

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **District Executive** held at the **Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil on Thursday 3 October 2019.**

(9.30 am - 10.28 am)

**Present:**

Councillor Val Keitch (Chairman)

Mike Best  
John Clark  
Sarah Dyke

Peter Gubbins  
Henry Hobhouse  
Peter Seib



**Also Present:**

Malcolm Cavill  
Mike Lewis

Mike Stanton

**Officers:**

Alex Parmley  
Netta Meadows  
Clare Pestell  
Martin Woods  
Paul Fitzgerald  
Angela Watson  
Peter Paddon  
Jan Gamon  
Katy Menday  
Vicki Dawson  
David Crisfield  
Angela Cox

Chief Executive  
Director (Strategy & Support Services)  
Director (Commercial Services & Income Generation)  
Director (Service Delivery)  
Section 151 Officer  
Monitoring Officer  
Lead Specialist (Economy)  
Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning)  
Leisure & Recreation Manager  
Lead Specialist (Environmental Health)  
Specialist (Strategic Planning)  
Democratic Services Specialist

**Note:** All decisions were approved without dissent unless shown otherwise.

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### **47. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the District Executive meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

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### **48. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jason Baker, Adam Dance and Tony Lock.

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### **49. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

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**50. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)**

There were no questions by members of the public present.

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**51. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)**

The Chairman noted that she would not be attending the District Executive meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> December and the Vice Chairman would lead the meeting on her behalf.

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**52. Adoption of the South Somerset Environment Strategy (Agenda Item 6)**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment introduced the report and advised that since declaring the climate emergency at the Council meeting in May, the team had produced a strong strategy during the summer months and she thanked them for their efforts. She said the strategy showed the Council's commitment that this was a priority across South Somerset and was paving the way to a carbon zero future. She noted that the Council would continue to consult across the community with schools, colleges, community groups, residents and Parish Councils to ensure they were part of the strategy going forward.

The Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning) advised that the Scrutiny Committee had requested two minor amendments to the Strategy document and they would be taken forward in the report to Full Council.

In response to questions from Members, the Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning) and the Chief Executive advised:-

- The Strategy would be reviewed within 2 years, that review likely to commence in 18 months time.
- The first priority following adoption of the Strategy would be to develop a plan to deliver the promised priorities through business cases.
- The Committee reports templates were being refreshed to ensure the environmental impacts of every report were correctly assessed.
- Currently the Council could encourage developers that carbon reducing and environmental measures were included in housing developments but they could not be required.
- The Council could lobby the Government with other Somerset Councils through the Local Government Association to allow them to set their own development standards.
- There had been a provisional allocation of funds to start some of the projects and an expert consultant had been engaged to assist in delivering the business cases. Any further allocation of funds would require Portfolio Holder approval.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members unanimously confirmed the Strategy for adoption by Full Council.

**RESOLVED:** That District Executive recommend that Full Council:-

- a. agree and approve the new Environment Strategy for adoption;
- b. note the identified intermediate actions and next steps.

**Reason:** To agree the content of the draft Environment Strategy and make recommendation to Full Council for adoption.

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**53. Heart of the South West Joint Committee Governance Review Report (Agenda Item 7)**

The Chairman noted that the report was not presented in the usual format but it had been agreed at the Heart of the South West meeting that the same report would be presented to all the partner Councils for approval. She advised that she was the Council's representative on the Joint Committee and the Chief Executive also attended the meetings and the Local Enterprise Partnership meetings.

The Monitoring Officer clarified that the two PDF documents embedded in the report were the original inter-authority agreement which had been public when the Council entered the Joint Committee and the second was reproduced as Appendix A.

During discussion it was noted that the SSDC contribution to the Joint Committee was not a great burden and it would lead to more joint working between Councils. It was also noted that the proposed Inter-Authority Agreement point (g) regarding deliver at scale was an enabling clause and not a competitive clause.

At the conclusion of the debate Members were content to confirm the recommendations of the report.

**RESOLVED:** That District Executive:-

- a. approved the amendments (shown in red) to the HOTSW Joint Committee's list of functions in the Arrangements document (Appendix A attached) and noted the updated budget position for 2019/20;
- b. noted the appointment of Somerset County Council as the Administering Authority to the Joint Committee.

**Reason:** To update the Constituent Authorities on the Joint Committee's governance arrangements and budgetary position for 2019/20 and to agree amendments to the Committee's Arrangements document following the governance review.

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**54. Community Capital Grant Request to the Parochial Church Council of All Saints Church, Isle Brewers (Agenda Item 8)**

The Chairman advised that the request for funding had been considered by the Area North Committee the previous week and had been approved by them.

During discussion Members fully supported the initiative for a community building in Isle Brewers. It was noted that similar projects had successfully occurred using church buildings for community space in Ansford and South Barrow.

The recommendation to confirm the grant was proposed and seconded and unanimously confirmed by Members.

**RESOLVED:** That District Executive confirmed that a grant of £35,000 be awarded to The Parochial Church Council of All Saints Church, Isle Brewers towards an ambitious £169,000 project to create a multifunctional usable community space within the restored All Saints Church building. The grant to be allocated from the Area North capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (Appendix A).

*Note - Within the District Council's scheme of delegation, capital projects seeking up to £12,500 are considered by Area Committees but District Executive is the decision making body for amounts over £12,500.*

**Reason:** To confirm the recommendation from Area North Committee to award a capital grant of £35,000 towards creating a community space within the recently restored historical building of All Saints Church, Isle Brewers for the use of the Village of Isle Brewers and surrounding communities that currently lack a suitable facility.

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## 55. **Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of Anti-Semitism (Agenda Item 9)**

The Chairman advised that there was currently national and international interest in this issue and many Local Councils had already adopted the definition.

The Third Sector and Equalities Co-ordinator advised that the international definition had been adopted in 2000. It had subsequently been adopted by the Government who had encouraged all Local Authorities to consider adopting it. Although the declaration had no legal status, it was a statement of intent to the Council's customers on anti-semitism. The principal legislation remained the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality duty.

During discussion some members expressed concern that the definition was a one-sided statement however others felt that the sentiment was more than a religious discriminatory definition. It was also mentioned that some of the supporting examples were poorly defined and could result in other groups asking for similar recognition when this was already enshrined in the Equalities Act.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded and when put to the vote, was supported by the majority of Members.

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive recommend to Full Council the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of Anti-Semitism along with the accompanying illustrative examples.

**Reason:** To seek member agreement of the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of Anti-Semitism and to request referral to Full Council for adoption.

*(Voting: 6 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention)*

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## **56. District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda Item 10)**

The following reports were added to the Executive Forward Plan:-

- Chard Regeneration Scheme – November 2019
- Transformation Update and Service Delivery Recovery Plan – November 2019
- Budget Update – November 2019

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive:-

1. approved the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A, with the following additions:
  - Chard Regeneration Scheme – November 2019
  - Transformation Update and Service Delivery Recovery Plan – November 2019
  - Budget Update – November 2019
2. noted the contents of the Consultation Database as shown at Appendix B.

**Reason:** The Forward Plan is a statutory document.

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## **57. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 11)**

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the District Executive would take place on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 9.30 a.m.

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## **58. Exclusion of Press and Public (Agenda Item 12)**

The Chairman asked for Members agreement to hear the following two reports in confidential session because they contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of the authority. This was agreed by Members and it was:-

**RESOLVED:** That the following items be considered in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

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**59. Wincanton Town Centre Strategy Governance and Finance (Confidential)  
(Agenda Item 13)**

The Portfolio Holder for Area East introduced the report and said it was important for Area East that the Wincanton Town Centre Strategy was progressed.

The Lead Specialist (Economy) advised that the Area East Committee had approved the final amendments to the governance structure which would follow the same course as the Yeovil Refresh and Chard Regeneration Scheme

At the conclusion of a short debate, Members unanimously confirmed the recommendations of the report be proposed to Full Council.

**RESOLVED:** That District Executive:-

- a. noted the content of the report.
- b. agreed to propose the recommendations of the report to Full Council

**Reason:** To recommend to Council the arrangements for the Wincanton Board and seek approval of the overarching budget to begin delivery of the Wincanton Strategy.

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**60. The Future Management of the Council's Leisure Facilities (Confidential)  
(Agenda Item 14)**

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Well-Being introduced the report.

The Director for Strategy and Support Services provided a clarification to a question.

Following a short debate, Members unanimously agreed the recommendations of the report.

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive agreed the recommendations of the report.

**Reason:** To confirm the recommended approach to the future operation of the Council's indoor pools and leisure centres.

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Chairman

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Date

