

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **South Somerset District Council** held on **Thursday 15 November 2018** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

(7.45 pm - 8.10 pm)

Present:

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

Jason Baker	Val Keitch	Peter Seib
Amanda Broom	Mike Lewis	Garry Shortland
Dave Bulmer	Mike Lock	Angie Singleton
Hayward Burt	Tony Lock	Alan Smith
John Clark	Paul Maxwell	Sue Steele
Nick Colbert	Sam McAllister	Rob Stickland
Adam Dance	Graham Oakes	Gerard Tucker
Sarah Dyke	Tiffany Osborne	Andrew Turpin
John Field	Stephen Page	Linda Vijeh
Nigel Gage	Ric Pallister	Martin Wale
Carol Goodall	Wes Read	William Wallace
Peter Gubbins	Jo Roundell Greene	Nick Weeks
Henry Hobhouse	Sylvia Seal	Colin Winder
Kaysar Hussain	Gina Seaton	Derek Yeomans

Officers:

Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Angela Watson	Monitoring Officer
Netta Meadows	Director (Strategy & Support Services)
Nicola Hix	Lead Specialist (Finance)
Paul Matravers	Specialist - Finance
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Specialist

51. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cathy Bakewell, Marcus Barrett, Mike Beech, Neil Bloomfield, Anna Groskop, Andy Kendall, Jenny Kenton, Sarah Lindsay, Graham Middleton, David Norris, Sue Osborne, Clare Paul, Crispin Raikes, David Recardo, Dean Ruddle and Paul Fitzgerald, Section 151 Officer.

52. Minutes (Agenda Item 2)

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 20th September 2018, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as correct records of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

53. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

54. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

A resident of Chard said she was aware that the first phase of the Chard Regeneration Scheme would include a new swimming pool but this scheme was still at the concept stage and there was no firm schedule for delivery other than late 2020. She asked when the scheme would move from concept to design, were any plan for a pool being worked on, when would detailed plans and costs be established, was it necessary to tie the pool to the Chard Regeneration Scheme and what steps were being taken to ensure it would be delivered within 3 years? She also asked if it had been appropriate to close the Cresta pool when the proposed replacement was only at the concept stage?

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Economy, Councillor Jo Roundell Greene, replied that the new pool was an integral part of the Chard Regeneration Scheme and the pool would be the first part of it to be delivered. No actual plans had been drawn up but officers were working on progressing the scheme and when plans were available there would be a public consultation. She noted that the Cresta pool had been owned by Somerset County Council and SSDC were not part of the decision to close it.

Another resident of Chard advised that recent reports said there had been a 30% increase in childhood obesity and the closure of the pool at Cresta was not helping towards this. She asked if the presence of bats at the site would delay the construction work?

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Economy, Councillor Jo Roundell Greene, replied that the Holyrood School in Chard were very aware of the childhood obesity issue. She was also aware of the presence of bats and as a protected species, the advice of an ecologist would have to be taken.

55. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

There were no announcements from the Chairman.

56. Chairman's Engagements (Agenda Item 6)

The list of Chairman's Engagements were noted.

57. Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2018/19 - Mid-year review (Agenda Item 7)

The Chairman of the Audit Committee, Councillor Derek Yeomans, introduced the report and invited questions from Members. He noted that the Audit Committee were not able to approve the Statement or Strategy and it was for Council to do this.

In response to a question clarifying that there would be no external borrowing until the Capital Strategy was agreed by Members in February 2019, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services said it was for the Finance team to recommend the most appropriate funding of any future capital acquisition, and therefore could not confirm that there not be any borrowing before this date.

At the conclusion of the debate, the majority of Members were content to confirm the revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy for 2018/19.

RESOLVED: That Council approved the revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy for 2018/19.

Reason: To approve the mid-year Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy for 2018/19.

(Voting: 28 in favour, 14 against, 2 abstentions)

58. Report of Executive Decisions (Agenda Item 8)

The Leader of Council drew Members attention to the various executive and urgent decisions taken by the Executive since the last Council meeting in September 2018.

The report of Executive Decisions was noted.

59. Audit Committee (Agenda Item 9)

Councillor Derek Yeomans, Chairman of the Audit Committee, presented the report of the Committee. He advised that the Council now had a Specialist in Risk and Procurement who had made an interesting presentation at their last meeting and would be presenting a detailed report at their next meeting.

In response to a question, the Chairman of the Audit Committee confirmed that the Audit Committee had no power to approve the expenditure in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement or Investment Strategy but they looked at the probity to ensure it was correct and forwarded it to Council for approval.

The report of the Audit Committee was noted.

60. Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 10)

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

Councillor John Clark advised that the business cards mentioned with the helpful contact details for homeless people had now been supplied by Streetlink and were with the Scrutiny Specialist if anyone would like a supply.

The report of the Scrutiny Committee was noted.

61. Motions (Agenda Item 11)

There were no Motions submitted by Members.

62. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Agenda Item 12)

Councillor Colin Winder asked the following question under Procedure Rule 10:-

Small business in Wincanton continue to struggle to operate without broadband connections on the trading estates. Following the message from the Programme Director of Connecting Devon & Somerset issued on 8th November, where does SSDC currently stand within this programme? On 19th May 2016, SSDC agreed to retain the £640,000 provisional allocation to Connecting Devon and Somerset made in June 2015, until there was greater clarification on how and where that money would be utilised for the benefit of South Somerset residents or businesses. Is this funding still available and are there any plans to use it in the near future?

Councillor Jo Roundell Greene, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Economic Development provided the following response:-

Members resolved in May 2016 to retain funding "until there was greater clarification on how and where that money would be utilised for the benefit of South Somerset residents or businesses". The council still has funds that it could invest in a scheme, but despite our best efforts, there is no greater clarification on how it could be utilised to benefit South Somerset residents and businesses as the Council cannot obtain the information required from the market or Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) to enable this clarity. However, as agreed by District Executive this September, we have also engaged with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) to clarify their Gigabit Voucher Scheme, which provides £3,000 to individual businesses to connect to Superfast Broadband. BDUK have confirmed that 45 businesses within South Somerset have engaged with this Voucher scheme and are at various stages of the application and approval process. Of these, 44 businesses are in Area East including 28 in and around Wincanton, who have applied via Wessex Internet, who are an active service provider in the area.

Councillor Winder responded saying that local businesses were confused about the various schemes on offer as there did not appear to be a lot of technical knowledge available.

Councillor Roundell Greene noted that SSDC could not invest any money unless there was a workable scheme within the State Aid rules and the presence of Wessex Internet precluded SSDC from investing at the current time. She acknowledged this was an issue and said she would speak to officers to see if anything could be done.

63. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 13)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council would take place on **Thursday, 13th December 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

