

**County Council**  
**Wednesday 19 February 2020**  
**10.00 am Council Chamber - Shire Hall,**  
**Taunton**



**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA**

To: The Members of the County Council

We are now able to enclose the following information which was unavailable when the agenda was published:

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## CHAIR'S SCHEDULE AND MEETING BUSINESS PLAN

County Council Meeting – Wednesday 19 February 2020 (10.00am)

**Please note that Item 12 will be considered in advance of Items 10 and 11**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** **Guide Time: 10.01am**

Cllr Govier, Cllr Keating, Cllr Lawrence

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** **Guide Time: 10.03am**

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.

**Chair to remind all members present that:**

- 1) The Monitoring Officer has granted a dispensation to enable all elected members to participate and vote on setting the budget, council tax levels and the Members Allowance Scheme**
- 2) Any member who has an amount of Council Tax due to be paid which has been unpaid for at least two months needs to declare that as they cannot take part in the vote relating to the Revenue Budget**

**3. MINUTES** **Guide Time: 10.04am**

To confirm the accuracy of the Minutes together with the Appendix attached of the Council meeting held on 22 January 2020, and if agreed, the Chair will sign the Minutes as a correct record.

**4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** **Guide Time: 10.10am**

**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: 10.25am**

**CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair's announcements cover information regarding visits made between 23 January and 17 February 2020

**6. For decision:**

**Guide Time: 10.30am**

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

**Item 6 - to be introduced by Cllr David Fothergill – Leader of the Council**

The Chair to invite the Leader of Council to make an introductory speech and to take subsequent questions.

Council are then asked to consider a report with recommendations from the Leader of the Council, arising from the Cabinet meetings held on 22 January and 10 February 2020. The recommendations for voting upon include the MTFP 2020/21-2022/23 (set out in Paper A) and the Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 (set out in Paper B). Chair to propose that each paper is presented, debated and voted upon separately.

**The Medium-Term Financial Plan 2020/21-2022/23 (PAPER A)**

Chair to invite Cllr Chilcott to refer to the report (set out in Paper A on pages 33-154) considered at the three Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet meeting in January and February setting out Revenue Budget, the Capital Strategy, the Minimum Revenue Provision statement and the Section 25 Statement from the Section 151 Officer for approval at the County Council meeting February 2020. Cllr Chilcott to highlight that members will need to have due regards to the equalities impact assessments within these papers.

Chair to invite Sheila Collins (Section 151 Officer) to set out any additional points and in particular key points from her Section 25 Statement.

Chair to then invite questions from members about the MTFP report with answers to be

provided by Cllr Chilcott or other Cabinet Members (if regarding specific proposals in their areas of responsibility) or the Section 151 officer.

The recommendations set out in Paper A on page 36 to be proposed by Cllr Fothergill, seconded by Cllr Chilcott, debated and voted upon as detailed below.

Chair to remind members that the recommendations for the budget are intended to be taken en-bloc and remind all members that there will be a named vote on the Revenue Budget as required by legislation.

Chair to invite the Monitoring Officer to read out the names for members to then advise of their vote. Following the vote, the Monitoring Officer will inform the Council as to the voting figures and whether the recommendations were carried or rejected.

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

**The Medium-Term Financial Plan 2020/21-2022/23** – see Paper A and its appendices that Cabinet considered and endorsed at its meeting on 10 February 2020

**The Council is recommended to:**

1. Take account of the Section 151 Officer's assessment of the robustness of budget and adequacy of reserves on the budget proposals as set out in **Appendix L**.
2. Agree the net revenue budget in 2020/21 of **£338,370,800**.
3. Agree to increase the level of the general Council Tax by 1.99%, which will provide a further £4.924m to support the Council's expenditure on services.
4. Agree to increase Council Tax by a further 2% for the adult social care precept, which will provide a further £4.949m to support the growth in demand for services.
5. Agree to continue the Council Tax precept of £12.84 within the base budget for the shadow Somerset Rivers Authority (representing no increase). This results in a Council Tax Requirement of £2,562,543.
6. Agree the precept requirement of **£257,292,090** for 2020/21 and set the County Council precept for Band D council tax charge at **£1,289.20** for 2020/21. This is a rise of £0.95 per week for a Band D property.
7. Note that the amount of council tax payable for dwellings listed by valuation band, calculated in accordance with the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the

Local Government Act 1992, shall be as follows:

<b>Valuation Band</b>	<b>Amount£</b>
A	859.47
B	1,002.71
C	1,145.96
D	1,289.20
E	1,575.69
F	1,862.18
G	2,148.67
H	2,578.40

8. Approve the use of earmarked reserves as follows:
  - a. Contribution to Social Care Transformation Reserve £4.472m
  - b. Contribution to Insurance Fund Reserve £2.067m
  - c. Contribution to Budget Equalisation Reserve £4.562m
  - d. Contribution to Social Care Volatility Reserve £2.343m
  - e. Draw from Corporate Priorities Reserve £5m (£4.831m in 2020/21, and £0.169m in 2021/22)
  - f. Draw from various service Earmarked Reserves £2.047m.
9. Agree the proposals for transformation (as set out in **Appendices A to G**), and delegate the implementation to the relevant Director(s) following due process.
10. Agree that due regards have been taken to any equalities implications identified and risk implications prior to any decision being taken in relation to the recommendations in this report, noting the initial equalities impacts.
11. Agree to keep the current Members' Allowances Scheme unchanged for 2020/21, noting the work being undertaken ahead of the County Council elections in 2021.
12. Note that the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Resources, Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer will oversee and monitor the delivery of the proposals for transformation and report on progress as part of the budget monitoring reports.
13. Delegate authority for the development of any additional alternative proposals for transformation that may be necessary to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and relevant Director(s).
14. Delegate powers to the Section 151 Officer following consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise budget proposals following analysis of the final

Local Government Financial Settlement and confirmation of the Business Rates income.

15. Approve the allocation of the Schools' Block element of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) as set out in **section 6** of the report.

16. Delegate approval of the final formula factors for individual schools 2020/21 to the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, the Cabinet Member for Education and Transformation and the Cabinet Member for Resources.

17. To note the Capital Strategy and adopt the Prudential Code Indicators set within the document.

18. Approve the proposed additions to capital programme for the period 2020/21 to 2023/24 of £123.961m, as set out in **section 9** of the report.

19. Approve that the Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team, following appropriate consultation and after giving due regard to the information contained within any associated impact assessments, are given delegated authority to decide on the individual capital projects to be delivered within block allocations.

20. Approve that the Section 151 Officer is given delegated authority to accept any additional grants or funding that is made available to the County Council together with authority to consequently expand the approved capital programme, providing there are no negative revenue budget implications as a result of that action.

21. Approve the continuation of the current MRP Policy for 2020/21

### **Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2020-21 (PAPER B)**

Chair to invite Cllr Chilcott to refer to the report (set out in Paper B) considered at the Audit Committee and the Cabinet meeting in January and February.

Chair to invite Sheila Collins (Section 151 Officer) to set out any additional points for members to consider.

Chair to then invite questions from members about the Treasury Management Strategy with answers to be provided by Cllr Chilcott or the Section 151 officer.

The recommendations set out in Paper B on page 155 to be proposed by Cllr Chilcott, seconded by Cllr Leyshon, debated and voted upon as detailed below.

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

**Treasury Management mid-year Report** – see Paper B

**The Council is recommended to:**

- 1. Adopt the Treasury Management Strategy (as shown in section 2 of the report)**
- 2. Approve the Treasury Investment Strategy (as shown in Section 3 of the report) and proposed Lending Counterparty Criteria (attached at Appendix B to Paper B)**
- 3. Adopt the Prudential Indicators in section 4 of the report.**

**There will be a short comfort break following the completion of Item 6**

## **7. REPORT OF THE HR POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Guide Time: 11.30am**

Chair to invite Cllr Chilcott to introduce the report from the HR Policy Committee.

Chair to invite any questions from members. If necessary Chris Squire the HR & OD Director may also be invited to answer any points raised.

Following any questions the Chair to highlight the recommendations on page 243 which are to be proposed by Cllr Chilcott, seconded by Cllr Leyshon. Chair to then invite the Council to vote upon:

**That the County Council approve the Pay Policy Statement (PPS) for the Council for 2020-21 (attached as Appendix A to this report).**

## **8. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

**Guide Time: 11.45am**



Chair to highlight the report from the Monitoring Officer relating to the appointment of a Deputy Section 151 Officer.

Chair to request that the Council consider the report by the Monitoring Officer (starting from page 203) setting out the proposed appointment of a Deputy Section 151 Officer.

Chair to invite any questions from members and debate on the proposed improvements. Following debate, the Chair to highlight the recommendations on page 186 which are to be proposed by Cllr Fothergill, seconded by Cllr Redman. Chair to then invite the Council to vote upon:

**The County Council is recommended to appoint the post and postholder of Strategic Manager Finance Business Partnering, currently held by Sian Kenny, as a Deputy Section 151 Officer (see section 3.3 of this report) with effect from 1 March 2020.**

## 9. REQUISITIONED ITEM

**Guide Time: 11.55am**

To consider the following requisitioned item – **Climate Emergency-‘A Tree for every baby’**. To be proposed by Cllr Leyshon and seconded by Cllr Munt.

Chair to invite Cllr Leyshon to present the requisitioned item.

Chair to invite any questions from members and debate on the requisitioned item. Following debate, the Chair to then invite the Council to vote upon:

As this Council works towards completion of its Action Plan to accompany the Climate Change strategy, leading from the declaration of a Climate Emergency a year ago, we call upon Council to acknowledge the further pressures of Ash die-back and loss of mature trees in recent storms.

Planting trees is beneficial to the environment in the face of accelerating climate change. As we plant trees they help support our wildlife, improve our natural environment as well as reduce the concentration of harmful gases contributing to climate change.

In order to ensure a significant increase in tree planting within the boundary of Somerset, this Council will commit to working with partners, including District and Parish Councils, to support tree planting schemes with local communities and landowners to enable new trees to be planted across Somerset equal to or in excess of the number of babies born in the County this coming year and for the

following two years. 'A TREE FOR EVERY BABY'

Note: 2016 births in Somerset, from Somerset Intelligence = 5470.

**Please note that Item 12 will be considered in advance of Items 10 and 11**

**12. REPORT OF THE LEADER AND CABINET-  
ITEM FOR INFORMATION**

**Guide Time: 12.15pm**

**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 (to respond to Cllr Lock's Member question)**
- **Cllr Mandy Chilcott (to present Item 11)**
- **Cllr John Woodman**
- **Cllr Frances Nicholson**
- **Cllr Christine Lawrence (To present Item 10)**
- **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.

**10. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER  
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

**Guide Time: N/A**

To be considered under Item 12

**11. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER  
FOR RESOURCES**

**Guide Time: N/A**

To be considered under Item 12

**13. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES,  
ADULTS AND HEALTH COMMITTEE**

**Guide Time: 12.45pm**

**Item 13 – to be introduced by Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey – Chair of the Scrutiny  
for Policies, Adults and Health Committee**

To be noted.

**14. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR  
POLICIES AND PLACE COMMITTEE**

**Guide Time: 12.55pm**

**Item 14 – to be introduced by Cllr Anna Groskop– Chair of the Scrutiny  
for Policies and Place Committee**

To be noted.

**15. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES,  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE**

**Guide Time: 1.05pm**

**Item 15 – to be introduced by Cllr Leigh Redman – Chair of the Scrutiny  
for Policies, Children and Families Committee**

To be noted.

**Finish 1.15pm**

## Annex A - Public and Member Questions

Public Questions			
PQ/MQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ 1 - 3	David Redgewell	South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside – Submitted by David Redgewell  Bus Services in Somerset	<p>We welcome the report into unity government in Somerset and the cost savings in mergers of services, especially planning and transport authority services such as land use at Taunton bus station. One Somerset council would be good for the community. The structure needs addressing. Do we have 3 councils? Somerset west and Taunton and South Somerset plus Sedgemoor, with North Somerset, Banes and Mendip district merging and become part of mayoral with planning and transport authority. Regarding buses and trains services there is a need for a clear bus strategy for the county and rail services investment under the Williams review, with government bids for local transport authority funding. Having a clear plan for bus and coach services is important, as is linking Taunton to Minehead, Bridgwater, Burnham-on-Sea and Wellington. Yeovil needs a network of routes to Chard, Wincanton and Crewkerne, with station improvements at Crewkerne and a new station area at Chard Junction. Yeovil Pen Mill and junction needs disabled access improvements as do the lifts at Bridgwater, Highbridge and Burnham-on-Sea, Weston Super Mare and Nailsea and Backwell. Reopening Wellington station and connection to the West Somerset railway are very, very important for the future. Following the successful rail services link in the summer from Taunton to Minehead connecting trains with First group and GWR we are very keen to maintain bus links 75 - Bridgwater to Wells, 29 - Taunton to Wells, 99 - Chard to Taunton and 25 - Taunton to Dulverton. We need to maintain subsidies on these services. We welcome the opportunity and progress on transport in the County and the new bus interchange at Taunton, whilst at Bridgwater the new interchange needs to be looked at again as at Bridgwater station buses cannot turn around.</p> <p>Councillors, can you also please talk to Dorset County Council about the future of bus service number 6 which First Group Wessex is to stop running from May 2020 and also talk to South Somerset District Council and Crewkerne Town Council about this important transport link,</p>

			<p>which includes Yeovil College. It is understood that First Group South West may take the service over under the buses of Somerset brand, operating from its Yeovil depot. Please can the Council discuss this issue with First Group plc.</p> <p>1. Are the council going to use the £444000 budget to improve the bus network to include subsidies on rural and evening bus services in the Somerset County Council area in 2020/2021 because the Council have this responsibility under the 2017 Bus Services Act.</p> <p>2. What arrangements do Somerset County Council have in place for subsidised cross boundary bus services and integration with rail services with North Somerset, East/North Devon, Dorset and Wiltshire?</p> <p>3. Is Somerset County Council going to put in a bid from the station reopening fund to make sure that Wellington is reopened?</p>
Answer: From Cllr John Woodman, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport			
PQ/MQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement

PQ 4 - 6	Alan Debenham	Budget / Council Tax	<p>1. House of Commons PMQs last week again saw PM Johnson declare a fantastic Government funding settlement for Local Government for 2020/21 of a real term increase of 4% and centrally allocated £1 billion for additional help to Adult Social Care, plus £5 billion now announced for positive promotion of local buses and bicycles".</p> <p>Where does the MTFP show these increases and doesn't the Interim Finance Director's language of tight budget control and just about managing to avoid any further service cuts speak of continuing austerity rather than any of the Johnson's typical post –Brexit golden age fantasy?</p> <p>What is the reality of Johnson's hard Brexit deal, measured on par with 'no deal' by most independent financial experts, in terms of loss of EU grants for rural and agricultural sustainability grants, in which Somerset have done well, and forecasted general economic downturn of 8 to 10% in the next decade?</p> <p>2. Once again, there is a proposed Council Tax demand at an increase of 4% which is over double the level of inflation, for a tax based on property values, as at April 1991, which is one of the most unfair in the way it bears little relation to people's incomes and does not include site and/or land values.</p> <p>How does the Council justify this continued enlarged and unfair taxation of its residents?</p> <p>3. "The MTFP Strategy recognised that the Council declared a climate change emergency in February 2019 and is now working with partners to develop a Climate Emergency Strategy. When this strategy is adopted, the Council will need a financial strategy that is flexible enough to reflect agreed priorities. Pending this strategy, no specific activities have been factored into the indicative budget proposals at this stage": says the finance report.</p> <p>When is this strategy likely to be concluded and surely some substantial financial provision should be earmarked now, even if only an estimate of definite needs to come, bearing in mind the threat to humankind's very continued existence on Earth and the possible likelihood of death by starvation or violence before this century ends?</p>
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PQ/MQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ 7 - 9	Nigel Behan	Climate Emergency	<p>Q1 Relates to Climate Change Emergency (and Framework)</p> <p>We welcome the quote on the leaflet (with an Extinction Rebellion logo) by the Somerset Climate Action Network who are facilitating the current consultations around the County.</p> <p>“We know we can’t wait – action has to start now for the people of Somerset” Somerset’s local authorities have declared A Climate Emergency Did you know? Councillor David Hall, Somerset County Council Cabinet Member, February 2019</p> <p>With structured (programmed) timescales still at a formative stage for SCC’s actions (for instance changes in commissioning, procurement, planning, transport, air quality - processes, policies...etc etc) to be measurable, meaningfully significant – when will it be Business as Usual (Would a new type of Key Performance Indicators be introduced)?</p> <p>Q2 We also note that the existing “Procedure Rules and Contract Standing Orders” are being reviewed and a paper will be considered by the Constitutions and Standards Committee in the Spring (2020).</p> <p>The Future of Local Government in Somerset: Delivering together for the people of Somerset stated: “The Somerset Councils have come together to develop a county-wide strategy for tackling the Climate Emergency. Each of us has pledged to bring our own operations and estate to carbon neutrality by 2030”</p> <p>Which of the models of Local Government (in the options from Ignite &amp; Co) does SCC believe is most likely to provide a strategic, coherent, joined up, practical response to combatting the adverse consequences of (anthropogenic) impacts on Our Climate (e.g. on commission/procurement changes)?</p>

Q3 A major United Nations climate change summit will take place in Glasgow.

The UK has won the bid to host the 26th Conference of the Parties, known as COP26, following a partnership with Italy.”

As the BBC put it. What responses will SCC provide/contribute to this event?

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

#### Member Questions

PQ/MQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement
MQ1	Cllr Jane Lock	Unitary Council for Somerset	If consensus cannot be reached between the five Somerset Councils as to the future of local government in the County does the Leader believe that residents should be given the final say through a referendum or other appropriate process to ensure that any outcome reflects the wishes of the Council Tax payer?

Response from Cllr David Fothergill - Leader of the Council





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