

COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber - Shire Hall, Taunton, on Wednesday 19 July 2017 at 10.00 am

Present: Cllr C Aparicio Paul, Cllr M Best, Cllr N Bloomfield, Cllr A Bown, Cllr A Broom, Cllr P Burridge-Clayton (Vice-Chair), Cllr M Chilcott, Cllr J Clarke, Cllr S Coles, Cllr A Dance, Cllr H Davies, Cllr M Dimery, Cllr B Filmer, Cllr D Fothergill, Cllr G Frascini, Cllr A Govier, Cllr A Groskop, Cllr D Hall, Cllr P Ham, Cllr M Healey, Cllr N Hewitt-Cooper, Cllr James Hunt, Cllr John Hunt, Cllr D Huxtable, Cllr M Keating, Cllr A Kendall, Cllr C Lawrence, Cllr M Lewis, Cllr L Leyshon, Cllr J Lock, Cllr T Lock, Cllr D Loveridge, Cllr T Munt, Cllr T Napper, Cllr G Noel, Cllr L Oliver, Cllr J Parham, Cllr H Prior-Sankey, Cllr F Purbrick, Cllr L Redman, Cllr B Revans, Cllr M Rigby, Cllr D Ruddle, Cllr N Taylor, Cllr J Thorne, Cllr G Verdon, Cllr L Vijeh, Cllr W Wallace (Chair), Cllr A Wedderkopp, Cllr J Williams, Cllr R Williams and Cllr J Woodman

11 **Apologies for Absence** - Agenda Item 1

Apologies for absence were received from: Cllr M Caswell, Cllr F Nicholson and Cllr M Pullin.

Cllr Terry Napper took the opportunity to thank members for his get well cards and wishes and for the care he received at Musgrove Park Hospital and Bristol Royal Infirmary. He praised the Beacon Centre at Musgrove for its treatment.

12 **Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 2

Members' written notifications of interests were affixed to the Notice Board at the back of the Council Chamber for the duration of the meeting

13 **Minutes from the meeting held on 24 May 2017** - Agenda Item 3

The Minutes, including attached Appendices, of the meeting of Council held on 24 May 2017 were signed as a correct record.

14 **Chairman's Announcements** - Agenda Item 4

The Chairman informed members of the recent death of former County Councillor Stan Oakes who was the division member for Yeovil West and Preston between 1981 and 1985.

15 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 4

(1) Public Questions / Statements / Petitions (under 5000 signatures): Notice was received of questions / statements / petitions regarding: Public Questions / Statements:

1. Council Constitution

From Andrew Lee

Response from Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of the Council

2. County Farms

From Sue Osborne

Response from Cllr David Hall, Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development

3. Train service from Taunton to Minehead

From David Latimer

Response from Cllr John Woodman, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

4. Chard Junction Station

From Andrew Turpin, George Beattie and Sandra Beattie

Response from Cllr John Woodman, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

5. Transport Forum

From John Hassall

Response from Cllr John Woodman, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

6. Learning Disability Provider Service

From Jeanette Cave

Response from Cllr David Huxtable, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

7. Learning Disability Provider Service

From Sarah Mainwaring (presented by Mandy Meakin)

Response from Cllr David Huxtable, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

8. Learning Disability Provider Service

From Paul Kitto (presented by Adrian Welland)

Response from Cllr David Huxtable, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

9. Learning Disability Provider Service

From Ewa Marcinkowska

Response from Cllr David Huxtable, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Full details of the questions and responses given at the meeting and / or in writing following the meeting are set out in Appendix A to these Minutes.

Petitions – over 5000 signatures

1. Learning Disability Provider Service Funding

Presented by Ewa Marcinkowska

(1) Cllr Huxtable thanked Ms Marcinkowska for the petition and responded by saying that the new provider had a proven and positive track record in meeting adult social care costs. It had an ambitious transformation agenda.

(2) The Council then had a 15 minute members debate on the petition as provided for under the Constitution. Points raised in the discussion included: members were encouraged to visit their local centres to have a clearer picture on what they were doing; loss of staff who had experience and knowledge; concern about costs of the new contract; assurance that performance was being monitored. Members were informed that an update on the new contract would be brought before the Scrutiny Adults and Health Committee in November.

16 **Report of the Monitoring Officer - Agenda Item 6**

(1) The Council considered a report from the Monitoring Officer which set out recommendations for proposed arrangements for the appointment of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman and a revised constitution as recommended by the Constitution and Standards Committee.

(2) The Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee introduced the report and explained that the committee felt the honorary position could be used for some former councillors in recognition of their long-term service.

(3) The Monitoring Officer directed members to the criteria and procedure for appointing Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen in the report and explained that proposals for appointments were likely to be brought before the November meeting.

(4) The report also covered the Annual Review of the Constitution including the details of the Junior Cabinet Member roles.

(5) During debate on the item the following issues were raised: minimal costs were required for appointing Aldermen/Alderwomen, the appropriateness of these appointments, recognising hard work and honouring former members.

(6) A named vote was taken regarding the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen and the Council RESOLVED by a majority vote of 37 for, 9 against and 6 abstentions to adopt the following recommendations:

The County Council agreed the proposed arrangements for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen set out in this report and to include them as an appendix in Part 2 the Constitution;

Votes cast as follows:

For	Against
Cllr Aparicio Paul	Cllr Broom
Cllr Best	Cllr Clarke
Cllr Bloomfield	Cllr Davies
Cllr Bown	Cllr J Lock
Cllr Burrige-Clayton	Cllr Munt
Cllr Chilcott	Cllr Prior-Sankey

Cllr Coles Cllr Filmer Cllr Fothergill Cllr Fraschini Cllr Groskop Cllr Hall Cllr Ham Cllr Healey Cllr Hewitt-Cooper Cllr James Hunt Cllr John Hunt Cllr Huxtable Cllr Keating Cllr Kendall Cllr Lawrence Cllr Lewis Cllr Leyshon Cllr T Lock Cllr Napper Cllr Noel Cllr Oliver Cllr Parham Cllr Purbrick Cllr Ruddle Cllr Taylor Cllr Verdon Cllr Vijeh Cllr Wallace Cllr J Williams Cllr R Williams Cllr Woodman	Cllr Revans Cllr Thorne Cllr Wedderkopp
Abstained Cllr Dance Cllr Dimery Cllr Govier Cllr Loveridge Cllr Redman Cllr Rigby	

The County Council agreed a revised Constitution for the Council as proposed in the Appendix to this report.

17 **Report of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel - Agenda Item 7**

- (1) The Council considered a report introduced by the Monitoring Officer which set out the report and recommendations of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel following its review of the Scheme of Member Allowances.
- (2) The Chairman thanked the panel for the tremendous amount of work it had undertaken.

- (3) During debate on the item the following issues were raised: whether members' allowances should be calculated and index linked via the officer pay scale or by the Somerset median wage rate; the proposed new arrangements for special responsibility allowances; whether allowances were in line with other local authorities; the role of junior cabinet members.
- (4) The recommendations at paragraph 2.1 of the report were proposed by Cllr David Fothergill and seconded by Cllr Mike Rigby.
- (5) Having considered the Panel's recommendations set out in the Annex to the report and summarised in section 2 – the Executive Summary, the Council RESOLVED:
1. in respect of recommendation 2.1 (a) and following a named vote (49 for, 0 against, and 3 abstentions as set out below) to agree that the basic allowance should be calculated and index linked (for 2017-21) via the officer pay scale as currently.

For	Against
Cllr Aparicio Paul Cllr Best Cllr Broom Cllr Burridge-Clayton Cllr Chilcott Cllr Clarke Cllr Coles Cllr Dance Cllr Davies Cllr Dimery Cllr Filmer Cllr Fothergill Cllr Fraschini Cllr Govier Cllr Groskop Cllr Hall Cllr Ham Cllr Healey Cllr Hewitt-Cooper Cllr James Hunt Cllr John Hunt Cllr Huxtable Cllr Keating Cllr Kendall Cllr Lawrence Cllr Lewis Cllr Leyshon Cllr T Lock Cllr J Lock Cllr Loveridge Cllr Munt Cllr Napper Cllr Noel	

Cllr Oliver Cllr Parham Cllr Prior-Sankey Cllr Purbrick Cllr Redman Cllr Revans Cllr Rigby Cllr Ruddle Cllr Taylor Cllr Thorne Cllr Verdon Cllr Wallace Cllr Wedderkopp Cllr J Williams Cllr R Williams Cllr Woodman	
Abstained Cllr Bloomfield Cllr Bown Cllr Vjeh	

2. Considered and agreed by a majority vote an amendment to the Panel's recommendations on the allocation of posts to the SRA bands to include within band 7 (and to continue to receive £1079pa) the vice-chairmen of the main committees (Audit, Regulation and Scrutiny), the Deputy Leader of the main opposition group and the group leaders of the smaller political groups.

