

Minutes of the **Council**
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**
held in Virtually from Conference Room 1, Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover,
Hampshire, SP10 3AJ
on 11 November 2020 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

Councillor M Hatley (Chairman)

Councillor M Cooper (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor N Adams-King
Councillor I Andersen
Councillor G Bailey
Councillor D Baverstock
Councillor C Borg-Neal
Councillor Z Brooks
Councillor P Bundy
Councillor T Burley
Councillor J Burnage
Councillor D Coole
Councillor S Cross
Councillor C Donnelly
Councillor A Dowden
Councillor C Dowden
Councillor D Drew
Councillor C Ecclestone
Councillor M Flood
Councillor S Gidley

Councillor N Gwynne
Councillor K Hamilton
Councillor V Harber
Councillor I Jeffrey
Councillor A Johnston
Councillor L Lashbrook
Councillor P Lashbrook
Councillor N Lodge
Councillor N Matthews
Councillor R Meyer
Councillor K North
Councillor P North
Councillor J Parker
Councillor R Rowles
Councillor T Tasker
Councillor C Thom
Councillor A Ward
Councillor A Warnes

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Prayers

Prayers were led by Chief Executive Andy Ferrier.

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Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

265

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

266

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

267 **To approve the minutes of the meeting's of the Council held on 2 September 2020 and 28 September 2020**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 2 September 2020 and 28 September 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

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Mayor's Announcements

The Worshipful the Mayor noted that today was Armistice Day. The Mayor had visited that Garden of Remembrance at St Mary's Andover to lay a wreath on behalf of the residents of the Borough, and the Deputy Mayor had placed a wreath in Romsey.

The Mayor read a note of thanks from the Deputy Lieutenant Weale following his attendance at the, socially distanced, act of Remembrance held in the Garden of Remembrance in Andover on Sunday 8 November.

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To receive and adopt Committee reports

Minutes of Meetings:

Resolved:

That the minutes of the following Committees and Cabinet meetings be received:

Southern Area Planning Committee – 25 August 2020

General Purposes Committee – 26 August 2020

Cabinet – 9 September 2020

Southern Area Planning Committee – 15 September 2020

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 16 September 2020

Southern Area Planning Committee – 6 October 2020

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 14 October 2020

Licensing Committee – 15 October 2020

Northern Area Planning Committee – 22 October 2020

Southern Area Planning Committee – 27 October 2020

Cabinet – 4 November 2020

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 10 November 2020

Licensing Committee – 15 October 2020

Northern Area Planning Committee – 22 October 2020

Southern Area Planning Committee – 27 October 2020

Cabinet – 4 November 2020

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 10 November 2020

To adopt recommendations from the following:

Licensing Committee – 15 October 2020

Licensing Act 2003 – Statement of Licensing Policy

Resolved:

- 1. That the revised Statement of Licensing Policy published for consultation in July 2020 attached as Annex 2 to the report be recommended for approval by Council, subject to the revisions set out in the report and a further revision to reference the fact that the Policy may need to be amended to reflect the Coronavirus pandemic.**
- 2. That the policy be effective for a five year period commencing 7 January 2021 subject to the policy being kept under review and the Council making such revisions to it at such times as it considers appropriate.**

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Questions under Rule 11.1

There were no questions under rule 11.1.

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Questions under Rule 11.2

Councillor Ecclestone submitted a question asking “I note that I asked a question at the last full council meeting as to whether TVBC intended to be compliant with the spirit of the Conservation Area rules with regard to lighting, paving and seating/fixtures at the Town Mills Riverwalk devel. The response was vague with a glib observation that I had been on the ATC Planning committee which had raised no objection. In fact the ATC Planning committee had raised four objections. However on the specific matter of the seating, I note that the filings and documents for 19/01263/FULLN show a disparate number of different designs for the same space, including some sort of S-shaped bench which most definitely is not Conservation Area compliant and neither are most of the other seat designs. This seat is not shown in other versions (see attached). In fact the Design & Access statement does not once mention the words "seats".”

“Are conceptual designs related to a planning application (when it pertains to TVBC) merely that and able to be discarded or over-ruled when it comes to final execution? Would this laissez-faire attitude to detail be tolerated from a private developer?”

“Can TVBC reassure councillors and residents of Andover that it will not flaunt the rules of the Conservation Area when it comes to the fittings, paving and accoutrements of the Riverside Walk project?”

The Planning Portfolio Holder responded that the question was very similar to the question asked at the recent Council meeting. The development of the Town Mills Riverside project came directly from the Andover Vision who identified making more of the river in the town centre as its number one priority. Throughout the process of developing the scheme, partners and local people have been consistently engaged through the Andover Vision

The Planning Portfolio Holder confirmed that the proposed development was given very careful consideration by officers and Members of the Council, and was satisfied that the Town Mills development was fully compliant with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Conservation and Listed Building) Act 1990 and the Councils own planning policies which required development to either preserve or enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area.

