

CHAIR'S SCHEDULE AND MEETING BUSINESS PLAN

County Council Meeting – Wednesday 17 February 2021 (10.00am)

Chair of Council, Cllr Nigel Taylor, to welcome everyone to the virtual meeting of the County Council and remind those present that:

- **It is only the County Councillors present that are taking the decisions at the meeting - others in attendance are there to provide advice to the Council.**
- **The agenda and papers have been published on the council's website in advance of the meeting.**
- **The Council will be making an audio recording of the meeting and this will be published on the Council's website in due course.**

Cllr Taylor to further highlight the following virtual meeting good practice:

- **Please use the meeting chat function only for purposes of the meeting, primarily to indicate that you wish to speak.**
- **Please only speak at the Chairs invitation.**
- **Please say you name before speaking.**
- **The importance of turning off microphones and cameras when not speaking (with the exception of the meeting chair).**
- **Members and Officers are invited to switch on their cameras when they speak.**

Invite Scott Wooldridge to clarify what defines a point of order, how members will vote on the decision items and what will happen if members experience connectivity issues during debate on decision items.

Anticipating this meeting lasting for approximately 5 hours and we will take a comfort break upon the completion of Item 6 (about 11.55) and then a ½ hr break for lunch before Item 10 (about 1.00pm).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Guide Time: 10.01am

1.

Cllr Davies and Cllr Keating.

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 18 November 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 and highlight that there will be a 15 second delay before speakers address the meeting. 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.

Members are reminded that there will be no debate on Public Questions

Invite Public Speakers in the following order:

Alan Debenham – Council Tax increase and Debt borrowing;

Andrew Pope – Council Tax increases;

Nigel Behan – Air Quality and Climate Change;

Nigel Behan – Reform of Health and Care Services;

Lucy Travis – Buses in Somerset;

David Redgewell – Trains in Somerset;
John Hassell – Trains in Somerset.

5. For information:

Guide Time: 10.30am

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair's announcements (Page 9) cover information regarding visits made between 18 November 2020 and 16 February 2021.

The Chair to refer to the recent passing of John Brunsdon MBE, former County Councillor for Glastonbury, who also served as a District Councillor, Mayor of Glastonbury and as a Glastonbury Town Councillor for 44 continuous years.

The Chair will ask the Council to pay its respects for those Somerset residents that have lost their lives with Covid-19, by calling for a minute's silence.

6. For decision:

Guide Time: 10.35am

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 8 February 2021. The recommendations for voting upon include the MTFP 2021/22 (set out in Paper A) and the Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 (set out in Paper B). Chair to propose that each paper is presented, debated and voted upon separately.

The Medium-Term Financial Plan 2021/22 (PAPER A)

Chair to invite Cllr Chilcott to refer to the report (set out in Paper A - Pages 11 to 172) 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.**

Cllr Chilcott to propose an amendment to the recommendations with regards to an additional recommendation for the Council to consider, detailed in Annex A of Agenda item 6. Cllr Chilcott to outline the intention of the amendment and its reasons. Cllr Liz

Leysdon will second the amendment. Following debate on the proposed amendment the Chair to invite the Monitoring Officer to read out the names for members to then advise of their vote as a named vote is required for budget amendments. Following the vote, the Monitoring Officer will inform the Council as to the voting figures and whether the amendment was carried or rejected.

Chair to invite Jason Vaughan (Section 151 Officer) to set out any additional points and in particular key points from his 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 19 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:

Approve the General Fund net revenue budget for 2021/22 of £356,072,100 and the individual service budgets for 2021/22 as outlined in Appendix 1 including,

- a) The transformation, savings and income generation plans outlined in Appendix 2(i), in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Assessments where required in Appendix 2 (ii).**
- b) The additional funding requirements set out in Appendix 3.**
- c) An increase in Council Tax of 1.99% in 2021/22 (an increase of £25.66 per Band D property).**
- d) An increase of 3.00% to Council Tax for the Adult Social Care Precept is approved in recognition of the current demands and financial pressures on this service. This is equivalent to an increase of £38.67 on a Band D property.**
- e) 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 £2,560,700,

f) Agree the precept requirement of £269,934,700 and set the County Council precept for Band D council tax charge at £1,353.53 for 2021/22.

