

Minutes of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**  
held virtually by Microsoft Teams  
on 17 March 2021 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

**Councillor Z Brooks (Chairman)**

**Councillor N Lodge (Vice-Chairman)**

Councillor D Baverstock  
Councillor C Borg-Neal  
Councillor T Burley  
Councillor D Coole  
Councillor C Dowden  
Councillor N Gwynne  
Councillor K Hamilton  
Councillor V Harber

Councillor M Hatley  
Councillor N Matthews  
Councillor K North  
Councillor J Parker  
Councillor R Rowles  
Councillor A Ward  
Councillor A Warnes

Also in attendance

Councillor N Adams-King  
Councillor I Andersen  
Councillor I Jeffrey

Councillor A Johnston  
Councillor P North

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Bailey

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**Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

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**Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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**Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

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**Minutes**

**Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2021 were confirmed and signed as a true record.**

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**Call in Items**

There were no call in items.

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**Urgent decisions taken since last meeting**

There were no urgent decision taken.

**455 Environmental Portfolio Holder Presentation on recycling and green waste**

The Environmental Portfolio Holder gave a presentation on specific areas requested by the Committee on recycling and garden waste collections, an understanding of the pending changes in national policy on waste collections and a broad outline of any changes.

The Environmental Team have kept the front line waste collection levels the same as before the Pandemic due to the resilience and dedication of the team and other staff who have stepped in to help. This was a tremendous achievement and the residents were very appreciative.

The recycling rate is 36.9% placing Test Valley Borough Council as 4<sup>th</sup> in Hampshire. Contamination rates show at 13% against an average of 18%. Waste diversion is a critical component and public awareness and education is key. Green waste has grown since 2004 to just under 14,500 and during the pandemic this has grown to 18,000 subscribers which resulted in 3 new rounds being introduced.

The Environment Bill sets out a new legal framework for air pollution, water quality and nature conservation. The Bill will see legally binding targets for air pollution and water quality, waste and bio diversity spanning from 2022 -2030. This will mean that there will be a huge increase in the range of materials collected from the kerb side in Test Valley particularly food waste, glass, pots, tubs and trays. The implementation of the Environment Bill will have a financial impact on the Council which is still to be determined.

The next step is to understand and cost the proposals and the Environmental Portfolio Holder is keen to work with the Committee to ensure that the implementation of these changes meets expectation.

Members discussed and asked questions as follows;

- Slow down in recycling nationwide – A lot of public education and awareness has increased the recycling rates and together with the climate change movement and climate emergency action plan together with the Bill will see more opportunities for recycling and further improvement in recycling rates.

- Electric vehicles – Trialing electric waste collection vehicles in 2021 to ensure fit for purpose will then look at the costing and viability of replacing the current fleet. Electric vans are currently in use. Have purchased 3 electric bin lifts.
- Behavioral change – Environment Bill sets targets which will help even up what can be recycled which will make it much easier for residents. As part of their role the Recycling officer and Recycling Development officers promote behavioral change.
- Receptacles for green waste – This is a subscription service using either recyclable bag or bins.
- Hampshire is a high producer of waste across the country. The aim is to reduce the amount of waste and the Environmental Bill will help with that. The Head of Environmental Health will look at something around waste arisings.
- Food waste – needs to be reduction in packaging from the producer.
- Contaminated waste – there would be a financial implication if the contamination rate increased as the Council receive an income from recycling material and the more that is contaminated the less recyclable material. The Council are the best performer in Hampshire for the least contaminated waste.
- Waste diversion – Hampshire County Council are responsible for the disposal of waste. 5% of waste which is not recycled is bulky waste, this is a county wide figure and Hampshire County Council are doing what they can to reduce this.
- As part of the Environment Bill the Government are looking at a glass deposit scheme.

The Chairman thanked the Environmental Portfolio Holder for her presentation.

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### **Climate Emergency Action Plan**

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Planning Policy and Environmental Development which provided an update on the delivery of actions contained within the Climate Emergency Action Plan. Quicker progress has been made on some aspects but there have been challenges in other areas, for example as a result of the pandemic.

The appendix to the report provided an action by action update on the CEAP. This has been collated through bringing together information from across the Council's Services, reflecting the way we have been embedding climate change across the organisation. The appendix also reflected on the last year and included items that were reported to this Committee in September 2020. Some of the key areas of progress in the last six months include:

- Electricity is now bought from a Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origins backed scheme<sup>1</sup>;
- Projects to reduce the energy consumption of some of the Council's buildings have been delivered, including in relation to lighting at the Chantry Centre multi-storey car park and for heating at Beech Hurst;

- A study on the renewable and low carbon energy potential within the Borough has been completed, which will help inform the preparation of the next Local Plan; and
- Three refuse collection vehicles with electrically operated bin lifts had been ordered and are in operation.

The CEAP includes a commitment to hold annual workshops for all Councillors to distil new ideas and actions that have been identified. The first such workshop was held on 30 November 2020. During the session Councillors had an opportunity to raise comments or queries around inward and outward looking actions. Some of the comments reflected items within the existing CEAP and general queries, as well as suggestions for further consideration.

Councillor Gwynne suggested that a panel be set up to look at the development of the Climate Emergency Action Plan to quantify data and identify high impact projects and outcomes. Councillor Gwynne will produce a scope which will be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

It was suggested that communications need to be improved communications Parish Councils and Members. Better engagement will be made through Members Information Bulletin and other communication streams.

**Resolved:**

**That OSCOM notes and endorses the six-monthly progress update on the Climate Emergency Action Plan.**

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**Updates on Panels**

**Budget Panel** – The next meeting of the Budget Panel will take place on 28 June 2021.

**Audit Panel** – Agreed next meetings and went through position on current audit. All items that have been completed were agreed without issues.

**Review of Outside Bodies** – This will be discussed on 21 April 2021.

**Informal process for selection of Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee** – Councillor C Dowden reported that she had met with the Group Leaders to discuss how this would proceed. A timetable for the process has been drafted.

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## **Work Programme**

Councillor Lodge updated the Committee on the work being undertaken in relation to Portfolio Holder reviews. A report will be submitted to the next meeting which will set out ways in which the members of the committee can play a more active part in preparing for future reviews. He requested that members inform Democratic Services to register their interest in becoming Portfolio Coordinators for their preferred portfolios. This will be discussed at the next meeting on 21 April 2021.

The Committee requested that the Regeneration Officer attend a future meeting to inform Members on plans for the future.

Councillor Gwynne will produce a scoping document to be considered at the next meeting on 21 April 2021 to look at the development of the Climate Emergency Action Plan

Andover Levy – The Chairman confirmed that arrangements have been made for an OSCOM led workshop for all members of the Council on the Andover Levy. The purpose of the workshop will be to help members understand the constituent parts on the levy and the legal basis. The workshop will include a presentation to be made by key officers including the Heads of Finance and Revenues, Legal and Democratic Services and Environmental Services. In response to a question the Chairman confirmed that whilst the workshop would not be open to the public all members of the Andover Town Council will be invited.

Following the round table discussion prior to the meeting it was suggested that resilience be added to the Covid-19 recovery action plan.

(The meeting terminated at 7.10 pm)