The Planning Portfolio Holder confirmed emphasised the development requiring planning permission must be carried out in accordance with the approved plan and that the Council would ensure any development taking place was fully compliant with both National and local planning policies and that any development will either enhance or preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Council would fully involve and consult with the community on the development proposals for the Riverside Walk project just as it has done on the Town Mills project.

Councillor Ecclestone submitted a question asking “It has come to my attention that a gym operator, I Can, shall shortly be moving operations from premises at Charlton lakes to the Rendezvous.

This involves ten exercise machines in a circuit. If true then this will totally occupy the Rendezvous and effectively alienate the community hall from use by the public. I note that this hall has sometimes been charged to the Andover Levy.

Can you please confirm or deny as to whether the hall is being alienated from community use to occupation by a single tenant?”

The Finance Portfolio Holder responded that the use of The Rendezvous had declined in recent years. A total of 104 bookings took place in 2017/18, falling to 70 bookings in the whole of 2018/19, falling further to only 56 bookings in 2019/20. Of these bookings a large number were from a single organisation which relocated to the Upper Guildhall partway through 19/20.

Given the extremely low use of the venue, officers had been exploring alternative options including marketing the venue for lease with a commercial agent. Officers were now in the process of negotiating draft terms of a lease with a potential occupier, subject to any necessary planning consents. The draft terms of that lease were commercially sensitive.

Councillor Ecclestone asked a supplemental question enquiring as to whether The Rendezvous would continue to be included in the Andover Levy.

The Finance Portfolio Holder responded that there was no specific line in the Andover Levy for The Rendezvous and that the Andover Levy was used to part fund community venues across Andover.

Councillor Meyer submitted a question asking “Of the £71,513,567.00 income/profit this Council received from the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer to the then Testway Housing in March 2000, how much of this income/profit has been reinvested in social housing provision of any kind?”

The Housing and Environmental Health Portfolio Holder responded that the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) of council housing stock occurred in Test Valley some 20 years ago.

The capital receipt that was received on completion of the LSVT formed part of the Council’s overall capital financing arrangements. It was therefore not possible to directly link any specific capital expenditure with a particular capital receipt. However, details of the capital programme, including Affordable Housing projects, were regularly reported throughout the financial year. From the point of the LSVT, the Council’s role became that of an enabler of affordable housing and TVBC has been able to demonstrate a good track record of delivery, at times exceeding the delivery of all other Hampshire authorities. Over the past 6 years, the Council had enabled in excess of 200 affordable homes per annum and in 2015/16 and 2016/17, Test Valley delivered more affordable homes than any other Hampshire authority including the unitary authorities of Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight.

Councillor Meyer asked a supplementary question. “How much of the income, if any, has been spent on Social Housing Provision and how much has the Council spent on private rented accommodation?”

The Housing and Environmental Health Portfolio Holder confirmed that he did not have those detailed figures in front of him and reiterated that it was not possible to directly link a lot of the expenditure. It was confirmed that a response by email would be provided.

Councillor Coole submitted a question asking “Councils-led Andover Emporium/Department Store/Covered Market. Does the Council Leader support the introduction a Councils-led Emporium/Department Store/Covered Market within Andover Town Centre, to encourage new local start-up businesses and increase Town Centre footfall, with the Town and Borough Councils working in partnership to deliver it?”

The Leader responded that following the Council’s purchase of the Chantry Centre, the Council had already introduced easy in/easy out terms to encourage and enable business start-ups, utilising the vacant units in the centre. The initiative had been very well received with a number of businesses utilising the opportunity to open in the centre.

The Council was also working closely with Andover BID, who were planning to open a unit in the centre from which a number of local artisans and businesses would have an outlet to showcase and sell their products.

The Chantry Centre also provided flexibility to accommodate seasonal and pop up events. Plans were already underway to accommodate a Christmas pop up market on the Saturdays in December in a vacant unit in the centre.

Councillor Coole asked a supplemental question regarding plans to encourage national concessions to increase footfall.

The Leader responded that the Council was open to speaking with any retailers who were considering Andover as a location and that this was driven by market forces. The Council had a number of different initiatives underway to encourage new businesses and increase town centre footfall in Andover.

Councillor Coole submitted a question asking “100 years ago this year, Andover's Cenotaph was dedicated in the High Street by Major General Seely, Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire. With the Masterplan approved to restore Andover's Old Town street patterns, is it not also time to restore the Cenotaph back to the High Street, and should we not erect a new Churchyard Memorial, in memory of the sacrifices all our Public Servants make, in protecting our Communities?”

The Leader responded that when previous discussions had occurred in relation to suggestions to move Andover's Cenotaph back to the High Street, it was usually met with divided opinion across the town, with some wanting the memorial to be amongst the hustle and bustle of the High Street, whilst others prefer the quiet solemnity of its current location.

The Cenotaph was located in the Garden of Remembrance in 1956; some 64 years ago and consequently, most people have only known it to be in its current location in their lifetimes.

Test Valley did not have any current plans to move the Cenotaph.

Councillor Coole asked a supplemental question enquiring as to whether the reason for moving the Cenotaph was to allow for extension of the Guildhall which had not taken place and asking whether the Council would undertake a consultation on the location of the Cenotaph.

The Leader responded that there was to be any meaningful public consultation on this matter then the public need all the information for them to contribute to that consultation. It was incumbent on those who wished to see the Cenotaph moved to provide that information which would need to include details of how the Cenotaph would be moved and how this would be done without damage, what would happen to the Second World War Memorials situated on the wall directly behind the Cenotaph, and the opinion of St Mary's Church.

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Notice of Motion - Rule 12

Council considered the following motion moved by Councillor Coole and seconded by Councillor P North:

'That following the adoption of the Andover Masterplan, Test Valley Borough Council ask the Andover Vision Stakeholders Group to lead on two pieces of public engagement. Namely;

1. Improvements to Andover Town Centre street furniture.
2. Improvements to Vigo Recreation Ground.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

Council considered the following motion moved by Councillor Coole and seconded by Councillor Ecclestone:

'That Shepherds Spring Lane car park charges mirror those of Romsey Rapids car park, so that both offer four hours free car parking.

(Current charges permit two hours free parking in Shepherds Spring Lane and four hours free parking in Romsey Rapids, yet both are a comparable walking distance from their Town Centre feature buildings (Andover Guildhall and Romsey Town Hall). Approval of this Motion would provide four hours free parking in both car parks and provide car parking charges parity across the Borough.)'

Upon being put to the vote the motion was lost.

Council considered the following motion moved by Councillor C Dowden and seconded by Councillor P North:

This Council notes:

'The publication by Government of the White Paper, 'Planning for the Future' on 6 August 2020, which set out proposals on reforms to the planning process for the future.

- That in Test Valley 95% of planning applications have been given the go-ahead by the authority's planning committees, where the recommendation from officers has been to grant permission.
- That research by the Local Government Association has said that there are existing planning permissions for more than one million homes that have not yet been started.
- That in the last year Test Valley Borough Council has substantially exceeded its housing target, building 948 new homes of which 315 were designated as 'affordable homes'.

This Council is concerned that the proposals seek to:

1. Reduce or remove the right of residents to object to applications near them.
2. Grant automatic rights for developers to build on land identified as 'for growth'.
3. Remove section 106/CIL payments for infrastructure and their replacement with a national levy.
4. Potentially remove control over development on land identified as 'renewal' from the local authority in favour of national guidance

This Council Further Notes:

1. The reforms are opposed by the all-party Local Government Association.

This Council Believes:

1. That existing planning procedures, as evidenced by the outcomes reported by the Test Valley Borough Council planning committees and TVBC's housing completions, allow for local democratic control over future development, and give local people a say in planning proposals that affect them, without hindering development of the homes the Borough needs.
2. That proposals for automatic rights to build in 'growth' areas, and increased permitted development rights, risk unregulated growth and unsustainable communities.
3. That any future standard methodology used to establish the Council's housing requirement figures should be calculated in a way that does not disadvantage the Borough because of its success in housing delivery.
4. In order to secure the homes that our communities need there should be a focus on the development industry bringing forward sites which have planning permission already. Local authorities should be given powers to require developers to bring forward development on sites such as the Romsey Brewery Site and Harewood Farm in Andover.'

Councillor C Dowden moved an alteration to the start of the motion that 'The Council notes and resolves to write to relevant Government Minister(s) expressing its view as set out below;'. The meetings agreement was signalled without discussion.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

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Appointments to Committees

Consideration was given to a report of the Corporate Portfolio Holder which set out details of committee appointments that were required following the resignation of Councillor Watts and the sad death of Councillor Finlay.

As a result of the two vacancies it was necessary to appoint Members to the Council's Licensing Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Northern Area Planning Committee and Southern Area Planning Committee to ensure that the committees reflected the overall political balance of the Council and vacancies were filled to allow the committees to operate in an effective manner.

Resolved:

- 1. That Councillor Neil Gwynne be appointed to the Licensing Committee to replace Councillor Richard Rowles.**
- 2. The Councillor Martin Hatley be appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 3. That Councillor Richard Rowles be appointed to the Northern Area Planning Committee.**
- 4. That Councillor Alison Johnston be appointed to the Southern Area Planning Committee.**
- 5. That Councillor Martin Hatley be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Southern Area Planning Committee.**

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Exclusion of the public

Resolved:

That, pursuant Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following report on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended, indicated below. The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the Public interest in disclosing the information for the reason given below:

Property Matters

Paragraphs 2 and 3

It is considered that this report contains exempt information within the meaning of paragraphs 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information). It is further considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because the report contains financially sensitive information and may impede the Council's ability to achieve best value.

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Property Matters

Consideration was given to a report of the Housing and Environmental Health Portfolio Holder which presented details of a property matter.

Resolved:

- 1. That the Head of Housing and Environmental Health is authorised to take the steps set out in paragraph 6.4 of the report.**
- 2. That the property purchase is added to the Capital Programme to be funded from the New Homes Bonus Reserve as described at paragraph 6.5 of the report.**

(The meeting terminated at 7.52 pm)