

Minutes of the **General Purposes Committee**
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**
held in Upper Guildhall, High Street, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 1NT
on Wednesday 17 April 2019 at 4.00 pm

Attendance:

Councillor G Bailey (Chairman)

Councillor K Hamilton (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor J Cockaday
Councillor A Dowden
Councillor M Flood
Councillor P Giddings

Councillor P Hurst
Councillor I Jeffrey
Councillor P North

Also in attendance
Councillor C Dowden

Apologies for absence Councillor N Adams-King

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Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 7 November 2018 and 12 March 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

324

Minutes of the Employment Appeals and Ethics Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Employment Appeals and Ethics Sub-Committee held on 27 March 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

325

External Audit: Audit Planning Report 2018/19

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Finance, which presented the External Auditors' audit planning report for the year ended 31 March 2019.

Kevin Suiter from Ernst and Young LLP presented the report which set out the auditors' responsibilities and the proposed audit approach and scope for the 2018/19 audit. The plan summarised the initial assessment of the key risks driving the development of the effective audit for the Council, and outlined the planned audit strategy in response to those risks.

The report formed part of the independent external and audit review process and the Committee was recommended to approve the 2018/19 audit plan which included an analysis of key risks, the audit strategy, reporting and timescales.

Resolved:

That the proposed external audit plan for the 2018/19 be approved.

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Staff Pay Award for 2019/20

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive, which addressed the pay claim submitted by the trade unions for the year 2018/20. The Council's approved budget for 2019/20 contained provision for a potential pay award. In paragraph 10.2 the report recommended a 4% increase for staff on grades up to and including Grade 6 (inclusive of the Training and Apprentice pay grades) and an increase of 2.5% for staff on Grade 7 and above.

Since 2014/15, the Council had structured its pay arrangements so that the actual lowest pay point matched or exceeds the level of the LWF Living Wage in force at the relevant time for all employees (except apprentices). In November 2018 the LWF Living wage increased from £8.75 to £9.00 per hour and the recommended increase would bring the lowest pay point above the LWF Living Wage of £9.00 an hour.

The proposals contained in the report sought to balance prudent financial decision making with recognition of the value of the council's staff and the need for the Council to remain competitive in the recruitment market place.

Resolved:

That a pay increase be awarded to staff with effect from 1 April 2019 in accordance with the recommendation in paragraph 10.2.

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Review of the Council's Grading Structure

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive, which recommended removing the overlapping pay points to bring the pay spine in line with best practice. A review of the Council's pay and grading structure had been undertaken and the report recommended removing points 1 and 2 on the pay spine and making amendments to pay points 3 and 4 in Grades 3 and 4 to remove the overlap.

There would be no increase in the maximum pay of each grade arising from the proposal and no employees would be adversely affected by the change. The cost of making those changes as of 1 April 2019 had been included in the pay award.

The report also recommended retaining the training grade which was a longer 6 point scale in full to enable the appointment and development of higher level apprenticeships at level 4 and above.

Resolved:

That the grading structure be updated in line with equal pay best practice as set out at Annex 1.

(The meeting terminated at 4.38 pm)