

Minutes of the **Council**  
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**  
held in Crosfield Hall, Broadwater Road, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 8GL  
on 13 September 2023 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

**Councillor P Lashbrook**  
**(Chairman)**

**Councillor G Bailey (Vice-Chairman)**

Councillor N Adams-King  
Councillor I Andersen  
Councillor C Borg-Neal  
Councillor K Brooks  
Councillor Z Brooks  
Councillor J Budzynski  
Councillor P Bundy  
Councillor J Burnage  
Councillor D Cattell  
Councillor G Cooper  
Councillor M Cooper  
Councillor N Daas  
Councillor C Donnelly  
Councillor A Dowden  
Councillor C Dowden  
Councillor D Drew  
Councillor K Dunleavey  
Councillor M Flood  
Councillor A Ford  
Councillor S Gidley

Councillor L Gregori  
Councillor N Gwynne  
Councillor S Hasselmann  
Councillor R Hughes  
Councillor I Jeffrey  
Councillor A Johnston  
Councillor R Kohli  
Councillor L Lashbrook  
Councillor M Leech  
Councillor N Lodge  
Councillor L Matthews  
Councillor J Neal  
Councillor K North  
Councillor P North  
Councillor J Parker  
Councillor J Sangster  
Councillor T Swain  
Councillor A Warnes  
Councillor S Yalden

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**Prayers**

Prayers were led by the Reverend Perrott.

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**Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S MacDonald.

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**Public Participation**

Ms Bartholomew and Ms Davis had registered to speak in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme under item 14 – Notice of Motion – Rule 12.

The Democratic Services Manager passed on the apologies of Ms Davis who was not able to attend the meeting to speak.

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### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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### **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 June 2023 were proposed by Councillor P North and seconded by Councillor Adams-King.

Council noted that the minutes from the meeting on 21 June 2023 stated that Councillors had been advised that information about outside bodies had been circulated. It was confirmed that this had not been correct and at that time, those details had not yet been sent. Details of outside body appointments had subsequently been sent to all representatives and an update presented in the Councillor Bulletin to clarify.

#### **Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 June 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.**

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### **Mayor's Announcements**

The Worshipful The Mayor of Test Valley advised that he had attended numerous engagements throughout the summer and thanked the communities and organisations who had been involved in the positive and successful events.

The Mayor took a moment to reflect on the tragedy in Morrocco and asked those present to support the victims of the earthquake as well as continuing to provide support for those impacted by the war in Ukraine.

The Mayor advised that there were two upcoming events taking place for his Charity Appeal. A *Call my Wine Bluff* event on Friday 10 November in the Andover Guildhall and a *Pig Racing* event on Friday 13 October at the Weyhill Fairground Village Hall.

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### **Notice of Motion - Rule 12**

In accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme, Ms Batholomew made a statement on the motion as set out in the agenda in relation to the Council setting aside a reserve to fund actions taken from the Climate Emergency Action Plan

Council considered the following motion move by Councillor Gwynne and seconded by Councillor Gregori:

*Test Valley Borough Council undertake to set aside £1m from its reserves in order to fund actions taken from the Climate Emergency Action Plan. Those actions to be identified and initiated in the current financial year.*

Councillor M Cooper proposed that a recorded vote be undertaken which was supported by more than 10 Councillors present at the meeting. Councillors voted as follows:

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained</b>
Burnage	Adams-King	Andersen
G Cooper	Bailey	
M Cooper	Borg-Neal	
Daas	K Brooks	
A Dowden	Z Brooks	
C Dowden	Budzynski	
Dunleavey	Bundy	
Ford	Cattell	
Gidley	Donnelly	
Gregori	Drew	
Gwynne	Flood	
Hughes	Hasselmann	
Kohli	Jeffrey	
Parker	Johnston	
Sangster	L Lashbrook	
Warnes	P Lashbrook	
Yalden	Leech	
	Lodge	
	Matthews	
	Neal	
	K North	
	P North	
	Swain	

Upon being put to the vote the motion fell.

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### **To receive and adopt Committee reports**

#### **Minutes of Meetings**

The minutes of meetings were proposed by Councillor P North and seconded by Councillor Adams-King.

**Resolved:**

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

**Cabinet - 7 June 2023**

**Southern Area Planning Committee - 13 June 2023**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 14 June 2023**

**Audit Committee - 19 June 2023**

**Northern Area Planning Committee - 29 June 2023**

**Southern Area Planning Committee - 4 July 2023**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 19 July 2023**

**Northern Area Planning Committee - 20 July 2023**

**General Purposes Committee - 24 July 2023**

**Southern Area Planning Committee - 25 July 2023**

**Special Northern Area Planning Committee - 1 August 2023**

**Southern Area Planning Committee - 15 August 2023**

**Cabinet - 23 August 2023**

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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 A Dowden asked the Community and Leisure Portfolio Holder the following question:

*“The very successful Knightwood Woodfair at Valley Park has now not taken place for several years. Please can I ask the Executive Member for Community & Leisure to see that next year this event is reintroduced? Residents in Valley Park have been disappointed by it not taking place this year now that Covid is not a major issue.”*

Councillor Swain responded that following the adoption of the woodlands in 1998, the first Woodfair was organised to engage with residents about how the woodlands might be managed with their help. There were no plans currently for the Council to re-instate the Woodfair. The event was initially funded using developer contributions however the funding had long been spent.

