

**Minutes of the Valley Park Annual Parish Meeting  
held on Monday 14 May 2018 at 7.00pm  
Location: Valley Park Community Centre**

**Present:**

Cllr Mr A Dowden (Chairman)  
Cllr Mr C Anderson  
Cllr Mr A Beesley  
Cllr Mr S Cross  
Cllr Mrs J Adey  
Cllr Mrs C Dowden  
Cllr Mr C Thom

**Apologies for absence:**

Cllr Mr R Bryan  
Cllr Mrs D Moran

**Action**

**1 Updates concerning rats issues in Valley Park and the intensified efforts to eliminate those: Mark Lee – Environment Health Manager – Test Valley Borough Council**

Cllr Dowden introduced Mark Lee as the Environment Health Manager and asked him to present what actions have been taken to tackle the rats' issues in Valley Park and what are the plans for the future. Cllr Dowden highlighted the need of concerted efforts in resolving this issue.

Mark Lee confirmed that he is aware of concerns raised about the rats in Valley Park and acknowledged that this spring the issue has escalated. The exact reason of the spread is unknown, however the landscaped area in Valley Park is a good habitat and shelter for the rats. It was noted that Valley Park is a clean area and there is not much litter.

Mark Lee reported that a campaign for tackling the rat's issue has commenced in the area and signs are visible to the public of where the 20 traps are placed. These are within 100 m radius from St Francis Surgery. Poison is restricted in public areas. The basket waste bins have been identified as a potential source for attracting rats as well as food left for the birds in gardens. The pest control officers are aware and the campaign will continue in the attempt to tackle the problem from different angles.

A question was raised regarding involving the Woodland Trust to allow the Borough Council to provide treatment in the woodlands. It was noted that the Woodland Trust stated that the treatment couldn't be carried out in the nesting season and that traps may harm other wildlife.

A question was raised regarding the scale of the issue and the number of complaints received from Valley Park in the last month. Mark Lee stated that there were not a large numbers of complaints received, but an exact number could not be provided. Concerns were received directly and via Cllr Dowden.

Mark Lee explained that Test Valley can provide treatment in public areas, however a charge is applied for people's gardens and buildings.

A question was raised regarding what kind of support is given to people to deal with the concerns. Mark Lee responded that free advice is offered over the phone to people.

Members of public shared some dreadful experiences with the rats destroying their gardens and homes and raised serious concerns of the scale of this issue in Valley Park.

A member of the public asked about the collaboration with Eastleigh Borough Council and the line of reporting an issue about a property in their borough, which is connected to a property in Test Valley. Mark Lee explained that any resident could submit an investigation request to Eastleigh Borough Council when an issue is identified. Cllr Dowden asked if Mark Lee could report the issue described by the resident in Netley Close and he confirmed that was possible.

Residents raised significant concerns about the rats coming from the Small Profits woodland area, which is owned by Woodland Trust. More concerns were raised about rats being present in St Francis School's grounds.

Following the numerous concerns from the residents about the rats and the potential diseases and damages these could bring to properties and people, the Chairman proposed that a letter is sent as soon as possible to several relevant organisations and call for an immediate concerted effort to eradicate and manage the significant issues with the rats in Valley Park. The organisations identified to be involved and part of the collaborative approach were named: Test Valley Borough Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Hampshire County Council and Woodland Trust.

**Resolved That:**

**A letter be sent on behalf of the Valley Park Parish Council to all above-named organisations to express the deep concerns and calling for a strategic approach and an action plan to quickly assist and tackle this issue.**

Clerk

The Chairman thanked Mark Lee for his presentation.

**2 Welcome and apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr R Bryan and Cllr D Moran.

**3 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman Report was presented and attached to the minutes.

**4 County Councillor's Report**

The County Councillor's Report was presented and attached to the minutes.

**5 Borough Councillor's Report**

The Borough Councillors' Report was presented and attached to the minutes.

**6 Public questions**

None received.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_