

Minutes of the **Cabinet**
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**
held in The Annexe, Crosfield Hall, Broadwater Road, Romsey
on Wednesday 9 April 2025 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

Councillor M Flood (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor P Bundy
Councillor D Drew

Councillor A Johnston
Councillor T Swain

507

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P North, Lodge, K North and MacDonald.

508

Public Participation

No members of the public had registered to speak.

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Declarations of Interest

Councillor Drew wished it to be noted that on item 11 he had been involved with the development of the Longparish Revised Village Design Statement Supplementary Document, but that it did not constitute an interest.

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Urgent Items

There were no urgent items for consideration.

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Minutes of the previous meeting

Councillor Flood proposed and Councillor Drew seconded the motion that the minutes of the previous meeting were an accurate record. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2025 were signed as a correct record.

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

There were no recommendations to consider from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

513 **Commitment to Working with Rural Communities 2025 - 2027**

The Chairman advised the committee that the correct Portfolio for this item was the Climate Emergency and Countryside Portfolio Holder and not the Community, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder as stated on the content page of the agenda.

Consideration was given to a report of the Climate Emergency and Countryside Portfolio Holder which presented the Council's commitment to working with rural communities.

The report highlighted the importance of recognising, continuing and developing further, the council's approach to working with rural communities. This was underpinned by an action plan, setting out how to do this and the resources required.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Johnston, seconded by Councillor Swain and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

- 1. That our commitment to working with rural communities, as shown in the Annexes to the report, be approved.**
- 3. That the Head of Finance and Revenues be authorised to add any grants that are capital in nature to the Council's Capital Programme.**
- 4. That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development and Head of Community and Leisure be given delegated authority to establish a suitable application process and approve grants from this new Fund in consultation with the Climate Emergency and Countryside Portfolio Holder and Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder.**

Recommended:

- 2. That £200,000 be allocated from the New Homes Bonus Reserve for the creation of a new Rural Business and Community Enterprise Fund from 01 May 2025 – 31 March 2027 (£100k per annum), as outlined in section 4 and Annex 3 of the report.**

514 **UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund 2025/26**

Consideration was given to a report of the Leader which outlined how the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) can be used to meet the objectives of the Council and its partners.

The Government has allocated £327,146 to the Council through the UKSPF. The report summarises the projects identified which best meet the UKSPF guidance and connect with the objectives of the Council and its partners. Whilst the details of the REPF funding have yet to be confirmed it is anticipated that the grant will provide an opportunity for the Council to support its rural communities.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor Johnston and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended:

- 1. That the projects summarised in paragraph 5.3 to the report be endorsed and allocated UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding.**
- 2. That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development in consultation with the Leader be authorised to make any subsequent necessary amendments or adjustments to the projects and sums encapsulated in recommendation 1 above.**
- 3. That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development be authorised to develop grant schemes, submit monitoring reports to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in consultation with the Leader.**
- 4. That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development in consultation with the Leader and the Climate Emergency and Countryside Portfolio Holder be authorised to administer the Rural England Prosperity Fund 2025/26 allocation.**
- 5. That the Head of Finance and Revenues be authorised to add capital projects from this scheme to the Council's Capital Programme.**

515 **Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan**

Consideration was given to a report of the Leader which provided details of the outcomes of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge.

The report provided the details of the outcomes of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and presented an action plan developed by the Council which responded to each of the nine recommendations highlighted by the Peer Team.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor Drew and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the Action Plan, as shown in the Annex to the report, in response to the nine recommendations of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge be approved.

516 **Write-off of Uncollectable Debts**

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which sought approval for the write-off of business rates debts that had proved to be uncollectable.

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

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor Bundy and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the business rates debts, shown in the table in paragraph 2.3 of the report, be written-off in the Council's accounts as uncollectable.

517 **Longparish Revised Village Design Statement Supplementary Planning Document**

Consideration was given to a report of the Planning Portfolio Holder that sought approval for the adoption of the Longparish Revised Village Design Statement (VDS) as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

A Revised Village Design Statement had been prepared for the Parish of Longparish and submitted for consideration for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), replacing the current Longparish VDS. The Council has undertaken a formal public consultation in order to meet the requirements of an SPD in line with the relevant regulation and guidance.

The report set out a summary of the comments received and the responses. This included amendments which were recommended in light of these comments. The VDS was considered appropriate for adoption, subject to inclusion of these amendments.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Bundy, seconded by Councillor Flood and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

- 1. That the Longparish Revised Village Design Statement, attached as Annex 1 to the report, be adopted (subject to the amendments set out in Annex 2 to the report) as a Supplementary Planning Document to replace the current document in providing design guidance for the Parish of Longparish.**
- 2. That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder be given delegated authority to carry out amendments of a minor nature.**

518 Provision of New Storage Building at North Baddesley Recreation Ground

Consideration was given to a report of the Planning Portfolio Holder which recommended the release of S106 developer contributions.

The Council had secured developer contributions from a number of developments granted planning permission in North Baddesley to support improvements to local facilities. These developer contributions must be used to fund the provision and/or improvement of public open space in the parish of North Baddesley.

The report recommended the release of funding requested by the parish council to fund a new storage building on North Baddesley Recreation Ground.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Bundy, seconded by Councillor Flood and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

- 1. That Section 106 developer contributions secured for improvements to Public Open Space be used to fund the project described in section 2 of the report.**
- 2. That should the project described in section 2 of the report exceed the specified expenditure, the Head of Planning and Building in consultation with the Head of Finance and Revenues and the Planning Portfolio Holder be authorised to release such additional funds as he considers reasonable towards the project.**
- 3. That the expenditure and funding, as set out in section 8 of the report, be added to the Council's capital programme.**

519 **Guide to Making Historic Buildings More Energy Efficient**

Consideration was given to a report of the Planning Portfolio Holder and the Climate Emergency and Countryside Portfolio Holder which sought approval of the Guide to Making Historic Buildings More Energy Efficient.

The report recommended that the Guide to Making Historic Buildings More Energy Efficient be approved and published as an information resource for councillors, homeowners/occupiers of historic buildings, professional agents, parish/town councils, council officers, and other parties with an interest in the historic environment in Test Valley. The preparation of such a guidance resource was an action in the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan (2024). The document is intended to sit alongside the national guidance and policy available on this subject, and signposts to those documents.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Bundy, seconded by Councillor Johnston and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

- 1. That the Guide to Making Historic Buildings More Energy Efficient, attached as an Annex to the report, be approved.**
- 2. That the Head of Planning and Building be given delegated authority to make changes of a minor nature prior to publication, and in future in response to changes in national and local policy and guidance.**

520 **Test Valley Local Plan Delivery Funding**

Consideration was given to a report of the Planning Portfolio Holder which sought approval for an increase in budget for the Local Plan and for delegated authority to be given.

The Council submitted an Expression of Interest for Local Plan (Regulation 18) Delivery Funding and has been awarded £227,962. This funding is to support local authorities that are at Regulation 18 stage of plan preparation with local plan delivery.

As this funding is outside of the annual budget process, it is necessary of Cabinet to approve the increase in budget for the Local Plan and use for the purposes outlined in the report

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Bundy, seconded by Councillor Flood and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

- 1. That the MHCLG Local Plan (Regulation 18) Delivery Funding of £227,962 be added to the Local Development Framework budget.**
- 2. That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development be authorised to spend the MHCLG Local Plan (Regulation 18) Delivery Funding on the production of the draft Local Plan.**

521

Western Avenue Stopping Up Order

Consideration was given to a report of the Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships (North) Portfolio Holder which sought authority to proceed with the application for a Stopping Up Order.

Authority was requested to proceed with the application for a Stopping Up Order to the eastern carriageway of Western to facilitate the delivery of the riverside park to allow for land within the Council's ownership to be dedicated as adopted highway, where necessary, to secure the necessary changes the road network as part of this scheme.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor Swain and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended:

- 1. That an application be made to the Secretary of State for Transport under section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for an order to Stop Up the highway identified indicatively in the Annex to the report as necessary to facilitate the delivery of the riverside park at Western Avenue.**
- 2. That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development be authorised if necessary to secure a deed of dedication incorporating any necessary land within Council ownership as publicly adopted highway in order to facilitate the delivery of the riverside park at Western Avenue.**

(The meeting terminated at 6.07 pm)