

Minutes of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**
held in Main Hall, Crosfield Hall, Broadwater Road, Romsey
on Wednesday 22 November 2023 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

Councillor I Jeffrey (Chairman)

Councillor G Bailey

Councillor S Gidley

Councillor L Gregori

Councillor N Gwynne

Councillor S Hasselmann

Councillor S MacDonald

Councillor L Matthews

Councillor J Parker

Councillor A Warnes

Councillor S Yalden

Also in attendance

Councillor I Andersen

Councillor C Dowden

Councillor A Johnston

Councillor T Swain

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Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Cattell, Borg-Neal and Neal.

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Public Participation

Mr Burley had registered to speak on Agenda Item 9 – Scoping for Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Regeneration.

315

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

316

Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

317

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

318

Call in Items

There were no call in items.

319

Urgent decisions taken since last meeting

There were no urgent decisions.

320

Water Pollution Infrastructure

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development which outlined the roles and responsibilities of different agencies in managing water pollution and infrastructure provision.

The role and responsibility for water quality and infrastructure provision is complex with multiple agencies responsible for delivery, monitoring and enforcement. The source of impacts on water quality also vary. The Council's role with regard to water pollution is limited, with the main responsibilities falling within the remit of other organisations. Particularly, the regulation of agriculture and wastewater treatment works (WwTW), as the main sources of water pollution are outside the scope of the Council's control. However, to an extent, the issue is relevant to the duties of both Planning and Environmental Health.

Southern Water is the water company providing both water supply and wastewater treatment services to the majority of Test Valley. Other water companies provide either water supply or wastewater treatment to some smaller areas of the Borough. Some rural parts of Test Valley are not served by mains water supply or mains drainage and therefore use private supplies and/or non-mains drainage provision.

Defra is responsible for setting the legal and policy framework for England, including the regulatory regime which governs the water industry, advice for farmers, and drinking water quality. Defra is also the lead department for arm's length bodies and regulators.

Whilst the Council's role is limited, we help to secure mitigation for new development and hopefully improvements where possible, through planning policy development and decision making. This is therefore a narrow remit, but does make a real difference in protecting the environment from further pollution.

Members discussed the timescales for an evidence base water cycle study currently in preparation, to consider the future phasing and upgrades of water supply and wastewater infrastructure, alongside potential sites to be allocated for new development in the draft Local Plan 2040.

Members required more clarity over who was responsible for what aspects of water pollution and infrastructure matters and requested that the Environment Agency and Southern Water be invited to a future meeting to clarify their roles and responsibilities.

Resolved:

That the report be investigated further and that the Environment Agency and Southern Water be invited to attend a future meeting.

321 Scoping for Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Regeneration

Consideration was given to a report by the Lead Member of the Regeneration Panel, Councillor Gwynne which requested the Committee to consider the draft scoping document for the Regeneration Task and Finish Panel and comment thereon.

The scope attached to this report sets out the focus of the proposed panel review, the anticipated value it will add and a draft work programme setting out how the panel will undertake the review leading to a final report back to Overview and Scrutiny in 2024.

The scope sets out proposals for how the panel will engage with councillors, officers and where appropriate stakeholders through Andover Vision and Romsey Future to help the panel gather evidence that will inform its work and any future recommendations.

Regeneration forms a key part of the Council's Corporate Plan and Corporate Action Plan which will deliver significant benefits for our communities across the Borough.

The Committee were also requested to appoint members to the Panel.

Resolved:

- 1. To agree the establishment of the panel as set out in the scoping document and to appoint Councillor Gwynne as Lead Member together with Councillors Gidley, Gregori and Hassleman to the panel together with any other Committee Members that wish to be included.**
- 2. That the scoping document and the draft panel work programme be approved.**

322 Annual Update on the work of the Community Safety Management Group

Consideration was given to a report of the Community Engagement Manager (Community Safety) on behalf of the Test Valley Partnership which summarised the work of the Test Valley Community Group over the past twelve months and the priorities for the year ahead.

The Community Safety Management Group (CSMG) is a sub-group of the Test Valley Partnership and comprises of the statutory Community Safety Partners (TVBC; Police; Fire & Rescue Service; NHS Integrated Care Board; Probation), plus other relevant local Community Safety Partners such as Registered Social Landlords, Neighbourhood Watch, Town Centre and BID managers, amongst others.

It enables organisations working locally in this sector to respond to the needs of communities in a co-ordinated and organised way by sharing skills, resources and data. The group addresses community safety specific issues on a tactical and localised level. This allows for responsible authorities and other local agencies and partners to work in partnership to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour priorities locally. The group considers and plans responses to key issues arising, hotspots, and the planning and implementation of measures for an action plan to address the identified priorities.

Officers from TVBC also attend monthly confidential Police's Tactical Command Briefing Meetings to help ensure that effective two-way communication and co-ordination is maintained on key issues between the CSMG and Police. CSMG priorities are a standing item on this agenda.

Overall, levels of crime and ASB remain generally low in Test Valley but with areas of fluctuation. The CSMG continues to work constructively in partnership to meet the identified priorities, and the allocation of funds from the SSF5 funding will help to support this, particularly across the new duty areas.

Members discussed:

- Partnership with Police
- Community Safety Partnership representatives do meet with other Districts to discuss options to address similar priorities.
- Installation of CCTV in Crosfield Hall car park.
- Rural crime
- Encourage residents to report crime to Police to enable local issues to be identified.

Resolved:

- 1. That the report be acknowledged and partnership approach be endorsed.**
- 2. That Officers bring a report back to Overview and Scrutiny in autumn 2024 to give an annual update on the work of the Community Safety Management Group.**

Councillor Neal, Lead Member for the Budget Panel had sent in an update.

The budget panel looked at three main areas, which were the mid-year current financial position; the principles included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the draft fees and charges for 2024/25.

The mid-year financial reporting has since been reported to Cabinet and the MTFS approved by full Council. Whilst a large variance has been reported in the year to date, it is not surprising that the two biggest contributors are investment income (due to rates increasing faster than expected) and salary costs which are our largest expenditure.

Most focus was given to the draft fees and charges that services are proposing for the coming financial year. Three areas were closely scrutinised and they were; pest control; sports pitch bookings; and room hire charges. After careful consideration the panel were in agreement with the proposals that had been put forward by services.

The overall conclusion of the panel was that the budget setting work for 2024/25 is progressing well and the next update in January is eagerly awaited.

324 Programme of Work for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee were requested to consider the next two portfolio areas it would like to review and the topics within those portfolios they would like to discuss and to agree the topics discussed at the Away Day and adopt them onto the work programme.

Members agreed to request the Portfolio Holder for Environment to attend a meeting in February/March to give an update on refuse collection and for the Portfolio Holder for the Romsey Regeneration to attend to give an update on progress and plans.

Members also requested a report on CIL funding and S106 at a future meeting.

Resolved:

- 1. That the topics discussed at the Away Day be adopted and added to the work programme.**
- 2. Approve the future work programme.**

(The meeting terminated at 7.05 pm)