

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES

Tuesday, 18th November, 2025

Present: Cllr M D Boughton (Chair), Cllr R P Betts, Cllr D Keers, Cllr A Mehmet and Cllr M Taylor

Cllrs S Crisp, D Harman, Mrs A S Oakley, W E Palmer and M R Rhodes were also present via MS Teams pursuant to Access to Information Rule No 23.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M A Coffin

PART 1 - PUBLIC

CB 25/125 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

CB 25/126 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the Cabinet held on 14 October and 29 October 2025 respectively be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION

EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS

CB 25/127 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION - BUSINESS CASE SUBMISSION

(Decision Notice D250121CAB)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Borough Council's preferred option for Local Government Reorganisation.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications detailed in the business case attached at Annex 3.

Cabinet welcomed the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, recognised the detailed and robust debate of Members and shared the

concerns expressed regarding the financial impact of local government reorganisation and the overall devolution timetable.

The business case (attached at Annex 3) proposed a 3-unitary model (option 3A) with a West Kent authority comprising Tonbridge and Malling, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone areas. Following positive engagement and collaborative working with other Kent authorities, this option was potentially supported by five councils across the County.

It was observed that this was an important decision which would have significant consequences for the future of the Borough for decades and generations to come. Particular reference was made to the views of parish/town councils and Cllr Boughton proposed that relevant supporting documentation could be included in the Borough Council's final submission if provided in sufficient time. It was also proposed by Cllr Boughton that any final drafting changes to the Borough Council's submission before the Government deadline be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader. Both of these proposals were seconded by Cllr Taylor and supported unanimously.

In recognition that the Borough Council had to submit a response to Government by 28 November 2025 and that option 3A offered the most efficient and least disruptive multi-unitary option for Kent, enabled long-term financial sustainability and reflected the position previously confirmed by Tonbridge and Malling at the interim submission to Government in March 2025, Cllr Boughton proposed, seconded by Cllr Taylor and Cabinet

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft proposals for Local Government Reorganisation, be noted;
- (2) based on the evidence set out in the business case (Annex 3), the 3 unitary model, Option 3a be submitted to the Government by the deadline of 28 November 2025 as the Borough Council's preferred option for Local Government Reorganisation;
- (3) any final drafting changes ahead of the submission deadline be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Borough Council; and
- (4) any relevant supporting documentation be included in the Borough Council's final submission to Government if received in advance of the 28 November 2025 deadline.

CB 25/128 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26 - WASTE, LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

(Decision Notice D250122CAB)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee in respect of fees and charges 2026/27 for waste, leisure and environmental health. The charging proposals reflected a range of factors including the Borough Councils overall financial position, market position, trading patterns, the current rate of inflation and customer feedback.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications. Cabinet welcomed the proposal for introducing a charge to new property developers to include capital costs, delivery costs and a reasonable administration element for the provision of all bins and waste containers. In addition, to recovering the cost for providing bins and containers at new residential properties, the feasibility of seeking the cost for the provision of public litter bins related to new developments was supported.

In recognition of the Borough Councils overall financial position, the increasing challenges in achieving further expenditure savings and the importance of maximising income where possible, Cllr Boughton proposed, Cllr Keers seconded and Cabinet

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposed schedule of charges for garden waste subscriptions, as set out in 5.1.4 of the report, be approved;
- (2) the proposed schedule of charges for household bulky refuse and fridge/freezer collection service, as set out in 5.2.4 of the report, be approved;
- (3) the proposed charge for “missed” refuse collection, as set out in 5.3.2 of the report, be approved;
- (4) the proposed schedule of charges in respect of Stray Dog redemption service, as set out in 5.5.4 of the report, be approved;
- (5) the proposed charge for Tonbridge Allotment, as set out in 5.6.2 of the report, be approved;
- (6) the proposed schedule of charges at Tonbridge Cemetery, as set out in Annex 1 and 5.7.2 of the report, be approved;

- (7) the proposed continuation of the pest control subsidy for residents in receipt of Council Tax Reduction Scheme alongside the existing charge, as set out in 5.8.1 of the report, be approved;
- (8) the proposed schedule of charges for Condemned Food Certificates, as set out in 5.9.2 of the report, be approved;
- (9) the proposed charge for Exported Food Certificates, as set out in 5.10.4 of the report, be approved;
- (10) the proposed charge for food hygiene requests for re-visits, as set out in 5.11.2 of the report, be approved;
- (11) the proposed charge for provision of services in respect of contaminated land, as set out in 5.12.5 of the report, be approved;
- (12) the proposed charge for provision of services in respect of private water supplies, as set out in 5.13.5 of the report, be approved;
- (13) the above proposed scale of charges (1) to (12) be implemented from 1 April 2026; and
- (14) the principle of charging property developers for the provision of all bins and waste containers at new developments, be approved, and the feasibility of seeking the cost for the provision of public litter bins related to new developments from developers, be explored.

EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISIONS

CB 25/129 TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION RECHARGE POLICY

(Decision Notice D250123CAB)

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health sought approval for a Policy which allowed the Borough Council to recharge applicants when its temporary accommodation needed repair due to wilful damage or neglect.

Due regard was given to the financial and value for money considerations, the risk assessment and legal implications detailed in the report. The introduction of a Recharge Policy was welcomed by Cabinet who were pleased to note that a firm but fair approach would be adopted. It was also noted that a resident's vulnerabilities or disabilities would be considered when reviewing whether to apply a recharge.

Whilst the Borough Council had a requirement to ensure value for money and would spend money on legitimate repairs, Cllr Boughton proposed that if a repair was needed because of damage or neglect

caused by an applicant living in temporary accommodation the cost should be charged to that applicant. This was seconded by Cllr Betts and Cabinet

RESOLVED: That the new Temporary Accommodation Recharge Policy (attached at Annex 1) be adopted.

CB 25/130 ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN QUARTER 2 (2025/26) REPORTING

(Decision Notice D250124CAB)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26 – Quarter 2.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the legal implications and the assessment of risk. Cabinet welcomed the positive progress made on the activities and Key Performance Indicators and recognised further improvement works were required for those currently rated red. The challenges with Private Sector Rented Offers and CO2 emissions were also recognised.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) appreciation be recorded for the overall progress made during Quarter 2;
- (2) appreciation be recorded for the achievements made during Quarter 2; and
- (3) the areas needing focus be noted.

CB 25/131 AIR QUALITY MONITORING UPDATES AND AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS - RECOMMENDATIONS

(Decision Notice D250125CAB)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee in respect of the revocation of four air quality management areas at Tonbridge High Street, Larkfield, Aylesford and Borough Green.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications. Cabinet welcomed the significant improvement in air quality and improved pollution levels and noted that this position was supported by DEFRA.

On the grounds that monitoring in some form within the areas of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) would continue, Cllr Betts proposed, Cllr Taylor seconded and Cabinet

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the improvement in air quality over the last four years, be noted;
- (2) the revocation of the Tonbridge High Street, Larkfield, Aylesford and Borough Green Air Quality Management Areas, be agreed; and
- (3) the continuation of air quality monitoring across the Borough, including to respond to any specific areas of concern, be agreed.

CB 25/132 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ENFORCEMENT TEAM - UPDATE OF WORK AND REQUEST FOR FUNDING

(Decision Notice D250126CAB)

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee in respect of the continuation of the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Enforcement Team.

Due regard was given to the views of the Committee, the financial and value for money considerations, the assessment of risk and the legal implications. To allow for consistency and for a more streamlined procurement process it was proposed that the Scheme be continued for a further two-year period, subject to identifying suitable funding and seeking contributions from parish/town councils.

In recognition of the high-profile and visible presence throughout the Borough which was reassuring to residents, local businesses and visitors, Cllr Keers proposed, Cllr Boughton seconded and Cabinet

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the continuation of the Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement Team for a further two-year period, be agreed, subject to Council approval of the funding in February 2026 as part of the annual budget setting process*;
- (2) the request for funding from Parish/Town Councils, be agreed; and
- (3) the initiation of the procurement process for the Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement Team, be agreed.

(*approval of funding to be referred to Council)

CB 25/133 WASTE MINIMISATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT AT EVENTS ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND

(Decision Notice D250127CAB)

Consideration of the recommendations of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee in respect of a proposed new guidance now (attached at Annex 1) to support event organisers in aligning their events with the Borough Council's objective to remove single use plastics from their operations.

The difficulties in collecting waste from recreation grounds and the issues around contamination were discussed. However, it was also recognised that behaviours had changed and recycling on public land could potentially be considered for the future.

On the grounds of encouraging greater use of refills and reducing waste from Council owned sites, Cllr Keers proposed, Cllr Betts seconded and Cabinet

RESOLVED: That the proposed guidance note (attached at Annex 1) be endorsed.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**CB 25/134 DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET MEMBERS**

Details of the Decisions taken in accordance with the rules for the making of decisions by executive members, as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution, were presented for information.

Particular reference was made to Decision Notice D250116MEM in respect of proceeding with the introduction of parking charges in Aylesford East and West car parks. The Leader apologised for the late communication provided to residents and indicated that the Borough Council would operate a grace period where warnings would be issued instead of fixed penalty notices for a few weeks.

CB 25/135 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm