades, especially those on variable mortgage rates, those coming to the end of fixed mortgage deals or those needing to move home at this time.

The mortgage rate is predicted to rise further yet, to 4.25% by next spring, according to the Bank of England on 27 November 2022.

3.6 Childcare

Table 5 below shows the cost of pre-school childcare costs.

Childcare costs are higher than average in the South East and this will have a massive impact on some of our members.

Table 5: Price of 25 hours a week childcare for children under three

	Nursery		Childminder	
	Under two	Two	Under two	Two and over
Great Britain	£137.69	£132.56	£118.34	£117.32
England	£140.27	£134.73	£119.02	£117.86
London, inner	£179.86	£177.61	£163.77	£161.60
London, outer	£156.32	£147.87	£147.53	£146.43
South East	£147.06	£143.10	£124.43	£122.60

Source: Coram Family and Childcare, Childcare Survey 2022.

3.7 Household Energy

The House of Commons report “Rising Cost of Living in the UK” dated 21 November 2022 states:

“Another important driver of inflation is energy prices, with household energy tariffs and petrol costs increasing. From October 2021 to October 2022, domestic gas prices increased by 129% and domestic electricity prices by 66%. Gas prices increased to record levels after Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine and continued to rise during much of 2022 due to cuts in Russian supply. Electricity prices are linked to gas prices and have followed a similar trend”.

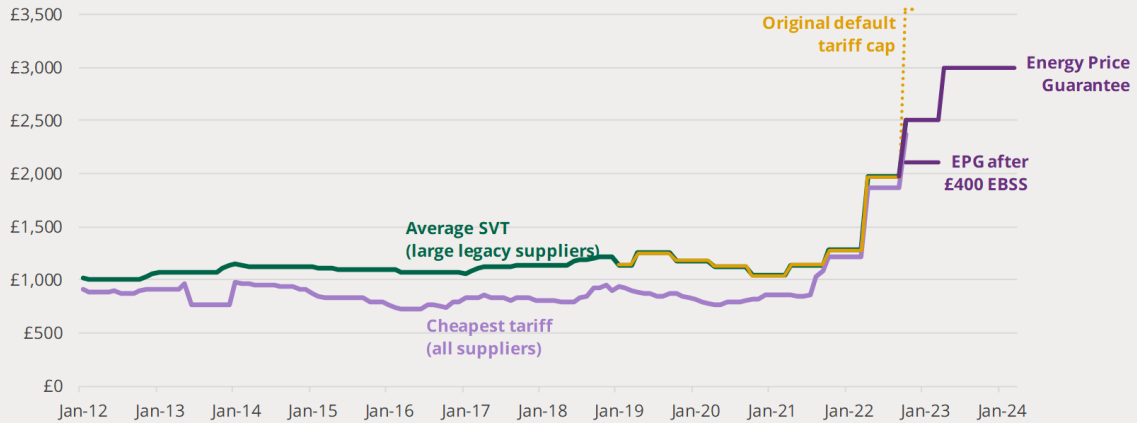
The Energy Price Guarantee (EPG), which caps the unit price of household energy, went up by 54% in April 2022, but increased again on 1st October 2022 to £2,500 for “typical household usage”, and will then rise again to £3,000 on 1st April 2023. This latter rate is expected to last until at least March 2024.

You can see from Graph 6 below that this is a huge increase on a year ago.

Graph 6: Domestic Energy Prices

Price cap up by 54% in April 2022, Energy Price Guarantee limits increase in October 2022, but increases to £3,000 from April 2023

Average annual direct debit dual fuel bill for typical levels of consumption, cash prices, Great Britain



Source: House of Commons Library Research Briefing “Domestic Energy Prices”

Despite the EPG price cap and the Energy Support Scheme payment of £400 per household, these are very worrying increases for most of our members, but will be especially daunting for anyone with a health condition which requires them to keep warm.

Please note: household energy costs even more for those on pre-payment meters.

Our survey back in September revealed that 3 of our members working at TMBC had already been struggling to pay their energy bills over the *last* year – before the price cap rose in October. And the ONS expect more people to be struggling to pay their bills as we go through this winter.

