

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Monday, 20th February, 2023

Present: Cllr M R Rhodes (Chair), Cllr B J Luker (Vice-Chair), Cllr A E Clark, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr D Keers, Cllr D W King, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr R V Roud and Cllr Mrs M Tatton

(Note: As Councillor Mrs P A Bates was unable to attend in person and participated via MS Teams, they were unable to vote on any matters).

Virtual: Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, R P Betts, V M C Branson, R W Dalton, P J Montague, K B Tanner were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

PART 1 – PUBLIC

GP 23/10 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There was no notification of substitute members received.

GP 23/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

GP 23/12 PAY AWARD 2023

Careful consideration was given to a number of options for an employee pay award for 2023/24 within a 'funding envelope' of £584k. At the meeting of General Purposes on 25 January 2023, Members had supported the principle of a 5% pay award but asked for a range of options to be assessed and presented for further consideration.

Concern was expressed that staff on the lowest wage were least resilient to the current cost of living crisis. However, it was also recognised that staff on a medium/higher wage could equally be impacted by the cost of living.

Councillor D Lettington proposed, seconded by Councillor A Clark that a different percentage be applied to each grade and that the lowest grade receive the highest percentage.

Concern was expressed that the proposal could be divisive amongst staff with some feeling undervalued, could impact negatively on the retention and recruitment of staff and lead to longer term destabilisation of the grading/banding structure.

Following a formal vote this proposal was rejected.

Councillor Davis, seconded by Councillor Keers proposed a 5% pay award for all staff from 1 April 2023, with a retrospective pay award backdated to 1 January 2023 for all staff on pay scales 1-6 (as set out in Option 2 of the report).

It was reported that this option would result in a currently unbudgeted one off cost to the Council of £50,000 which could be met from the General Revenue Reserve in 2022/23 subject to approval from the Council.

On the grounds that this proposal would provide additional pay to staff on lower grades, whilst still ensuring that a 5% pay award applied to all posts and seemed fair and equitable to all staff, Members voted in favour of Option 2.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a 5% pay award for all staff from 1 April 2023 with a retrospective pay award backdated to 1 January 2023 for staff on pay scales 1-6 be approved.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (2) the one-off cost of backdating the pay award to scales 1-6 of £50k be met from the Borough Council's General Revenue Reserve in 2022/23 be commended to Council for endorsement.

***Referred to Council**

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

GP 23/13 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.33 pm