

Minutes of a Meeting of the Full Council held in the Hollinsworth Hall, Canalside Conference Centre, Marsh Lane, Huntworth, Bridgwater, TA6 6LQ, on Wednesday, 27 September 2023 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Mike Best (Chair)

Cllr Lee Baker (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Steve Ashton

Cllr John Bailey

Cllr Councillor Brian Bolt

Cllr Hilary Bruce

Cllr Simon Carswell

Cllr Norman Cavill

Cllr Barry Clarke

Cllr Simon Coles

Cllr Nick Cottle

Cllr Dixie Darch

Cllr Tom Deakin

Cllr Andy Dingwall

Cllr Michael Dunk

Cllr Caroline Ellis

Cllr Ben Ferguson

Cllr David Fothergill

Cllr Andy Hadley

Cllr Bente Height

Cllr Ross Henley

Cllr Henry Hobhouse

Cllr Dawn Johnson

Cllr Liz Leyshon

Cllr Martin Lovell

Cllr Kevin

Cllr Tessa Munt

Cllr Graham Oakes

Cllr Oliver Patrick

Cllr Emily Pearlstone

Cllr Suria Aujla

Cllr Marcus Barr

Cllr Alan Bradford

Cllr Theo Butt Philip

Cllr Mike Caswell

Cllr Mandy Chilcott

Cllr Peter Clayton

Cllr John Cook-Woodman

Cllr Adam Dance

Cllr Hugh Davies

Cllr Martin Dimery

Cllr Lance Duddridge

Cllr Sarah Dyke

Cllr Habib Farbahi

Cllr Bob Filmer

Cllr Andrew Govier

Cllr Pauline Ham

Cllr Alistair Hendry

Cllr Edric Hobbs

Cllr John Hunt

Cllr Tim Kerley

Cllr Tony Lock

Cllr Dave Mansell

Cllr Harry Munt

Cllr Mike Murphy

Cllr Sue Osborne

Cllr Kathy Pearce

Cllr Derek Perry

Cllr Evie Potts-Jones

Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey

Cllr Faye Purbrick

Cllr Leigh Redman

Cllr Mike Rigby

Cllr Diogo Rodrigues

Cllr Dean Ruddle

Cllr Councillor Heather Shearer

Cllr Fran Smith

Cllr Andy Soughton

Cllr Claire Sully

Cllr Lucy Trimnell

Cllr Councillor Martin Wale

Cllr Alex Wiltshire

Cllr Gwil Wren

Cllr Tom Power

Cllr Steven Pugsley

Cllr Wes Read

Cllr Bill Revans

Cllr Tony Robbins

Cllr Jo Roundell Greene

Cllr Peter Seib

Cllr Brian Smedley

Cllr Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts

Cllr Mike Stanton

Cllr Andy Sully

Cllr Sarah Wakefield

Cllr Richard Wilkins

Cllr David Woan

Cllr Ros Wyke

Other Members present remotely:

Cllr Jason Baker

Cllr Councillor Nicola Clark

Cllr Mike Hewitson

Cllr Christine Lawrence

Cllr Adam Boyden

Cllr Shane Collins

Cllr Helen Kay

Cllr Rosemary Woods

30 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillors Jason Baker, Adam Boyden, Nicola Clark, Shane Collins, Dawn Denton, Philip Ham, Susannah Hart, Mark Healey, Helen Kay, Val Keitch, Andy Kendall, Jenny Kenton, Marcus Kravis, Christine Lawrence, Matt Martin, Frances Nicholson, Connor Payne, Gill Slocombe, Jeny Snell and Rosemary Woods.

31 Minutes from the Previous Meeting - Agenda Item 2

RESOLVED that the minutes of Full Council held on 26 July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

32 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

Councillors present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor of a Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

UNITARY COUNCILLOR	TOWN AND/OR PARISH COUNCIL
Steve Ashton	Crewkerne Town Council / Hinton St George Parish Council
Suria Aujla	Bridgwater Town Council
Lee Baker	Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council
Marcus Barr	Wellington Town Council
Mike Best	Crewkerne Town Council
Alan Bradford	North Petherton Town Council
Theo Butt Philip	Wells City Council
Simon Carswell	Street Parish Council
Norman Cavill	West Monkton Parish Council
Peter Clayton	Burnham Highbridge Town Council
Nick Cottle	Glastonbury Town Council / St Edmunds Parish Council
Adam Dance	South Petherton Parish Council
Tom Deakin	Taunton Town Council
Andy Dingwall	Westonzoyland Parish Council
Caroline Ellis	Taunton Town Council
Ben Ferguson	Axbridge Town Council
Bob Filmer	Brent Knoll Parish Council
Andrew Govier	Wellington Town Council
Pauline Ham	Axbridge Town Council
Ross Henley	Wellington Town Council
Edric Hobbs	Shepton Mallet Town Council
John Hunt	Bishop's Hull Parish Council
Tim Kerley	Somerton Town Council
Tony Lock	Yeovil Town Council
Martin Lovell	Shepton Mallet Town Council
Mike Murphy	Burnham Highbridge Town Council
Graham Oakes	Yeovil Town Council / Yeovil Without Parish Council
Sue Osborne	Ilminster Town Council
Kathy Pearce	Bridgwater Town Council
Evie Potts-Jones	Yeovil Town Council
Tom Power	Wincanton Town Council
Wes Read	Yeovil Town Council
Leigh Redman	Bridgwater Town Council
Mike Rigby	Bishop's Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council
Tony Robbins	Wells City Council
Dean Ruddle	Somerton Town Council
Peter Seib	Brympton Parish Council / Chilthorne Domer Parish Council

Heather Shearer	Street Parish Council
Brian Smedley	Bridgwater Town Council
Federica Smith-Roberts	Taunton Town Council
Andy Soughton	Yeovil Town Council
Richard Wilkins	Curry Rivel Parish Council
Dave Woan	Yeovil Town Council
Ros Wyke	Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Council

33 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

Public Questions were received from:-

- Alan Debenham - Budget
- Mr JC Woods - Council Tax Discount
- Sigurd Reimers - Climate
- Catherine Cannon - Plant based food/Climate
- Paul Partington - Rights of Way
- Andrew Strong - Bus/Transport
- David Redgewell - Bus/Transport
- Robbie Bentley - Bus/Transport
- Ian Beckey - Bus/Transport
- Eva Bryczkowski - Town Centre Improvements
- Nick Hall - Licensing Policy
- Carolyn Griffiths - Licensing Policy

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

Chair's Announcements

The Chair of the Council, Councillor Mike Best, referred to the events detailed on the Chair's Information Sheet, circulated and published with the agenda.

Council observed a minute's silence in memory of former Councillors Alex Glassford, Peter Humber and Derek Yeomans who had sadly passed away. Several councillors paid tribute to them at the meeting, including Councillors Lee Baker, Mike Best, David Fothergill, Bill Revans and Martin Wale.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Kevin Messenger to his first meeting of Full Council.

34 Report of the Leader and Executive - Agenda Item 5

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Revans, introduced the report which set out the recommendations to Council which arose from the consideration of the report at the Executive meeting held on 6 September 2023.

The purpose of the report was to acknowledge the year end position of the legacy Councils' General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors thanked officers for all their hard work in compiling the reports for the five former councils.
- Concern was raised on the slippage figures within the report.
- Councillors agreed that the table within appendix 7 for Paper A was useful and requested that the figures were further broken down by projects.
- Councillors queried why the Yeovil Refresh Project had not been highlighted within the table, as the Firepool Project had been highlighted within the Taunton figures.
- Councillors queried when the finalised funding from Government would be known.

Councillor Bill Revans proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Liz Leyshon.

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Council **RESOLVED** to:

- Acknowledge the year end position of the legacy Councils' General Fund Capital Programmes and approved the carry forward requests of £99.5m and revised Capital Programme attached at Appendix 7.
- Acknowledge the year end position of the legacy Councils' HRA Capital Programmes and approved the carry forward requests of £90.4m and revised Capital Programme attached at Appendix 7a.

35 Report of the Monitoring Officer - Agenda Item 6

The Monitoring Officer, David Clark, introduced the report which set out a proposed appointment of a co-opted member to the Scrutiny Committee for Children and Families (Paper A) and a Chief Executive Non-Key Decision which approved a Member Dispensation (Paper B).

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Concern was raised on the distribution of late papers for the agenda.
- Councillor David Fothergill thanked officers for the decision paper on the

member dispensation for Councillor Christine Lawrence due to ill health.

Councillor Liz Leyshon proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor David Fothergill.

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Council **RESOLVED** to:-

- Paper A - Approve the appointment of Joanne Simons as a co-opted member on the Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families.
- Paper B - Note the non-key decision report taken by the Chief Executive on 6 September 2023.

36 Report of the Chief Executive - Agenda Item 7

The Chief Executive, Duncan Sharkey, introduced the report which asked for approval for emergency cover arrangements for two vacant Service Director roles.

Councillor Dean Ruddle proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Sue Osborne.

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Council **RESOLVED** to:-

- Confirm the emergency temporary appointment of Niki Shaw Strategic Manager Quality, Performance, Policy and Assurance, to provide emergency cover to the proposed post of Service Director Adults Strategy, Transformation and Performance, with effect from 1 August 2023 for a temporary period until 31 March 2024 or on a permanent appointment being made, whichever was sooner.
- Confirm the emergency temporary appointment of Paul Coles Strategic Manager Adults Services, to provide cover for the post of Service Director Adults Commissioning, for a temporary period until 31 March 2024, or on a permanent appointment being made, whichever was sooner.

37 Report of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee - Agenda Item 8

The Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committee, Councillor Simon Carswell, introduced the report which requested approval of the Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors thanked officers for the work carried out on the Policy.
- Councillors mentioned noise nuisance created by many festivals within the area and requested a member briefing on the licensing objectives.
- The Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee welcomed councillors

to attend their meetings.

- Councillors thanked the public speakers and all of the people that had submitted responses to the consultation.

Councillor Simon Carswell proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Ros Wyke.

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Statement of Licensing Policy.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.

The meeting restarted at 4:15 pm.

38 Report of the Leader and Executive - Agenda Item 9

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Liz Leyshon, introduced the report which included a summary of the key decisions taken by the Leader and Executive.

Member Questions were received from:-

- Councillor Dave Mansell/Cllr Gwil Wren - Flooding
- Councillor Lucy Trimnell - Heritage
- Councillor Norman Cavill - Phosphates
- Councillor Sue Osborne - Planning
- Councillor David Fothergill - Adult Social Care
- Councillor Diogo Rodrigues - Car parks/Transport

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

The Council discussed the report and the following points were addressed to Lead Members:-

- Installation of contactless payments on all bus services.
- Concern on the amount of empty electric vehicle charging bays in the Crescent Car Park.
- Section 19 on Flooding and the importance of keeping the roads open.
- Thanks were given to local communities and the actions taken during the recent flooding.

The Council noted the report.

39 Annual Report of Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture - Agenda Item 10

The Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture, Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts, introduced her annual report.

The Council noted the report.

40 Annual Report of Lead Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity - Agenda Item 11

The Lead Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity, Councillor Adam Dance, introduced his report.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors requested an update on the take-up figures for this year's covid vaccine.
- Concern was raised on the withdrawal of some vaccine programmes.
- Councillors requested a further breakdown of the results from the school's wellbeing survey.
- The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee for Childrens and Families advised that the survey results would be discussed at one of their meetings.

The Council noted the report.

41 Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Board - Agenda Item 12

The Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board, Jane Lock, introduced the annual report.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors thanked the Chair, Vice Chair and all the members of the Board for their hard work.
- Councillors gave special thanks to the retiring Independent Chair of Corporate Parenting Board.

Jane Lock proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Leigh Redman.

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Council **RESOLVED** to:-

- Recommend a continued focus on corporate parenting responsibility as our new structures and arrangements were established, especially around housing, education, apprenticeships and social value in our procurement systems.
- Support and promote a whole council approach to create practical and

specific offers to Care Leavers through our Local Offer and the Care Leaver Covenant.

- Extend its thanks to the Somerset Care Council's young people for all the hard work that they had undertaken.
- Extend its thanks to the retiring Independent Chair of Corporate Parenting Board, Jill Johnson for her commitment and tenacity during her tenure from 2016- 2022.

42 Annual Report of the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Partnership - Agenda Item 13

The Chair of the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Partnership, Councillor Henry Hobhouse, introduced the annual report.

The Council noted the report.

43 Redundancies Arising from Changes in Services - Agenda Item 14

The Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources, Councillor Theo Butt Philip, introduced the report which detailed two proposed dismissals on account of redundancy in relation to changes within their services.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors thanked the officers for their work during their years of service for the councils.
- Councillors highlighted that only one of the redundancies was related to the Local Government Reform.

Councillor Theo Butt Philip proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Faye Purbrick.

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Council **RESOLVED** to:-

- Approve the costs of the redundancies, as set out in Appendix One (Pest Control).
- Approve the costs of the redundancy, as set out in Appendix Two (Highways and Transport).
- Delegate authority to the relevant Service Director to agree the final date of dismissal and the final redundancy package, noting that the payment would not exceed contractual redundancy pay or the payment required under statute to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

44 Report of the Special Members Panel - Agenda Item 15

Exclusion of the Press and Public:

Having been duly proposed and seconded the Council **RESOLVED** 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: Information which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Liz Leyshon, introduced the report of the Special Members Panel.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors were advised of the membership of the Panel.
- Clarification was given on the process followed by the Panel.
- Councillors were glad that the decision had come to Full Council.

Councillor Liz Leyshon proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Theo Butt Philip.

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations within the confidential report.

(The meeting ended at 5.45 pm)

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CHAIR