

## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Monday, 6th March, 2017

**Present:** Cllr O C Baldock (Chairman), Cllr L J O'Toole (Vice-Chairman), Cllr M A C Balfour, Cllr P F Bolt, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr R V Roud and Cllr C P Smith

Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, M C Base, D Lettington, M Parry-Waller, H S Rogers and T C Walker were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Bell, Ms S V Spence and M Taylor

#### PART 1 - PUBLIC

##### **GP 17/1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

##### **GP 17/2 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 20 October 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

##### **GP 17/3 MINUTES OF ELECTORAL REVIEW WORKING GROUP**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Review Working Group held on 22 November 2016 be received and noted.

#### MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

##### **GP 17/4 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

The report of the Management Team set out details of a review undertaken by the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on the Scheme of Members' Allowances and summarised the key recommendations arising from the Panel. Management Team advised that the recommendations of the Panel, if adopted, would produce a saving of circa £30,000 when compared to the budget included within the 2017/18 Estimates.


The Committee recognised the considerable work undertaken by the Panel in evaluating the role undertaken by Members and acknowledged

the case made for a reduction in the basic allowance. However, the Committee felt that it was neither appropriate nor fair to reduce the basic allowance mid-term and that the reduction should not be implemented until after the next Borough Council Election in 2019.

Members were reminded that, since the last review in 2013, the Council was now required to formally appoint a Deputy Leader on an annual basis and the report set out details of the Special Responsibility Allowance to be applied to this role.

Members recognised the value and role of the vice-chairmen and considered it appropriate to maintain an allowance to vice-chairmen based on 25% of the relevant chairman's allowance.

Following a comprehensive debate it was

**RECOMMENDED:** That, as summarised in the attached matrix at Annex 1, 

- (1) the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations be accepted in full, effective after the Borough Council elections in 2019;
- (2) however, effective from the 2017 Annual Council and during the 'interim period' until the Borough Council elections in 2019:-
  - (a) the Basic Allowance remain at its current level of £5,283 and protected until after the next Borough Council Election in 2019;
  - (b) with regard to the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA)
    - (i) the Leader's SRA remain at its current level of £18,384;
    - (ii) the SRA for the Deputy Leader be introduced and the figure for 2017/18 be £14,000;
    - (iii) the Opposition Leader's SRA be set at £2,250 (this being a flat sum of £1,250 per annum to recognise the collaborative way of working within the Council, plus £250 per member in the group);
    - (iv) Cabinet member's SRA remain at the current level of £8,400;
    - (v) the SRA in respect of chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny, Licensing and Appeals, Joint Standards and Audit Committees be set at £2,500 per annum;

- (vi) the SRA in respect of chairmen of the three Area Planning Committees be set at £2,500 per chairman per annum;
  - (vii) the SRA in respect of chairmen of the General Purposes Committee and programmed Advisory Boards be set at £1,300 per annum;
  - (viii) with the exception of the Area Planning Committees, vice-chairmanship allowances for committees be retained and based on 25% of the relevant chairman's allowance until the Borough Council Election in 2019; and
  - (ix) the vice-chairmanship allowances for the Area Planning Committees be set at £325 per annum for each of the three vice-chairmen;
- (3) the level of Childcare and Dependent Carers Allowances be set as recommended by the JIRP;
  - (4) the level of Mileage Allowances and Subsistence Allowances be set as recommended by the JIRP;
  - (5) the principle of annual indexation of allowances in line with the staff pay award be retained. However, during the 'interim period' indexation should not apply; and
  - (6) it be confirmed that individual members should not receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance (excluding group leaders)

**\*Referred to Council**

#### **GP 17/5 LOCALISM ACT - PAY POLICY**

The report of the Director of Central Services advised that the Localism Act 2011 required local authorities to review their pay policy statements for each financial year. The report summarised the requirements of the Act and presented an updated Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18. It was noted that there had been no changes in the Council's remuneration policy and the substantive content of the updated statement was identical to that adopted by the Council in February 2012.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 set out in Annex 1 to the report be commended for adoption by the Council.

**\* Referred to Council**

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

**GP 17/6 ANNUAL REVIEW OF WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

The report of the Director of Finance and Transformation gave details of the outcome of the annual review of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and its consideration by the Audit Committee on 23 January 2017. The Committee noted that the Policy, once approved, would be circulated to all staff with computer access and made available on the Council website.

**RESOLVED:** That the Whistleblowing Policy set out at Annex 1 to the report be approved.

**MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

**GP 17/7 2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES**

The report of the Chief Executive confirmed details of the response made to the Boundary Commission for England to the consultation on the 2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies.

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

**GP 17/8 APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE**

The report of the Director of Central Services set out details of national changes to apprenticeship funding and the application of 'apprenticeship targets' to public bodies from April 2017.

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

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

**GP 17/9 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****GP 17/10 ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES****(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 1 – Information relating to an individual)**

The report of the Director of Central Services presented for approval a number of establishment changes within the Exchequer team, Finance and Transformation Services arising from the on-going operational management of the Council's services. It was noted that the proposals would result in net savings of £39,431, which had been incorporated into the 2017/18 Estimates presented to the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board on 4 January 2017.

**RESOLVED:** That the proposals and establishment adjustments set out in the report be endorsed as follows:

- (1) the hours of post DF0403 (Exchequer Services Manager, M8) be reduced from 37 to 22.5 hours per week with effect from 1 April 2017; and
- (2) the hours of post DF0404 (Payroll Officer, Grade 6/SO) be reduced from 37 to 21 hours per week with effect from 1 January 2017.

The meeting ended at 8.28 pm