

Appendix 1

Electoral Review of Tonbridge & Malling

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council submission on
Council Size – Evidence Base

March 2021



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Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Brief Description of Changes
2	February 2021	Jeremy Whittaker	Update of statistics and brief analysis of data supplied.

Maps

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Council Size Submission – Evidence Base

About this Evidence Base

1. This document is submitted as evidence from Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (TMBC) to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) in respect of the Electoral Review commencing during 2020 concerning the size of the Council.
2. This document has been prepared and collated by Officers using a range of information available, for consideration by Elected Members of the Borough Council through the Electoral Review Working Group and General Purposes Committee. This evidence base will accompany the Council submission which will be considered by Full Council.

Executive Summary

3. At present, 54 Councillors representing 24 wards serve on Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. All Councillors are elected every four years and serve a four year term of office. The most recent elections were held in May 2019, with the next scheduled Borough Council elections due to take place in May 2023.
4. It should be noted that the Submission should be considered in its entirety, rather than as a series of smaller sections.

Introduction

Background to the Review

5. Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council was created in 1974 following the Local Government Act 1972. The most recent electoral review of the authority commenced in 2011 and was published in 03 October 2012. This review recommended that the number of wards was reduced from 26 to 24 and the number of Councillors was increased from 53 to 54, representing 7 three-member wards, 16 two-member wards and 1 single-member ward across the Borough.
6. This current Electoral Review has been conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as the 2020 Electoral Roll showed that Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council met the Commission's criteria for electoral inequality, with 1 ward (Burham & Wouldham) having a variance from the average of 32%. In addition, there are three other wards with a variance of greater than 10% - Kings Hill (18%), Snodland West & Holborough Lakes (-11%) and Wateringbury (-12%).
7. The initial stage of an Electoral Review is to identify and confirm the preferred Council Size. This is the number of elected Councillors who will serve on the Borough Council, and should be the number required to deliver effective and convenient local government (the number of members to enable the council and individual councillors to perform most effectively).
8. The final size of the council will determine the average number of electors per councillor, and this is then used to determine warding patterns. As such, it is important that the figure agreed is correct and reflects the needs of the authority and of the community, although it should be noted that the LGBCE may amend the agreed figure if necessary in order to allow for a better representation of electors and as a result of consultation.
9. Within the review process, the LGBCE do not have an initial view on whether there should be an increase, decrease or no change in the size of the Council. However, all submissions must be evidence-led and justifiable.

Guidance on calculating Council Size

10. The LGBCE has provided guidance that highlights the areas that should be considered when developing a proposal for Council Size; these are considered in detail in the pages that follow:
 - a) The **governance arrangements** of the Council and how it takes decisions across the broad range of its responsibilities.
 - b) The Council's **scrutiny functions** relating to its own decision making and the Council's responsibilities to outside bodies.
 - c) The **representational role of councillors in the local community** and how they engage with people, conduct casework and represent the Council on local partner organisations.

About the Borough

11. The Borough of Tonbridge and Malling is situated in the heart of Kent, covering an area of around 93 square miles from the North Downs at Burham and Snodland in the north to the town of Tonbridge in the south. It is largely rural with few large settlements, with Tonbridge in the south being the largest and home to around 40,000 residents. The remainder of the borough is dotted with villages and smaller towns.

12. It is a generally affluent borough, with comparatively low levels of unemployment and good household income levels. However, there are pockets of relative deprivation within the borough that contrast starkly with more affluent neighbourhoods.
13. Mosaic profiling data from 2016 indicates that the most prevalent groups in Tonbridge and Malling are (Kent figures in brackets):
 - Group B ('Prestige Positions' – established families in large detached homes living upmarket lifestyles) – 17.6% (9.0%)
 - Group D ('Domestic Success' – thriving families who are busy bringing up children and following careers) – 15.9% (10.1%)
 - Group H – ('Aspiring Homemakers' – younger households settling down in housing priced within their means) - 14.6% (12.7%)
 - Group M – ('Family Basics' – families with limited resources who have a budget to make ends meet) - 9.9% (8.8%)
14. The 2019 mid-year estimate indicates that the population of Tonbridge and Malling is approximately 132,200 people. Key characteristics of this population are:
 - It has an average age of 40.7 years, which is slightly lower than the Kent average of 41.2 years.
 - There are slightly more female residents (51.1%) than male.
 - There is an overall population density of 5.5 persons per hectare (which is higher than the average of 4.5 for Kent as a whole)
 - The borough is not particularly diverse in terms of ethnic backgrounds. The most recent data relates to the 2011 census which showed 92.4% of residents describing themselves as White British and 3.5% as another White ethnic group.
15. Forecasts indicate that the population of Tonbridge and Malling is expected to grow to around 142,900 by 2028. The largest increase will be in people over 65 years of age – growing from 24,500 currently to around 30,000 by 2028 (an increase of roughly a quarter).

Council Vision & Priorities

Council Vision

16. The Council's Vision is set out in its Corporate Strategy 2020-2023 and reflects its role and purpose within the local community. It is designed to convey what the Council is striving to achieve through its work. The vision is:

“To continue to be a financially sustainable Council with strong leadership that delivers valued services, a commitment to delivering innovation and change to meet the needs of our Borough”

Values and Priorities

17. Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council focuses on the following values and priorities:

- i) Achieving Efficiency - focusing on ensuring good value for money, continuously reviewing how our services are provided and funded, focusing our available resources where they will have most beneficial impact for our communities, and maximising commercial opportunities.
- ii) Embracing Effective Partnership Working - achieving more by working and engaging effectively with a wide range of local partners from the private, public, voluntary and community sectors.
- iii) Valuing our Environment and Encouraging Sustainable Growth - keeping our towns, villages and countryside clean and well maintained, planning for our future homes and jobs, led by our Local Plan, driving investment in economic regeneration and infrastructure and meeting the challenges of climate change.
- iv) Innovation – developing more cultural change, innovative and efficient ways to deliver our services through the use of improved systems and technologies guided by our recently adopted Digital Strategy.

Managing the Business of the Council

Political Governance

18. Following the Local Government Act 2000 coming into effect, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council adopted the 'Leader and Cabinet' model in 2002. This model currently consists of:

- a) Full Council of 54 Members approves and adopts the budget and key policies within which Cabinet decisions are taken. Council appoints members of committees and holds them and the Cabinet to account for the decisions they take.
- b) Cabinet comprises 6 Members, including the Leader of the Council. They are responsible for most day-to-day decisions. Each Member has responsibility for particular service areas.
- c) Councillors' overriding duty is to the whole community, but they are democratically accountable to all the residents of their ward. Their role is to represent the residents of their ward, share in the policy and budgetary decisions of the Full Council, suggest policy improvements, and scrutinise the Cabinet's policy proposals and their implementation.

Member Allowances

19. During the financial year 2019/20, the total sum of allowances paid to the Borough Councillors was just over £370,000 (including subsistence and expenses). This overall figure has reduced year on year since 2011/12. The sum paid to each Councillor varies, depending on their roles and responsibilities, but the average paid per Councillor is around £6,870.

Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors

Separation of Roles

20. The Constitution of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council formalises the separation of roles for Councillors. These include specifications as to which Committees and Advisory Boards members of the Cabinet may be members of, and how many Cabinet members may be part of those other bodies.
21. Whilst this separation of roles is crucial in the fair, effective and transparent running of the Council, it does impact on the number of available Councillors for certain bodies and in doing so, increase the requirement of those members in terms of the number of bodies they must join and attend.

Full Council

22. The Council currently has 54 Councillors, elected every four years for a four year term of office. The last elections were held in May 2019, with the next scheduled elections due to take place in May 2023.
23. All Councillors are members of Full Council, which is responsible for approving and adopting the budget and key policies within which Cabinet decisions are taken. Council appoints members of committees and holds them and the Cabinet to account for the decisions they take.
24. The Council normally has between 5-8 (average 6) meetings per year, including additional special meetings that are held as necessary.

Cabinet

25. Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council operates and Leader and Cabinet model. The Cabinet comprises 6 members including the Leader of the Council. Before 2015, the number of Cabinet members was 8 including the Leader of the Council. Members are responsible for most day-to-day decisions. Whilst each member has a responsibility for a particular service area, when major or key decisions are to be discussed or made, they are taken collectively by the whole Cabinet. The Cabinet meets around 6 times per year.
26. In addition to attending Cabinet meetings, each Cabinet member has regular meetings with relevant directors and other senior officers.
27. The current Cabinet member's portfolios (as set out in Part 3 of the Constitution) are:

a) Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration

Leadership roles: To lead in the development and delivery of Council policies

Key Tasks (Economic Regeneration):

- i) Business Engagement
- ii) Economic Development
- iii) Promoting Inward Investment
- iv) Partnership Working
- v) Rural Business Sector
- vi) Skills and Employability

- vii) Supporting Town Centres
- viii) Supporting the Tourism Sector

b) Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property

Key Tasks: To support the Leader in the development and delivery of Council policies in the following areas of responsibility:

- i) Customer Service
- ii) Efficiency and Innovation
- iii) Financial Responsibilities
- iv) IT and E-Government
- v) Non-Financial Responsibilities (land and property assets)
- vi) Procurement
- vii) Skills, Education and Training

c) Cabinet Member for Community Services

Key Tasks: to support the Leader in the development and delivery of Council policies in the following areas of responsibility:

- i) Arts Programme
- ii) Community Development
- iii) Crime and Disorder
- iv) Equal Opportunities
- v) Health
- vi) Indoor and Outdoor Leisure
- vii) Older Persons
- viii) Rural Affairs
- ix) Tonbridge Castle
- x) Youth and Children
- xi) Voluntary Sector

d) Cabinet Member for Housing

Key Tasks: To support the Leader in the development and delivery of Council policies in the following areas of responsibility:

- i) Housing – Empty Homes; Homelessness; Enforcement of caravan site licensing and Houses in Multiple Occupation

e) Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Environment Services

Key Tasks: To support the Leader in the development and delivery of Council policies in the following areas of responsibility:

- i) Car Parking
- ii) Environmental Services
- iii) Street Scene
- iv) Technical Services Projects

f) Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure

Key Tasks: To support the Leader in the development and delivery of Council policies in the following areas of responsibility:

- i) Building Control
- ii) Development Control
- iii) Infrastructure Policy and Programming
- iv) Planning Policy

Delegations to Officers

28. The Borough Council has a comprehensive Scheme of Delegation to Officers (as set out in Part 3 of the Constitution) which clearly sets out where the responsibility and extent of delegation lies.

29. These delegations to officers have helped to reduce the burden on Members.

Notification of Cabinet Decisions

30. Following each meeting of the Cabinet, all Members of the Council are circulated with a list of all decisions taken. Decisions are subject to a five day delay before implementation to enable decisions to be called in.

Regulatory and other Committees

31. Under the terms of the Constitution, a number of regulatory and other Committees have been established. These have delegated authority to carry out and/or oversee specific duties and functions of the Council. The table below gives an overview of how these committees have changed since the last review in 2011:

Table 1: Regulatory and other Committees 2011 and 2020

Committees	2011	2020
Area Planning Committees	Three separate Area Planning Committees covering different sub-regions of the Borough – each committee meets 9 times a year (27 meetings)	No change – still 9x3=27 meetings per year.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Meets 5 times a year	Currently meeting 5 times a year
Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee	Meets 3 times a year	N/A
Audit Committee	Meets 4 times a year	Meets 4 times a year
Standards Committee	Meets 4 times a year	Meets 4 times a year
Licensing and Appeals Committee	Meets 5 times a year	Meets 5 times a year
General Purposes Committee	Meets 3 times a year	Meets 3 times a year
MINIMUM MEETINGS PER YEAR	51	48

32. Over the past ten years there has been only a minor change to the regulatory and other committees. In effect, the only change has been that the Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee is no longer in operation. As such, this means that the number of committees has dropped from 7 to 6 (a drop of 14%) and the number of meetings has dropped from 51 to 48 (a drop of 6%).

Advisory Panels and Boards

Introduction

33. Since 2011, the Borough Council has made a concerted effort to streamline the number of advisory panels and boards in order to better reflect the priorities of the Council and in order to reduce the level of duplication. This has meant that the number of panels and boards has reduced from **21** in 2011 to just **11** in 2020 (a reduction of **47.6%**). The table below illustrates the changes that have happened:

Table 2: Advisory Panels and Boards 2011 and 2020

Advisory Panel and Board	2011	2020
Car Parking Charges Advisory Board	Meets once per year	Merged with Local Environmental Management Advisory Board to create the Street Scene and Environmental Services Advisory Board (SSESAB) – meets 4 times per year
Communities Advisory Board	Meets 4 times per year	Merged with Strategic Housing, Community Safety, Health and Well-Being & Leisure and Arts Advisory Boards to create the Communities and Housing Advisory Board (CHAB) – Meets 4 times per year.
Community Safety Advisory Board	Meets as required	Now part of CHAB
Economic Regeneration Advisory Board	N/A	ERAB meets 4 times per year
Finance and Property Advisory Board	Meets 4 times per year	Merged with Innovation and Improvement AB to become Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board (FIPAB) – meets 4 times per year.
Health and Wellbeing Advisory Board	Meets as required	Now part of CHAB
Innovation and Improvement Advisory Board	Meets as required	Now part of FIPAB
Leisure and Arts Advisory Board	Meets 4 times per year	Now part of CHAB
Local Environmental Management Advisory Board	Meets 4 times per year	Now part of SSESAB
Planning and Transportation Advisory Board	Meets 4 times per year	Meets 4 times per year
Strategic Housing Advisory Board	Meets 4 times per year	Now part of CHAB
Community Infrastructure Levy Panel	Meets as required	N/A

Electoral Review Working Group	Meets as required	Meets as required
Gypsy and Travellers Issues Panel	Meets as required	N/A
Housing Associations Liaison Panel	Meets as required	Meets as required
Joint Transportation Board	Meets 4 times per year	Meets 4 times per year
Management Liaison Panel	Meets as required	N/A
Parish Partnership Panel	Meets 4 times per year	Meets 4 times per year
Tonbridge Forum	Meets 4 times per year	Meets 3 times per year.
Tonbridge Town Centre Panel	Meets as required	N/A
Twinning Committee	Meets 2 times per year	N/A
Joint Employees Consultative Committee	Meets 1 time per year.	Meets 1 time per year.
MINIMUM MEETINGS PER YEAR (not including 'as required' meetings)	40	32

34. As is evident in this table, the number of advisory boards alone has been reduced considerably from 10 to 5, and now covers the following areas:

- Communities and Housing
- Economic Regeneration
- Finance, Innovation and Property
- Planning and Transportation
- Street Scene and Environmental Services

35. In terms of the minimum number of meetings per year (i.e. not including 'as required' meetings), these have decreased from **40** in 2011 to **32** in 2020, a reduction of **20%**

Summary of Internal Appointments

Introduction:

36. Having looked at the number of boards, panels and committees in the previous sections, this part of the evidence base focusses internal appointments, i.e. the number of Councillors appointed to various internal bodies, and the number of meetings per year for each body. This leads to an overview of the projected attendances per year across the authority.

Summary of Internal Appointments in 2011:

37. In 2011, there were 215 appointments (including all groups) across all the committees, and a total of 79 meetings scheduled (not including training committee), giving a total of **1267** projected attendances per year.

Table 3: Summary of Committee Places - 2011:

Body	No of Appointments	Quorum	Meetings per Year	Projected attendances per year
Council	53	14	6	318
Cabinet	8	4	6	54
Overview & Scrutiny	18	n/a	5	90
<i>Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee</i>	9	n/a	3	27
Area 1 Planning	19	4	9	171
Area 2 Planning	17	4	9	153
Area 3 Planning	19	4	9	171
Licensing and Appeals	15	4	5	75
Licensing and Appeals Panel	5	3	10	50
General Purposes	14	4	3	42
Audit Committee	7	n/a	4	28
Standards Committee	13	4	4	52
<i>Standards Assessment Sub-Committee</i>	6	3	2	12
<i>Standards Hearings Sub-Committee</i>	6	3	2	12
<i>Standards Review Sub-Committee</i>	6	3	2	12
Training Committee	13	n/a	4	52
TOTAL Including All Groups	228		83	1319
TOTAL Excluding Training Committee	215		79	1267

38. At the same time, there were also a number of appointments to advisory boards and panels. In total there were 134 appointments to a minimum of 38 meetings (not including 'as required' meetings), giving a minimum total of **486** projected attendances per year.

Table 4: Summary of Advisory Board and Panels Places - 2011:

Advisory Board/Panel	Number of Appointments	Quorum	Number of Meetings per Year	Minimum Projected Attendances per Year
Car Parking Charges	13	4	1	13
Communities	13	4	4	52
Community Safety	13	4	As required	-
Finance and Property	13	4	4	52
Health and Well Being	13	4	As required	-
Innovation and Improvement	13	4	As required	-
Leisure and Arts	13	4	4	52
Local Environmental Management	13	4	4	52
Planning and Transportation	13	4	4	52
Strategic Housing	13	4	4	52
Community Infrastructure Levy	13	4	As required	-
Electoral Review	9	n/a	As required	-
Gypsy and Travellers Issues	13	4	As required	-
Housing Associations Liaison	5	3	As required	-
Joint Employee Consultative Committee	9	4	1	9
Joint Transportation Board	7	4	4	28
Management Liaison Panel	13	4	As required	-
Parish Partnership Panel	13	4	4	52
Tonbridge Forum	13	4	4	52
Tonbridge Town Centre Panel	19	4	As required	-
Twinning Committee	10	4	2	20
TOTAL For those meeting regularly only	134		38	486

39. In summarising the above two tables, the table below shows that the total minimum projected attendances per year in 2011 was **1,753**.

Table 5: Summary of Internal Appointments in 2011:

Meetings	No. of Appointments	Meetings per year	Minimum Projected Attendances per year
Committees (not including training committee)	215	79	1,267
Advisory Boards and Panels (for those meeting regularly only)	134	38	486
TOTAL	349	117	1,753

Summary of Internal Appointments in 2020

40. Having highlighted the situation with regards to internal appointments at the time of the last review in 2011, it is essential to undertake a similar exercise for the current year in order to gain an insight into the changes that have taken place over the past 9 years.
41. Firstly, turning to Committee places in 2020, the table below shows that there were a total of 191 appointments and a total of 70 meetings scheduled, giving a total of **1218** projected attendances per year.

Table 6: Summary of Committee Places - 2020

Body	No. of Appointments	Quorum	Meetings per Year	Projected attendances per year
Council	54	14	6	324
Cabinet	6	4	6	36
Overview & Scrutiny	18	n/a	5 (some year less)	90
Area 1 Planning	20	4	9	180
Area 2 Planning	17	4	9	153
Area 3 Planning	20	4	9	180
Licensing and Appeals	15	4	5	75
Licensing and Appeals Panel	5	3	10 (varies)	50
General Purposes	14	4	3	42
Audit Committee	9	n/a	4	36
Joint Standards Committee	13	4	4	52
TOTAL Including All Groups	191		70	1218

42. At the same time, as in 2011, there were also a number of appointments to advisory boards and panels in 2020. In total there were 137 appointments to a minimum of 32 meetings (not including 'as required' meetings), giving a minimum total of **449** projected attendances per year.

Table 7: Summary of Advisory Board and Panels Places – 2020:

Advisory Board/Panel	Number of Appointments	Quorum	Number of Meetings per Year	Projected Attendances per Year
Communities and Housing Advisory Board	16	4	4	64
Economic Regeneration Advisory Board	16	4	4	64
Finance, innovation and Property Advisory Board	16	4	4	64
Planning and Transportation Advisory Board	16	4	4	64
Street Scene and Environmental Services Advisory Board	16	4	4	64
Electoral Review Working Group	9	N/A	As required	-
Housing Associations Liaison Panel	5	N/A	As required	-
Joint Employee Consultative Committee	10	N/A	1	10
Joint Transportation Board	7	4	4	28
Parish Partnership Panel	13	4	4	52
Tonbridge Forum	13	4	3	39
TOTAL For those meeting regularly only	137		32	449

43. As such in summary, the table below shows that there were **1,667** minimum projected attendances for 2020.

Table 8: Summary of Internal Appointments in 2020:

Meetings	No. of Appointments	Meetings per year	Minimum Projected Attendances per year
Committees	191	70	1,218
Advisory Boards and Panels	137	32	449
TOTAL	328	102	1,667

Internal Appointments - Comparing 2011 and 2020

44. Comparing the two years, it is clear that overall the number of appointments and meetings has dropped since 2011 when the last review was undertaken. The table below shows that the number of appointments has dropped by 6%, the number of meetings by around 13% and the minimum projected attendances by around 5%. This decrease has resulted from a reduction in the number of advisory boards, as well as a reduction of appointments on some bodies. However, it has also been in spite of an increase in the number of appointments to advisory boards.

Table 9: Internal Appointments – 2011 and 2020

Meetings	No. of Appointments		Trend	Meetings per year		Trend	Minimum Projected Attendances per year		Trend
	2011	2020		2011	2020		2011	2020	
Committees	215	191	Down 11.2%	79	70	Down 11.4%	1267	1218	Down 3.9%
Advisory Boards and Panels	134	137	Up 2.2%	38	32	Down 15.8%	486	449	Down 7.6%
TOTAL	349	328	Down 6.0%	117	102	Down 12.8%	1753	1667	Down 4.9%

Cancellations – April 2015 to March 2020:

45. Having given consideration to the changes in the structure and frequency of various meetings within the Borough Council, it is also important to look at whether these meetings have been taking place, and if so, what level of attendance has been achieved at these meetings. The table below gives an overview of meeting cancellations between April 2015 and March 2020.
46. By way of explanation, this period was chosen because it reflects the recent operation of the Borough Council, whilst not including the initial period of disruption that was caused by the covid-19 pandemic, which would (certainly in the period from April to June 2020) have skewed the figures.
47. The table below shows that with the exception of Council and Audit Committee, all the bodies set out below have seen some degree of cancellation over this period of time. Whilst the levels of cancellation do vary quite considerably, overall around a fifth (20%) of meetings have been cancelled during this period.

Table 10: Cancellations between April 2015 to March 2020

Body	Meetings Scheduled 2015/6-2019/20	Meetings Cancelled 2015/6-2019/20	Percentage Cancelled
Area 1 Planning Committee	46	25	54%
Area 2 Planning Committee	45	5	11%
Area 3 Planning Committee	45	18	40%
Audit Committee	20	0	0%
Cabinet	35	6	17%
CHAB (goes back to 08 June 2016)	16	2	13%
Council	31	0	0%
ERAB	21	6	29%
FIPAB	21	3	14%
General Purposes Committee	16	1	6%
Joint Standards Committee	20	15	75%
Joint Transportation Board	19	2	11%
Licensing and Appeals Committee	24	3	13%
Licensing and Appeals Panel	47	1	2%

Overview and Scrutiny Panel	24	5	21%
Parish Partnership Panel	19	1	5%
PTAB	25	7	28%
Standards Hearing Panel	6	1	17%
SSESAB (established May 2016)	17	3	18%
Tonbridge Forum	12	1	8%
TOTAL	509	105	20.6%

Attendance of Members:

48. In addition to looking at the extent to which cancellations have taken place, it is also important to look at the levels of attendance in order to gain an appreciation of how the Council currently functions. During 2019/20, average attendance at meetings for the various bodies ranged from 62% to 100%. The overall average attendance rate was 80%, highlighting that there was a 20% absence rate overall during this year.

Table 11: Attendance of Members 2019/20

Body	Meetings 2019/20 (Members x Mtgs)	Attended 2019/20	Attendance (%)
Area 1 Planning Committee	60	55	92%
Area 2 Planning Committee	102	79	77%
Area 3 Planning Committee	120	99	83%
Audit Committee	36	26	72%
Cabinet	30	30	100%
CHAB	64	44	69%
Council	324	266	82%
ERAB	48	37	77%
FIPAB	64	48	75%
General Purposes Committee	42	35	83%
Joint Standards Committee	13	8	62%
Joint Transportation Board	28	23	82%
Licensing and Appeals Committee	45	32	71%
Licensing and Appeals Panel	25	16	64%
Overview and Scrutiny Panel	72	53	74%
Parish Partnership Panel	52	46	88%
PTAB	64	52	81%
Standards Hearings Panel	-	-	-
SSESAB	80	61	76%
Tonbridge Forum	39	36	92%
TOTAL	1308	1046	80%

Appointments to Outside Bodies

49. In 2011, the Borough Council made 39 annual appointments to outside bodies (which was followed by a further 14 appointments that year). In comparison, in May 2019 there were a total of 36 annual appointments made, representing a slight reduction in appointments.

Table 12: Appointment to Outside Bodies

Outside Body	No. of Councillors	Councillors Appointed 2020/21 (rolled over from 2019/20)
Kent County Playing Fields Association	1	Cllr Rhodes
Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge	2	Vacancies
Citizens Advice North and West Kent	1	Cllr Boughton
Maidstone and District Care Committee for Chest, Heart and Stroke	1	Cllr Hammond
West Kent Relate	1	Cllr Bates
Action with Communities in Rural Kent	2	Cllrs Dalton and Sergison
Maidstone Mediation Scheme	1	Cllr Kemp
Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee	1	Cllr Lettington
Basted Mill Public Open Space Joint Committee	2	Cllrs Betts and Taylor
Snodland Partnership	3	Cllrs Bell, Keeley and Lettington
South East England Councils (Leaders Forum)	1	Cllr Heslop (Substitute: Cllr Coffin)
Youth and Community Centres/Project Management Committees	1	Cllr Rhodes
LGA General Assembly	1	Cllr Heslop (Substitute: Cllr Coffin)
West Kent Partnership	1	Cllr Luker
Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London Adjudication Joint Committee	1	Cllr Dalton (Deputy: Cllr Botten)
Rochester Airport Consultative Committee	1	Cllr Keers
Rochester Airport Delivery Board	1	Cllr Luker
Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel	1	Cllr Rhodes
Kent Flood Risk Management Committee	1	Cllr Rogers
Tonbridge & Malling Leisure Trust	2	Cllrs Bishop and Davis
Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board	3	Cllrs Boughton, Davis and Rogers
Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board	1	Cllr Davis
Haysden Country Park and Leybourne Lakes Country Park User Panels	4	Cllrs Hood and King (Haysden) Cllrs Bishop and Luker (Leybourne Lakes)
West Kent Improvement Board Members Forum	1	Cllr Montague
Dry Hill Disabled Persons Trust	1	Cllr Branson
TOTAL	36	

Changes in Council Size Since 2010/11:

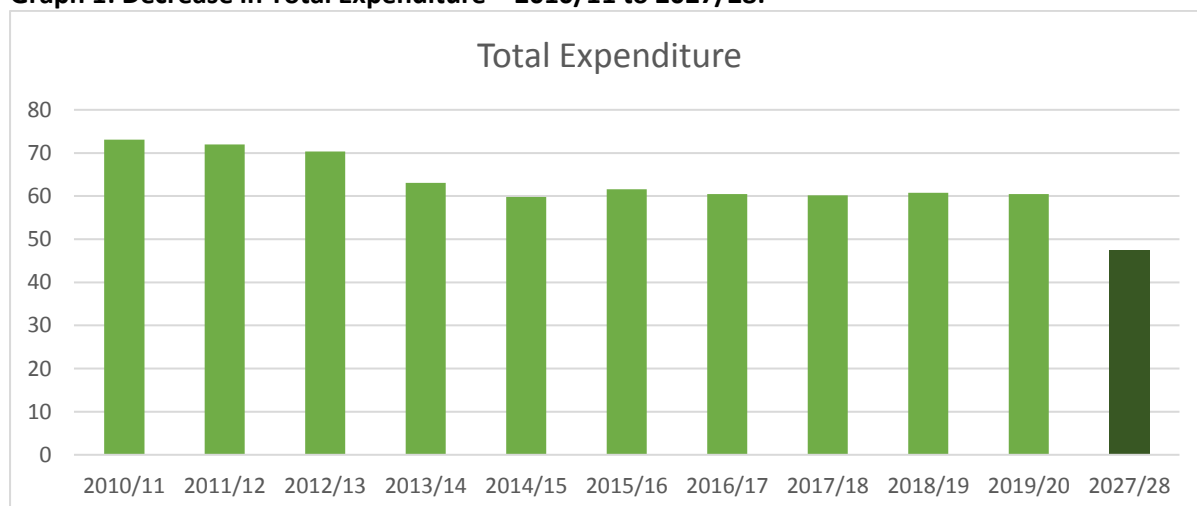
50. When the last boundary review was undertaken, the Borough Council had an annual total expenditure of over £73 million and a staff count of over 350 people (Full-Time Equivalent). Since that time, the size of the Council (as measured by total expenditure and staffing levels) has reduced. By 2019/20, the Borough Council had an annual total expenditure of just over £60m and a staff count of just over 220 people.
51. Part of this decrease can be attributed to the transfer of leisure centre operations to the Tonbridge & Malling Leisure Trust, along with departmental streamlining, with both expenditure and staffing having plateau-ed somewhat since 2016/17.

Table 13: Reduction in Council Size – Expenditure and Staffing

Financial Year	Total Expenditure	Staffing (FTE)
2010/11	£73.075m	352.84
2011/12	£71.953m	345.61
2012/13	£70.348m	340.45
2013/14	£63.036m	324.03
2014/15	£59.784m	238.36
2015/16	£61.569m	230.99
2016/17	£60.481m	218.48
2017/18	£60.143m	213.34
2018/19	£60.732m	219.79
2019/20	£60.459m	223.36
Total decrease from 2010/11 to 2019/20	17%	36.7%

52. The table above shows that in total total expenditure has decreased by 17% and staffing numbers by just under 37% over the course of the last ten years.
53. Looking forwards, the impact of covid-19 has added considerable uncertainty regarding the future of the Borough Council. However, even before this impact, the Council's expenditure was scheduled to reduce further, reaching £47.394m by 2027/28, which would amount to a **35%** decrease from the position in 2010/11.

Graph 1: Decrease in Total Expenditure – 2010/11 to 2027/28:



Further Anticipated Changes

54. In addition to the above information, it is worth also highlighting that the day-to-day role of a councillor has changed substantially since 2011, and will no doubt continue to do so into the future. In addition to there now being fewer council meetings to attend, and less duplication within remaining meetings, the technological changes at the Council have also provided councillors with an opportunity to communicate across IT platforms that greatly increase efficiency, and allow more time for face-to-face contact with residents who do not have access to the internet.

55. The impact of the covid-19 pandemic has sped up this process considerably, and the use of technology, be it social media or virtual meetings has now become very much a key part of the role of both officers and councillors as an effective means of communicating within the existing restrictions. This is something that is likely to continue even once these restrictions are eased.

Conclusion

56. The headline findings from this exercise are as follows:

- **25%** reduction in the size of the Cabinet since 2015
- **6%** reduction in total number of appointments to all Council meetings since 2010/11
- **13%** reduction in scheduled Council meetings since 2010/11
- **14%** reduction in regulatory and other committees since 2010/11 and a **6%** drop in meetings.
- **48%** reduction in the number of Advisory Panels and Boards and a **20%** drop in Advisory Board and Panel Meetings since 2010/11
- **21%** cancellation rate of scheduled meetings since 2015/16
- **20%** non-attendance of members at meetings that do take place (although attendance of Councillors that are not Members of particular meetings is quite high)
- **7%** reduction (minimum) in annual appointments to outside bodies
- **17%** drop in the Council expenditure from 2010/11 to 2019/20, with a forecast reduction of **35%** in Council expenditure from 2010/11 to 2027/8
- **37%** drop in the number of staff (FTE) working for the Borough Council since 2010/11