

**Minutes of the General Purposes Committee
of the Test Valley Borough Council**
held in The Annexe, Crosfield Hall, Broadwater Road, Romsey
on 30 July 2018 at 4pm

Attendance:

Councillor K Hamilton	(P)		
(Vice Chairman)			
Councillor N Adams-King	(P)	Councillor P Giddings	(P)
Councillor G Bailey	(P)	Councillor P Hurst	(P)
Councillor J Cockaday	(P)	Councillor I Jeffrey	(A)
Councillor A Dowden	(P)	Councillor P North	(P)
Councillor M Flood	(P)	Vacancy	

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Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

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Apprentice Pay Award 2018/19

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive which addressed apprentice pay for 2018/19 following the move away from the Hampshire Apprenticeship partnership pay arrangements. The Apprentice Pay Award was considered separately to the pay award for other employees. A pay award of 2.5% for 2018/19 was agreed for all other employees at the meeting of this Committee on 20 June 2018.

The report recommended an increase to £6.00 per hour for Level 2 and Level 3 apprentices in year 1 of the apprenticeship and an increase to £6.50 or the National Minimum Wage for their age (higher of the two) for Level 2 and Level 3 Apprentices in year 2 of their apprenticeship.

The Council was committed to employing apprentices and providing them with a good start to their employment career. In the last 12 months the Council had experienced difficulty in recruiting and retaining apprentices with some posts remaining vacant. The Council was not alone in this difficulty with the apprentice market becoming increasingly competitive due to the introduction of public sector targets, the apprenticeship levy and the change to apprentice standards.

Given the difficulties in recruiting apprentices, coupled with the rate of pay being identified as one of the contributing factors, and the other issues noted in the report including market comparisons and the TVBC general pay award, the Committee were requested to consider increasing the apprentice rate.

Resolved:

That the apprentice rate of pay increases with effect from 1 April 2018 in accordance with the recommendation set out in paragraph 9.6 of the report.

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Statement of Accounts 2017/18

The Council was required to prepare an Annual Statement of Accounts and have those accounts audited.

Will Fullbrook, Head of Finance introduced the report and explained that the Council was required to produce and approve an Annual Statement of Accounts for each financial year. The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2018 and had been audited by Ernst & Young and the Annual Statement of Accounts, together with the auditor's Annual Audit Results Report which were presented for approval.

Maria Grindley, Associate Partner of Ernst & Young presented the Council's Annual Audit Results Report. An unqualified opinion was expected to be given in respect of both the Annual Statement of Accounts and the Council's value for money arrangements. This meant that the auditors had found no material areas of concern as part of their audit.

Jenni Carter, Acting Accountancy Manager reported that the Statements of Accounts was presented with an unqualified opinion; this meant the auditors had found no unadjusted material errors or misstatements in the accounts.

It was expected that Ernst & Young would issue an unqualified opinion in respect of both the Annual Statement of Accounts and on the Council's ability to deliver value for money. The reason for the recommendation was to comply with a statutory duty to approve the Council's audited Statement of Accounts by 31 July each year.

Members congratulated the officers for an exceptional piece of work in a very short timescale. It was an excellent report and the Council should be congratulated for their contribution towards a successful audit and the Finance team should be congratulated on producing an excellent set of accounts and a satisfactory audit.

Resolved:

- 1. Ernst & Young's Annual Audit Results Report (as shown in annex 1 to the report):**
 - a. That the matters raised in the report be considered before authorising the financial statements for issue,**
 - b. That the proposed audit opinion and value for money conclusion be noted.**

- 2. That the letter of representation (as shown in annex 2 to the report) be approved.**
- 3. That the audited Annual Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2017/18 (as shown in annex 3 to the report) be approved.**

(Meeting terminated at 4.50pm)