A sustainable programme of activities and work parties had been developed in partnership with volunteer groups, which offered targeted and impactful engagement throughout the year. In other areas, community events would more typically be run by parish councils, community, or volunteer groups and the Council would be happy to work with Councillor A Dowden to explore how the Council might continue to support such community events going forward.

Councillor A Dowden asked a supplementary question enquiring as to why the Council would not wish to continue with a successful event which over 3,000 people visited from both within and outside of Test Valley. Councillor A Dowden noted that the important woodland had, for 14 years, been awarded green flag status and asked the Council to reconsider the event.

Councillor Swain confirmed that she would be happy to work with the community to explore how they might be able to manage the event going forward and offered to discuss the matter further with Councillor A Dowden outside of the meeting.

Councillor Gidley asked the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder the following question:

*“Given that council officers increasingly work from home what considerations are being given to the long-term future of the Beech Hurst council offices?”*

Councillor Flood responded to confirm that the Council ran an agile working pilot from July to December 2021 and a new agile working policy went live from 1 April 2022. That policy stipulated that staff should be in the office for a minimum of two to three days a week. This was important for a whole of host of reasons including team development and training and therefore it was not strictly true to say that Council officers were increasingly working from home.

Councillor Flood advised that the long-term future of Beech Hurst was under early consideration by officers. A Council presence in Andover town centre could provide potential regeneration partners with the confidence to invest in any future development and that a town centre location, like that of the FMC in Romsey, was a better option for the public.

The Chief Executive was committed to working with staff on a potential relocation and working to understand the requirements of Beech Hurst partners to ensure the future provision of those services in Andover.

Councillor Flood confirmed that Beech Hurst Park itself, would always remain a public open space and would be outside of any future development on the site.

Councillor Gidley asked a supplementary question requesting that all Borough Councillors be kept fully apprised of any potential relocation plans as she had not been aware of any proposals and had learnt about the potential proposal via her role on an outside body.

Councillor P North responded that Andover Vision members had received an update but would ensure that all Councillors were kept up to date on any future work in this area.

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### **Staff Pay Award**

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which considered the budget implications of a pay award to council staff in respect of the 2023/24 financial year.

At its meeting on 4 September 2023, the General Purposes Committee approved a pay award for the 2023/24 financial year of 6% for all staff, with the exception of the Chief Executive. The award exceeded the amount set aside in the revenue budget and therefore it was necessary for Council to consider the budgetary implications.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Flood and seconded by Councillor P North.

#### **Resolved:**

That a draw from Budget Equalisation Reserve of £477,000 be approved for the purposes of funding a staff pay award for 2023/24.

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### **To appoint to the Project Enterprise Board**

Consideration was given to a report of the Democracy and Governance Portfolio Holder which sought to appoint Councillors to the Project Enterprise Member Panel to fill vacancies, and set out a proposal for an amendment to the capital budget allocation for Project Enterprise investments.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Lodge and seconded by Councillor P North.

#### **Resolved:**

- 1. That Councillors A Dowden, Flood, Gwynne, Johnston and P North be appointed to the Member Panel to be consulted by the Head of Property & Asset Management in respect of proposed property investments.**
- 2. That capital budget allocation for Project Enterprise investments be reduced to a maximum of £1M.**

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### **Appointment to Outside Bodies**

Consideration was given to a report of the Democracy and Governance Portfolio Holder which proposed the appointment of Council representatives to a number of outside bodies.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Lodge and seconded by Councillor P North.

#### **Resolved:**

- 1. That Councillor Cattell be appointed as the Council's representative to Finding Freedom from Abuse.**
- 2. That Dorothy Baverstock be appointed as the Council's representative to Unity.**

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### **Calendar of Meetings 2024/2025 and 2025/2026**

Consideration was given to a report of the Democracy and Governance Portfolio Holder which set out proposed calendars of ordinary meetings for the municipal years 2024/2025 and 2025/2026.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Lodge and seconded by Councillor P North.

#### **Resolved:**

**That the Calendar of Meetings for the municipal years 2024/2025 and 2025/2026, as set out in Annex 1 and Annex 2 to the report, be approved.**

(The meeting terminated at 7.14 pm)