g) The use of reserves for once-off spend and the overall estimated position of Earmarked Reserves outlined in Appendix 4.

h) Note the adequacy of General Reserves at £19.690m within a risk assessed range requirement of £18.70m - £20.67m

i) The Capital & Investment Strategy attached at Appendix 6.

j) The Capital Programme for 2021/22 of £152.138m including new capital bids of £73.913m outlined in Appendix 7, planned sources of funding, and notes the overall programme of £231.711m for 2022/23 to 2023/24, outlined in Appendix 8.

k) The MRP Policy attached at Appendix 9.

l) The Capital Prudential Indicators outlined in tables 12-18.

m) Delegate any amendments within the final Government Financial Settlement and the final Business Rates amendments to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021-22 (PAPER B)

Chair to invite Cllr Chilcott to refer to the report (set out in Paper B – Page 137 onwards) considered at the Audit Committee and the Cabinet meetings in January and February.

Chair to invite Jason Vaughan (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 138 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: 12.00pm

Chair to invite Cllr Chilcott to introduce the report (Pages 173-188) from the HR Policy Committee. **N.B Cllr Chilcott to highlight the typo on pg 174 and Chris Squire to advise if any questions.**

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 which are to be proposed by Cllr Chilcott, seconded by Cllr Redman. Chair to then invite the Council to vote upon:

That the County Council approve the Pay Policy Statement (PPS) for the Council for 2021-22 (attached as Appendix A to the report).

8. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

Guide Time: 12.15pm

Chair to invite the Monitoring Officer to present the proposals (starting from page 189) setting out the proposed Member Development Strategy 2021-2025, and the proposed appointment of an independent member of the Audit Committee.

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

The County Council is recommended to:

Agrees the Member Development Strategy 2021-25 (as set out in Appendix A to Annex A);

1.The recruitment and appointment of an independent person to be a non-voting co-opted member of the Audit Committee for a period of two years;

2.That the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority to finalise a role description, skills and competencies and person specification for the independent person, advertise this role, complete interviews and agree the appointment of the successful candidate to the Audit Committee;

3.That the Monitoring Officer is authorised to amend the Audit Committee functions and membership within the Council's Constitution to reflect the inclusion of an independent non-voting member of the Committee.

9. REPORT OF THE JOINT INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Guide Time: 12.35pm

Chair of the Council to invite **Scott Wooldridge** (Monitoring Officer) and **Mr John Thomson** (Chair of the Panel) to introduce the Panel's report regarding the Scheme of Members' Allowances.

Following this introduction and prior to the Panel Chair setting out the recommendations, the Leader of the Council will be invited to respond and intends to set out the following proposal for the Council to consider:

In view of the outstanding Government decisions regarding the timetable and next steps for the Local Government Reorganisation proposals and the Council's request for the

deferral of the Council elections, I would propose that the Council agrees to adjourn the consideration and debate of the Panel's report and recommendations until the next Full Council meeting May 2021. That would I hope allow for much needed clarity from the Government on those strategic matters in order for the Council to make a more informed decision on the Scheme of Members Allowances and any further work that the Council may request the Panel to undertake.

Cllr J Lock to second the proposal and the Chair to then ask the Council to vote upon the proposed deferral of this matter to the May Council meeting.

CHAIR TO ADVISE OF ADJOURNMENT FOR ½ hour LUNCH BREAK

10. REQUISITION ITEM

Guide Time: 1.30pm

To consider the following requisitioned item (Page 237) – **Pilot Studies for Universal Basic Income**. To be proposed by Cllr Clarke and seconded by Cllr Munt.

Chair to invite Cllr Clarke 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:

In recognising the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Somerset's residents' incomes, and the urgent need to reduce inequality, disadvantage and poverty, this Council calls on the Leader:

1. To write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Somerset's MPs and the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions requesting the UK Government undertakes pilot studies for the Universal Basic Income, and that Somerset be included in any pilot.
2. That such pilot studies gather evidence of the effectiveness of a Universal Basic Income on reducing inequality, disadvantage and poverty.
3. That the Leader sends a copy of any responses from The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Somerset's MPs and the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions to all Somerset County Council Members as and when replies are received.

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

Guide Time: 1.45pm

(Pages 239 - 262) - to be introduced by Cllr David Fothergill – Leader of the Council.

Member Questions (set out in Annex A) to the Leader and Cabinet Members will be taken under this item in the following order:

- **Cllr David Fothergill**
- **Cllr Mandy Chilcott (to respond to Cllr Lock’s question)**
- **Cllr John Woodman**
- **Cllr Frances Nicholson**
- **Cllr Christine Lawrence**
- **Cllr David Hall (to respond to Cllr Redman’s and Cllr Lock’s questions)**
- **Cllr David Huxtable**
- **Cllr Faye Purbrick**
- **Cllr Clare Paul – Chair to invite Cllr Paul to present her annual report (agenda item 13) as part of this item and answer any questions regarding her area of responsibilities**

Following debate, the Council will be asked by the Chair to note the Leader and Cabinet’s report for information and that it has also considered agenda item 13 (Cabinet Member for Public Health & Well-Being and Climate Change) as part of this agenda item.

12. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Guide Time: 2.15pm

Page 263 and invite Cllr William Wallace to introduce the report.
The Council is asked to note the report.

**13. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & WELL-BEING & CLIMATE CHANGE**

Guide Time: N/A

To be considered under Item 11

Page 267 and invite Cllr Paul to introduce her report.
The Council is asked to note the report.

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

Guide Time: 2.20

Page 281 and invite Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey to introduce her report.
The Council is asked to note the report.

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

Guide Time: 2.30

Page 287 and invite Cllr Anna Groskop to introduce her report.
The Council is asked to note the report.

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

Guide Time: 2.40

Page 295 and invite Cllr Leigh Redman to introduce his report.
The Council is asked to note the report.

Finish 2.50pm

Public Questions

PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ1 -	Alan Debenham	Council Tax increases, Debt borrowing,	<p>Question 1</p> <p>In the recent Commons debate on the Local Government Settlement, the MHCLG Minister, Luke Hall MP, said that this year's settlement was very generous in that overall it involved a 4.5% increase in REAL TERMS compared with last year and local residents would much benefit. The opposition strongly refuted this by saying that Local Councils generally were having to take a serious hit over inadequate funding for the Covid-19 emergency, whilst still suffering from real terms cuts of up to 40% over the past decade through severe Tory austerity cuts, AND including still cuts to Revenue Support for 2021/22. The so-called 4.5% real terms increases are achieved ONLY by loading them onto very regressive Council Tax, with nearly all Councils – including this one – making local residents, especially the struggling poor, pay another 4.99% more for less services. What is the Leader's response to this damning critique of the government and this Council's position?</p> <p>Question 2</p> <p>From the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), which includes vast millions of debt borrowing paid for at 4.66% interest and a few millions of County Council cash investments gaining a return of only of 0.73%, you can easily see how the billionaire so-called national and global investors of this world use usury to make themselves forever richer at the expense of the 99% rest of us. Is there no alternative which the Council can use to stop this daylight robbery and immorality?</p> <p>Question 3</p> <p>It is noted that the TMS and the accompanying capital programme should be serving the best interests of the County Plan which now includes the much-vaunted Climate Emergency Strategy (CES). Why is there not a full description of how in detail everything in the TMS adheres to the CES, particularly in divestment from any investment whatsoever in fossil fuels or associated products and all other environmentally damaging products or enterprises?</p>

Response - Cllr Mandy Chilcott

PQ/MQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement
PQ2	Andrew Pope	Council Tax increase	<p>I appeal to you to refuse the 4.99% increase in council tax. Ask yourself whether this is really justified when there has been money wasted on One Somerset which no residents of Somerset asked for, and where the County has a budget report which is deliberately opaque, long-winded and hiding the truth.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member responsible, as it is Councillor Chilcott's report after all, could have made it clearer, by asking officers to do so. Instead, the public has to interpret a total mess hiding the mis-spending of public funds on a huge scale. Why do I say the public? Because you councillors aren't doing your jobs.</p> <p>There should be no taxation without representation. And the County Council has not listened to residents who want a referendum before any changes to how we are governed. In 2007, 82% of residents voted against a unitary. Even your own rigged consultation showed a lack of support. Please just stop it now.</p> <p>Not only has this money been wasted, you are proposing to pay for other past, present and future mistakes by increasing council tax. £17 million for something that residents don't want, plus countless millions on who knows what in the future. No taxation without representation.</p>

