

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **South Somerset District Council** held on **Thursday 20 September 2018** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

(7.30 pm - 8.45 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Tony Capozzoli (Chairman)
Councillor Mike Best (Vice-Chairman)

Clare Paul	Henry Hobhouse	Wes Read
Jason Baker	Kaysar Hussain	David Recardo
Marcus Barrett	Val Keitch	Dean Ruddle
Neil Bloomfield	Andy Kendall	Peter Seib
Amanda Broom	Jenny Kenton	Garry Shortland
Dave Bulmer	Mike Lewis	Angie Singleton
Hayward Burt	Mike Lock	Alan Smith
John Clark	Tony Lock	Sue Steele
Nick Colbert	Paul Maxwell	Rob Stickland
Adam Dance	David Norris	Gerard Tucker
Sarah Dyke	Sue Osborne	Andrew Turpin
Nigel Gage	Stephen Page	Linda Vijeh
Carol Goodall	Ric Pallister	Martin Wale
Peter Gubbins	Crispin Raikes	Derek Yeomans

Officers:

Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Angela Watson	Monitoring Officer
Netta Meadows	Director (Strategy & Support Services)
Clare Pestell	Director (Commercial Services & Income Generation)
Martin Woods	Director (Service Delivery)
Nicola Hix	Lead Specialist (Finance)
Stephen Lodge	Director, Yarlinton Housing Group
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Specialist

34. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cathy Bakewell, Mike Beech, John Field, Anna Groskop, Sarah Lindsay, Sam McAllister, Graham Middleton, Graham Oakes, Tiffany Osborne, Jo Roundell Greene, Sylvia Seal, Gina Seaton, William Wallace, Nick Weeks and Colin Winder.

35. Minutes (Agenda Item 2)

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 19th July 2018, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as correct records of the meetings and signed by the Chairman.

36. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

37. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

The Chairman of Hinton St George Parish Council spoke regarding a retrospective planning application in the parish which they had expected to be referred to the Area West Committee for determination. He outlined the history of the site and expressed their disappointment that the application had been approved by the Chairman and officer's delegated powers. He said he would be writing to the planning office to ask for clarification on the enforcement of the planning conditions.

The Leader of Council said she would look into the matter and provide a written response.

38. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman advised that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had advised that they would be laying the Draft Order for reorganising the SSDC Ward Boundaries before Parliament on 15th October. The Order would be laid for 40 days and so would complete its passage through Parliament late November / early December 2018.

39. Chairman's Engagements (Agenda Item 6)

The list of Chairman's engagements were noted.

40. Presentation from Yarlington Housing Group (Agenda Item 7)

Stephen Lodge, Executive Director of Growth and Development at Yarlington Housing Group provided a presentation on the recent work of the Group. He advised that:-

- Yarlington employed 368 people and 82% of them lived in South Somerset
- Yarlington generated a direct GVA of £24.5m in 2017/18
- They managed 9,182 properties in South Somerset
- 116 new homes were currently in contract
- Their planned maintenance works for South Somerset in 2018/19 was £13.7m, with a budgeted development cost of £7.2m
- 75% of their customers had digital access
- Their Inspire to Achieve programme had assisted 642 resident to gain employment and 77 had accessed work experience or training.
- Their NextGen 5 year strategy was to provide new homes, a new services and to serve their customers efficiently, effectively and economically.
- They were also building houses for sale to make a profit for the organisation.
- £500,000 was provided each year for community solutions
- They were looking at introducing WIFI in their sheltered schemes and were also looking at how the schemes would be funded in the future as the County Council funding changed.

- Sometimes because of huge void costs and poor energy performance it was better to sell an individual house than pay the cost to bring it up to standard.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Lodge confirmed:-

- Of the proposed 1,500 new homes to be built, 1,000 would be built within Somerset and 500 outside the county.
- They were consulting with their residents on the proposed changes to Assisted Living.
- There was no policy to remove their rural properties, however, there were challenges when a property was not viable.
- They had sold 17 houses during 2018 and although the ambition to generate an income through house sales, they recognised it must not dilute the purpose of the business.
- Yarlington worked with Community Land Trusts to provide houses in rural areas.
- Yarlington had made a bid in partnership with other organisations for Government funding towards house building.
- They now had community partners to assist their vulnerable tenants who could not access their services digitally.

At the conclusion of the debate the Chairman thanked Mr Lodge for attending and providing an interesting and informative presentation.

NOTED

41. 2017/18 Treasury Management Activity Report (Agenda Item 8)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services introduced the report and advised that it had been considered by the Audit Committee at their meeting in June 2018.

In response to a question, the Lead Specialist for Finance confirmed that the overall responsibility for treasury management lay with Full Council.

There was no debate and Members were content to note the Treasury Management Activity for the 2017/18 financial year, the position of the individual prudential indicators and the outlook for the investment performance in 2018/19.

RESOLVED: That Full Council:-

- a. noted the Treasury Management Activity for the 2017/18 financial year;
- b. noted the position of the individual prudential indicators for the 2017/18 financial year;
- c. noted the outlook for the investment performance in 2018/19;
- d. noted the council operated within all of the Prudential Indicators during 2017/18.

Reason: To review the treasury management activity and the performance against the Prudential Indicators for the 2017/18 financial year as prescribed by the revised CIPFA Code of Practice and in accordance with the Council's Treasury Strategy and Annual Investment Policy and Treasury Management Practices.

42. Changes to the Constitution - Financial and Other Delegations and Re-allocation of functions (Agenda Item 9)

The Leader of Council introduced the report and advised the changes to the Council's Constitution were necessary.

The Monitoring Officer advised that following the loss of the Director for Support Services, his delegated responsibilities had been reallocated between herself, the Chief Executive and the Director for Strategy and Support Services, and therefore it was necessary to reflect the changed delegations in the Council's Constitution. The report also included delegations previously approved by the District Executive.

In response to questions from Members, the Monitoring Officer confirmed:-

- The Council's Commercial Strategy: 2017-2021 was confirmed by Full Council in August 2017
- Section 4, Point 4.18 (3) referred to the Chairman of the relevant Regeneration Programme Board
- The relevant Portfolio Holder would be involved in the investment acquisition process
- She had delegated power to amend post names as required in the Constitution
- Reference to the Income Asset Group and Disposals Asset Group would be added to Section 4, Point 4.18 (1) and (2)

The Lead Specialist - Finance confirmed that the Council had no external borrowing at the current time and they would take advice from Arlingclose, the Council's Treasury management advisers before any such borrowing was made. Funds were being kept in reserve.

At the conclusion of the debate a named vote on recommendation 1 was requested by more than 10 Members present. This was taken and the voting was recorded as: 27 in favour, 15 against, 0 abstentions. Members were unanimous in their support for recommendation 2.

RESOLVED: That Full Council:-

1. agreed the following changes be made to the Council's Constitution:
 - a) Section 4 of Part 3 be amended to reflect previously approved delegations to the Investment Assessment Group, the Disposal Assessment Group, and the Strategic Development and Regeneration Programme Boards;

- b) Section 4 of Part 3 be amended to reflect the previously approved delegation for establishing limited companies and limited liability partnerships;
- c) Section 6 of Part 3 be amended to delegate to the Lead Specialist – Legal those duties that appropriately sit with the senior legally qualified officer and to delegate elsewhere those aspects that appropriately sit with a another officer;
- d) Financial Procedure Rule 13.2 be amended to reflect the financial limits of the delegation to the Investment Assessment Group, the Disposal Assessment Group, the Strategic Development Board and the Regeneration Programme Boards.

2. confirmed that, until recruitment processes linked to the Transformation programme were complete, officer delegations set out in Part 3 Section 6 referring to named posts below Senior Leadership Team level are delegations to the officer properly exercising that function. Once the full transformed structure is known, the Monitoring Officer will update references to job titles in accordance with her authority to do so under Article 15.02(a).

Reason: To ensure that recent delegations of matters and functions to officers or officer/ member bodies that would otherwise be for the Executive to determine are reflected in the Council’s Constitution.

*(Voting: Question 1 – 27 in favour, 15 against, 0 abstentions)
(Question 2 - unanimous in favour)*

		For	Against	Abstain
1	CLARE APARICIO PAUL		x	
2	JASON BAKER	x		
3	CATHY BAKEWELL	Absent		
4	MARCUS BARRETT		x	
5	MIKE BEECH	Absent		
6	MIKE BEST	x		
7	NEIL BLOOMFIELD	Absent		
8	AMANDA BROOM	x		
9	DAVE BULMER		x	
10	HAYWARD BURT		x	
11	TONY CAPOZZOLI	x		

		For	Against	Abstain
12	JOHN CLARK	x		
13	NICK COLBERT		x	
14	ADAM DANCE	x		
15	GYE DIBBEN	Absent		
16	SARAH DYKE	x		
17	JOHN FIELD	Absent		
18	NIGEL GAGE		x	
19	CAROL GOODALL	x		
20	ANNA GROSKOP	Absent		
21	PETER GUBBINS	x		
22	HENRY HOBHOUSE	x		
23	KAYSAR HUSSEIN	Absent		
24	VAL KEITCH	x		
25	ANDY KENDALL	x		
26	JENNY KENTON	x		
27	MICHAEL LEWIS		x	
28	SARAH LINDSAY	Absent		
29	MIKE LOCK	x		
30	TONY LOCK	x		
31	PAUL MAXWELL	x		
32	SAM MCALLISTER	Absent		
33	GRAHAM MIDDLETON	Absent		
34	DAVID NORRIS		x	
35	GRAHAM OAKES	Absent		
36	SUE OSBORNE		x	
37	TIFFANY OSBORNE	Absent		
38	STEPHEN PAGE	x		
39	RIC PALLISTER	x		

		For	Against	Abstain
40	CRISPIN RAIKES	x		
41	WES READ	x		
42	DAVID RECARDO	x		
43	JO ROUNDELL GREENE	Absent		
44	DEAN RUDDLE		x	
45	SYLVIA SEAL	Absent		
46	GINA SEATON	Absent		
47	PETER SEIB	x		
48	GARRY SHORTLAND	x		
49	ANGIE SINGLETON	x		
50	ALAN SMITH	x		
51	SUE STEELE		x	
52	ROB STICKLAND	x		
53	GERARD TUCKER		x	
54	ANDREW TURPIN	x		
55	LINDA VIJEH		x	
56	MARTIN WALE		x	
57	WILLIAM WALLACE	Absent		
58	NICK WEEKS	Absent		
59	COLIN WINDER	Absent		
60	DEREK YEOMANS		x	
		27	15	0

43. Membership of Committees - Appointment of New Councillors to Audit, Scrutiny, Standards and Regulation Committees (Agenda Item 10)

Members were content to note the proposed new members of the Audit, Regulation, Standards and Scrutiny Committees.

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Section 16 (1) Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the duty therein to give effect to the wishes of the political group to which seats on any committee are allocated, the Council confirm that:-

1. Councillor Nigel Gage be appointed to the Audit Committee;
2. Councillor Jo Roundell Greene be appointed to Audit Committee;
3. Councillor Graham Middleton be appointed to the Regulation Committee;
4. Councillor Nick Colbert be appointed to the Standards Committee;
5. Councillor Neil Bloomfield be appointed to the Scrutiny Committee.

Reason: To confirm changes to the Audit, Scrutiny, Standards and Regulation Committees appointments following the appointment of Councillors to various committees and working groups at Council on 17th May 2018 and 19th July 2018.

44. Confirmation of Appointment of a Councillor to the Parrett Internal Drainage Board (outside body) (Agenda Item 11)

Members were content to confirm the proposed member as the SSDC representative on the Parrett Internal Drainage Board.

RESOLVED: That Council approved the appointment of Councillor Nick Weeks as the SSDC representative on the Parrett Internal Drainage Board.

Reason: To confirm an amendment to the outside bodies appointments made at Council on 17th May 2018.

45. Report of Executive Decisions (Agenda Item 12)

The report of Executive Decisions was noted.

46. Audit Committee (Agenda Item 13)

Councillor Derek Yeomans, Chairman of the Audit Committee, presented the report of the Committee.

The report of the Audit Committee was noted.

47. Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 14)

Councillor Sue Steele, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, presented the report of the Committee.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services thanked the Scrutiny Committee members for their comments on the recent budget monitoring report.

The report of the Scrutiny Committee was noted.

48. Motions (Agenda Item 15)

There were no Motions submitted by Members.

49. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Agenda Item 16)

Councillor Nick Colbert submitted the following questions under Procedure Rule 10:

"How much has been paid out in redundancy payments since the beginning of Transformation?"

Councillor Peter Seib, as Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services provided the following response:

"The transformation process will deliver modern, customer focussed and eventually better services, but was essentially a spend-to-save investment contributing to closing the £6m a year funding gap in the Financial Strategy Report.

The Transformation budget of £7,448,577 agreed with Members support contributes an annual ongoing saving of £2.5m every year – entirely from reducing staff costs.

The service areas affected – our core services and support services - will see their headcount reduce by about 22%.

Although Managers worked hard to minimise the number of people made redundant by holding some vacancies unfilled and by using temporary contract staff where posts had to be filled, it was always going to be necessary to make some people redundant to reduce our staff costs.

By far the majority of staff that have been made redundant have left on voluntary redundancy and there is no additional costs to voluntary redundancy.

Within the Transformation Budget, the budget provision for redundancy and pension strain costs is £4,044,700 and this was agreed without dissent in April 2017 and set out in the update report in July 2018.

At the end of August 2018 we had paid £1,621,730 in redundancy payments since the Transformation Programme commenced. This represents 40% of the budget. We are not yet at the end of Transformation and this cost will be added to as set out in the updated business case agreed by this Full Council in April 2017.

All the costs of Transformation including redundancy costs, will continue to be fully reported to Members through the quarterly Transformation Progress Reports to Scrutiny and District Executive. We will of course report the benefits in the same way”

50. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 17)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council was a reserve date of 18th October 2018.

Unless there was any urgent business to progress on this date, the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council would take place on **Thursday, 15th November 2018** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil **commencing at 7.30 p.m.**

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Chairman

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Date