

Minutes of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**
held in The Annexe, Crosfield Hall, Broadwater Road, Romsey
on Wednesday 3 August 2016 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

Councillor C Lynn (Chairman)	(P)	Councillor I Jeffrey (Vice Chairman)	(P)
Councillor N Adams-King	(P)	Councillor P Hurst	(P)
Councillor D Baverstock	(P)	Councillor J Lovell	(A)
Councillor J Cockaday	(P)	Councillor J Neal	(P)
Councillor C Dowden	(P)	Councillor J Ray	(-)
Councillor D Drew	(P)	Councillor B Page	(P)
Councillor B Few Brown	(A)	Councillor T Preston	(A)
Councillor A Finlay	(P)	Councillor K Tilling	(P)
Vacancy			

Also in attendance:

Councillor PGiddings
Councillor S Hawke
Councillor A Ward

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Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2016 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

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Community Safety Panel Final Report

The Committee considered a report of the Community Safety Review Lead Scrutiny Member. The report reviewed the effectiveness of the Council's Community Safety responsibilities and, in particular, the role of Neighbourhood Wardens, in response to:

- Changes in front line policing personnel.
- The withdrawal by Hampshire County Council of Accredited Community Support Officers (ACSOs).
- Concerns about perceived resource reductions and their impact upon Community Safety in Test Valley.
- The restructuring of the Test Valley Partnership.
- The development of a new TVBC Corporate Plan.

An OSCOM Panel was established to review both the role of the Neighbourhood Wardens and the TVBC contribution to Community Safety in general. The Panel met several times during 2014-2016 and an interim report was presented to OSCOM in January 2016.

The interim report recommended a further review of the deployment and the effectiveness of Neighbourhood Wardens and an assessment of their training and skills development needs.

Recommended to Cabinet:

- 1. That the Neighbourhood Wardens' functions be integrated fully into the Community Engagement Team.**
- 2. That the role, person specification, job description and working hours of the Neighbourhood Wardens be reviewed and modified as necessary, to complement other Community Safety functions of the Community Engagement Team and to reflect the priorities of the Test Valley Partnership.**
- 3. That the work programme of the Community Engagement Team support the development of Community Resilience on a Borough-wide level.**
- 4. That the skills and training required by the Neighbourhood Wardens be assessed by management.**
- 5. That changes to the working practices of Neighbourhood Wardens and other members of the Community Engagement Team addressing Community Safety be monitored and reviewed by management and reported to OSCOM.**

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Complaints Handling

The committee considered the Annual Complaints Handling Report. The report was introduced by the Complaints Communications Officer who advised the Committee that, of the 260 complaints received in 2015/16, the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) had made preliminary enquiries into 2 complaints relating to TVBC and had begun an investigation into 1.

A complaint was defined within the Council as: *“an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, action or lack of action by the Council, or its staff, affecting an individual customer or group of customers.”*

Complaints recorded under the formal procedure (and dealt with in this summary report) do not include those ‘first time’ representations which were effectively requests for a service and dealt with as such. Accordingly, a new report of a missed bin, or a broken swing, for example, would not be registered and dealt with as a complaint, but as a request for action. Of course, in the event of failure to respond to the ‘request’ appropriately, then that may generate a complaint.

Members made the following suggestions:

- Forward appropriate complaints to Members for investigation. This could lead to a quick and easy resolution.
- Produce a list of examples of where action taken to deal with small trends of complaints have been successful and unsuccessful.
- Introduction of an employee reward scheme.

Resolved:

1. **That congratulations be extended to staff members for the decrease in the number of complaints received and for the excellent handling of the complaints process.**
2. **That a comparison of complaints with the Council's audit family group of local authorities be introduced.**
3. **That future reports incorporate compliments received by the public.**
4. **That the name of the report be altered for future to 'Complaints'.**

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Work Programme Report

The Chairman advised Members that the outcomes from the OSCOM Away Day had been documented and that they would be circulated in due course. He also invited Members to attend the OSCOM Action Planning Workshop being held on 10 August

The Committee considered and updated the Work Programme as follows:

- 13 September – Planning Control/Planning Advisory and Planning Process Panel – To receive an **interim** report
- 8 November – Budget Panel Draft Report – update responsibility to Vice Chairman
- 8 November – Budget Panel Fees and Charges Draft Report - update responsibility to Vice Chairman
- 22 February – Community Engagement – update responsibility to Head of Leisure and Wellbeing.

Resolved:

That the future work programme, as amended, be approved.

(Meeting terminated at 6:48 pm)