

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL



## EXECUTIVE SERVICES

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**Chief Executive**  
Damian Roberts

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

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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](mailto:committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk)

3 March 2026

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, 11th March, 2026 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

## AGENDA

1. Guidance for the Conduct of Meetings

5 - 8

## **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

2. Apologies for absence
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.

5. Minutes 13 - 18

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of General Purposes Committee held on 21 January 2026

### **Matters for Decision under Delegated Powers**

6. Stansted Parish Council Community Governance Review 19 - 32

A request has been received from Stansted Parish Council to increase the number of Parish Councillors from 7 to 9. Please see attached the request from Stansted Parish Council at **Annex 1**.

### **Matters submitted for Information**

7. Gender Pay Gap Report 2025 33 - 40

This report summarises the legislative context for gender pay gap reporting and incorporates the outcomes of the Council's gender pay gap analysis for 2024-2025 (the most recent data included in this report is from 31 March 2025).

8. Urgent Items 41 - 42

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 43 - 44

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**

10. Establishment Report 45 - 68
- (Reasons: Part 2 - Private LGA 1972 - Sch 12A Paragraph 1 - Information relating to an individual)
- This report sets out for Members' approval several establishment changes recommended by the Council's Management Team.
11. Urgent Items 69 - 70
- 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 J Clokey  
Cllr D A S Davis

Cllr B A Parry  
Cllr R V Roud  
Cllr K B Tanner  
Cllr K S Tunstall

## **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-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](mailto: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@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto: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.

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**General Purposes Committee**

	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Liberal Democratic</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Ind. Kent Alliance</b>	<b>Labour</b>
1	Robin Betts	David Thornewell	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		

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Declarations of interest

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## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

#### MINUTES

Wednesday, 21st January, 2026

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

**In attendance:** Councillors A G Bennison, P M Hickmott, M A Coffin\*, Mrs A S Oakley\* and W E Palmer\* were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

(\*participated via MS Teams)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor L Chapman.

#### PART 1 - PUBLIC

##### **GP 26/1 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Notification of substitute members were recorded as set out below:

- Councillor M Boughton substituted for Councillor L Chapman

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 17.5 to 17.9 this Councillor had the same rights as the ordinary member of the committee for whom they were substituting.

##### **GP 26/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

##### **GP 26/3 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 8 October 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

##### **GP 26/4 LOCALISM ACT - PAY POLICY**

The report of the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive summarised the requirements of the Localism Act and

presented an updated Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 as set out in Annex 1 to the report.

Members noted that as there had not been many significant changes in the Borough Council's remuneration policy, the substantive content of the updated Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 was nearly identical to the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26. The key updates related to the actual pay received by staff, the pay multiple data and the number of officers in specific graded posts. Furthermore, a new section had been added to reflect the current Long Service Award scheme operated within the Council.

Reference was made to the factors that would be taken into consideration in setting an annual pay award, as outlined in Section 3 of the Pay Policy. It was proposed by Councillor Clokey and seconded by Councillor Banks that 'relevant official statistics and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) lead inflation index' be added alongside the inflation levels as one of the factors, and that a new factor of 'the level of Real Living Wage' also be included. It was explained that these factors would not bind the Borough Council but would require formal consideration in setting the annual pay award. Concern was raised that including the real living wage as a consideration could reduce the Council's flexibility in setting pay level locally, potentially leading to prescriptive outcomes and impacting its ability to address market conditions and recruitment challenges. Following a formal vote, both motions were lost with 6 Members voting against (including a casting vote of the Chair) and 5 Members voting in favour.

The Chair proposed, seconded by Councillor Davis, and the Committee

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That

- (1) the Pay Policy set out in Annex 1 be commended for adoption at the Council meeting on 24 February 2026.

**\*Recommended to Council**

#### **GP 26/5 PAY AWARD 2026/2027**

The report of the Chief Executive provided Members with information to recommend to full Council, the Borough Council's pay award for employees for 2026/27.