3. The Council RESOLVED by a majority vote to:

(b) Agree the revised Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2017-21 as amended by 1 and 2 above.

(c) Agree that any changes to SRA payments as a result of decisions by the Council are backdated to the date of appointment.

(d) Authorise the Strategic Manager, Governance & Risk to make any amendments to the Scheme of Members' Allowances 2017-18 (attached as Appendix C to the 2 Item No. Title Annex to this report) required as a result of the Council's decisions in (a) above.

18 **Report of the Leader and Cabinet - for decision - Agenda Item 8**

(1) The Council considered a report by the Leader and Cabinet which set out a recommendation to Council arising from the meeting held on 10 July 2017.

(2) The recommendation was proposed by Cllr David Fothergill and seconded by Cllr David Hall.

- (3) The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the Annual Treasury Management Outturn Report 2016/17 as set out in the attached report and its appendices.

19 **Requisitioned Items - Agenda Item 9**

Staff Pay Award

- (1) The Council considered a requisitioned item on Staff Pay Awards proposed by Cllr Jane Lock and seconded by Cllr Simon Coles.
- (2) Cllr Lock introduced the item and highlighted the following points: council staff were expected to continue to carry out their duties with dwindling resources; increasingly having to work more hours for less money; the problem of teachers leaving the profession within the first few years of qualifying; the need to show that staff were valued.
- (3) During debate the following issues were raised: the proposal was suggested to apply from April 2018; many staff have pay awards agreed at national level; employees also had good holiday and sickness entitlements and pensions as well as staff benefits.
- (4) The Council RESOLVED to task the HR Policy Committee with reviewing the level of staff pay awards and report back to the November Council meeting.

20 **Report of the Leader and Cabinet - Items for Information - Agenda Item 10**

- (1) The Leader of the Council gave a statement about the County Vision and the Medium Term Financial Plan. He updated members on various issues including that a review by the Fire Authority of properties across Somerset had taken place following the Grenfell Tower incident; there had been further work on fairer funding for schools in Somerset; the Council was waiting for a response from ministers regarding Devolution; the Northern Inner Distributor Road was now open.
- (2) It was hoped that the new approach with the budget would yield higher savings with efficiencies in back office services, IT, better procurement and shared services. Further debate on this included: proposed closure of Taunton Park and Ride service on Saturdays; cuts to bus services; possible closures to Children's Centres; and reducing the temporary labour spend.
- (3) The Council then considered a report (Agenda Item 10) that summarised the key decisions taken by the Leader and Cabinet Members between 10 May and 7 July 2017, together with the items of business discussed at the Cabinet Meetings on 14 June and 10 July 2017.
- (4) Cllr David Hall responded to a written question from Cllr Amanda Broom regarding Frome Recycling Centre.
- (5) Cllr David Hall responded to a written question from Cllr Simon Coles regarding Hinkley Nuclear Power Station.

- (6) The Council received the Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Business, Inward Investment and Policy (now Resources and Economic Development) at this point in the meeting (Paper 14). It detailed key activities and achievements of the past year within these areas.
- (7) Cllr John Woodman responded to a written question from Cllr Liz Leyshon regarding safe journeys for children to schools.
- (8) The Council then received the Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport (Agenda Item 15) which highlighted key activities and achievements of the past year within these areas.
- (9) Further debate included: agreement by Cllr John Woodman to meet with Cllr Amanda Broom and interested parties to further discuss Chard Junction Station; possibility of enhancing rail services; and early years' provision and free childcare.

Full details of the questions and responses given at the meeting and / or in writing following the meeting are set out in Appendix B to these Minutes.

21 Report of the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee - Agenda Item 11

(1) The Council received the report from the Chair of the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee, Cllr Tony Lock.

22 Report of the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee - Agenda Item 12

(1) The Council received the report from the Chair of the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee, Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey.

23 Report of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee - Agenda Item 13

(1) The Council received the report from the Chair of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee, Cllr Leigh Redman.

24 Local Government Ombudsman Report - Agenda Item 16

(1) The Council received a report from Julian Wooster, Director of Children's Services, regarding the findings of a complaint that was investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman. Mr Wooster acknowledged there had been unacceptable level of service and remedies were needed. Cllr Leigh Redman asked a number of questions about Education, Health and Care Plans and was informed that he would receive a written response to his questions.

(The meeting ended at 1.30 pm)

CHAIRMAN