

Minutes of the **General Purposes Committee**  
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**  
held in Conference Room 1, Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover  
on Monday 30 September 2013 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

<b>Councillor I Carr</b> <b>(Chairman)</b>	(A)	<b>Councillor M Hatley</b> <b>(Vice Chairman)</b>	(P)
Councillor D Busk	(P)	Councillor M Cooper	(P)
Councillor A Dowden	(A)	Councillor P Giddings	(P)
Councillor I Hibberd	(P)	Councillor P Hurst	(P)
Councillor J Neal	(A)	Councillor G Stallard	(P)
Councillor N Whiteley	(P)		

Also in Attendance:

Kate Handy, Ernst and Young

Malcolm Haines, Ernst and Young

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**Minutes**

**Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.**

130 **Annual Corporate Health and Safety Report 2012/13 & Action Plan**

Consideration was given to the annual Corporate Health and Safety Report 2012/13 & Action Plan which demonstrated the Council's compliance with its statutory responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

The Environmental Health Manager explained that the office action risks were relatively low compared with Environmental Services which had a higher risk of accident. First Aider training was ongoing and refresher training was offered in some areas. There had been an increase in the level of violence and aggressive incidents towards parking wardens. Environmental Health were working with the Manager responsible for parking wardens and were talking to other Authorities about solutions.

**Resolved:**

**That the Annual Corporate Health and Safety report 2012/13 and Action Plan be approved.**

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### **General Purposes Committee – Appointment of Sub-Committees**

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Administration which sort the appointment of a Redundancy Appeals Sub-Committee and an Employment Appeals and Ethics Sub-Committee.

#### **Resolved:**

- 1. That a Redundancy Appeals Sub-Committee of the General Purposes Committee be established comprising five members to deal with redundancy appeals and that Councillors Cooper, Hibberd, Neal, Stallard, and N Whiteley be appointed to the Sub-Committee.**
- 2. That an Employment Appeals and Ethics Sub-Committee of the General Purposes Committee be established comprising five members to deal with all other appeals to members by staff relating to employment matters (save for redundancy matters) as well as matters of an ethical nature concerning Members as delegated on 25 July 2012 and that Councillors Carr, Cooper, A Dowden, Hatley and Giddings be appointed to the Sub-Committee.**

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### **Statement of Accounts 2012/13**

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Finance which set out the audited Annual Statement of Accounts for approval together with the Annual Governance Report of the Council's external auditors, Ernst & Young. The auditors found no unadjusted material errors or misstatements in the accounts.

Kate Handy, Director at Ernst & Young reported that they had found no significant weaknesses in the design of internal control arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness and were satisfied that the Council had established a robust financial plan. She concluded that there was a good level of corporate challenge and arrangements for securing economies and efficiencies could be demonstrated to achieve a secure and efficient way of working without cutting key services.

Kate Handy also explained that the scoring had changed to either a pass or fail instead of gradings. She had carried out audits for 12 Local Authorities and only 1 had been given a qualified opinion in respect of Value for Money. The Audit Plan was based on the same level of risk as last year and costings were based on the assumption that a good set of accounts and statements would be provided. The audit had taken 134 actual days to complete. In answer to a question Kate Handy explained that they start the audit by looking at the high level details then identify the systems and procedures and check that controls were working.

The Economic Portfolio Holder felt that it was an excellent report and that the Council should be congratulated for their contribution towards a successful audit and that the Finance team should be congratulated on producing an excellent set of accounts and a satisfactory audit.

The Accountancy Manager took Members through the Statement of Accounts 2012/13. He answered a question about the Hampshire Pension Fund and explained that the liability of pension funds were changeable and actuarial pension valuation at the end of March 2013 would lead to recommendations on how much the Council would pay in the future. The trend is for employee and employer contributions to increase.

The Economic Portfolio Holder congratulated the Head of Finance and his staff on a brilliant set of Accounts.

The Accountancy Manager reported that a summary statement was being prepared and would be shortly available on the Council's website.

**Resolved:**

- 1. Ernst & Young's Annual Governance Report (Annex 1):**
  - a. That the matters raised in the report be considered before authorising the financial statements for issue,**
  - b. That the adjustments to the financial statements be noted,**
  - c. That the proposed audit opinion and value for money conclusion be noted.**
  - d. That the letter of representation (Annex 2) be approved.**
- 2. That the audited Annual Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2012/13 (Annex 3) be approved.**
- 3. That the Council's staff be congratulated for their contribution towards a successful audit and that the Finance team be congratulated on producing an excellent set of accounts and a satisfactory audit.**

(Meeting terminated at 6.23pm)