

## DECISION

of Councillor Fox and Councillor Holloway, Chairman and Vice Chairman of Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Town Clerk, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2016

### Apprenticeships Finance Administration Assistant Vacancy

Following the introduction of the National Living Wage (NLW) in 2015 and annual cost of living increases to the National Minimum Wage (NMW) the Town Council's lower pay scale points (4 & 5) which is where we would previously aligned Apprenticeship posts have been eradicated.

In order that we can give opportunity to and recruit for apprenticeships going forward the Town Council needs to re-approve new pay scales. Our lowest pay scale is now scale point 6, this means that we no longer have a pay scale to align with for Apprentice positions.

For benchmarking purposes research has been obtained by South West Councils which shows various practices being applied by local authorities under the Green Book terms and conditions and includes North Somerset Council. Given that we have tended to follow their practices on the occasion that we have an absence of policy ourselves e.g. shared parental leave it is recommended that we adopt their Apprentice Pay scales, also given that they manage and our payroll it reduces the risk of error.

Accordingly it is recommended to approve the following **2016/17** pay scales and rates for Apprentice positions:

L1 £10,632 (or NLW/NMW)	pa based on 37 hrs per week
L2 £11,256	pa based on 37 hrs per week
L3 £12,008	pa based on 37 hrs per week

Following the resignation of the Finance Administration Assistant officers are authorized to fill the post, however it is considered by the Finance team and HR that the detail of the job needs reviewing. A review was undertaken with the intention of reducing the high staff turnover experienced in this post and modifying to job itself to meet a wider pool of candidates.

The job as it stands is a junior role within the finance department and predominantly consists of processing work and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) matrix updating tasks. It is believed that the last two postholders have soon 'grown out of' the role as they aspired to move into more interesting and challenging work.

In order to prevent a third re-occurrence which is disruptive and costly due to management time and money spent during the recruitment and selection process it is recommended that certain HLF tasks be removed from the job description and assigned to the Finance Officer in

order to maintain consistency at this critical time. However, it should be noted that this would reduce the role from 23 to 16 hours per week.

It has transpired due to the streamlining of the post that the new post would lend well to the creation of an apprenticeship position, where arguably there would be less expectations from the postholder in terms of the work as they would have the added interest of learning a new job alongside obtaining a valued accredited qualification at the same time. In this case an AAT accountancy qualification with Weston College on day release.

An apprentice position would require a commitment from the Council of a minimum of 30 hours per week (to include training time) but as the payscale is lower the difference is minimal and could legitimately be offset by savings in our museum department as a result of recent changes as a result of the deletion of the Museum Supervisor post. The wider benefit would be that the Town Council would be seen as a proactive public sector employer. i.e. by creating opportunities for young people given the national issue of high youth unemployment and the new Government interventions to address it.

Due to the nature of devolvement, resulting in the expansion of Town Council services our finance department has a growing remit together with ever increasing opportunities to apply for external grant funding for projects and services that can further benefit our community, which means there is room for an apprenticeship role to evolve with our organisation and its future aspirations.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that we advertise in the usual way to fill the post of Finance Assistant on 16hrs per week but also open up the field of opportunity for a Finance Apprenticeship with Weston College. It is therefore recommended that the Town Council adopt the below Apprentice Payscales in order to a) advertise the position with immediate effect and b) create a formal Apprentice pay structure going forward.

### **2016/17**

L1 £10,632 (or NLW/NMW)	pa based on 37 hrs per week
L2 £11,256	pa based on 37 hrs per week
L3 £12,008	pa based on 37 hrs per week

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### **DECISION**

Under the Town Council's Scheme of Delegation paragraph 2 "Chairman's Action" we as Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Personnel Committee in consultation with the Town Clerk AGREE that the filling of the post of Finance Assistant be opened up to an Apprenticeship arrangement and that the Apprentice Payscales set out above be adopted .

Decision Apprenticeships

**Signed .....** (Chairman)

**Date.....**

**Signed .....** (Vice-Chairman)

**Date.....**

Advice confirmed by:

**Signed .....** (Town Clerk)

**Date.....**25<sup>th</sup> August 2016