

Minutes of the **Test Valley Association of Parish and Town Councils**
held on Microsoft Teams
on 24 November 2022 at 7.30 pm

1 **Welcome**

Clive Ward, Chair of the Association welcomed those present. Clive spoke about the importance of the Association in bringing parish and town councils from across the borough together to collaborate, share ideas and knowledge and allow the collective voice to be heard.

It was noted that the revised constitution now allowed for any parish or town councillor or clerk to attend meetings and events free of any charge with no limit to the number able to attend from any one organisation.

2 **Local Elections, May 2023**

Frances Cleland, Electoral Services Manager, TVBC, gave a presentation to members on the Test Valley borough and parish elections taking place on Thursday 4 May 2023.

The notice of election would be published on 22 March 2023 with nominations being accepted up to 4pm on Tuesday 4 April 2023. It was noted that it was a requirement of national legislation that all nomination forms be delivered by hand to the Council. It was noted that the person delivering the form does not need to be the candidate themselves.

Frances requested that appointments be arranged for the submission of nominations forms during office hours. Consideration would be given as to whether forms could be submitted in the south of the borough and further guidance notes would be sent to all parish clerks for circulation by the new year.

An online briefing session would be held at the beginning of March for candidates and agents. Further details would be circulated once confirmed.

Polling day will be Thursday 4 May with the verification and count taking place during the day on Friday 5 May.

Frances outlined a number of changes coming into effect for the elections in May, including the introduction of voter ID which was a national requirement that meant everyone would be required to show photographic ID at their polling station before they could be issued with a ballot paper. Those members of the public who did not have any photographic ID such as a passport or photographic driving licence, would be able to apply to the Council for a free Voter Authority Certificate (VAC).

Further details of the changes would be well publicised ahead of the elections. Following discussion, Frances would develop a briefing pack for parishes, which will include information about the acceptable ID, posters for printing and including in

magazines/newsletters/websites, and how people can apply for a VAC if they need it. It was expected that this would be sent to parishes in January 2023 for them to promote locally.

Frances welcomed any queries in relation to the elections in 2023 to electoral services who could be contacted on elecereg@testvalley.gov.uk.

3 **TVBC Corporate Plan - local priorities**

James Moody, Head of Strategy and Innovation, TVBC provided an update on the work being undertaken to develop the TVBC new Corporate Plan which would be considered for adoption in April 2023.

The first phase of public consultation had been launched in May for a period of 15 weeks. James had attended a meeting of the Association in early July where parishes had made a number of comments on areas of local importance which had been fed into the consultation process.

Over 1,500 responses had been received to the consultation as well as further input gained from targeted groups and events. The response represented a statistically significant proportion of the population and was broadly reflective of the geography and demographics of the borough.

Phase two of the public engagement was now being undertaken which was a series of more in-depth conversations with representatives from communities to really understand what the issues raised in the survey meant for people at a local level and what the Council and others might be able to do to support these priorities.

Whilst the sessions had not yet all concluded, so far key messages included that sustainability and climate changes issues were important to people as was developing a sense of belonging to their local community and the value of local facilities. Public realm and the prosperity of our towns had been highlighted as a theme along with support for rural prosperity and skills.

It was anticipated that a report on all of the outcomes and recommendations would be available in the new year and the Association would welcome an update from James at their meeting in February.

4 **Parish and Town Update and Information Sharing**

Roads Safety Council

Jacqueline Smith advised that she had attended a meeting of the HCC Roads Safety Council and would send the minutes from the meeting to Emma for circulation to those who may be interested. The next meeting would be held on 7 February in Winchester. Jackie asked for any items people wished to have raised to be sent to Emma who would pass them on to her.

Planning Enforcement

Bryan Nanson enquired about the outcomes from the planning enforcement workshop held at the joint TVAPTC/ TVBC conference in October. Emma Horbury confirmed that the workshop had been undertaken as part of an Overview and Scrutiny Panel who were looking at this topic. Once concluded the panel's report would be available as part of the Overview and Scrutiny Agenda pack when its conclusions were presented for consideration. At present there was not a planned date for the report, however Emma Horbury would confirm once this was known.

TVPATC communications

Emma Horbury advised that a website was currently being developed as a standalone section of the TVBC website in the first instance. Once available the website would be made public and circulated to members for comments on how it could be better developed and made more useful for members going forward.

A TVAPTC distribution list was also being created to allow those who signed up to receive direct communications about the Association and information relevant to parish and town councils in the borough. Details would be circulated.

Overview and Scrutiny Communications

Dorothy Baverstock advised that she was part of an Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the Councils communication methods and welcomed any comments from members on this.

TVBC Policy Documents

Clive Ward referred to a recent document sent out for public consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning. Clive had sent feedback to the planning policy team regarding the content and presentation of the document which he felt was difficult to read and understand due to the terminology and would benefit from an executive summary. Clive invited the views of other members on public consultation documents and their accessibility.

Clive expressed a desire to provide collective feedback from the Association on such public consultations but noted that the timescales often associated with the documents meant this was difficult to achieve. Consideration of how this might work would be undertaken.

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Items for Future Meetings

It was agreed that James Moody would be invited to attend the February meeting to present the detailed community outcomes from the public consultation.

Association members were asked to contact Emma with any suggestions for future items.

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Forthcoming Meetings

- 23 February 2023
- 25 May 2023
- 30 September 2023 – Joint Annual Conference with TVBC
- 23 November 2023