

Minutes of the **Cabinet**
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**
held in Upper Guildhall, High Street, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 1LP
on Wednesday 17 April 2019 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

Councillor P North (Chairman)

Councillor N Adams-King (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor P Bundy
Councillor D Drew
Councillor M Flood

Councillor P Giddings
Councillor G Stallard

Also in attendance

Councillor D Baverstock
Councillor A Dowden

Councillor C Dowden
Councillor I Jeffrey

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Ward

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Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

329 **Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Report of the Task and Finish Panel – Car Parking

The Planning Portfolio Holder explained that the Parking (Car Park and Streets) Panel had reviewed the issues of residential parking; public car parking provision, standards, location and enforcement. The Panel recommended several actions with the intention of improving the car parking provision on residential schemes and for residents and visitors to Andover and Romsey, in the future. The report also identified topics which the Panel considered to be potential areas for future reviews.

The Committee were keen that the recommendations were passed on to Cabinet for their endorsement.

Resolved:

- 1. That the parking standards and minimum dimensions of spaces currently set out in the adopted Revised Local Plan (2016) be reviewed as part of the next local plan review.**

2. **That the next local plan review consider what practical steps could be taken to influence the design and layout of future parking within residential schemes.**
3. **That the Council write to Government to highlight the issue of large commercial vehicles parking in residential areas and request steps are taken to enforce possible restrictions.**

330

Write Off of Uncollectable Debts

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance Portfolio holder, which sought approval for the write off of business rates debts that proved to be uncollectable, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

The report identified seven debts for which there was no reasonable prospect of recovery. It was recommended that they were written off in the Council's accounts.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the debts detailed in the report, totalling £310,975, be written off in the Council's accounts as uncollectable.

331

Budget Carry Forwards

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance Portfolio Holder. Each year there were items included within the original estimates and forecasts that Services were unable to spend before the end of the financial year. The report sought approval to carry forward the more significant of these items into the 2019/20 revenue budget.

The report gave the Cabinet the opportunity to consider including unspent revenue items from the 2018/19 estimates in the current year's budget.

The annex showed a small number of projects that were expected to be completed in 2018/19 but were now planned for delivery in 2019/20. The budget for these projects was available to carry forward without impacting on future service delivery. For this reason the budget carry forwards were recommended for approval.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the items shown in the Annex to the report, totalling £50,250, be approved for carry forward into the 2019/20 revenue budget.

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Member Development Strategy and Member Role Descriptions

Consideration was given to a report of the Corporate Portfolio Holder which sought approval of a Member Development Strategy including additional Councillor role descriptions.

The Strategy also highlighted that a dedicated Member Training Budget existed and described the types of training available. The Strategy directed Members as to how to access that funding and how they may obtain assistance with identifying their training and development needs.

The cross party Member Development Group had looked at the Strategy in detail and the Council had been praised for its Community Councillor Role. Thanks was given to officers and members for their input and hard work.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the Member Development Strategy and Member Role Descriptions as set out in the Annex to the report are approved.

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Social Inclusion Services Review

Consideration was given to a report of the Housing and Environmental Health Portfolio Holder. The County Council had completed a review of Social Inclusion Services on 5 December 2018, and approved recommendations which would deliver a £1.8m reduction in HCC spending on Social Inclusion Services from 1 August 2019. The report set out services that would be impacted by the County Council's recent decision, and considered options for Test Valley in the context of forthcoming changes.

The funding changes approved by the County Council would have significant implications for Test Valley. Since the commencement of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 in April 2018, the Council had been under a significantly increased range of statutory duties associated with the provision of housing advice and homelessness services, and had experienced significantly increased demand for housing advice and support over the past financial year.

The recommendations within the report were intended to meet locally identified priorities and maintain strong partnership arrangements in the interests of meeting the needs of vulnerable people in our communities. This could be achieved through the adoption of a costed approach to investment using existing service budget and ring-fenced government grants.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended:

1. That Cabinet note the outcome of the Hampshire County Council “Transformation to 2019” (T19) review of Social Inclusion Services.
2. That Cabinet note the impact of these changes on local services and consider them in the context of the Council’s wider work to prevent and relieve homelessness.
3. That the recommended Option 3 be approved as set out in paragraph 5.17 of the report.
4. That any items shown in Annex 2 to the report, which are unspent by 31 March 2020, be approved for carry forward into the 2020/21 revenue budget.

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ECO Flexible Eligibility - Statement of Intent

Consideration was given to a report of the Housing and Environmental Health Portfolio Holder which sought approval to declare and publish a Test Valley ECO LA-Flex ‘Statement of Intent’ allowing households in residential private sector homes in Test Valley to access funding under the Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat Programme (ECO3) 2018 – 2022. This funding would provide energy efficiency improvements delivered by energy companies and their agents.

The Statement of Intent enabled the Council to help households reduce their energy bills and carbon emissions by installing energy savings measures assisting in the delivery of the HECA Action Plan, Housing Strategy Action Plan and Environmental Sustainability Framework.

LA-Flex enabled the Council to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents utilising government funding provided to Energy Company Suppliers. This approach represented no risk to the Council and had no significant resource implications beyond officer time. It would deliver new opportunities for our residents to improve their homes.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet note the change to Energy Company Obligation funding and that local authorities are required to issue a “Statement of Intent” in order for their residents to access some strands of ECO funding.

2. **That the recommended Option 1 be approved and the associated Statement of Intent at Annex 1 to the report be adopted.**

335 **Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Private Rented Sector Access Fund & Future Homelessness Funding Rounds**

Consideration was given to a report of the Housing and Environment Health Portfolio Holder which set out the content of the successful bid and MHCLG expectations associated with the funding. Cabinet were asked to consider recommendations that would not only facilitate the delivery of the Private Rented Sector Access Fund Project, but would also ensure internal processes could accommodate rapid mobilisation of new funding achieved in this context.

The recommendations in the report would support the Council to meet its legal duties to prevent and relieve homelessness, and further built on the Council's recent innovations in the way it delivered services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

MHCLG funding rounds required urgent participation and rapid mobilisation. The report provided detail associated with a specific project yet its recommendations sought to ensure that the Council was well placed to submit further ambitious funding bids and to deliver on those bids in future, by ensuring the right delegated power was in place.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

1. **That the receipt of MHCLG funding and the conditions attached to it as set out in the Annex, to the report, be noted.**
2. **That the Head of Housing and Environmental Health be authorised to deliver the joint project as set out in paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 of the report including incurring expenditure from the MHCLG bid fund not exceeding £74,000.00 for the purposes of recruitment to the posts of Landlord Liaison Officer and Tenancy Liaison Officer on 12 month fixed term contracts.**

Recommended to Council:

3. **That monies received from this and any future successful bids be transferred to the Homelessness Reserve, and the Head of Housing & Environmental Health, in consultation with the Housing & Environmental Health Portfolio Holder and the Head of Finance, be given delegated authority to draw from this reserve to deliver specific projects where funding is awarded by MHCLG for this purpose.**

336 Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

Consideration was given to a report of the Planning Portfolio Holder which proposed that a new draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, together with accompanying Housing Advice Note, be published for public consultation.

It was considered that the Draft Affordable Housing SPD, together with accompanying Draft Housing Advice Note, should be published for public consultation. This would help provide more detailed and up to date guidance on the interpretation and implementation of Local Plan policy on affordable housing, particularly Policy COM7 and on the Council's expectations in relation to the delivery of affordable housing, respectively.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

- 1. That the Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document be published for public consultation.**
- 2. That the Draft Housing Advice Note (to accompany the Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning document) be published for public consultation.**
- 3. That the Head of Planning Policy, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to make changes.**

(The meeting terminated at 6.25 pm)