

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, 12th June, 2024

Present: Cllr M R Rhodes (Chair), Cllr A McDermott (Vice-Chair), Cllr B Banks, Cllr K Barton, Cllr A G Bennison, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr J Clokey, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr B A Parry, Cllr R V Roud and Cllr K B Tanner

Cllr P M Hickmott were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

GP 24/16 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members.

GP 24/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

GP 24/18 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 13 March 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

GP 24/19 STAFF AWARD PAYMENT

Consideration was given to a proposed one-off staff recognition payment within an approved budget of £50,000 as included in the approved Estimates 2024/25. The sum to be divided equally amongst all staff was intended as a 'thank you' payment in recognition of their contribution to the authority, the Borough and its communities and to mark and celebrate 50 years of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.

The proposal was a Cabinet led initiative and not linked to any wider Borough Council policies on staff pay and reward. It was also a one-off standalone payment and not a recurring annual payment. Any amount above £50,000 as a result of national insurance contributions and superannuation payments would be met from the organisations management savings on salaries.

Details of the criteria for staff to receive the payment were set out in 1.3 of the report.

Members recognised the role of staff in maintaining and delivering services during the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis and welcomed the opportunity to reward this hard work. There was also discussion on performance related pay and rewarding exceptional service. However, the challenge in quantifying performance across many different services and roles made this difficult to manage. The current proposal rewarded all staff equally regardless of grade. It was also noted that the Management Team had declined to accept this pay reward.

The Chair proposed that the General Purposes Committee record appreciation to all staff for their efforts in supporting residents and communities within the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council area. This was supported unanimously by Members.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the one-off staff recognition payment of £150 each be approved as set out in the report; and
- (2) the General Purposes Committee formally record appreciation to all staff for their efforts in supporting residents and communities within the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council area.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

GP 24/20 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 24/21 ESTABLISHMENT REPORT

(Reasons: LGA 1972 – Sch 12A Paragraph 1 and 2 – Information relating to an individual and information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.)

The report set out for Member's approval a number of establishment changes recommended by the 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.

Careful consideration was given to a number of proposed changes to the establishment as detailed in 1.3 of the report. As this represented budget growth these required the approval of Council, subject to the views of the Committee. However, it was noted that the cost of creating a full time, fixed term Finance Officer post (as detailed in 1.3.35) would be met from the Budget Stabilisation Reserve.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the two-year extension up to 5 December 2026 of the Economic Development Officer post (DC0199) be noted;
- (2) the regrading of the Electoral Services Officer post (DC4020) following a job evaluation exercise from scale 4 to scale 5 with effect from 1 June 2024 be noted; and
- (3) the creation of a new three-year fixed term Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Manager post at M8/M7 be noted.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (4) with effect from 10 July 2024, the Internal Communications Officer post (DA1299) be permanently established at 18.5 hours per week;
- (5) with effect from 10 July 2024, the proposed changes within the Revenues and Benefits Service, detailed in 1.3.24 – 1.3.27 of the report, be established; and
- (6) with effect from 10 July 2024, the proposed changes within Accountancy and Exchequer Services, detailed in 1.3.25 to 1.3.40 of the report, be established.

***Recommended to Council**

The meeting ended at 8.06 pm