

CHAIR'S SCHEDULE AND MEETING BUSINESS PLAN

County Council Meeting – Wednesday 28 November 2018 (10.00am)

Monitoring Officer to ask everyone present to stand as the Chair of Council enters the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE **Guide Time: 10.00am**

Nigel Taylor, Mike Caswell, John Thorne, Tony Lock, Mike Pullin and Dave Loveridge.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST **Guide Time: 10.01am**

The County Solicitor will read out any prejudicial interests that have been declared by Members. All personal interest forms will be displayed in the chamber.

Members are reminded that if any business of the Council relates to or affects a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest which you have declared you should disclose it at the meeting not later than the start of the consideration of the business in which you have an interest or (if later) the item at which the interest becomes apparent to you and you should leave the room whilst the business is being considered.

3. MINUTES **Guide Time: 10.05am**

To confirm the accuracy of the Minutes together with the Appendices attached of the Council meeting held on 18 July 2018 and 17 October 2018, and if agreed, the Chair will sign the Minutes as a correct record.

4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS **Guide Time: 10.15am**

The Chair's announcements will include reference to:

- Chair will make reference to the Chair's Information Sheet number 2 as published on the website and included in the agenda pack.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME **Guide Time: 10.20am**

Public Questions / Statements

Note: The questions / statements / public petitions submitted by each member of the public are detailed in **ANNEX A to this Schedule**.

1. Bid for Cycling and Walking Scheme

From Chris Rix

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

2. Safe Passage

From Melanie Hudson

Responses from Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families

3. Six Acres

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From Cheryl Freeman

Response from Cllr Mandy Chilcott, Cabinet Member for Resources

4. New Social Value Contracts

From Nigel Behan, Unite

Response from Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of the Council

5. Getset

From Nigel Behan, Unite

Responses from Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families

6. Broadband

From Andrew Lee

Response from Cllr David Hall, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

7. Council Spending

From Eva Bryczkoswki

Response to Q1 from Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of the Council and Q2 & Q3 from Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Mandy Chilcott Cabinet Member for Resources

8. Public Transport

From David Redgewell

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

For decision:

6. REPORT OF THE LEADER AND CABINET FOR DECISION

Guide Time: 10.45am

**To be Introduced by Cllr David Fothergill – Leader of the Council
Expansion of the Capital Investment Programme, Treasury Management mid-year 2018-19 and Heart of the South West Joint Committee Update.**

To consider this report. The recommendations at paragraph 2.1. 2.2 and 2.3 of the report (and repeated below) to be proposed by Cllr David Fothergill, seconded by Cllr Mandy Chilcott, debated and voted upon as detailed below.

- 1. The Council is asked to approve the expansion of the Capital investment Programme in 2019/20 to commit a sum of up to £10m to facilitate the purchase of waste vehicles and depot infrastructure for the Somerset Waste Partnership, provided that it can be proved that this offers better value for money than the vehicles being supplied by the private sector provider.**

2. That the Council endorses the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report for 2018-19.

3.

(a) Note the progress report setting out the work of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee since its establishment in March 2018;

(b) Agree to delegate the development and endorsement of the HotSW Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) to the HotSW Joint Committee (noting that final approval of the HotSW LIS rests with the HotSW Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Government);

(c) Note the Budget statement for 2018/19 set out in Appendix B and that in accordance with the decisions taken at the time the Committee was established, the Council is asked to make provision for a financial contribution towards the costs of the Joint Committee for 2019/20 in line with the 2018/19 contribution (£10,500). A further budget update will be provided in advance of the 2019/20 financial year and any additional contribution requested (including in-year) will be submitted as a fully costed agreed proposal within a work programme and only after all other potential sources of funding have been exhausted.

(d) Agree the Budget and Cost-sharing Agreement set out in Appendix B to this report.

7. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

Guide Time: 11.00am

To be introduced by Scott Wooldridge – Monitoring Officer

To consider this report. The recommendations at paragraph 2.1 of the report (and repeated below) to be proposed by Cllr David Fothergill, seconded by Cllr Mandy Chilcott, debated and voted upon as detailed below.

Appointments Schedule – Appendix 1 refers

To approve the changes to Committee and Outside Bodies appointments – see section 3.1 and Appendix 1 to this report.

Appointment of Deputy Section 151 Officer

To appoint the post of Strategic Finance Manager – Adults, Health and Children, currently held by Elizabeth Watkin, as a Deputy Section 151 Officer.

Appointment of Data Protection Officer

To appoint the post of Data Protection Manager, currently held by Lucy

Wilkins, as the Council's Data Protection Officer.

8. STRATEGY FOR SINGLE USE PLASTICS Guide Time: 11.15am

To be introduced by Cllr David Hall – Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

To consider this report. The recommendations at paragraph 2.1 and 2.2 of the report (and repeated below) to be proposed by Cllr David Hall, seconded by Cllr John Clarke, debated and voted upon as detailed below.

The County Council is asked to note the growing concern locally, nationally and globally about the impact single use plastics are having on our environment, and that action is needed to reverse this trend of negative impacts. The Council can act positively in reducing the use of plastics, and can use its position of influence with partners, providers and stakeholders, and this Strategy is designed to provide a framework for this work.

It is recommended that the Council adopt the strategy “Reduction in the use of Single Use Plastics: A Strategy for Somerset County Council” shown at Appendix A to the report.

9. REQUISITIONED ITEMS Guide Time: 11.30am

To consider this report setting out two requisitioned items set out in the report.

1. 100 years of women County Councillors

To be introduced by Cllr Bill Revans. Recommendations to be proposed by Cllr Bill Revans and to be seconded by Cllr Christine Lawrence, debated and voted upon:

It is recommended that the Council resolves to recognise the contribution of Councillor Fry and commemorate the contribution of women to the council over the last 100 years, by asking the Chief Executive to work with the Chair of the Council to identify and name a prominent meeting room after her.

2. Opposing the closure of Norton Manor Camp and relocation of 40 Commando out of Taunton Deane

To be introduced by Cllr Simon Coles. Recommendations to be proposed by Cllr Simon Coles and to be seconded by Cllr Alan Wedderkop, debated and voted upon:

- 1) it opposes the decision of the Government to close Norton Manor Camp and relocate the Royal Marines out of Taunton Deane, will support the retention of 40 Commando Unit and stands behind the local 40 Commando community of serving and veteran Royal Marines who want the Camp to remain in Taunton Deane;
- 2) the Leader of the Council write to the Secretary of State for Defence strongly opposing the closure of the Camp, urging him to remove Norton Manor Camp from the list of sites to be disposed of on the MOD website, and
- 3) the Leader of the Council write to all of Somerset's Members of Parliament

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pointing out that the County is in danger of losing 40 Commando Royal Marines and urging them to take up the importance of Norton Manor Camp to the County of Somerset and to Taunton Deane in particular in Parliament and oppose its closure and the relocation of 40 Commando to another area, and that the Chief Executive should report back to the whole Council placing copies of any replies received on the public record.

For information:

10. REPORT OF THE LEADER AND CABINET – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Guide Time: 11.55am

To be introduced by Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of the Council

To be noted.

Also to be taken under this item will be:

Item 13 – Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

Item 14 – Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

Item 15 – Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Member questions to the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members on items not on the agenda elsewhere will be taken under this item. The questions are detailed in **Annex B to this Schedule**

Member questions have been submitted with advance notice as follows:

1. Cllr A Broom – Cresta Pool

Response from Cllr David Hall, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

2. Cllr T Napper – A361 designation at Glastonbury

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

11. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, ADULTS AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

Paper 11 – to be introduced by Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey – Chair of the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee

Guide Time: 12.20pm

To be noted.

12. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Guide Time: 12.25pm

To be introduced by Cllr Leigh Redman – Chair of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee

To be noted.

13. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES AND PLACE COMMITTEE

To be introduced by Cllr Anna Groskop – Chair of the Scrutiny for Policies and Place

Guide Time: 12.30pm

To be noted.

14. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

To be introduced by Cllr David Hall – Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

To be noted.

NB To be taken under item 9 – Report of the Leader and Cabinet

To be introduced by Cllr David Hall – Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

To be noted.

NB To be taken under item 9 – Report of the Leader and Cabinet

15. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING

To be introduced by Cllr Christine Lawrence – Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

To be noted.

NB To be taken under item 9 – Report of the Leader and Cabinet

16. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

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To be introduced by Cllr David Huxtable – Cabinet Member for Adults Social Care

To be noted.

NB To be taken under item 9 – Report of the Leader and Cabinet

**17. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SOMERSET ARMED FORCES Guide Time: 12.35
COMMUNITY COVENANT PARTNERSHIP**

**To be introduced by Cllr Rod Williams – Armed Forces Member
Champion**

To be noted.

Finish: 12.45pm

Public Questions / Statements

PQ1 Chris Rix

Topic: Bid for Cycling and Walking Scheme

Will Somerset County Council commit to work with TDBC and ourselves to prepare and prioritise a major scheme bid for cycling and walking for the Taunton Area?

Taunton has enormous scope for high levels of cycling, which would reap large transport, environmental and public health benefits. The joint 20-year transport vision wants to double cycling from its current 9% level.

Sustainable transport should be at the heart of transport planning for our Garden Town.

The current network is fragmented and many neighbourhoods simply do not have cycling as an option due to hostile road conditions. We have produced a quality assessment of the network (see leaflet) which we believe is feeding into your planning work.

It was suggested to us that we try to secure funding through the Small Improvement Scheme process. We did a lot of work on two of the 15 hotspots from our initial survey but neither were taken forward. We are therefore convinced that we should be seeking serious resources through the same mechanism that the County uses for its numerous new road projects.

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

PQ2 Melanie Hudson

Topic: Safe Passage

My name is Melanie Hudson I am part of Refugee Support Group (South Somerset). We have 9 committee members and 7 helpers who are backed up by 56 online members. Some of our members support the resettlement of refugees in the local area by offering English lessons. Our main focus though is raising money through holding events throughout the year, collecting clothing and blankets to be sent to crisis areas throughout the world and raising awareness of the plight of refugees in the twenty first century.

We are strongly supported in our request to you by LARA (Langport Area Refugee Action group) which has eight committee members, six helpers and fifteen email correspondents and supporters. LARA are actively supported by Long Sutton Quakers and the Vicar of Langport and the surrounding village parishes. LARA runs an ongoing collection of essential supplies for refugees: the success of this is evidence of community willingness to help refugees. LARA also organises fundraising events and an annual party for Syrian refugees resettles across the county.

I would like to start by thanking Somerset County Council for the work you have already done in supporting refugees. Our council have worked hard on Refugee resettlement and resettled 27 families through the VPRS scheme in the last three years. You have taken on the serious responsibility of working with families themselves and supporting them to create a new life here.

Thank you for taking the decision to transform the lives of the 27 families. This year is the 80th Anniversary of the Kindertransport, the scheme through which Britain welcomed 10,000 child refugees, over 2 years. This anniversary marks the best of what Britain is about. As part of this anniversary, we are joining a national campaign with Safe Passage, led by Lord Alf Dubs, himself a Kinder child, to call on Central Government to start a fully-funded scheme for 1000 child refugees to be resettled in the UK every year. If the UK were to take 1000 children a year spread across the UK, each local authority would take just 3 children.

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Lord Dubs has spoken eloquently and movingly about this campaign on television and national radio and we look to Somerset CC to support this important humanitarian initiative.

Other Councils have already pledged to create additional resettlement places.

Hammersmith and Fulham Council have offered 100 places for child refugees over 10 years and Perth and Kinross Council in Scotland have offered 20 places for child refugees.

We hope that Somerset would wish to show leadership on the issue and we would pledge to support the Council to resettle 15 child refugees.

So, we are here to ask two questions?

1. Will you work with us to continue to make Somerset a welcoming place?
2. Will you commit to resettle 3, 4 or 5 child refugees in 2019 if Central Government creates a new fully funded scheme.

Response by Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families

PQ3 Cheryl Freeman

Topic: Six Acres

Has a decision been taken to sell the Six Acres site in Taunton?

Response by Cllr Mandy Chilcott, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources

PQ4 Nigel Behan

Topic: New Social Value Contracts

On Monday 19th November the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, David Lidington, announced new government procurement measures: **New 'Social Value' contracts to revolutionise government procurement**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-social-value-contracts-to-revolutionise-government-procurement>

The Register reported that:

“Capita, Serco and Sopra Steria are drafting "living wills" with the government in case they collapse – a measure agreed to after the Carillion debacle.

After the multinational construction firm was liquidated in January, the extent of the government's reliance on it became clear as it struggled to gather the information necessary to step in and take over.

This put the spotlight on other outsourcing deals, with the government under pressure to make better preparations for a similar crisis – as well as re-igniting calls for more transparency around crucial contracts.

As a result, the Cabinet Office is attempting to put some safety nets in place so it won't get caught out if another firm was to collapse.”

- a) Does Somerset County Council have similar arrangements with its (commissioned and) outsourced providers to ensure service continuity and minimise the risk of failure?
- b) Is there a “living will” type arrangement in place for the outsourced Learning Disability Service to Discovery/Dimensions UK Ltd in case they collapse? If not, will there be?

Response by David Fothergill, Leader of the Council

PQ5 Nigel Behan

Topic: Getset

In the Getset Public Consultation

(<http://www.somersetconsults.org.uk/consult.ti/Getset/consultationHome>) it is stated:

“The County Council, like councils across the country, has had its funding from central Government significantly reduced in recent years. As a result, we have had to consider ways to reduce spending in all our services. Considerable savings have already been made by working differently and more efficiently, but we also have to consider savings that can only be made by reducing the levels of service we provide.”

And:

“Our proposal is that the County Council stops providing getset support for children and families with additional needs at Level 2. This would mean the groups and activities that the getset Level 2 service currently provides, along with the targeted work that supports individual families would stop.”

And also:

“Please note: As well as the getset groups above, there are an estimated 427 similar groups and activities that are run by other people or organisations that provide the same kind of support for children and families with both universal (Level 1) and additional needs (Level 2). These are run by many different community groups and organisations, often in community venues such as libraries and churches, and sometimes in children’s centres. This includes health run sessions such as local healthy child clinics, young parents support and breastfeeding support which will continue.”

Can you supply the risk register associated with the 427 groups taking on additional work and, if there is no additional capacity identified, are there examples in other local authority areas where they have removed similar provision?

Response by Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families

PQ6 Andrew Lee

Topic: Broadband

Openreach are about to be offered more work on getting superfast broadband to Somerset homes. The money they are returning to be spent on a new project could surely be given to someone else just as easily to do the job properly. When the Connecting Devon and Somerset project was set up - to which SCC contributed £10m, parishes and various community organisations were contacted by SCC and CDS with documentation promising the project would deliver 90% broadband coverage. This project has, according to latest figures from the House of Commons library (published this month), failed to delivery 90% coverage in 4 out of 5 of constituencies in the SCC area (only Yeovil has over 90%). These figures though are after Gigaclear has been working on an additional project to extend coverage. That may not have gone well but it has increased coverage. The problems with Gigaclear are well documented. The fact is the best ranked constituency in Somerset - that of Yeovil - is ranked 492 out of 650 constituencies in the UK. Somerton & Frome is ranked 616.

Why has SCC not held Openreach to account when we are still way off having 90% coverage. In Somerton & Frome coverage is actually only 81%. Why have Somerset businesses been left lagging far behind the rest of the country, despite £94m being spent on the project? And why should Openreach continue to do yet more work in Somerset on the broadband project?

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Response by Cllr David Hall, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

PQ7 Eva Bryczkowski

Topic: Council Spending

The Council has stated that it has had to make difficult decisions regarding having to make savage cuts in services. Employees affected by these cuts have had to make far far more difficult decisions on what to spend their money on – which bills do they pay first, mortgage/rent, heating and other costs, as they are increasingly plunged into debt, particularly the employees you have decided to make redundant.

1. Regarding capital spending and the refurbishment of part of County Hall, (which has been reported will cost 9.9 million pounds), as a council tax payer, I believe that this capital could be spent on more sorely needed things. Surely that's not the ONLY thing the Council can spend it on, and I'm wondering whether the Council can provide other examples of what the money could be spent on?

2. Regarding Council Tax, this could be raised up to the limit allowed by the government. It might seem controversial but the Council could explain to council tax payers what the money is needed for and why it had to be raised. Rather than another consultation, (which I believe is not necessary up to a certain amount, if I'm not mistaken), the Council could consider doing this to avoid some of the savage cuts it has decided to make.

3. Regarding employees being made redundant, when I was a care assistant for 16 years, many employees at risk did not get suitable jobs. I am wondering whether councillors, (I realise you are in a very difficult situation), can demonstrate that you have empathy with the people affected by these cuts and redundancies imposed on employees. You say that we are all in it together. Prove it by at least cutting the salaries of the highest earners to the level of the average employee, or better still, to the level of some of the lowest earners. They can afford it and this would save money. The Council might respond by stating that we need to pay them high salaries. I would like to quote something:- To make the rich work harder we pay them more. To make the poor work harder we pay them less. Some may think this is a controversial statement, but, in other words, let's have equality for all employees. They all contribute in important ways. Finally, again, I fully appreciate that the Council is in a difficult financial position. I'd like to suggest, if at all possible, that the Council consider having a moratorium on present and future planned cuts, ('savings' sound better, but they ARE cuts), and aim for a win-win outcome between the Council and people affected by the cuts. Not compromise, where the more powerful party ends up getting a lot more than the least powerful. A win-win with the people affected, and when negotiating with the relevant trade unions. We all need to work together for the good of all the employees, groups, and individuals affected by the situation we find ourselves in.

Response by Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill and Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Mandy Chilcott

PQ8 David Redgewell

Topic: Public Transport

On behalf of Bus Users UK and South West Transport Network:

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- We want to see Somerset Council supporting the bid from the Great Western Railway Community Fund for the West Somerset Railway to run the service for 60 days from Bishops Lydeard to Taunton next summer.
 - We want the West Somerset Councils and Minehead Town Council to work together to improve the buses between Taunton and Minehead and also to ensure that local buses in Taunton are well connected to the Railway.
 - The council should also ensure that good bus passenger waiting facilities are available at Minehead railway station.
1. What liability does the County Council as owners of the West Somerset Railway have regarding the remedial work directed by the Office of Road and Rail?
 2. Will the County Council make a statement to the Transport Select Committee “Health of the Bus Market” on how their partnerships work with local councils, parish councils and local bus operators such as First – which led services under threat continuing.

Response by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Cllr John Woodman

Member Questions / Statements

MQ1 Amanda Broom

Topic: Cresta Pool

Question/Statement

In October, the government have launched a new “Drive to ensure all children can swim by the end of primary school”. This drive will see the government rolling out more swimming lesson, extra teaching and improved guidance – supported by £320 million PE and Sport Premium.

Considering that Somerset County Council would not sell the Cresta pool to the community of Chard, can I ask if Somerset County Council will be lobbying the Government to see if some of the intended money can be used to help primary schools in and around Chard get their pupils to swimming lessons? This is in light of most primary schools having now seen a decrease in the amount of swim time for pupils since the closure of the Cresta pool.

Response from Cllr David Hall, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure

MQ2 Terry Napper

Topic: A361

Question/Statement

What is the mechanism to change the A361 main route? Could you explain the process required to remove the designation as a county freight route on A361 between Cannards Grave and Glastonbury?

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