The Chair proposed and it was seconded by Councillor Boughton and agreed unanimously by the Committee that Council Procedure Rule 10.11 be suspended, to allow a representative of UNISON to address the Committee on behalf of its members, during which concerns were raised regarding the long-term impact of inflation accumulated over the past years and the ongoing recruitment and retention challenges faced by the Borough Council. Furthermore, suggestion was made for the

Council to permanently adopt the Real Living Wage and attain the accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer. Following the statement from UNISON, Council Procedure Rules were reapplied.

Members noted that the Borough Council employees had a term in their contracts which read “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” and the Borough Council therefore determined its own pay awards without being tied into the national process of collective bargaining. The Borough Council’s current salary scales were attached at Annex 1 of the report and UNISON’s pay claim for 2026/27 at Annex 2.

During discussion, Members were reminded of the acute recruitment and retention difficulties faced by the Borough Council, particularly for professional M grade roles. Additionally, the reasons why the suggested adoption of the Real Living Wage could not be supported were acknowledged. These included concerns about how it would affect the Council’s ability to recruit for entry-level positions, the need to maintain fair pay differentials across the pay scale, the importance of keeping flexibility in making local pay awards, and the substantial costs involved, especially in light of the recent government announcement of the provisional finance settlement which indicated a significant reduction in funding for the Council in the coming years. Moreover, the overall wider benefits of working for a local government compared to the private sector were also recognised.

The Chair proposed, seconded by Councillor McDermott, that a pay award of 4% be applied to all salary scales, with effect from 1 April 2026. Following a formal vote, the motion was carried with 5 Members voting in favour and 5 Members abstained from voting.

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That

- (1) a pay award of 4% be commended to full Council for application to all salary scales, with effect from 1 April 2026.

**\*Recommended to Council**

### **MATTERS FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

#### **GP 26/6 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2026 - 2028**

The report of the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive set out a new Member Development Strategy 2026 – 2028, developed to equip Members with the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their roles effectively with the aim of supporting the successful delivery of the Borough Council’s strategic priorities.

Following a Member survey undertaken in December 2025 and based on the feedback received, a draft Member Development Strategy had been prepared and was attached at Annex 1, focusing on five key priority areas as outlined in paragraph 5.6 of the report.

Members welcomed the introduction of the new Member Development Strategy, advocated for interactive training exercises and the use of external facilitators for regulatory topics, and emphasised the importance of benchmarking against other councils and tracking progress with training modules. It was noted that implementation of the Strategy would be monitored annually by the General Purposes Committee, with priority areas for 2026/27 scheduled to be considered by the Committee in March 2026.

Councillor Boughton proposed, seconded by Councillor Clokey, and the Committee unanimously

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the new Member Development Strategy 2026 – 2028, set out in Annex 1, be approved.

**GP 26/7 DOMESTIC ABUSE HOUSING ALLIANCE ACCREDITATION - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Consideration was given to a set of revised and new domestic abuse policies and procedures, developed to support staff members and residents as part of the work that the Borough Council were undertaking to tackle domestic abuse and working towards achieving the 'bronze' level of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation scheme – a benchmark for Local Authorities and Housing Associations to respond to domestic abuse in the UK.

An updated draft of the Borough Council's Domestic Abuse Policy for Staff, setting out how the Council would identify signs of domestic abuse among staff and respond to disclosure and what support would be provided to staff members experiencing domestic abuse, was attached at Annex 1, with an associated procedure for disclosing domestic abuse attached at Annex 2.

In addition, a set of policy and procedure had also been developed to support residents approaching the Borough Council's Housing Services for support with accommodation/housing advice, for reasons of domestic abuse, as set out in Annex 3 and Annex 4 respectively.

Members acknowledged the progress made by the Borough Council in aligning relevant policies and procedures with the DAHA standards and commented on the robustness of these measures.

The Chair proposed, seconded by Councillor Clokey, and the Committee unanimously

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the Domestic Abuse Policy for Staff, attached at Annex 1, be approved and adopted;
- (2) the Domestic Abuse Procedure for Staff, attached at Annex 2, be approved and adopted;
- (3) the Resident's Domestic Abuse Policy, attached at Annex 3, be approved and adopted; and
- (4) the Resident's Domestic Abuse Procedure, attached at Annex 4, be approved and adopted.

### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

#### **GP 26/8 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 RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL AND FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

#### **GP 26/9 ESTABLISHMENT REPORT**

(Reason: LGA 1972 – Sch 12A Paragraph 2 – Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

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

In addition, Members noted a number of changes and updates to the Establishment since the last meeting of the Committee, as outlined in Section 5 of the report.

The Chair proposed, seconded by Councillor McDermott, and the Committee unanimously

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) post DC0103, Policy, Scrutiny & Communities Manager (M6) be redesignated to Corporate Policy & Communities Manager (M5) with effect from 22 January 2026;
- (2) post DR0403, Licensing Inspector (SO) be redesignated to Principal Licensing Officer (M9) with effect from 22 January 2026;
- (3) post DV0301, Environmental Protection Manager (M8) be deleted with effect from 22 January 2026;
- (4) a full-time Regulatory Services Manager post (M7/M6), be created with effect from 22 January 2026;
- (5) the Environmental Protection Manager be redeployed into the newly created Regulatory Services Manager post with effect from 22 January 2026;
- (6) the Planning, Housing and Environmental Health Directorate be renamed to Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services Directorate with effect from 22 January 2026;
- (7) post DG2098, Waste Contracts Officer, 30 hours (scale 6) be permanently established with effect from 22 January 2026; and
- (8) post DC0199, Economic Development Officer, 22.2 hours (scale 4/5) be permanently established with effect from 22 January 2026.

The Chair proposed, seconded by Councillor McDermott, and the Committee unanimously

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That

- (1) a new, full-time, Information Governance Manager post, grade M8, be permanently established;
- (2) the hours of post DJ0318, Principal Planning Policy Officer (M8), be permanently increased from 32 to 37 hours per week; and
- (3) the hours of post DJ0319, Senior Planning Policy Officer (M9), be permanently increased from 30 to 37 hours per week.

**\*Recommended to Council**

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm



## 4 Introduction

- 4.1 Parish Councils are entitled to request changes in their democratic governance arrangements, including the number of councillors.
- 4.2 The formal process to change the number of councillors on a Parish Council is by means of a Community Governance Review. As set out under Part 3 of the Constitution, General Purposes Committee has the authority to decide whether a Community Governance Review is to be undertaken when a request is received.
- 4.3 Stansted Parish Council currently has 7 seats and at the May 2023 elections, they were able to fill all 7 vacancies. As of the 02 February 2026 register, Stansted Parish Council has an electorate of 452 people.
- 4.3 The 1972 Act, as amended, specifies that each Parish Council must have at least 5 Councillors on a Parish Council, there is no maximum. The Government's guidance also states that each should be considered on its own merits, having regard for its population, geography, and the pattern of communities. The Aston Business School found the following levels of representation aligned to the good running of a council. This model is used by local authorities nationally.

<b>Electorate</b>	<b>Seats</b>
Less than 500	5-8
501 – 2500	6-12
2501-10,000	9-16
10,001-20,000	13-27
Over 20,000	13-31

- 4.4 For comparison, a current list of Parish Councils within the Borough, showing their Councillor numbers and electorate as of the 02 February 2026 register is provided in **Annex 2**.

## 5 Proposed Next Steps

- 5.1 A timetable setting outlining the key stages of this Community Governance Review process is provided in **Annex 3**. The process requires a number of phases to be undertaken:
- Initiation and publishing of a Terms of Reference (**See Annex 4**)
  - An initial consultation – comprising:
    - a) the development of an online questionnaire.
    - b) direct email to Stansted residents on the electoral services database, the Parish Council and key stakeholders (including Ward Councillors, Kent County Council, the Member of Parliament, the Kent Association

of Local Councils (KALC) and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)).

- c) letters to each household in the parish.
- d) social media posts to engage with residents.
- e) Press release
- f) Poster/leaflet for the Parish to advertise the Community Governance Review.

- Draft recommendations
- Final Recommendations and Order
- Implementation – with changes taking effect at the next scheduled parish elections in May 2027.

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

- 6.1 If the Committee were to agree for the Community Governance Review to go ahead, there would be a cost implication. The process would be managed by existing staff however there would be costs associated with the consultation exercise which would amount to approximately £600 and would come from the General Revenue Reserve.

## **7 Risk Assessment**

- 7.1 No risks directly associated with this report and process.

## **8 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 deals with Community Governance Reviews
- 8.2 In addition to the 2007 Act, legislation relating to parishes can also be found in the Local Government Act 1972 (in particular, provision about parish meetings and councils, the constitution of a parish meeting, the constitution and powers of parish councils and about parish councillors) and the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (reviews of, and recommendations about, electoral areas by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England), as well as in other enactments.

## **9. Climate Change and Biodiversity**

- 9.1 Limited or low impact on emissions and environment.

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

## 10. Equalities and Diversity

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

Background Papers	None
Annexes	<p>Annex 1 – Letter from Stansted Parish Council</p> <p>Annex 2 – List of Parish and Town Councils (02 Feb. 2026)</p> <p>Annex 3 – Proposed Timetable for the CGR</p> <p>Annex 4 – Draft Terms of Reference</p>

## Stansted Parish Council

The Old Manor, Plaxdale Green Road, Stansted, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 7PE  
Tel : 07733450763 email: stanstedparishcouncil@gmail.com  
www. stansted-pc.gov.uk

10<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Mr Damian Roberts  
Chief Executive  
Electoral Registration Officer  
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council  
Gibson Building  
Gibson Drive  
Kings Hill  
West Malling  
ME19 4LZ

Dear Mr Roberts

### **Request for additional Councillors**

Following our Parish Council Meeting of 1st December 2025, it was agreed that we should write to the Borough Council to request a Community Governance Review to be undertaken to increase the number of councillors on our parish council. Stansted Parish Council covers the village of Stansted and Fairseat and currently has 7 members. We wish to increase the number to 9. Our electorate is currently over 525 and I have outlined the background for this request as follows: -

Stansted Parish Council is very active and has an ever-increasing workload with numerous sub-committees.

The Parish Council bought and manages our local school building which requires a sub-committee. We are applying for an ACV for the Fairseat Chapel, which will require a sub-committee. We have another sub-committee which is trying to get our parish included within the National Landscape. We have had a section 106 application for the extremely large London Golf club development which has required yet another sub-committee. We also have a sub-committee involved in establishing a traffic plan. Currently we are fighting to keep our only pub open through another hard-working sub-committee. Moreover, we sit on the border of three areas, Sevenoaks, TMBC and Gravesham so we have now added large Local Plans to our agenda.

We need to increase our numbers to allow the workload to be spread over a larger base and to ensure that councillors have the time to involve themselves in the detail of issues. The increasing number and complexity of planning applications, committees and demands on our time necessitates for all members to attend the Parish Council meetings and at least one other committee meeting each month.

We have sought to have a diverse parish council with representatives from both villages and of both genders ranging in age from 35 to 65. Two female members have children under 9 years and 6 of our members work full-time. It is also not unusual for two councillors to be on holiday at the same time reducing our numbers to 5. Although a diverse council offers a very good representation of views it also offers its own challenges. None of the current councillors would like to stand as chair or vice-chair at the next election!

The current workload imposed on each councillor every month amounts to approximately two days. Given that this is all voluntary work it imposes a significant pressure on councillors which borders on being a burden. Our chair has a significant issue with keeping councillors motivated to deal with an increasing workload and without an increase in numbers we will struggle to keep existing members on the committees.

At our last election in May 2023 our long-standing chair and vice-chair stepped down. A new councillor was appointed and took on the role of chair and then stepped down with immediate effect after four months. We then appointed a new chair from within the Parish Council who also stepped down with immediate effect after fifteen months. Our current chair has been 'holding the fort' ever since and wishes to address the succession issue by appointing councillors who fully appreciate the workload and responsibilities the role requires.

Trying to plan ahead and mindful of the need for succession to the role of chair we are aware of two potential candidates who could be interested in joining the parish council if spaces were available. Both candidates could offer knowledge and expertise that will greatly benefit our parish council and both could potentially be interested in taking the role of chair and vice-chair should they be asked to do so in due course. We are aware that individuals can be co-opted, but again, being mindful of filling the role of chair it would be preferable to have candidates as fully involved members prior to taking on a key role in the parish council.

Stansted Parish Council respectfully requests the Electoral Register Officer to consider approving an increase in the number of our councillors from 7 to 9.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly and if you have any queries please contact me.

Yours faithfully

David Rice  
Parish Clerk  
Stansted Parish Council

## Annex 2 – List of Parish and Town Councils (02 Feb 2026)

<b>PARISH</b>	<b>COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>ELECTORATE</b>
Addington	7	672
Aylesford	20	9485
Birling	7	345
Borough Green	11	3212
Burham	8	1042
Ditton	13	3818
East Peckham	11	2568
Hadlow	13	2956
Hildenborough	11	3933
Ightham	9	1596
Kings Hill	12	7326
East Malling & Larkfield	17	11188
Leybourne	11	3606
Mereworth	7	838
Offham	7	640
Platt	9	1396
Plaxtol	9	895
Ryarsh	7	696
Shipbourne	7	397
Snodland	15	8697
Stansted	7	452
Trottiscliffe	7	435
Wateringbury	9	1592
West Malling	11	2293
West Peckham	7	298
Wouldham	8	2654
Wrotham	9	1506

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### Draft timetable for a Community Governance Review (CGR) for Stansted Parish Council

to increase the number of parish councillors

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#### Phase 1: Initiation & Terms of Reference

- 1 December 2025 - Parish council passes resolution requesting CGR.
  - 11 December 2025 - Submit request to principal authority.
  - 11 March 2026 - Report to General Purposes to agree commencing with a CGR
  - 11 March 2026 - Principal authority drafts and publishes **Terms of Reference** (scope includes councillor numbers), Timetable and consultation plan.
- 

#### Phase 2: Initial Consultation

- 16 March – 17 April 2026 - Public consultation opens inviting views from residents, parish council, and stakeholders, including surrounding councils, Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).
- 

#### Phase 3: Final Recommendations & Order

- Publish recommendations
  - 10 June 2026 report to General Purposes Committee
  - General Purposes Committee approves **Final Recommendations**.
  - Issue **Community Governance Order**
- 

#### Phase 4: Implementation

- Update electoral registers and arrangements at publication of the register 1 December 2026.
  - Changes take effect at the **next scheduled parish elections** May 2027.
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## **Annex 4 – Draft Terms of Reference**

### **Review of Community Governance Arrangements for Stansted Parish Council**

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **Introduction**

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is conducting a Community Governance Review for Stansted Parish Council, in accordance with Part 4 Chapter 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The council is required to have regard to the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. This guidance was considered when drawing up the Terms of Reference (TOR).

##### **Explanation of a Community Governance Review**

It can take place for the whole or part of the district to consider one or more of the following:

- creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes/town councils
- the naming of parishes and the style of new parishes
- the electoral arrangements for parishes (the ordinary year of election; council size, the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding)
- grouping parishes under a common parish/town council or de-grouping parishes/town councils.

The council is required to ensure community governance within the area under review will be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient.

In doing so the Community Governance Review is required to take into account of:

- the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion
- the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish/town.

The aim of the review is to consider the request and the alternative ways in which the council might bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and efficient, more effective and convenient delivery of local services and ensure electors across the area affected will be treated equitably and fairly.

## **Reason for undertaking this Community Governance Review**

This review is taking place following the receipt of a request from Stansted Parish Council seeking to increase their councillor numbers from 7 to 9.

The council wishes to consult on the proposals to inform the review.

## **Area to be reviewed**

The Community Governance Review includes the Parish of Stansted.

## **Who will undertake the review?**

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is responsible for conducting the review.

The recommendations will be considered in public by the General Purposes Committee which, in turn, will make recommendations to Full Council.

A consultation process will form part of the review to take account of the views of local people.

The council will publicise the review by displaying a notice at the council offices and publicity on the council's website and social media. The council will also write to relevant ward councillors, Kent County Council (KCC), relevant KCC councillors, MPs, and other known stakeholder groups, including adjoining parish and borough councils.

A letter will be sent to electors in Stansted Parish to notify them of the review and the opportunity to share their views through the survey.

Information and paper copies of a survey will be made available in the locality to support the review.

The council will be required to approve the final recommendations prior to the Community Governance Order being made.

## **Timetable for the review**

A timetable for the review is attached.

The programme and timeline may be adjusted after representations have been received.

Any adjustments to the programme and timetable will be approved by the council and published on its website.

## **Consultation**

The council has drawn up and once approved, will publish this Terms of Reference document. This document lays out the aims of the review, the legislation that guides it and some of the policies that the Council considers important in the review.

In coming to its recommendations following the Review, the Council will take account of the views of local people and stakeholders.

The council will:

- publish these Terms of Reference.
- promote the consultation process by means of press releases, social media, posters, letters to electors and direct emails to stakeholders.
- provide key documents (this and subsequent reports) on deposit at the Kings Hill offices.

This council will notify Kent County Council, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) and any other formal consultees that a review is to be undertaken.

## **Representations**

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council welcomes representations from any person or body (e.g. organisation or business) who wishes to comment or make proposals on any aspect of the matters under review.

The public can respond to the consultation in a variety of ways, including:

- completing the survey on our website
- email comments to [voting@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:voting@tmbc.gov.uk)
- writing to Damian Roberts, Electoral Registration Officer, Electoral Services, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4LZ

In accordance with the Act, representations received in connection with the review will be taken into account and steps will be taken to notify interested parties of the outcome of the review.

## **Publication of the results**

The council will publish full details on its website and make them available on request from the council offices.

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3.5 The Equality and Human Rights Commission defines the difference between equal pay and the gender pay gap as follows:

- Equal pay means that men and women in the same employment performing equal work must receive equal pay, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation or the labour market. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

3.6 Salaries at TMBC are determined through a grading system that evaluates the job and not the post holder. It makes no reference to gender or any other personal characteristics of existing or potential job holders. Therefore, the Council is confident that it is paying the same salary to roles of equal value.

#### 4 Gender Pay Gap Analysis

4.1 The data below represents the gender pay gap snapshot data for TMBC as of 31 March 2025 and is presented as required by the regulations. For comparison purposes, the previous two years of data are included.

4.2 On 31 March 2025, the Council's workforce gender breakdown was 65.5% female and 34.5% male. This represents a 1.5% decrease in the female workforce and a 1.5% increase in the male workforce compared to the previous year.

#### 4.3 Mean and Median gender pay gap 31 March 2025

4.4 Mean gender pay gap in hourly rate as a percentage of men's pay:

	2025	2024
<b>Mean gender pay gap</b>	<b>22.27%</b>	22.29%

4.5 Median gender pay gap in hourly rate as a percentage of men's pay:

	2025	2024
<b>Median gender pay gap</b>	<b>28.45%</b>	28.86%

## 4.6 Analysis of staff by gender in each pay quartile:

	2025	2024
<b>Upper quartile</b>		
Percentage of males in the quartile	<b>58.46</b>	55.56
Percentage of females in the quartile	<b>41.54</b>	44.44
<b>Upper middle quartile</b>		
Percentage of males in the quartile	<b>33.85</b>	35.94
Percentage of females in the quartile	<b>66.15</b>	64.06
<b>Lower middle quartile</b>		
Percentage of males in the quartile	<b>26.15</b>	22.22
Percentage of females in the quartile	<b>73.85</b>	77.78
<b>Lower quartile</b>		
Percentage of males in the quartile	<b>19.70</b>	20.31
Percentage of females in the quartile	<b>80.30</b>	79.69

## 4.7 Breakdown of new starters and leavers during 2024/25

Gender	Total Starters	Total Leavers	M Grade Starters	M Grade Leavers	Main Scale Starters	Main Scale Leavers
Male	13	9	2	5	11	4
Female	13	16	1	0	12	16

4.8 The mean gender pay gap has nominally decreased by 0.02%, and the median gender pay gap has decreased by 0.41% compared to the previous reporting year.

4.9 It is important to note for that the data used to show an organisation's gender pay gap is taken on the 'snapshot' date of the 31st March each year and it only includes actual staff employed on that date. It is not the average earnings throughout the year.

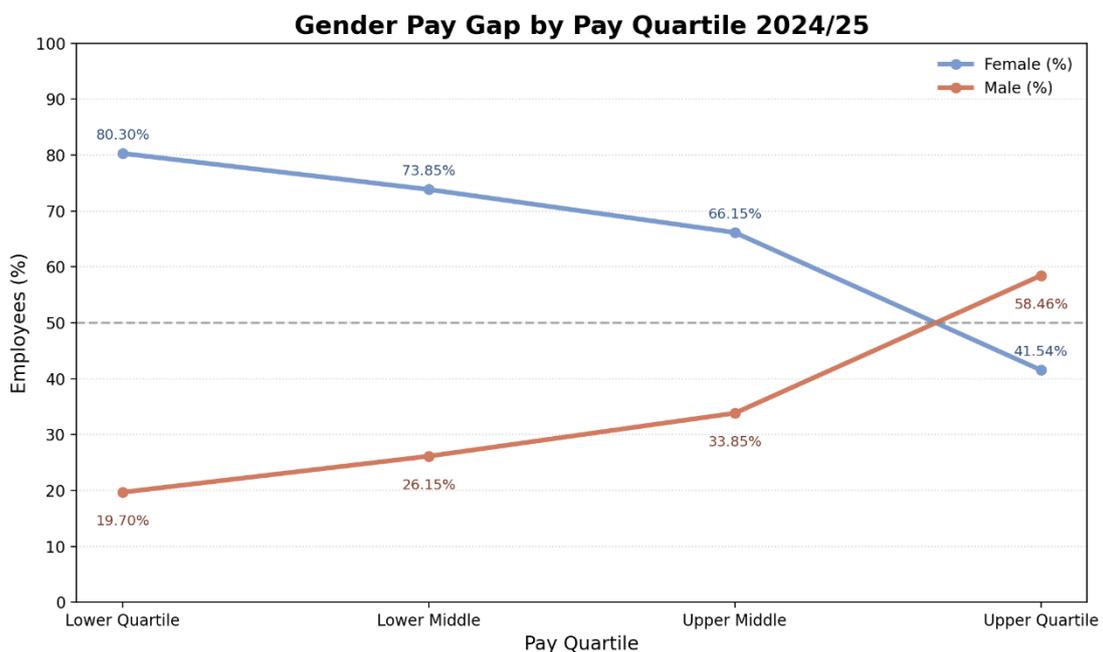
4.10 This can have a significant impact on the annual gender pay gap percentage changes, especially for an organisation the size of TMBC which employed approximately 261 employees during 2024/25.

4.11 There was an increase in the percentage of male employees in the upper quartile.

- 4.12 The percentage of females increased in the upper middle quartile compared to the previous year.
- 4.13 The percentage of males increased in the lower middle quartile but decreased slightly in the lower quartile with the percentage of females increasing slightly in the lower quartile and decreasing in the lower middle.
- 4.14 The gender pay gap has largely remained static compared to the previous year.

## 5 Actions to try to address the Gender Pay Gap

- 5.1 As can be seen from the graph below, the Lower Middle and Lower Quartile show the largest disparity between the number of women (higher) and men (lower).



- 5.2 The Government Equalities Office have published guidance for employers on “Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender equality in organisations”. In brief the guidance offered suggests the following actions.
1. Include multiple women in shortlists for recruitment and promotion.
  2. Use skills-based assessment tasks in recruitment.
  3. Use structured interviews for recruitment and promotion.
  4. Encourage salary negotiation by showing salary ranges.
  5. Introduce transparency to promotion, pay and reward processes.
  6. Appoint diversity managers and/or diversity task force.

7. Improve workplace flexibility for men and women and have a robust family friendly policy.
  8. Encourage the uptake of Shared Parental Leave.
  9. Offer mentoring and sponsorship.
  10. Offer networking programmes.
  11. Set internal targets.
- 5.3 Whilst the majority of these actions are being observed to a greater or lesser extent at TMBC, the Council's gender gap profile suggests that it is the lack of men in lower graded jobs that is the cause of the extent of the gap.
  - 5.4 TMBC have contracted out several services (e.g. refuse, street cleansing, leisure centres) where there are often lower graded roles filled by men in the majority, which goes some way to explain why TMBC's pay gap is higher than some comparative councils across Kent.
  - 5.5 All recruitment literature for jobs is written in such a way to attract male, as well as female, applicants. This will be continually monitored and considered each time a new role becomes vacant.
  - 5.6 The Government Equalities Office states that flexible working can help address an organisation's gender pay gap.
  - 5.7 The Government Equalities Office states that "Well-designed flexible working is key to enable women to reconcile work and caring responsibilities. It can enable women to remain in work and stay in roles that reflect their skills, thereby potentially reducing the gender pay gap".
  - 5.8 During the past few years, like many organisations across the UK, the Council has had to change the way it deploys its workforce by offering a far greater degree of flexible and remote working. This has included staff working remotely and working their hours more flexibly. The Council adopted its 'Remote Working Policy' in December 2022.
  - 5.9 The remote working policy allows the Council's to offer the majority its workforce a far greater degree of flexibility in which to carry out their role.
  - 5.10 As well as the remote working policy, the Council has a longstanding 'Flexible Working and Time Off Policy' which details a number of different flexible working approaches and initiatives to enable staff to undertake their role.
  - 5.11 During the past twelve months the Council has offered a number of different initiatives around promoting understanding of menopause in the workplace including information sessions for staff, e-learning training for staff and managers as well as a staff support network, the Menopause Cafe.

- 5.12 The Council introduced a new Menopause in the Workplace Policy in January 2025. There is a greater understanding of how health issues relating to the menopause can negatively affect women in the workplace with research showing that women leave the workforce early due to the menopause. The Council is committed to undertaking further work in this area to ensure that staff affected by the menopause feel supported at work and can raise concerns openly.
- 5.13 Another positive initiative the Council has launched is the introduction of a Women's Network in March 2025. This network has been established as part of the Council's wider commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and reflects proactive steps taken during the year to understand and address the experiences of women in the workplace.
- 5.14 The Women's Network serve as a dedicated network for connection, mentorship and professional development. It is open to all employees who support gender inclusion and equality, and aims to create a supportive space where colleagues can share experiences, build confidence and influence organisational culture.
- 5.15 As part of its investment in this initiative, the Council is funding a new coaching programme to support members of the network. This programme will focus on leadership development, career progression, resilience and skills-building.
- 5.16 The Council is committed to seeing a reduction in the Gender Pay Gap by as much as reasonably possible each year and is taking action to address this.

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

- 6.1 The regulations also require those authorities that award bonuses to publish the mean and median gender bonus gaps and the proportion of men and women who receive bonuses.
- 6.2 There is no record of such gaps in the above tables as this Council does not operate a performance related or total contribution pay scheme, and therefore does not award bonuses to staff.

## **7 Risk Assessment**

- 7.1 The Council supports a range of initiatives for both men and women including flexible working, remote working, job sharing, part time working, and flexitime.

## **8 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The data included in this report has been calculated and presented according to the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

## 9 Consultation and Communications

- 9.1 The Council is obliged to publish the updated Gender Pay Gap information for 2024/25 by 30 March 2026. The information will be published on the Council's website.

## 10 Implementation

- 10.1 The actions to try to address the Gender Pay Gap will continue to take place in the current and new financial year 2026/27.

## 11 Cross Cutting Issues

### 11.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 11.1.1 A moderate source of emissions is likely to be maintained at current levels or increased.

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

### 11.2 Equalities and Diversity

- 11.2.1 The information contained within this report 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

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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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