

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Monday, 31st January, 2022

Present: Cllr M R Rhodes (Chairman), Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr R V Roud and Cllr Mrs M Tatton

Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, V M C Branson, A E Clark, D Harman, D Keers, Mrs A S Oakley, H S Rogers, J L Sergison and K B Tanner participated via MS Teams and joined the discussion when invited to do so by the Chairman in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B J Luker and Mrs S Bell

PART 1 - PUBLIC

GP 22/1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

GP 22/2 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 5 October 2021 and of the extraordinary meeting held on 7 December 2021 be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

GP 22/3 LOCALISM ACT - PAY POLICY

The report of the Director of Central Services summarised the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and presented an updated Pay Policy Statement 2022/23. Members noted that, as there had not been any changes to the Borough Council's remuneration policy, the substantive content of the updated Pay Policy Statement set out at Annex 1 to the report was identical to the authority's first Pay Policy Statement adopted by the Council on 16 February 2012.

RECOMMENDED: That the Pay Policy Statement, as set out at Annex 1 to the report, be commended to Council for adoption. ◀

***Referred to Council**

DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION (RESPONSIBILITY FOR COUNCIL FUNCTIONS)

GP 22/4 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

The report of the Director of Central Services sought approval to the process for the recruitment of Independent Persons.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Monitoring Officer advertises for the recruitment of 2 Independent Persons; and
- (2) a panel, comprising the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Joint Standards Committee together with the Group Leaders, be set up to short-list and interview candidates and to make a recommendation to Council for appointment.

GP 22/5 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The joint report of the Director of Central Services and the Director of Finance and Transformation advised of the outcome of the annual review of the Borough Council's Whistleblowing Policy. A copy of the updated internal Whistleblowing Policy was attached at Annex 1 with the new Whistleblowing Procedure at Annex 2. In addition, to align with best practice, an external policy to be made available to support those working externally who may witness wrongdoing by officers and councillors, was attached at Annex 3.

RESOLVED: That the Whistleblowing Policy, as attached at Annex 1, and accompanying Whistleblowing Procedure and External Procedure, as set out in Annexes 2 and 3 respectively, be approved.

GP 22/6 PAY AWARD 2022/23

The report of the Chief Executive requested Members to consider a pay award of 2% for employees for 2022/23. Members noted that 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 that the Council therefore determined its own pay awards and was not tied into the national process of collective bargaining. A supplement, circulated in

advance of the meeting, provided details of a number of issues and concerns raised with UNISON by staff in respect of the increased costs and financial challenges they faced due to current economic circumstances. Members acknowledged the value of staff and the effort that employees had continued to make during a challenging period but expressed concern that any increase in the pay award would have a detrimental effect on the Council's ability to maintain services and could lead to redundancies.

RESOLVED: That a 2.0% pay award, from 1 April 2022, be agreed.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

GP 22/7 GENDER PAY GAP

The report of the Director of Central Services summarised the legislative context for gender pay gap reporting and incorporated the outcomes of the Council's gender pay gap analysis for 2020-21.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

GP 22/8 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

GP 22/9 ESTABLISHMENT REPORT

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 1 – Information relating to an individual)

The report of the Director of Central Services set out for approval a number of establishment changes arising from the ongoing operational management of the Borough Council's Services.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) post DA0704 Printing Assistant 28.5 hours per week scale 1/2 be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect;

- (2) post DG0502 Head Ranger 37 hours per week scale 6 be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect;
- (3) post DG0503 Assistant Ranger 37 hours per week scale 3/4 be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect;
- (4) post DG0599 Seasonal Ranger 37 hours per week scale 2 be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect;
- (5) post DF0604 Fraud Officer 37 hours per week scale 4/6 be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect;
- (6) post DF0606 Fraud/Audit Assistant 37 hours per week scale 2/4 be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect;
- (7) post DF0998 Intelligence Officer 37 hours per week scale 2/4 be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect;
- (8) post DF0802 Audit and Assurance Manager 18.5 hours per week M8 be deleted from the establishment with immediate effect;
- (9) post DF0804 Senior Internal Audit Officer 37 hours per week scale 6/SO be deleted from the Establishment with immediate effect;
- (10) the reduction in hours of post DJ0210 Building Control Surveyor M9 from 37 to 25 per week that came into effect on 1 July 2021 be noted;
- (11) post DF0402 37 hours per week scale 6 be re-designated from Senior Exchequer Officer (Income and Treasury) to Exchequer Officer (Income and Insurance) from 1 February 2022;
- (12) post DF0407 30 hours per week scale 6 be re-designated from Senior Exchequer Officer (Payments and Bank Transactions) to Exchequer Officer (Payments) from 1 February 2022;
- (13) post DG0110 Administrator/Cemetery Registrar 22.5 hours per week scale 3/4 be deleted with effect from 1 February 2022;
- (14) a new post of Cemetery Administration Officer 15 hours per week scale 3/4 be created with effect from 1 February 2022;
- (15) the hours of post DB0201 HR and Development Manager M6 be increased from 22.2 to 37 per week and the post be re-designated Head of HR and Development with effect from 1 April 2022;
- (16) post DB0006 Senior HR Advisor full-time M8 be deleted with effect from 1 April 2022;

- (17) a new full-time post of HR Advisor M9 be created with effect from 1 April 2022;
- (18) the full-time post DA1201 Head of Communications M7 be added to the permanent establishment with immediate effect;
- (19) post DF0404 Payroll Manager 21 hours per week scale 6/SO be deleted from the Establishment with effect from 1 February 2022;
- (20) post DF0409 Exchequer Assistant (Payments) 22.5 hours per week be deleted from the Establishment with effect from 1 February 2022;
- (21) a new post of Payroll Officer 37 hours per week scale 6 be created with effect from 1 February 2022;
- (22) post DF0412 Exchequer Assistant (Bank) 37 hours per week scale 2/3 be re-designated and re-graded to Exchequer Assistant (Bank and Payroll) 37 hours per week scale 3/4 with effect from 1 February 2022;
- (23) the hours pertaining to post DF0413 Exchequer Assistant (Bank) scale 2/3 be reduced from 30 to 24 per week with effect from 1 February 2022;
- (24) post DN0113 Senior Systems Analyst M8 22.5 hours per week be deleted from the Establishment on 25 February 2022;
- (25) a new post of Developer SO/M9 30 hours per week be created with effect from 25 February 2022;
- (26) the hours attached to post DF1106 Senior Revenue and Benefits Officer be increased from 22 to 28 per week, at the cost of £7395, with effect from 1 March 2022;
- (27) the full-time DV0201 Team Leader M9 post be deleted with effect from 1 April 2022;
- (28) the full-time DV0297 Health Improvement Support Assistant scale 3 post be deleted with effect from 1 April 2022;
- (29) the two full-time scale 5 posts of One You Advisor (DV0202 and DV0203) be deleted with effect from 1 April 2022;
- (30) a new full-time M9 post of One You Team Leader be created with effect from 1 April 2022;
- (31) two 22 hours per week One You Advisor posts be created with effect from 1 April 2022; and

- (32) the ring-fenced sums of £7,800 in Leisure Services and £5,350 in Central Services and Electoral Registration be removed from the Establishment with immediate effect.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm