

Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE, on Wednesday, 4 October 2023 at 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Bill Revans (Chair)
Cllr Liz Leyshon (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Theo Butt Philip
Cllr Dixie Darch
Cllr Mike Rigby
Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts

Cllr Adam Dance
Cllr Tessa Munt
Cllr Dean Ruddle
Cllr Ros Wyke

In attendance:

Cllr Leigh Redman
Cllr Sarah Wakefield
Cllr Andy Soughton
Cllr Mandy Chilcott
Cllr Fran Smith
Cllr Heather Shearer

Cllr Tony Lock
Cllr Frances Nicholson
Cllr David Fothergill
Cllr Tom Deakin
Cllr Sue Osborne
Cllr Richard Wilkins

Other Members present remotely:

Cllr Martin Wale
Cllr Mike Best
Cllr Norman Cavill
Cllr John Cook-Woodman
Cllr Susannah Hart
Cllr Dawn Johnson
Cllr Val Keitch
Cllr Martin Lovell
Cllr Graham Oakes
Cllr Evie Potts-Jones
Cllr Mike Stanton
Cllr David Woan

Cllr Steve Ashton
Cllr Adam Boyden
Cllr Nicola Clark
Cllr Andy Dingwall
Cllr John Hunt
Cllr Helen Kay
Cllr Marcus Kravis
Cllr Dave Mansell
Cllr Oliver Patrick
Cllr Gill Slocombe
Cllr Claire Sully
Cllr Rosemary Woods

Cllr Gwil Wren

41 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

No Apologies were received.

42 Minutes from the Previous Meeting - Agenda Item 2

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 6 September 2023 were agreed upon and signed by the Chair.

43 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

COUNCILLORS WHO ARE ALSO CITY, TOWN AND/OR PARISH COUNCILLORS
SOMERSET COUNCILLOR CITY, TOWN AND/OR PARISH COUNCIL

Theo Butt Philip - Wells City Council

Adam Dance - South Petherton Parish Council

Mike Rigby - Bishop's Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council

Dean Ruddle - Somerton Town Council

Federica Smith-Roberts - Taunton Town Council

Ros Wyke - Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Council

44 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

Public Questions were received regarding Item 10 – Octagon Project Update, from:

Kathy Rolls

Jason Welch

Tareth Casey

Ray Tostevin

All questions were considered under the relevant agenda item.

The questions and responses provided are attached to the minutes in Appendix A.

The Lead Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity, Cllr Adam Dance, added an update on refreshed timescales and the signage at the Octagon work area.

The Lead Member for Children, Families and Education, Cllr Tessa Munt, and the

Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, Cllr Ros Wyke, updated the Executive on the Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) dynamic and evolving situation.

45 Treasury Management Outturn Report - Agenda Item 5

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Cllr Liz Leyshon, to introduce the report.

The Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Cllr Liz Leyshon, introduced the report, highlighting: that the report is prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) and Prudential Code; that the report detailed the outturn position on treasury management transactions in 2022-23, and presented details of capital financing, borrowing and investment activity, the risk implications of treasury decisions and transactions; and that the appendices of the report summarised the treasury management activities during 2022/23 for each of the five legacy Councils.

The Director of Resources and Corporate Services, Jason Vaughan, added to the above points, highlighting: that the information presented is a factual report position of the former five legacy Councils; the opportunity to bring the different ways of working together and find the best way going forward, including a clear risk section.

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, requested clarification of the intra-unitary borrowing and compliance regarding the former Sedgemoor District Council reports for audit, and invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: the financial risk to the authority considering the reduction in investment against the borrowing position for 2022/23.

The Director of Resources and Corporate Services, Jason Vaughan, confirmed that Somerset Council are fully compliant with the CIPFA code.

The Service Manager, Investments, Anton Sweet, clarified the intra-unitary borrowing of the former Sedgemoor District Council as £34m and that the Treasury Management 6-month report is to be considered at the 6 December 2023 Executive meeting.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion, the Executive

approved the report as being in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management and recommended it to Full Council at the next available meeting.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

46 2023/24 Housing Revenue Account Report Q1 - Agenda Item 6

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts, to introduce the report.

The Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts, introduced the report, highlighting: that the report provided an update on the projected outturn financial position of the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial year 2023/24; that the new unitary Somerset Council has inherited two landlord operating models (formerly Somerset West and Taunton and formerly Sedgemoor District Council) which now sit under one HRA and has over 10,000 of dwelling stock; that the HRA is a ring-fenced account and is self-financing; that the HRA has set a balanced budget for 2023/24; the ambitious capital programme and the planned new schemes, including major and improvement works and the Social Housing Development schemes; the revenue and capital challenges and risks relating to the economic operating environment; and the risks associated with support services and regulatory and compliance requirements.

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, asked for assurance of building compliance, post the Grenfell Tower fire, of Westfield House residential tower block in Bridgwater; and invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: dwelling housing stock and future provision work across the whole of Somerset; the duty as a Landlord for previously held HRA areas and the housing crisis issue across the whole of Somerset; the quality new builds in Minehead and the North Taunton Woolaway project; the opportunity to provide low carbon and zero carbon properties; and the zero variance across the budget lines and clarity of information.

The Director of Community Services, Chris Hall, confirmed that works had been undertaken and would be ongoing at Westfield House, to achieve the constantly changing regulatory requirements.

The Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Cllr Liz

Leyshon, commented on the HRA report, acknowledging the national and local factors that had considerable impact and challenge throughout the reporting period. The Lead Member further added that the HRA Quarter 2 report is be considered at the 6 December 2023 Executive Meeting, which will give the opportunity to provide assurance or due warning of where the Council should pay due regard.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Executive agreed:

- 1. To note the Housing Revenue Account's forecast financial performance and projected reserves position for 2023/24 financial year as at 30 June 2023, including key risks and future issues and opportunities detailed in the report which would be closely monitored and updated throughout the year.**
- 2. To note the forecast outturn position of the Capital Programme.**
- 3. To recommend to Full Council to approve a supplementary capital budget of £3,313,829 for the in-house service to spend on Fire Safety.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

47 Statement of Community Involvement - Agenda Item 7

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, Cllr Ros Wyke, to introduce the report.

The Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, Cllr Ros Wyke, introduced the report, highlighting: the requirement of Somerset Council to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to set out how and when the Council will engage with local communities and other interested parties when carrying out its statutory planning functions; that the SCI includes consultation on both planning applications and the preparation of planning policy documents, such as the Local Plan; that the preparation of a new single SCI for the whole new unitary area is essential to ensure a consistent approach to engagement is taken across all communities; and that following public consultation, the final SCI document had been amended significantly in response to feedback received.

The Principal Policy Officer, Policy, Andy Reading, with the aid of a PowerPoint

presentation, presented the report, highlighting: the legal requirements to be met by Somerset Council; that the SCI is a high level document setting out statutory legal requirements over consultation which covers engagement on planning policy, i.e. local plan, neighbourhood plan and determination of planning applications; that the SCI will replace the existing five separate SCIs of the former Districts and County Councils; that consultation on the draft SCI was undertaken during Spring 2023 prior to vesting day for a six-week period; following consultation, the content of the SCI has been reviewed and amended as appropriate to take into account comments received; summarised the consultees / interest groups, consultation statement and review of comments received, subsequent changes and key points of the received comments; summarised the main changes and key points of changes following consultation; and that there are detailed communication engagement strategies which will be prepared for particular elements of planning.

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, reminded Members of the need for a structured debate and invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: the comments and discussion from the Scrutiny Committee – Climate and Place held 20 September 2023: including consultation with the local community and the statutory requirements for notification on planning applications, the use of site notices and adjudicate neighbour notifications, an all Member briefing request – planning application process including notification and consultation (specifically neighbour and community), and small applications and use of website notifications; the scale of development and the effect on the area; the minimum statutory requirements of an SCI and the document presented; the role of a Unitary Councillor, particularly in a rural area; Parish, Town and City Councils engagement, consultation on planning applications and the closer alignment for improved understanding; and the constitutional review work for community involvement in planning.

The Assistant Director, Strategic Planning, Alison Blom-Cooper, advised of the current different practises across the different area teams and the work to make the practises consistent and confirmed the plan for an all Member briefing to be provided. The Assistant Director, Strategic Planning further added that the planning team welcomed comments from Parish, Town and City Councils in terms of their local knowledge and bringing issues to officers' attention.

The Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, Cllr Ros Wyke, advised the Executive of the change in the process whereby Parish Councils can now refer directly to the Planning Chairs and Vice-Chairs.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Executive formally adopted the Statement of Community Involvement

(Appendix 1 to the report).

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

48 Local Development Scheme - Agenda Item 8

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, Cllr Ros Wyke, to introduce the report.

The Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, Cllr Ros Wyke, introduced the report, highlighting; that the Council has a statutory responsibility to produce a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out the work programme and timetable for the production of a development plan documents, including the local plan, minerals plan and waste plan; that given the large geographic area of Somerset, the local plan will be a very complex piece of work and that the timetable is ambitious, but necessary, as the Council is required to produce a local plan within five years of vesting day; that the development plan is a key vehicle for delivering the ambitions, policies and strategies of Somerset Council, including addressing the climate and ecology emergencies and meeting housing and employment needs; and that the proposed Planning and Transport Policy Sub-Committee would oversee and monitor the review of the development plans and local transport plan and take delegated decisions on behalf of the Executive to ensure a more streamlined timetable for producing these documents.

The Principal Planning Officer, Laura Higgins, with the aid of PowerPoint presentation, presented the report, highlighting; that the Council has a legal requirement to produce a Local Plan within 5 years of vesting day (by 1 April 2028); that Officers were supported by a Critical Friend to identify ways in which this could be achieved; the conclusion that five years could be achieved but only with sufficient financial and staff resources; the ambitious timetable and streamlined approach, including consultation and a draft plan; summarised the stages and dependent factors of the proposed elements of timetable of the local plan; the establishment and purpose of the proposed Planning and Transport Subcommittee; that the timetable assumes the Local Plan is produced as a separate work strand from the Minerals and Waste Plan reviews; and that the Local Plan is a key document that will help delivery on our Climate Emergency Strategy and its emerging policies.

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: thanks to the officers and team for their work on the LDS; the challenges of achieving the local plan including: developing a new plan across a very

large geographic area, recognising and retaining the variation within Somerset, the number of other current local plans to work with, the constraints of Local Government finance, the requirement of officer and specialist skills resource, unitarisation and bringing together five local plans; the proposals in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to make amendments to the plan making process and potential changes to the current arrangements and legislation and process; liaison with the National Park and inclusion in the LDS; the comments and discussion from the Scrutiny Committee – Climate and Place held 20 September 2023, including: the involvement of Members in bringing forward a new Local Plan, a potential cross party working group for development of the Local Plan to provide scrutiny and work through the early stages of policy, the cost and breakdown of costs for a DPD, Climate Emergency policies, including zero carbon standards and new renewable energy generation, best practice and comparison of other Local Authorities, emerging policies and expediting and giving weight to policies through the Local Plan, including climate change, energy, water efficiency and increasing requirements through the building regulations to move towards net zero; the Executive Subcommittee responsibilities and public meeting open and transparent process; and the unique Somerset Council situation and the need to adhere to process to deliver policies.

The Executive Director of Climate and Place, Mickey Green, added to the above points advising of the changes in the report to reflect Scrutiny Committee – Climate and Place comments, and the recognition of further work required on the consultation engagement plan to find a manageable way to ensure everyone has a voice, with a look to add this work to the Scrutiny Committee – Climate and Place forward plan.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Executive:

- i. Approved the Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1 to the report) as the Council's work programme for delivering the Development Plan; and**
- ii. In consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, delegated authority was given to the Service Director for Economy, Employment and Planning to agree any necessary final amendments prior to its publication; and**
- iii. Agreed to establish a Planning and Transport Policy Sub-Committee of the Executive with Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

49 Octagon Project Update - Agenda Item 10

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts, to introduce the report.

The Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts, introduced the report, highlighting; that the report is a position update following the challenges and issues that have emerged since the original business case decision of the former South Somerset District Council (SSDC); the cultural, community and economical value of Octagon Theatre; that the report is not critical of the previous business case or the decision of SSDC; the conditions have changed beyond those that could reasonably have been foreseen at the time of approval; the £10m grant from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, which was the largest given at that time and a third of its total grant; and the commitment to arts and culture and the exploration of all options available to continue the Octagon being a flagship venue.

The Director of Community Services, Chris Hall, with the aid of PowerPoint presentation, presented the report, highlighting; that the report does not review the full business case; the focus on the significant funding pressures identified; summarised the approved SSDC business case; that the report identifies a range of issues that have emerged since the original business case was approved; that the report sets out the financial pressures in both revenue and capital resources during the pre-construction, and construction phases; the report sets out further financial pressures due to the increased borrowing costs and that it is no longer possible to give assurance to Members that the future taxpayer-funded revenue costs can be met. The Executive Director further summarised the changes affecting the business case, potential mitigations, risks, and next steps; and confirmed that debt servicing costs increased from c£245k pa to c£1,055k pa (the published presentation advised c£285k pa).

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: future options appraisal and revised approval to reopen, including funding, capital and revenue scheme unknowns, future options funding, commissioned survey input, venue safety, programme and production time, partnership working and timelines; the significant long term benefit to the local

community, and the local and regional economy; the divesting of former SSDC resources and assets, including capital receipts and the requirement to budget for the whole of Somerset as one Council; the duty to all the people in Somerset when making decisions for the whole of Somerset; the transparent and open communication with Council members; the central Government financial situation affecting Councils and projects both locally and nationally; the Octagon as a building for the whole of Somerset; the local economic impacts of closure of the theatre; the operation, use and ownership Westlands Leisure Venue and opportunity for future use; the meeting frequency, oversight and reporting of the Octagon Board; modelling and forecasting based on inflation and interest rates and external treasury advice; alternative modelling regarding Minehead theatre being run by volunteers and not subsidised by the Council; The 50-year loan and the life expectancy of the refit; partnership arrangements; and the governance process dependent on options brought forward.

As a Local Councillor, Cllr Graham Oakes, invited Members and Officers to the deferred meeting of Yeovil Town Council to consider the in-principle decision to work in partnership with Somerset Council to deliver the project. Councillor Oakes further added comments, highlighting: the ability for local people to express their views and feedback; advantages and opportunities for individuals and the local community and local economy; the communication between Somerset Council, Yeovil Town Council and the local community; the potential contribution to the project from Yeovil Town Council; the disadvantages and advantages of reopening, refurbishment and demolition of the theatre; the need for expertise in this project; the need for partnership working for a new way forward; and consideration of the capital programme.

The Chief Executive, Duncan Sharkey, advised that the full financial position of the Council must be considered before making decisions to invest in any area of Somerset, and that when taking decisions, only the reports and information available in the public domain should be considered.

The Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Cllr Liz Leyshon, requested it be noted that the £10m grant referred to throughout the debate, was from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

Having been duly proposed and seconded the Executive agreed the proposed amendment to add an additional recommendation to the officer report:

f. Confirmed that we would work with partners to mitigate the current economic impact of the closure of the Octagon.

This was agreed unanimously. The Executive proceeded to vote on the recommendations, as amended, which were also agreed unanimously.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Executive:

- a. Confirmed its commitment to the Octagon project as a flagship venue to deliver arts and culture services in Yeovil for Somerset.**
- b. Acknowledged that the current business case could no longer be met, and a revised business case would be necessary.**
- c. Acknowledged the revenue financial pressure created by the works to date and instructed Officers to explore mitigations to these costs.**
- d. Instructed officers to continue to work with the Department for Culture Media and Sports (DCMS) and Arts Council England (ACE) to find a viable Octagon business case to deliver cultural services in Yeovil for Somerset.**
- e. Instructed work to be overseen by the Octagon Theatre Redevelopment Project Board in collaboration with all partners and that we worked with partners to mitigate the economic impacts of the optimum closure in Yeovil.**
- f. Confirmed that we would work with partners to mitigate the current economic impact of the closure of the Octagon.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

Lunch Break: 2 – 2.30pm

The Lead Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity, Cllr Adam Dance left the Executive meeting

50 Kitchen replacement programme 2023-27 - Agenda Item 9

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts, to introduce the report.

The Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts, introduced the report, highlighting: that Somerset Council owns and manages approximately 6000 social rented homes in the Taunton area (prior to April 2023, Somerset West and Taunton District) and under the capital maintenance programme needs to ensure continued compliance with the Decent Homes Regulatory Standard; that the Council has a specific need to replace approximately 300 additional kitchens in 2023/24; that the annual demand thereafter is forecast to be at a similar level; and that the Council has a need to implement a long-term programme to install replacement kitchens to its domestic properties to provide quality homes for tenants and maintain properties.

The Assistant Director, Housing Property, Ian Candlish, added to the above points, that the funding is available within the HRA ring-fenced budget and highlighted the emphasis on the social value element regarding contractor submissions.

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: the social value and local direct employees; the minimum kitchen standard, size and unit number and the average lifecycle of a kitchen replacements; and the component life cycle standard and tenants' entitlements for a replacement.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Executive:

- a. Approved the award of three contracts for an initial period of 12 months, with an option to extend by mutual agreement for up to a further 12 months, followed by a further extension option of 24 months by mutual agreement, providing for a potential four-year contract term in total.**
- b. Approved the delegation of authority to the Service Director for Housing to approve the further extensions of the contracts subject to mutual agreement.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

The Chair advised that although the main reports for items 11, 12 and 13 were not confidential, supporting appendices available to Members contained exempt information and were therefore marked confidential – not for publication. At any point if Members wished to discuss information within these confidential

appendices, then the Executive would be asked to agree a resolution to exclude the press and public, and that there would be a requirement to agree the resolution to exclude the press and public for Item 14.

51 Cornwall and the Council of the Isles of Scilly Adoption Service to integrate with Adopt South West Regional Adoption Agency - Agenda Item 11

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, welcomed Julie Goodwin, Head of Service, Children in Care and Care Leaver, Cornwall Council and invited the Lead Member for Children, Families and Education, Cllr Tessa Munt, to introduce the report.

The Lead Member for Children, Families and Education, Cllr Tessa Munt, introduced the report, highlighting; the regional benefits of the Local Authorities grouped together will include a larger area of coverage leading to more potential adopters, a streamlined service over a large proportion of the south west area and continuity of service, not only for staff working within adoption but also for children and adopters; the provision of an agreed level of finance to support Adopt South West to continue to deliver high-quality adoption practices across the region.

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: staffing resource across the adoption agency, including recruitment, budgets, experience and the associated risks and mitigations; the number of children placed for adoption and who are in placement orders for adoption across each Local Authority area; the positive feedback received from an adoption agency peer review.

The Chair, Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families, Cllr Leigh Redman, commented on the good work of the adoption South West and reported that the Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families, had looked at previous and current report and supported the proposal.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Executive agreed the proposal for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Adoption Service to join Adopt South West as a full member.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

52 Award of contracts for highways services - Agenda Item 12

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Lead Member for Transport and Digital, Cllr Mike Rigby, to introduce the report.

The Lead Member for Transport and Digital, Cllr Mike Rigby, introduced the report, highlighting: that the contract with the existing Highways TMC is due to finish on 31st March 2024, and a new contract or set of contracts will need to be in place on 1st April 2024 to ensure that the Council can continue to deliver essential statutory highway maintenance services; the number of different contractors that have carried out the work and the intention to break up the delivery into four smaller contracts; summarised the advantages including, the encouragement of a wide range of bidders and the opportunity to deliver some services in house.

The Strategic Manager Highways and Transport, Mike O Dowd-Jones, presented the report, highlighting: that the report covered the award of the Term Service Contract for highway maintenance, which included activities such as grass cutting, gully emptying, drainage works, safety defects repair, patching, signs and lines, winter service and emergency (out of hours) services; the robust **procurement process to** bring the best possible value for money from the process.

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: the benefit of the Exmoor highway stewards pilot scheme and the level of flexibility in the contract; future input and feedback opportunities in respect of dark skies; the aspirations for EVCP roll out across Somerset; the Live Labs work to decarbonise highways maintenance; and the welcome climate change and sustainability implications and the clear carbon emission measuring baseline and management.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Executive:

- a. Approved the award of an 8-year contract with the option of a 4-year extension to Supplier B as identified in confidential Appendix A; for the provision of Highway Maintenance services from 1st April 2024.**
- b. Delegated the future decision regarding the extension of the contract beyond its initial term of 8 years to the Executive Lead Member or equivalent responsible for Highways Services having due regard to the contract terms.**
- c. Agreed that Appendix A be treated confidence, as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing that information.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

53 Contract Award - Appointment of Providers to deliver housing related support and accommodation for 16-25 year olds - Agenda Item 13

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Lead Member for Children, Families and Education, Cllr Tessa Munt, to introduce the report.

The Lead Member for Children, Families and Education, Cllr Tessa Munt, introduced the report highlighting; that the contract award is the Council's response to prevent youth homelessness in Somerset; that the statutory responsibility is shared with Community Services and Children, Families and Education services; the tender process and work across Directorates; the set up of a dynamic purchasing system to provide further beds for young people where they are required; that the award will ensure that young people are supported to manage a tenancy and develop daily living skills, as well as help them into education, employment or training.

The Strategic Commissioner for Children in Care, Julie Breeze, presented the report, highlighting: the 2 block contracts and procurement process; the flexible DPS contracting arrangement which will allow pre-approved providers to join an open account; the response from the market was highly positive and consultation sessions included input from young people and the inclusion of 10% social value commitment; the statutory requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act, the Children Act and the Care Act; the two sets of vulnerable young people requiring different levels of support; the service concept to allow young people with housing related support needs to progress along a pathway; and the range of flexible, high-quality accommodation located across the whole of Somerset.

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited comments from other Members present, questions and points raised included: the care review, the number of young people in the system and changes in requirements and complexity of needs increase, and the broad effect across the whole care system; the comparison of need before and after the pandemic and safeguarding accommodation provision process across the age differences, including Ofsted registered provision for 16-17 year olds; and the Somerset area coverage and support networks for young people

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Executive:

- **Approved the award of a 5-year contract for the appointment of suppliers to deliver housing related support and accommodation for 16 to 25 year olds, based on the most advantageous tender, to the proposed suppliers (as per the confidential evaluation report (Appendix B), commencing on 1 April 2024.**

Lot Number	Support Level	Awarded Suppliers (see Appendix B for details)
Lot 1 – Supported Accommodation for 16-25 year old children in care and care leavers, including Emergency accommodation		
Lot 1A	High	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 1B	Medium/Low	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 2 – Supported Accommodation for 18-25 year olds who are homeless, eligible and reason to believe in priority need, including Emergency accommodation		
Lot 2A	High	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 2B	Medium	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 2C	Low	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 2D	Emergency	Bidder O / Bidder D

- **Agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Director for Children and Family Services and the Executive Director for Community Services in consultation with the relevant Lead Members to evaluate and take a further decision on the two 2-year extension options at the appropriate time.**
- **Approved the set up and operation of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to provide further anticipated beds, as and when required. This would entail the set-up of the system itself, the approval of providers to join the DPS through a Selection process and the ongoing award of call-of contracts through the system. The maximum spend over the term of the DPS would be £100,000,000. The term would be 10 years commencing on 01/04/2024.**
- **Agreed the case for applying the exempt information provision as set out in the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and therefore to treat the confidential Appendix B in confidence, as it contained commercially sensitive information, and as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing that information.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

54 Commercial Investment update - Agenda Item 14

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Governance and Communications, Cllr Bill Revans, invited the Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, Cllr Ros Wyke, to introduce the report.

Exclusion of the Press and Public:

Having been duly proposed and seconded the Executive agreed to exclude the press and public from the meeting under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information.

Reason: Local Government Act 1972 – Schedule 12A

The item is likely to contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets, Cllr Ros Wyke, introduced the report and invited the Commercial Property Land Development Manager, Rob Orrett, to present the report.

The Commercial Property Land Development Manager, Rob Orrett, presented the report and a debate was had.

Following consideration of the officer report, confidential appendix and discussion, the Executive agreed:

- a. To exclude the press and public from the meeting where there was any discussion at the meeting regarding exempt or confidential information (as set out in Appendix A of the report);**
- b. That Appendix A be regarded as exempt information and be treated in confidence, as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing that information;**
- c. To approve the recommendations set out in Appendix A (as amended).**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

55 Executive Forward Plan - Agenda Item 15

The Executive noted the Forward Plan.

(The meeting ended at 3.35 pm)

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CHAIR