

## CHAIR'S SCHEDULE AND MEETING BUSINESS PLAN

### County Council Meeting – Wednesday 17 July 2019 (10.00am)

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**Guide Time: 10.07am**

Cllr Mike Pullin, Cllr Dean Ruddle, Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey, Cllr Mark Healey, Mike Best, Terry Napper

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**Guide Time: 10.10am**

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: 10.12am**

To confirm the accuracy of the Minutes together with the Appendix attached of the Council meeting held on 15 May 2019, and if agreed, the Chair will sign the Minutes as a correct record.

#### 4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

**Guide Time: 10.15am**

##### **Public Questions / Statements**

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

Chair to then invite all public speakers registered to address the Council. Each speaker reminded that they have up to 3 minutes to make any key points and to try and not repeat points made by other speakers on the same matter. Chair to highlight that every member has access to the statements and questions that have been submitted and therefore speakers may wish to summarise their key points and focus their available time to put their question(s) to the Council.

#### 5. For information:

**Guide Time: 10.45am**

##### **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair's announcements covers information regarding visits made from May, June and July 2019.

##### **For decision:**

6.

Guide Time: 11.00am

## **REPORT OF THE LEADER AND CABINET – FOR DECISION**

### **Item 9 - to be introduced by Cllr David Fothergill – Leader of the Council**

To consider the report with recommendations from the Leader of the Council, arising from the Cabinet meeting held on 8 July 2019.

The recommendations at 2.1 of the report to be proposed by Cllr David Fothergill, seconded by Cllr Liz Leyshon debated and voted upon as detailed below.

Following debate the Council will be asked by the Chair to vote upon:

**Annual Treasury Management Outturn report 2018-19 – see Annex A**

**The Council is asked to approve the Annual Treasury Management Outturn Report 2018/19 as set out in the attached report and its appendices.**

7.

## **REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

Guide Time: 11.10am

To consider a report by the Monitoring Officer regarding appointments to Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership Joint Scrutiny Committee, Appointment of Director of Adult Social Services, Appointment of Deputy Section 151 Officer.

The recommendations at paragraph 2 to be proposed by Cllr David Fothergill seconded by Cllr Jane Lock, debated and voted upon as detailed below.

Following debate the Council will be asked by the Chair to vote upon:

**The County Council is recommended to:**

**2.1 Appointment to Heart of the South West LEP Joint Scrutiny Committee  
To approve the appointment of Cllr A Bown, Cllr M Lewis, Cllr S Coles and Cllr R Williams to the LEP Joint Scrutiny Committee (see section 3.1 below).**

**2.2 Appointment of Director of Adult Social Services  
To appoint Mel Lock (Adults Services Operations Director) to the role of Director of Adult Social Services with effect from 1st August 2019 (see section 3.2 of this report).**

**2.3 Appointment of Deputy Section 151 Officer  
To appoint the post and postholder of Strategic Finance Manager, currently held by Jason Vaughan, as a Deputy Section 151 Officer (see section 3.3 of this report).**

8.

## **REQUISITIONED ITEMS**

Guide Time: 11.25am

To consider the following requisitioned item – **Parental Leave for County Councillors**

Chair to invite Cllr Fothergill to present and propose the requisitioned item and seconded Cllr Leigh Redman.

Chair to invite other members to debate and ask any questions. Cllr Chilcott to answer any questions raised and if necessary Chris Squire may also be invited to answer any points raised.

Following debate Chair to highlight to members that the recommendations are set out on page 63 of the agenda pack and members should refer to these when voting.

**Council Motion:**

**That the County Council notes that it does not currently have a formalised policy relating to Parental Leave for elected Members. At present there is no legal right to Parental Leave for those elected to public office. It is proposed that this Council should agree in principle to adopt a Parental Leave Policy for elected Members and request that the Constitution & Standards Committee consider the attached draft policy proposals on Parental Leave.**

**It is further proposed that the Council authorises the Monitoring Officer to consult with the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel on the draft policy and for that Panel to identify any potential implications and recommendations for the Council to consider in relation to Member allowances.**

**9. REPORT OF THE LEADER AND CABINET – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION      Guide Time: 11.40am**

**Item 12 – to be introduced by Cllr David Fothergill – Leader of the Council**

To be noted.

**Member Questions to the Leader and Cabinet Members will be taken under this item in the following order:**

- **Cllr David Fothergill**
- **Cllr Mandy Chilcott**
- **Cllr John Woodman**
  - **Invite Cllr Liz Leyshon to ask her question – MQ1**
  - **(Invite Cllr Woodman to present his report at this point)**  
To be noted.
- **Cllr Frances Nicholson**
- **Cllr Christine Lawrence**
  - **Invite Cllr Leigh Redman to ask his question – MQ2**

- **Cllr David Hall**
- **Cllr David Huxtable**
- **Cllr Faye Purbrick**

Following debate the Council will be asked by the Chair to note the Leader and Cabinet's report for information and the Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.

**10 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT Guide Time: 12.10pm**

**This was taken under agenda item 9.**

**11 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE Guide Time: 12.15pm**

**To be introduced by Cllr Clare Paul, Chair of the Audit Committee**

To be noted.

**12 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, ADULTS AND HEALTH COMMITTEE Guide Time: 12.30pm**

**To be introduced by Cllr Ann Bown –Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee member**

To be noted.

**13. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE Guide Time: 12.40pm**

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

To be noted.

**14. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES AND PLACE COMMITTEE Guide Time: 12.50pm**

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

To be noted.

**Finish: 1.00pm**

**ANNEX A**

**Public Questions / Statements**

PQ1 - Nigel Behan  
Climate Change

Q1 Relates to a week of events from 15 July across the UK "Summer Uprising – ACT NOW. IT IS TIME TO REBEL"

The Bristol Occupation by XR Southwest state on their "Events" page that:

"Parliament and many UK councils have declared a climate and ecological emergency, but their actions do not match their words. The government's commitment to cut carbon emissions to zero by 2050 is an alarmingly insufficient response. In the Global South, water shortages, famine, extreme weather and conflicts over dwindling resources are already commonplace. Britain's food security is at risk. Our children's future is at stake."

There are XR groups in Somerset including:

"Extinction Rebellion Frome  
Environmental conservation organisation  
Frome arm of campaign group Extinction Rebellion. We are responding to an unprecedented ecological emergency, and we need your help!"

And

"Extinction Rebellion South Somerset  
Community  
Extinction Rebellion actions in the South Somerset area. The planet is in ecological crisis. The Extinction Rebellion is a necessity."

**What will SCC (Elected Councillors who decide and the Officers who advise) do practically to highlight the "Climate Change Emergency" issues as the XR "demand is..... ("For five consecutive days, rebels from Bristol and the South West, will disrupt key transport routes and occupy spaces in central Bristol. Our demand...") ..... that national and local governments ACT NOW to halt biodiversity loss and cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025."?**

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

PQ2 – Louise Thomas  
5G Rollout

In the light of the growing Worldwide opposition to the 5G rollout, and the appeal by scientists and doctors to the EU, WHO and UN, the peer reviewed scientific research indicating biological harm to humans and the environment, and the fact that both Glastonbury and Frome councils have put a moratorium on the rollout of 5G subject to reviewing the research , **does Somerset County council consider that it may be also appropriate to look into the 5G frequency emissions and the impact it could have on Somerset's residents.**

Response from Cllr Christine Lawrence, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

Pq3 – Nigel Behan

House of Commons Transport Committee Bus services in England outside London (May 2019)

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmtrans/1425/1425.pdf#>

Following the Select Committee report (link above) the Campaign for Better Transport called for:

“A National Bus Strategy would ensure the Government focuses on protecting and improving bus services across the country by:

- Combining funding from public sector spending on buses within a long-term framework to give local authorities and bus operators the ability to maximise the benefits of investment, plan properly for the future and ensure no further services are lost
- Speeding up the move to low and zero emission vehicles to help national and local government meet environmental and public health objectives, support jobs in bus manufacturing and help establish the UK amongst the international leaders on clean mass transport
- Establishing a programme of investment in physical and virtual infrastructure to support buses including a new generation of modal interchanges, targeted investments to make motorways and other strategic roads more bus-friendly and initiatives to encourage the development of multi-modal ticketing and journey planning.”

As one of the report’s recommendations was that the Government introduce a national strategy for buses by 2020.

**Does the Council support the Transport Committee’s request that:**

**“In its response to this Report the Government should lay out a clear timescale for the development of this strategy, including the impact assessments and consultations which will accompany the development of such a strategy. We believe there is merit in such a national strategy being underpinned by a national forum involving representatives from bus operators, trade unions and other stakeholders to examine and share information on issues such as improving services, recruitment and retention, skills, apprenticeship and bus safety.”**

And the recommendation(s):

“We recommend that the Government develop and adopt a bus strategy by the end of 2020. This should include:

- the Government’s ambitions for increasing bus ridership;
- a commitment to making the full suite of operating models, including franchising, available to all local authorities, and guidance on how different bus operating models can be used most effectively and implemented quickly with a minimum of bureaucratic impediments;
- a more stable multi-year funding model for local transport, including bus services, and a clear strategy for and details of how to access any bid-for funding;
- an assessment of the evidence for the effectiveness of bus priority measures across England, and guidance on how best to implement bus priority measures; and
- specific targets for modal shift, and actions to encourage people to switch to bus use.”

## **And what will SCC do practically as part of the Climate Change Emergency (and Air Pollution) concerns?**

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

PQ4 - Eva Bryczkowski  
Supporting Vulnerable People

Lack of funding has meant that much needed refuges have been closed. Yes, some local authorities provide safe houses, but they are not as safe as a group of women in the same house/refuge protecting one another with the support of a full time worker.

Regarding victims of sexual abuse, whether children or adults requiring help, there is no way near enough support. There are very long waiting lists. And generic counselling often wasn't enough and not tailored towards the victims who needed specialist counselling or therapy in order to help them heal, often from traumatic experiences.

I now would like to compare and contrast how different levels of funding affected services offered to adults who experienced sexual abuse as children.

When I worked at Bristol Rape Crisis Line we had an enormous amount of people, (mainly women), ringing up wanting support and counselling for childhood abuse, particularly with their experiences of flashbacks which impacted on their everyday life, at work for example.

A colleague and I set up Incest Survivors as an offshoot. This was because we had enough funding to do this. That is why I think it's important and relevant to mention this.

We set up self-help groups, counselling, and giving tailored individual support to individuals.

Two examples:-

- We supported a young woman who was sexually abused by her father to be able to leave home and find another place to live in. But it didn't stop there. She was having severe flashbacks, and we helped her in different ways to eventually heal.
- Another example was a woman who experienced such extreme sexual abuse as a child that she couldn't go anywhere where a man was nearby. She urgently needed to post a parcel but a man was serving in the post office. So I went with her and she stayed outside while I went in to post it.

Why are these examples relevant? Because it takes valuable time in order to do these things and support people, and that needs adequate funding. Now that there is definitely not enough funding in local authorities, and the levels of support offered is far less. Local authorities, and Councillors in Somerset County Council, with all the goodwill in the world simply cannot afford to provide this level of funding, despite the excellent examples of best practice in some areas.

Now in Somerset, (as in most local authorities), there are serious gaps in provision. For example, gaps in domestic violence provision. According to a recent Women's Aid report, lack of enough funding has literally meant that it is a matter of life and death. With less refuges, and also in existing refuges where there aren't enough beds to provide for everyone who is escaping from domestic abuse, workers have near impossible decisions to make. For example,

the report quotes from a worker, "I spent last weekend trying to work out which woman to turn away, asking myself - is this woman going to die if I turn her away?"

According to the Avon and Somerset Police Commissioner's Crime report. While this highlighted many examples of good practice, it also included information about the gaps in provision - which we MUST focus on in order to improve the level of support offered. For example, the report mentions cuts a key service, children's support services. These help children who have witnessed domestic abuse to access extra support. While there might have been increases in funding for domestic violence provision, it isn't enough. The number of cases of domestic violence has skyrocketed. Where increased funding has enabled the number of beds to largely to remain stable, (mainly due to housing benefit caps which often pays women's rent in shelters), women still had to wait weeks to get a place in a refuge. One woman had to call the police four times while waiting for a safe space. Another woman attempted suicide after being raped so brutally by her partner that her womb was severely damaged. When she finally managed to leave her partner there was no space immediately available.

The Somerset PCC report recommends a ratio of one refuge for 10,000 in population. The report stated that the victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence lack one-on-one support services, which is crucially needed.

The report outlines a number of percentage increases in domestic abuse and sexual abuse over certain time periods.

It states that the majority of services offer only short term support. Also that these services are not provided overnight or on weekends, when often support is very much needed.

I simply don't have time now to provide extra figures from the above and other research. Suffice it to say that I would like the Councillor who answers my questions, instead of simply confirming good practice, which is great, to concentrate on the gaps and what can the Council do about the terrible suffering experienced by adults and children.

QUESTION ONE:-

**What are councillors and officers going to do about the gaps in provision so that people who are suffering get the help they need?**

QUESTION TWO:-

**Working from the premise that:**

**If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got.**

**If what you are doing isn't working, do anything else at all.**

**How are the Council going to lobby the government in radically different ways?**

QUESTION THREE:-

**Will the Council do such radically different things such as brainstorming, involve staff working in the above areas, and anything else they can think of to find a way out of this impasse?**

Response from Cllr Christine Lawrence, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

## **ANNEX B**

**Member questions have been submitted with advance notice as follows:**

### **Elected Member Questions**

MQ1 – Liz Leyshon

Major Road Network Schemes

At the recent Peninsula Transport Board meeting, the road scheme submissions for the Peninsula area of Cornwall, Devon & Somerset included two schemes for Somerset. In the Large Local Major scheme, Somerset has proposed the Walton/Ashcott by-pass. In the Major Road Network scheme, Somerset has proposed the Glastonbury by-pass.

**Can the Cabinet member for Highways and Transport please confirm the approximate likely costs for each of these two schemes and identify how much of each total might be covered by DfT funds, how much by developer contributions and how much by Somerset County Council?**

**Of the SCC contribution, can the Cabinet member please clarify the source of the SCC funds and when these would be required?**

**And if developer funds are paid retrospectively as housing and other development takes place, how will the Council manage the cashflow for these major schemes?**

*Response from Cllr J Woodman, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport*

MQ2 – Leigh Redman

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority

As a member of the Devon & Somerset fire & rescue authority, I am privileged to be one of the representatives of this council, in July an extensive 12-week consultation was announced, elements of which, if progressed that could involve station closures and/or cuts to service, aspects that could have potential impacts on the safety of some members of our Communities.

**I wanted to ask if we as a County are responding formally to this important consultation and also suggest it would be a good idea for the appropriate scrutiny committee to look at this proposal paper and our response?**

*Response from Cllr Christine Lawrence, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing*