

To Councillors: A Baker, M Gemmell Smith, A Layland, M McArthur (Chair), S McGregor, M Stockdale, B Todd.

Notice is hereby given of a Personnel Committee Meeting to be held in Doggetts Barn on 7 November 2025 at 11:30 am, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk
3 November 2025

To assist in the speedy and efficient dispatch of business members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the Town Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

Council Meetings may be recorded. Any person intending to make recordings is advised to notify the Clerk in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made

Agenda

In view of the confidential nature of Agenda Items 5, 6, 6.1, 7, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 8, 9, 9.1, 9.2, 10 to be discussed, the Chair will move that the press and public be excluded from the Chamber. Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 s100 and 102.

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Meeting Papers & Report

1 To receive apologies for absence

2 Declarations of interest or predetermination

The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If an interest becomes apparent to a member during the course of a meeting that has not been disclosed under this item, the member must immediately disclose it.

3 To receive, approve and sign the minutes of the Personnel Meeting held on 13 June 2025 (pages 2023-098/1-4).

Personnel | 13 June 2025 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-098/1-4)

4 Matters arising not covered elsewhere

Personnel matters just for noting:

Contracts: As per last year's resolution, staff have all received update contracts (August).

Appraisals: All staff will take place in January.

Worknest portals: HR portal has been wiped ready to reset-up but time is not allowing so records remain manual and Excel spreadsheets. H&S portal was working sufficiently until during an audit some forms were deleted. This has caused some disruption, with some forms (mainly office) needing to be reloading. H&S recording and checks are carried out.

Polices: Recommendation for new polices (and also expected as part of the Quality Council), which I will be working on and will present to Council to approve:

- Harassment at work
- Menopause
- Training and Personal Development

Annual contract HR and H&S services: Worknest has provided its annual invoice. We are in year 3 of the agreement, annual total will be £2765.53; and insurance £308.75. (Total £3074.28) They have also advised from 1 May 2026, their fees will be increasing by 6%. I have had another company approach us to quote but as we are in a 3-year agreement, I will look at this for next year when we look at new HR and H&S agreement.

Council meeting papers: Confidential papers can be viewed by all councillors on the new meeting agendas, papers and minutes software. Previously, committee and a council agreed that 'only' personnel committee would have access to 'confidential' papers due the sensitivities of staffing matters. For the now, this is not possible. It is difficult to prepare papers without identify personnel either by name or position. Therefore, sensitivities will be reported verbally at meetings or papers presented at those meetings.

4.1 Kent Pension Fund - Pooling of Town & Parish Council - Formal Consultation: Update from last meeting

This was reported to Council September meeting. As minuted:

Personnel Committee and Council had considered the Kent Pension Fund recent consultation on the pooling of town and parish councils contributions. KALC had responded that this was not something they were able to advise on. The Council's response following its July meeting

had been submitted.

Having circulated to some other clerks, it would seem there was mixed views as all councils pay different contributions, with one paying a secondary contribution. Some will benefit from the pooling with its contributions being reduced and others will increase. One clerk explained, as they understood it, those paying a lesser amount will see an increase in contributions. Those paying more will see a reduction. Overall, an average will be worked out and we will all pay that amount.

Kent Pensions were prompt in responding to the Council's concerns - details were reported in the meeting papers. In short, they clarified that:

- This proposal is not in respect of pooling pension Funds. It is in respect of pooling certain groups of employers together in the Kent Pension Fund. Specifically, town and parish councils. We currently have two other successful pools in the Kent Pension Fund, namely Academies and Colleges. The theory is that pooling a certain category of employers, controls volatility of contributions and funding positions which is what the Fund aims to do overall.
- It is likely that employer contribution rates will change from 1 April 2026 if pooling is agreed by the Pension Fund Committee, however as advised we are currently conducting the Funds Triennial Valuation and even if the pooling arrangement does not proceed, individual employer rates are likely to change regardless, as it does every 3 years when we carry out the triennial valuation.
- Local Government Pension Scheme is a Career Average defined benefits scheme, meaning the pension amount is based on salary and the number of years in the scheme. It's a statutory scheme meaning all benefits are guaranteed. Increases or decreases on employer contributions does not impact the level of benefits the member received on retirement.

For noting.

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5

[CONFIDENTIAL] Budget 2025-26 update

Confidential item omitted from public papers.

6

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6.1

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7.3

[CONFIDENTIAL] Market Officer

Confidential item omitted from public papers.

7.4

[CONFIDENTIAL] Pension Contributions during period of absence

Confidential item omitted from public papers.

7.5 **[CONFIDENTIAL] Employers Assist Programme (EAP)**

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[CONFIDENTIAL] Budget 2026-27: Considerations for staffing budgets; and to make recommendation to the Finance Committee for the draft budget

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