

To receive and, where necessary, adopt reports of Committees

(Some reports may involve the disclosure of exempt information. If the Council wishes to debate them, for each individual case the Council will need to adopt a suitable motion).

7.1 To receive the minutes of the following meetings:

- 7.1.1 General Purposes Committee – 29 March 2022
- 7.1.2 Cabinet – 30 March 2022
- 7.1.3 Northern Area Planning Committee – 31 March 2022
- 7.1.4 Southern Area Planning Committee – 5 April 2022
- 7.1.5 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 7 April 2022
- 7.1.6 Southern Area Planning Committee – 26 April 2022
- 7.1.7 Cabinet – 11 May 2022
- 7.1.8 Northern Area Planning Committee – 12 May 2022
- 7.1.9 Southern Area Planning Committee – 16 May 2022
- 7.1.10 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 May 2022
- 7.1.11 Southern Area Planning Committee – 7 June 2022

(Note: in relation to 7.1.11 these minutes are not included in the minute book and will be presented at the next Council meeting but members are able to ask questions on resolved items.)

7.2 To adopt recommendations from the following:

- 7.2.1 Cabinet – 11 May 2022
 - 7.2.1.1 Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 (APPENDIX A)

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which sought approval for the Annual Governance Statement, which accompanied the 2021/22 Statement of Accounts.

On the basis of Internal Audit work completed in 2021/22, the Internal Audit Manager has provided a “substantial assurance” opinion in respect of the Council’s risk management, control and governance arrangements.

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

Recommended:

That the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 be approved and that the Leader and Chief Executive be authorised to sign it on behalf of the Council.

7.2.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 May 2022

7.2.2.1 Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill (APPENDIX B)

Consideration was given to a report of the Chairman (Lead Panel Member) setting out the findings of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill panel. The Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill was put forward to assist the UK government to meet its legally binding target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. In response to a motion to Council on 1 September 2021 seeking to support the Bill, it was agreed that an Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel be established to review the implications of the CEE Bill on Test Valley and consider whether to support the Bill or not. The CEE Bill was being considered through the House of Commons at the point the 2021-22 session of Parliament was brought to a close.

At the time of the final meeting of the panel, the CEE Bill was due its second reading at the House of Commons, which represents a relatively early stage in the legislative process. The Bill had been delayed on several occasions with the most recent date for the second reading having been scheduled for 18 March 2022, which was deferred until 6 May 2022. The parliamentary session for 2021-22 was brought to a close on 28 April, therefore it is indicated that there will be no further progress on the Bill. It is not known whether the Bill may be re-introduced in future parliamentary sessions, and if it is re-introduced whether it would have been subject to amendments. The panel anticipated that should the Bill have been enacted, the government would have needed to fill in many of the details of the requirements of an eventual Act by making regulations or orders.

Despite this, the panel has investigated, as best as possible: the connections between the expectation of the Bill and other legislation, how the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) and other potential local implications may arise, and what conclusions can be drawn. In reaching those conclusions the panel identified a number of general comments. They were mindful of the scale of the requirements and that the provisions within the Bill go beyond the remit of local authorities. In addition, the panel recognised the need for clarity on how any legally binding requirement would work, be measured and monitored. There were also issues with the language and terminology used in terms of being able to properly understand the purpose of the Bill and its implications.

The Task and Finish Panel has considered the CEE Bill as required by the Council motion. As the Bill is no longer progressing, it is recommended that the work of the Panel on whether to support the Bill be concluded. However, the Panel has highlighted elements of the Bill which it can support and which can add value to our existing CEAP. The recommendations of the panel for consideration as part of future reviews of the Council's CEAP comprise:

- Think about re-focusing on biodiversity (taking account of the forthcoming implications of the Environment Act 2021), including the link to the CEAP; and
- Add targets and milestones to the CEAP.

Recommended:

- 1. That the findings of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill panel set out in Annex 2 to the report be noted.**
- 2. That it be noted that the panel could not come to a firm conclusion on whether or not the motion (contained at Annex 1 to the report) relating to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill could be supported; however as the Bill will not be progressing, as the 2021-2022 session of Parliament has prorogued, it is recommended that the work of the panel be concluded.**
- 3. That the recommendations of the panel, as set out in paragraph 6.2 to the report, be considered as part of future reviews of the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.**

7.2.4 Southern Area Planning Committee – 7 June 2022

Recommendations to follow (if any)