

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

12 June 2024

Report of the Interim Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 STAFF AWARD PAYMENT

A report setting out criteria for the one-off staff recognition payments within the approved budget contained in the 2024/25 estimates.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 During the preparation of the Estimates for 2024/25, Members of Cabinet recommended that £50,000 be set aside for "Staff Recognition". Accordingly, a budget of £50,000 was incorporated into the Estimates for 2024/25 and subsequently approved by Full Council.

1.1.2 Cabinet suggested that the sum was divided up equally between all staff and is paid as soon as reasonably practicable, subject to the approval by the General Purposes Committee.

1.2 Principles of the staff reward payment

1.2.1 This is a one-off standalone payment; this is not a recurring annual payment.

1.2.2 This is a Member-led initiative and is not linked to any wider Council policies on staff pay and reward.

1.2.3 Cllr Kim Tanner, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Housing, is the lead Member for this initiative. Cllr Tanner has suggested that the sum of £50,000 should be divided equally amongst all staff as a 'thank you' payment for staff in recognition of the work they do and their service to the Council.

1.2.4 It is noted that, over the years, Members have expressed their gratitude to staff for their roles in diligently delivering services to the public through good and extremely challenging times (including the pandemic and economic crises) whilst at the same time playing their part in ensuring economy, efficiency and the achievement of best value. The good performance of the Council (financially and in other respects) is as a result of the excellent partnership with staff.

- 1.2.5 In challenging times, the goodwill, loyalty and dedication of staff (often for no financial reward) is paramount in maintaining effective services.
- 1.2.6 The one-off payment is also a way in which to mark and celebrate 50 years of Tonbridge & Malling Council by recognising the contribution that staff make to the borough and its communities.

1.3 Criteria for staff to receive the payment

- 1.3.1 For staff to receive the one-off payment, the following criteria must be met:
- Staff must be employed on a permanent contract or a fixed-term contract of a minimum of twelve months.
 - Staff must be employed by the Council on 30 June 2024 and still be due to receive their usual salary payment on 15 July 2024.
 - All staff will receive the same fixed payment amount. The amount will not be pro-rata'd according to hours or grade.
 - Any members of staff who are within the Council's disciplinary procedure will not receive the payment until disciplinary proceedings have finalised with "no case to answer" as the outcome. If the outcome results in disciplinary action being taken, then it is likely that the payment will not be made. A final decision on the appropriateness of the payment will be taken by the relevant Chief Officer, depending on the circumstances of the disciplinary case.
 - Similarly, any members of staff who are within the Council's capability procedure will not receive the payment if formal action has been taken against them as detailed in the Council's Capability Procedure. If the outcome results in a formal Capability Hearing, then it is likely that the payment will not be made. A final decision on the appropriateness of the payment will be taken by the relevant Chief Officer, depending on the circumstances of the capability case.
 - The payment will be made to staff employed directly by the Council who meet the above criteria, the payment will not be made to personnel engaged on Casual Agreement contracts.
 - The payment will not be made to staff who are engaged via an employment agency.
- 1.3.2 All four members of the Council's Management Team have opted out from receiving the payment.

1.4 Payment amount

- 1.4.1 Based on a current headcount of 262 staff the payment will be £150 each.
- 1.4.2 The payment is made subject to employer's national insurance contributions, the payment is also superannuable.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 Engagement will take place with the Joint Employee Consultative Committee (JECC) and with UNISON.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.6.1 A budget of £50,000 is included in the estimates for 2024/25.

1.6.2 Due to the employer's national insurance contribution and the superannuation payment, it is likely that actual amount cost will be in the region of £52,000-£53,000. Any amount above the £50,000 will be met from the Council's Management Savings on salaries.

1.7 Risk Assessment

1.7.1 There are no relevant risks.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

1.8.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.9 Policy Considerations

1.9.1 Pay Policy statement. If this payment is made it will be detailed in the pay policy statement for 2025/26.

1.10 Recommendations

1.10.1 Members are asked to recommend the one-off staff award payment subject to the criteria set out in paragraph 1.3.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Mathew Brooks
Head of Human Resources &
Development

Adrian Stanfield
Interim Chief Executive