

Minutes of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**  
held in Conference Room 1, Beech Hurst, Andover  
on 25 June 2018 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

<b>Councillor I Jeffrey (Chairman)</b>	(P)	<b>Councillor Cockaday (Vice Chairman)</b>	(P)
Councillor G Bailey	(P)	Councillor I Hibberd	(A)
Councillor D Baverstock	(P)	Councillor P Hurst	(A)
Councillor C Borg-Neal	(A)	Councillor J Lovell	(P)
Councillor P Boulton	(A)	Councillor P Mutton	(P)
Councillor C Dowden	(P)	Councillor J Neal	(P)
Councillor B Few Brown	(A)	Councillor T Preston	(A)
Councillor A Finlay	(A)	Councillor I Richards	(A)
Councillor K Hamilton	(A)	Councillor C Thom	(A)

Also in attendance:

Councillor Adams King  
Councillor Drew  
Councillor Hawke  
Councillor Giddings

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**Minutes**

**Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.**

95 **Overview of Economic Development and Tourism Portfolio**

Councillor Drew, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Tourism gave an overview of his Portfolio. The Portfolio operates at the strategic level, dealing with the major place-making initiatives of Andover Vision and Romsey Future, and at the operational level, supporting new and small businesses.

Councillor Drew began by describing the size of the Test Valley economy and highlighted the significance, in particular, of the University of Southampton Science Park and the tourism sector. He went on to refer to the role of a Portfolio Holder and Cabinet Member and outlined how his is a new and different Portfolio. He referred to the Corporate Plan and new 10 point Economic Development Strategy Action Plan.

Councillor Drew described his contact and working relationship with officers and emphasized how officers enjoy very effective working relationships with the many external agencies in order to promote economic development.

The presentation illustrated successful outcomes in terms of: the number of times the Council has won the FSB Small Business Friendly Council Awards; higher survival rates for businesses the Council has awarded grants to; the £470,000 worth of funding for 14 rural businesses which the Council has helped secure from the Loddon & Test LEADER Programme; and the fact that Test Valley Business Awards (in which the Council is an organiser and sponsor) has now been running for 14 years.

Portfolio challenges include engaging with businesses because to be successful this requires long term relationships and implementing the ambitious Action Plan, with its huge projects.

Councillor Drew answered questions from Members which are summarised below;

- There was no Tourist Information Centre in Andover but there are tourist information points in Andover Library, Andover Museum, The Lights and several visitor attractions in northern Test Valley.
- There is a good working relationship with Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- Andover Junior Graduation engages with children and TVBC funds skills training through the Andover and Chilworth/Nursling & Rownhams funds, secured from S.106 agreements.
- There was a better support of start ups in Test Valley as TVBC was seen as a business friendly Council and could demonstrate support for businesses.
- Employment & Skills Plans, required by S.106 agreements on major new housing developments include constructions apprenticeships and the Construction Industry Training Board attend local school careers fairs.
- Information on the economic contribution of the visitor economy is only available at district level though visitor numbers are known by individual attraction.
- Viability of town centres is a major national concern. Business Rates are set by central Government and TVBC had no influence over private rents. Government is being asked to create a more level playing field between online retailers and those struggling to survive on the High Street.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Drew for his presentation.

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### **Local Plan Car Parking Study**

The Planning Policy Manager outlined the summary of the Car Park study. One of the triggers for undertaking the Car Park Study came from the Borough Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation to ensure that Town Centres were fit for purpose, adaptable and controllable to encourage more people into the Town Centre.

The study looked at car park peak average occupancy from 2003 to 2016 on Fridays and Saturdays to establish occupancy trends in order to plan for the future. It was difficult to forecast the impact of internet shopping and car ownership in order to predict the requirement however this would provide an evidence base for the next Local Plan as well as Andover Vision and Romsey Future Project South of the Town Centre.

The Engineering and Transport Manager gave a presentation of the latest peak average occupancy rates for 2017, Andover and Romsey, Fridays and Saturdays by car park category, along with the overall occupancy trend 2003 to 2016 for Andover and Romsey, Fridays and Saturdays.

The Planning Policy Manager and the Engineering and Transport Manager answered questions from members which are summarised below:

- The survey only covered TVBC pay and display car parks.
- Season ticket holder spaces were included in the study and stats however they were only in certain areas.
- The feasibility of paying by contactless debit/credit cards was being investigated.
- Pay on exit would not be feasible as there would need to be a 24 hour charge and a control room to manage issues and breakdowns, this made small car parks unviable.
- There was not much difference in car park occupancy after 4pm when parking was free.
- The car parks being free on a Sunday and Bank Holidays was a help to tourism.

The Chairman thanked the Planning Policy Manager and the Engineering and Transport Manager for their interesting and informative presentation.

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### **Update on Panels**

The Chairman requested an update from the Lead Member on current panels.

#### **Council Tax Support Scheme**

Councillor Baverstock updated the Committee on the Council Tax Support Scheme. She reported that recommendations from the panel was considered by Cabinet on 18 April who agreed for a consultation on the recommended options to take place over the summer. The panel would reconvene to review the results of that consultation.

#### **Parking (Car Park and Streets) Panel**

Councillor Baverstock reported that the first meeting of the panel has been set up to discuss the scoping template.

#### **Audit Panel**

Councillor Neal reported that the next Audit Panel would be held just prior to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 July to appoint the external auditors. Internal audit was now fully staffed and they aimed to complete more audits by the end of the year.

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### **Work Programme Report**

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Away Day would be held on Friday 6 July and an agenda would be circulated by the end of the week. One of the items on the agenda was for members to consider items for the forthcoming year.

Councillor Lovell requested that with reference to the Planning Inspections decision to uphold the appeal by Goodmans in relation to the removal of the barred routes at the Andover Airfield site, that a plain English version of the Planning Inspectors decision was made available to members.

#### **Resolved:**

**That the future work programme be approved.**

(Meeting terminated at 6.55pm)