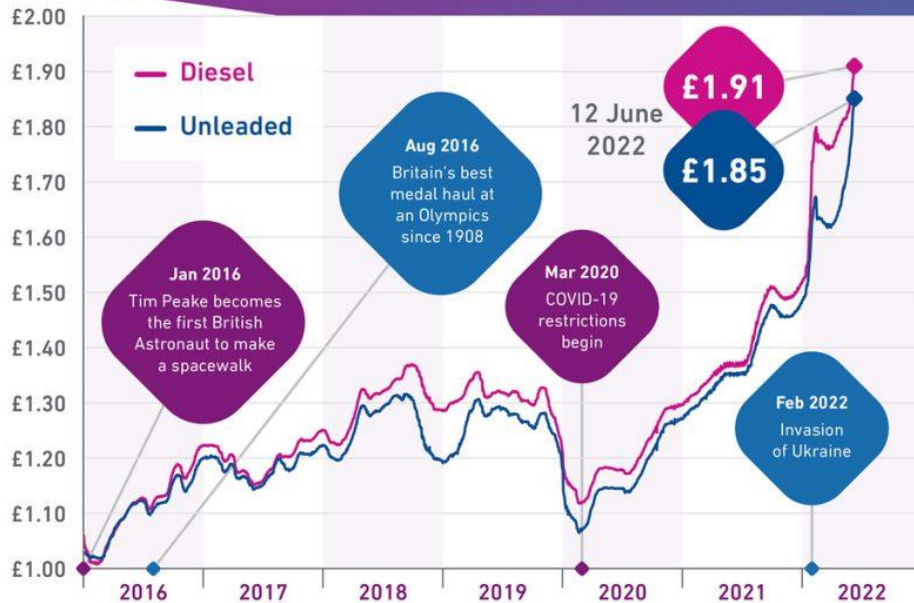
84% of our survey respondents told us that they plan to reduce how much they switch their heating on over this coming winter.

3.8 Petrol/Diesel

Graph 7 from Experian shows how Diesel and Unleaded Prices have rocketed since 2016.

Graph 7

The journey to a **£100** price tag for a full tank of fuel
Average pump price per litre



Feb 2016 was the lowest price per litre in the last decade

Source: Experian Catalyst



Mileage rates of 45p per mile set by HMRC 11 years ago are now wholly inadequate, such that employees who are required to drive for work are now subsidising their employer's costs. Petrol and oil have risen by 45%, in the last year alone.

UNISON has calculated that the mileage rate should now be 63p/mile (ref. UNISON press release of 1 Nov 2022).

Some other employers, including other Councils, have already increased their mileage rates.

3.9 Some other findings from our survey

This survey of UNISON members employed at TMBC was completed in September 2022, before the energy price cap went up:

- 21% of respondents told us they are already struggling financially.
- When asked how they are coping with the cost of living:
37% of respondents are regularly dipping into their savings to pay the bills,
10% have taken out loans,
8% have borrowed from family and
3 have taken additional jobs.
- Our survey also revealed that 37% of respondents felt that financial worries were impacting their mental health. Some members said they were feeling anxious about the future if they did not receive a significant pay increase.
- 54% of respondents had considered leaving for better pay elsewhere.

Other comments from our survey included:

- “When comparing income to expenditure, it now leaves us little disposable income”.
- “We don’t know how much worse things are going to get before next April”.
- “TMBC salaries are lagging behind other local authorities’ pay”.
- “The number of staff leaving is a “brain drain” that leaves remaining staff under strain trying to cope and/or training up new staff – which is a particular strain on smaller teams”.
- “Workload duties are increasing and morale is decreasing”.

4.0 Conclusion

This pay claim is set at a level that we believe recognises the following key points:

- As key workers, we have helped to keep the country going during the Covid-19 crisis, providing vital services and keeping our communities safe – sometimes at some personal risk to ourselves.
- The next time a crisis comes along, we would be expected to pull out the stops once again; staff would most likely be willing – but especially if they feel valued and rewarded.
- More recently in the subsequent “recovery phase”, staff have worked extra hard to catch up with work that was postponed during the pandemic.

- Appropriate reward is needed to sustain the morale and productivity of employees in their crucial roles, delivering high quality services.
- Average pay settlements across the economy have been running ahead of those received by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council employees over most of the recent years, increasing the likelihood of recruitment and retention problems in the long term unless the trend is reversed. With our proximity to London and major road networks, plus a shortage of workers in the labour market, it is easy for TMBC staff to look elsewhere (at other authorities or in entirely different sectors) and find more attractive salaries.
- In particular, there appears to be an issue retaining and recruiting staff in some departments, with a number of vacancies remaining vacant for long periods.
- Appropriate reward is needed for the increased workload and stress placed on remaining staff who are covering the work of vacant posts that are not immediately filled, or not replaced at all, against a background of budget cuts.
- Major increases in the cost of living over recent years (and especially in recent months) have significantly reduced the value of all staff wages.
- The current economic crisis has led to significant increases in utility bills, mortgages, transport/fuel costs and food prices.
- Most of our members are concerned about how they will cope.
- For those who have no opportunity to work from home, increased transport or fuel costs cannot be avoided.

The Committee believe that this claim on behalf of UNISON members recognises the severe impact of the current cost of living crisis and the ability of our members to pay for the basics for their families.

Carolyn Mell
Branch Chair

Jack Lee
Membership Officer

29 November 2022

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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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Agenda Item 9

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 11

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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