

## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 29th June, 2015**

**Present:** Cllr Ms S V Spence (Chairman), Cllr P F Bolt (Vice-Chairman), Cllr M A C Balfour, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr Mrs S M Hall, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr S C Perry, Cllr H S Rogers, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr C P Smith, Cllr M Taylor and Cllr T C Walker

Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, O C Baldock and Mrs M F Heslop were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **GP 15/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct. However, in relation to the item on Draft Recommendations for New Electoral Arrangements for KCC, Councillors Balfour and Smith reminded the Committee that they were members of Kent County Council.

#### **GP 15/11 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 2 February 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL**

#### **GP 15/12 HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY UPDATE**

The report of the Director of Central Services updated the Committee on progress in achieving the improvement priorities in the Human Resources Strategy for 2014/15 and identified actions to be implemented in the period April 2015 – March 2016. The updated strategy also contained the statutory equality monitoring required by the Equality Act 2010.

The Committee acknowledged the professional skills of the human resources team during challenging circumstances and recorded thanks to the Personnel and Development Manager and the Personnel and Customer Services Manager for all their work.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the outcomes of the equality monitoring reported in Section 4 of the Human Resources Strategy, as set out in



Annex 1 to the report, be noted and the actions listed in Section 5 thereof be commended to the Council.

**\* Referred to Council**

**DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 3, PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION**

**GP 15/13 RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON NEW ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

Further to Minute GP 15/5, the report of the Chief Executive gave details of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Kent County Council which had been published for public consultation. It was noted that the proposals affecting the Tonbridge and Malling area retained the number of county councillors at 7 but suggested that Ditton parish be split between Malling Central division and Malling North East. A further change involved Stansted parish being moved to Malling West.

Consideration was given to a suggested response to be made to the LGBCE by the 6 July 2015 deadline. Whilst supporting the move of Stansted to Malling West, concern was expressed that splitting Ditton between two county divisions would lead to confusion for electors and would not be conducive to effective or convenient local government.

**RESOLVED:** That the response to the LGBCE consultation, as set out at paragraph 1.3.1 of the report, be approved.

**GP 15/14 ANNUAL REVIEW OF WHISTLEBLOWING CHARTER**

The report of the Director of Finance and Transformation gave details of the outcome of a review of the Whistleblowing Charter which had identified a number of amendments to bring the charter in line with best practice. Consideration was given to a revised draft which it was proposed should be referred to as the Whistleblowing Policy to correspond with other Council policy documents. The Committee was advised that the Policy covered councillors, employees and contractors.

It was noted that the Policy had been considered by the Audit Committee on 7 April 2015 and commended for endorsement. Members sought clarification of where councillors should initially report concerns and it was suggested that they should be directed to one of the three statutory officers.

**RESOLVED:** That the draft Whistleblowing Policy set out at Annex 1 to the report be approved subject to the inclusion in section 6.2 of a provision for councillors to raise any concern in the first instance with the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer.

**GP 15/15 SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY**

The report of the Director of Central Services advised that the Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014 came into effect on 1 December 2014 and gave details of a proposed Policy to inform employees of their rights and responsibilities should they wish to take Shared Parental Leave and statutory Shared Parental Pay.

Whilst the majority of the Policy reflected the largely prescriptive terms of the legislation, attention was drawn to two areas of employer discretion. These included the right to refuse a request for discontinuous leave and whether to match Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) with that of the Maternity Pay Scheme. It was noted that the Policy as presented recognised contractual pay for ShPP purposes thereby avoiding unequal treatment. Members were advised that the proposed Policy had been reported to the Joint Employee Consultative Committee (Operational Working Group).

**RESOLVED:** That the Shared Parental Leave Policy set out at the Annex to the report be approved.

**MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION****GP 15/16 OFFICE OF SURVEILLANCE COMMISSIONERS - INSPECTION REPORT, THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000**

Further to Minute GP 13/025, the report of the Director of Central Services referred to reviews undertaken by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners (OSC) to ensure that public authorities carried out covert activities in a lawful manner. Details were given of the outcome of a review at the offices on 18 November 2014 when the Inspector confirmed that the single recommendation from the last inspection had been addressed. He had concluded that the Council did not frequently utilise the powers vested under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act, had good policies and procedures in place and had undertaken appropriate training. Accordingly, no formal recommendation had been made.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received and noted.

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE****GP 15/17 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 TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 3, PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION****GP 15/18 ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES**

The report of the Management Team presented for approval a number of establishment changes arising from the on-going operational management of the Council's services. It was noted that the proposals would result in permanent base budget savings of £25,133 per annum that could be carried forward into the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Members were advised that where appropriate Unison had been consulted and was content with the proposals. Detailed recommendations for staffing in the newly configured Transportation and Planning Policy teams would be presented for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That the following proposals and establishment adjustments be endorsed:

- (1) Post DA0304 Democratic Services Officer be regraded from 5/6 to M9 with effect from 6 July 2015;
- (2) Post DV0201 be redesignated from Healthy Living Co-ordinator to Health Improvement Manager and regraded from SO to M8 with effect from 6 July 2015;
- (3) Post DG2012 be redesignated from Senior Waste Services Inspector to Waste Services Manager (Operations) and regraded from 6/SO to M9 with effect from 6 July 2015;
- (4) Post DF0209 Senior Accountancy Assistant be regraded from 5/6 to SO with effect from 6 July 2015;
- (5) the redesignation of Post DR0303 Land Charges Officer to a permanent position be confirmed;
- (6) the reduction in hours of Post DG0101 Senior Parks Officer from 37 to 22 hours per week be confirmed;
- (7) the reduction in hours of Post DG0110 Administrator/Assistant Cemetery Registrar from 30 to 22 hours per week be confirmed;
- (8) the creation of Post DG0102 Assistant Parks Officer at scale 3 be confirmed;

- (9) the increase in hours of Post DV0202 Health Improvement Assistant from 30 to 37 hours per week until 31 March 2016 be noted;
- (10) the increase in hours of Post DV0203 Health Improvement Assistant from 20 to 30 hours per week until 31 March 2016 be noted;
- (11) the increase in hours of Post DJ0125 Systems Support Assistant from 30 to 37 hours per week be noted;
- (12) the commencement of a review of shared service models appropriate for the revenue and benefits function with Gravesham Borough Council via the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board be supported and the consequent staff consultation be endorsed;
- (13) the principle of a shared service agreement with Gravesham Borough Council and the aspiration to introduce this by 2017/18 be noted;
- (14) the continuation of a shared working agreement with Gravesham Borough Council for the services of a Revenue and Benefits Manager be approved;
- (15) the creation of a new post of Financial Services Manager grade M5 be confirmed and, following a ring-fenced selection process, it be noted that Mr Paul Worden will be appointed to the post on 6 July 2015 and thereafter the Principal Accountant Post DF0203 that he currently occupies will be deleted;
- (16) the Street Scene and Leisure directorate be renamed Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services and the job title of the director be redesignated Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services with effect from 6 July 2015;
- (17) Post DE002 be redesignated from Chief Engineer to Head of Technical Services and relocated within the Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services directorate, and the appointment of Mr Andy Edwards to the role with effect from 6 July 2015 be noted and thereafter Post DE0201 (Principal Engineer) be deleted;
- (18) Post DE0101 (Principal Engineer) be deleted on 2 October 2015 and it be confirmed that the contract of Mr Steve Medlock be terminated on that date on the grounds of redundancy and that in accordance with the Local Government Pension Regulations he should commence receipt of his pension from 3 October 2015

and his redundancy pay should be calculated as set out in the Reorganisation, Redundancy and Redeployment Procedure;

- (19) a sum of £88,500 from the overall savings in respect of the recommendations set out in (17) and (18) be ring-fenced for future operational adjustments; and
- (20) the net contribution of £25,133 towards future savings targets be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm