



TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SERVICES

Chief Executive
Damian Roberts

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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.gov.uk

30 September 2025

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, 8th October, 2025 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

DAMIAN ROBERTS

Chief Executive

A G E N D A

1. Guidance for the Conduct of Meetings

5 - 8

PART 1 - PUBLIC

2. Apologies for absence

- | | | |
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| 3. | Notification of Substitute Members | 9 - 10 |
| 4. | Declarations of interest | 11 - 12 |

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 for members – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council \(tmbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/code-of-conduct-for-members).

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

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| 5. | Minutes | 13 - 16 |
|----|---------|---------|

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of General Purposes Committee held on 11 June 2025.

Matters for Decision under Delegated Powers

- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 6. | Member Development Strategy - Initial Themes and Next Steps | 17 - 22 |
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This report outlines the initial themes identified for inclusion in the Council's Member Development Strategy and seeks approval for a draft Strategy to be presented to the Committee to consider in a future meeting.

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| 7. | Urgent Items | 23 - 24 |
|----|--------------|---------|

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

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---------|
| 8. | Exclusion of Press and Public | 25 - 26 |
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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

Matters for Decision under Delegated Powers

9. Establishment Report 27 - 56

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

This report sets out for Members' approval a number of establishment changes recommended by the Council's 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.

10. Urgent Items 57 - 58

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 A McDermott (Vice-Chair)

Cllr B Banks
Cllr K Barton
Cllr L Chapman
Cllr M A Coffin
Cllr J Clokey

Cllr D A S Davis
Cllr B A Parry
Cllr R V Roud
Cllr K B Tanner

GUIDANCE ON HOW MEETINGS WILL BE CONDUCTED

- (1) Most of the Borough Council meetings are livestreamed, unless there is exempt or confidential business being discussed, giving residents the opportunity to see decision making in action. These can be watched via our YouTube channel. When it is not possible to livestream meetings they are recorded and uploaded as soon as possible:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPp-IJISNgoF-ugSzxiAPfw/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 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 Chair, 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 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 should attend in person. However, arrangements to participate online can be considered in certain circumstances. Please contact committee.services@tmhc.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.

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General Purposes Committee					
	Conservative	Liberal Democratic	Green	Ind. Kent Alliance	Labour
1	Robin Betts	David Thornevell	Lee Athwal		
2	Matt Boughton	Michelle Tatton	Steve Crisp		
3	Robert Cannon	Anita Oakley	Mark Hood		
4	Des Keers	Frani Hoskins	Robert Oliver		
5	Adem Mehmet	Garry Bridge	Stacey Pilgrim		

May 2025

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Declarations of interest

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TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, 11th June, 2025

Present: Cllr M R Rhodes (Chair), Cllr A McDermott (Vice-Chair), Cllr B Banks, Cllr K Barton, Cllr L Chapman, 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

PART 1 - PUBLIC

GP 25/20 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members.

GP 25/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

GP 25/22 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the General Purposes Committee held on 12 March 2025 and 12 May 2025 respectively be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

GP 25/23 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 25/24 ESTABLISHMENT REPORT

(Reason: 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) Post DF1101, Benefits & Welfare Manager, be deleted with effect from 12 June 2025;
- (2) Post DF1102, Revenues Manager, be deleted with effect from 12 June 2025;
- (3) a new permanent Revenues and Benefits Manager post, 37 hours per week, Grade M5, be established with effect from 12 June 2025;
- (4) a new permanent Deputy Revenues and Benefits Manager post, 37 hours per week, Grade M8/M7, be established with effect from 12 June 2025;
- (5) the reduction of 7 hours per week from the established hours for Post DF1109, Revenues and Benefits Officer, and the reallocation of the hours to increase the established hours for Post DF1199, Overpayment Recovery Assistant, from 30 to 37 hours per week, be noted;
- (6) the increase of the established hours for Post DJ0167, Senior Planning Officer, from 30 to 37 hours per week and the reduction of the established hours for Post DJ0184, Senior Planning Officer, from 29.5 to 22.5 hours per week with effect from 4 August 2025, be noted;
- (7) the deletion of Post DV0915, Housing Technical Officer, and the redistribution of its hours to increase the established hours for Posts DV0904 and DV0908, Housing Technical Officers, from 22.2 and 29.6 hours per week respectively to full-time 37 hours per week, be noted; and
- (8) it be noted that following the transfer of call handling responsibilities to the Contact Centre, as agreed by this Committee in January 2025 and implemented from 1 May 2025, 1.7 FTE had been transferred from the Environmental Health/Waste Admin Team to the Contact Centre with 3.9 FTE retained in the Team to provide back-office support across Environmental Health, Leisure, and Waste Services, per the revised establishment as set out in Annex 1.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) Post DV0723, Housing Solutions Manager, be regraded from Grade M7 to M6 with effect from 9 July 2025;
- (2) Post DV0731, Housing Allocations Team Leader, be regraded from Scale 5/6 to SO with effect from 9 July 2025;
- (3) Posts DV0726 and DV0745, Housing Allocations Officers, be regraded from Scale 3 and 3/4 respectively to Scale 5/6 with effect from 9 July 2025;
- (4) the hours of post DR0016, Contracts and Procurement Lawyer, be increased from 21 to 37 hours per week with effect from 9 July 2025; and
- (5) Post DE0107, Resilience Officer, be regraded from Scale SO to Grade M9 and the hours of the post be increased from 15 to 29.6 hours per week with effect from 9 July 2025.

***Recommended to Council**

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm

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General Purposes Committee

08 October 2025

Part 1 - Public

Delegated



Cabinet Member	n/a
Responsible Officer	Adrian Stanfield, Director Central Services & Deputy Chief Executive
Report Author	Mathew Brooks, Head of HR & Development

Member Development Strategy – Initial Themes and Next Steps

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report outlines the initial themes identified for inclusion in the Council's Member Development Strategy.
- 1.2 These themes have emerged from early discussions between Cllr Mark Rhodes and Cllr Alex McDermott (as Chair/ Vice-Chair of General Purposes Committee), Adrian Stanfield, Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive and Mathew Brooks, Head of HR & Development.
- 1.3 The Member Development Strategy will be shaped through Member engagement, including a proposed survey of all Members. A draft strategy will then be prepared for Member approval.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 A Member Development Strategy will ensure the Council's Members are well-informed, confident in their decision-making roles, and equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to contribute to the effective governance and delivery of council services.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Members are asked to:
 - Note the emerging themes for the Member Development Strategy;
 - Endorse the proposal to survey all Members on their development needs; and

- Agree that the General Purposes Committee will receive a draft strategy in January 2026.

4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 The development of a comprehensive Member Development Strategy is a stated priority within the Council's Annual Service Delivery Plan for 2025/26, reflecting the importance of equipping Members with the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their roles effectively.
- 4.2 Following the 2023 elections, an intensive Member induction programme was delivered. Further subject specific training has taken place since that time. Building on this, the Council is now seeking to develop a more structured and responsive Member Development Strategy to support Members in their roles and responsibilities.
- 4.3 Initial discussions have highlighted the need for a strategy that is:
- Member-led and responsive to both individual and collective development needs
 - Flexible in delivery to accommodate time constraints and existing pressures on Members
 - Focused on both foundational knowledge and emerging priorities.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 The following areas have been identified as potential priorities for Member training and development:
- 5.2 **Committee specific training**
- 5.3 Committee specific training aims to equip Members with the knowledge and confidence required to fulfil their distinct responsibilities within each committee.
- 5.4 Through tailored refresher sessions and flexible "bitesize" learning opportunities, Members will deepen their understanding of committee purpose, decision-making processes, and their individual roles. This training will therefore build upon the sessions provided during the induction process in 2023.
- 5.5 This approach ensures that training is targeted, practical, and aligned with the evolving needs of each committee, supporting effective governance and informed participation.
- Refresher sessions for each committee on its purpose, decision-making responsibilities, and Member roles.

- Option for “bitesize” training (e.g., 30-minute sessions before committee meetings).
- Potential for up to two sessions per month to balance existing commitments.

5.6 **Legislative training**

5.7 Legislative training is designed to ensure all Members are equipped with a thorough understanding of the statutory frameworks and essential governance principles underpinning their duties.

5.8 This includes both ongoing mandatory training for key regulatory committees and preparation for anticipated legislative changes which may introduce new or heightened training standards.

5.9 By embedding a strong foundation in legislative requirements and good governance, Members will be able to fulfil their responsibilities with confidence, integrity, and effectiveness.

5.10 A focus on developing knowledge in the following areas could be considered:

- Continued mandatory training for Licensing and Planning Committees.
- Anticipated legislative changes requiring minimum training standards for Planning Committee Members.
- Chairing Effective Meetings (for Chairs, Vice Chairs, and aspiring leaders).
- Role and function of Scrutiny and the Scrutiny Committee.
- Understanding the Audit Function and the role of the Audit Committee.
- Code of Conduct and ethical standards.

5.11 **High-profile and high-risk service areas**

5.12 Focusing on these areas is essential because they represent some of the most complex, high-impact functions within the Council, where decisions can have far-reaching consequences for residents and the organisation alike.

5.13 Equipping Members with specialist knowledge in these areas ensures that governance is not only robust, but also responsive to emerging challenges and scrutiny.

5.14 In-depth understanding empowers Members to ask the right questions, evaluate risks, and contribute meaningfully to discussions and decisions, ultimately enhancing accountability, transparency, and public trust.

5.15 Training to improve Member understanding of:

- Housing services and the Council's role
- Waste services and the waste contract
- Property function and its strategic importance
- Contracts and procurement, including high-value contracts.

5.16 **Finance and Governance**

5.17 A strong grasp of finance and governance is critical for every Member, as these underpin the effective operation and stewardship of the Council.

5.18 Sound financial management enables the Council to allocate resources wisely, deliver quality services, and maintain fiscal resilience in the face of changing demands or economic uncertainty.

5.19 Equipping all Members with this core knowledge not only upholds transparency and legal compliance but also ensures that decisions are made with a full appreciation of their financial implications. In turn, this helps safeguard the Council's reputation and strengthens public confidence in its leadership.

5.20 A focus on developing knowledge in the following areas could be considered:

- Understanding the Statement of Accounts
- Internal and external audit processes
- What constitutes a balanced budget
- Regular updates on financial governance.

5.21 **Continuation of compliance training**

5.22 Ongoing compliance training — including areas such as Equality & Diversity, Safeguarding, PREVENT, Data Protection, and Cyber Security will ensure Members are aware of legal obligations and can protect the wellbeing of the community.

5.23 Staying informed about local government reorganisation and climate change supports responsive and strategic decision-making.

- Equality & Diversity
- Safeguarding Children and Adults
- PREVENT

- Data protection
- Cyber security
- Local Government Reorganisation
- Climate Change
- Corporate Health & Safety

5.24 Access to external resources

5.25 Engaging with external resources and training opportunities, such as those offered by the Local Government Association (LGA), allows Members to continually build their expertise and adapt to new challenges.

5.26 Review of Member engagement with Local Government Association (LGA) online training.

5.27 Consideration of how access to external training can be improved

6 Further options and next steps

6.1 The areas outlined above in section 5 serve as a starting point; Members themselves are central in identifying further development needs and shaping the future focus of training, ensuring the strategy evolves in line with their priorities.

6.2 To ensure the strategy reflects Member priorities, the following actions are proposed:

- Circulation of a short survey to all Members to identify training needs and preferences.
- Inclusion of a question on whether Members would value a Personal Development Plan.
- Development of a draft Member Development Strategy for consideration by the General Purposes Committee in January 2026.

7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

7.1 Where the council has in-house skills and capability to deliver training and development sessions, these will be delivered within existing resources. Additional provision through a designated budget may need to be agreed where external providers are required. This will be considered alongside the drafting of the development strategy.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 There is a risk that insufficient participation in consultation or training activities could limit the strategy's effectiveness. To mitigate this, it will be important to ensure that the strategy emphasises flexible delivery and ongoing communication to encourage involvement.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. However, the implementation of a member development strategy will ensure members are trained on the legal obligations placed upon them in undertaking their role and discharging the functions of the Council.

10 Consultation and Communications

- 10.1 All Members will be invited to contribute their views and identify their development needs through a proposed all-Member survey.

11 Implementation

- 11.1 Based on feedback received from Members, a draft proposed Member Development Strategy will be presented to Members of the General Purposes Committee at its meeting in January 2026.
- 11.2 Training and development activities will be scheduled to accommodate Members' commitments, with a blend of in-person and online options. Progress will be monitored through regular feedback and evaluation, enabling continuous improvement and adaptation to emerging needs.

12 Cross Cutting Issues

12.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 12.1.1 Adaptation and resilience have not been considered.

- 12.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

12.2 Equalities and Diversity

- 12.2.1 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.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	None

Agenda Item 7

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 8

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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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Agenda Item 10

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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