		<p>I spoke at the Police and Crime Panel recently, and for the first time, they refused an unjustified 6.6% increase which amounted to £15. They are councillors just like all of you apart from Councillor Hunt – national party politicians. Despite this, they stood up for residents and voted 11 for and 1 abstention. Your proposals are more than four times higher. Why? How?</p> <p>I suggest to you that this level of increase is not justified, so you must refuse it today. Residents feel that you've got a cheek asking for any more money, let alone 4.99%, when your Conservative-run Council has provided no pushback whatsoever on the Conservative Government's failure to protect our county and its residents from the Pandemic. Instead, you beg for letters to and from failed Prime Minister Johnson. If you think Boris Johnson's support bolsters support for you, you are very much mistaken. He and you have failed us.</p> <p>The public expect the county council to be responsible. Instead of this, you are proposing to cut support for Freedom of Information, spend millions on a solar farm that won't pay back for many years, plus more wasteful IT spending. These are just some examples but there are many more. Please think again.</p> <p>You've squirreled millions of un-ringfenced Government Covid money to bolster Council's reserves, asking suffering residents to pay more again. What a cheek.</p> <p>You should be standing up for us. You should be refusing this increase today. I say again, the Police and Crime Panel finally found some backbone. So, should you, because you should respect the dire situation that residents find themselves in, and vote against this misguided budget. No taxation without representation.</p> <p>Thank you for listening and I hope that I will get a written response, and there will be a healthy debate, about the points that I have raised. You can contact us at somerinds@gmail.com.</p>
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Response - Cllr Mandy Chilcott

PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ3	Nigel Behan	Air Quality and Climate Change	<p>Question 1</p> <p>Whilst it is not too surprising, given the magnitude of the pandemic induced reaction, that the Taunton & Yeovil AQMAs have achieved compliance with mandatory standards for the first time how does SCC intend to maintain compliance (without transferring the problem (advecting) it elsewhere) and how will the Climate Emergency Strategy be put into reality (e.g. include practical actions and measurable, specific "targets") to prevent increases in carbon dioxide (and other Greenhouse Gas) concentrations?</p>
<u>Response - Cllr Clare Paul</u>			
PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
	Nigel Behan	Air Quality and Climate Change	<p>Question 2</p> <p>The report "Air Quality and coronavirus: a glimpse of a different future or business as usual" by the Parliamentary Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee (11 February 2021) noted in the Summary Air Quality and coronavirus: a glimpse of a different future or business as usual - Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee - House of Commons (parliament.uk) that: Cleaner air and clearer skies were one of the few positives that many people experienced</p>

			<p>following the first covid-19 lockdown in March 2020. However, as the pandemic progressed evidence also began to emerge that air pollution might be playing a role in people's susceptibility to, and increased mortality from, covid-19. Air pollution is the largest environmental risk to UK public health and is linked to as many as 64,000 early deaths a year. It is an issue that our predecessor Committees returned to several times, concluding the Government had failed to address the scale of the challenge.</p> <p>What practical steps and measures will SCC (along with other Local Authorities) take to act and respond to this report's key findings?</p>
Response – Cllr Clare Paul			
	Nigel Behan	Reform of Health and Care Services	<p>Question 3</p> <p>Whilst "Counties warn against social care centralisation" (Public Finance - Counties warn against social care centralisation Public Finance Local authorities require long-term funding certainty to help implement changes to the social care system, according to a new report.)</p> <p>And "If "parity" is expected between the NHS and social care, as the government suggests, then staff should have similar pay and conditions. At the moment, care workers are typically paid only £8.67 per hour, barely above the minimum wage, and a quarter of them are on zero hours contracts.</p> <p>The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services has called for wages to be linked to the pay of band 3 NHS health care assistants, who do a similar job but earn £10.90 an hour and have much greater security at work. That would be both logical and fair. Care workers from abroad should have the same immigration rights as NHS staff in a truly integrated system."</p> <p>Will SCC campaign for these reasonable proposals to be applied across the Care Sector, including Private Sector organisations that receive Cash - for providing Care - from Local Government (Commissioners)?"</p>

Response - Cllr David Huxtable

PQ/MQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement
PQ4	Lucy Travis	Somerset catch the bus campaign	<p>Question 1 Firstly in Frome we still need a regular Covid 19 cleaning programme for all bus shelters. We need a bus shelter outside the Frome hospital in Frome Fields, one at Frome Railway station approach for bus 53 and one at Frome Cork Street coach station. Will Somerset County Council work with Wiltshire County Council to improve bus services to Frome station?</p> <p>Question 2 On shelter maintenance I am very concerned that as a wheelchair user, I cannot get off the bus at Walton due to the shelter being closed down as it has barriers around it. The shelter of course needs to maintain Covid 19 secure cleaning standards and social distancing with social distancing notices. Will the Council help ensure the barriers and railings at Wells bus station are repaired and can we please have this shelter at Walton repaired?</p> <p>Question 3 It is important with reductions in bus services from Mendip towns to Bath Spa bus and coach station from Frome, Shepton Mallet and the City of Wells bus station and from Street, Glastonbury, Wells bus station to Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol bus station, it is important that clear timetable information should be provided for passengers by the WECA mayoral transport authority, North Somerset Council and Somerset County Council about services operating within Mendip district. Will the County Council commit in the longer term to update bus timetables on all bus stops in the Mendip District Council area bus stations and interchanges and railway stations at Castle Cary and Frome?</p>

Response - Cllr John Woodman

PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ5	David Redgewell	South West Transport network	<p>Question 1</p> <p>Important of public transport in Somerset county council budget .</p> <p>We also need to invest in public transport network real time information on key bus routes D2 Bath Spa bus and coach station to Frome Sainsbury's, service 174 Wells bus station to Shepton Mallet bus interchange to Radstock, Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Peasdown St John to Bath bus and coach station, service 173 Wells bus station to Chilcompton, Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Peasdown St John and Bath Spa bus and coach station, service 376 Street, Glastonbury ,wells bus station Bristol Temple meads station and Bristol bus and coach station service 1 Shepton Mallet, Castle Cary railway station and Town to Yeovil bus station, service 29 Wells bus station to Glastonbury and Street to Taunton, service 126 Wells Cheddar, Axbridge, Wincombe, Banwell and Weston Super mare, service 30 Taunton, Chard to Axminster railway station with connections for Lyme Regis, Bridport, Weymouth and Dorchester, service 21 Taunton, Bridgwater, Burnham on Sea for Weston Super Mare, service 20 for Weston Super Mare, service 22 Taunton to Wellington, service 28 Taunton, Watchet and Minehead. We observe that the public transport network is for essential journeys with services funded by the Department for Transport and we must lobby through the county MP's and Secretary of State for continued bus operators Covid 19 emergency grant and the new proposed Covid 19 bus service recovery grant. Grants should be awarded via Somerset County Council to the bus operators and not direct. As the Transport Authority will the Council confirm that it will keep a bus service budget and a community transport budget?</p> <p>Question 2</p> <p>We are still very concerned about provision of safe stopping places in Taunton town centre essential on journeys from Castle Way, The Parade and Corporation Street. Before lockdown we</p>

were very concerned about the lack of social distancing among passengers in Taunton town centre and the risk of super spreading and we would like to see the County Council and Somerset West and Taunton Council through its bus scrutiny commission to work on improving bus passengers interchange facilities. The vision for Taunton development shows no provision for bus and coach interchange facilities. It would appear that Somerset county council The Transport authority will need to work with Somerset west and Taunton council to make sure the plan includes Public transport interchange facilities in Taunton Town centre. In Exeter a brand new bus station is opening soon and a brand new bus station has opened in Gloucester as a transport hub with a second phase to link to the railway station and a new bus interchange in Weston Super Mare is to be constructed all with Department for Transport government grant. Swindon has just been give £25 million to regenerated the town centre and there is a new bus and coach station on Flemming Way, Somerset County Council (The Transport Authority) and Somerset West and Taunton Council need to bid for Government grant through the South West Transport board for bus and coach interchange facilities in Taunton town centre. Bus passengers facilities need improving in Minehead town centre and at Minehead Railway station. Is the County Council responding to the Government consultation on the rural transport strategy?

Question 3

We welcome the Work by Somerset county council The Transport authority.

Working with First group west of England buses and First south west in developing bus services and community transport services and slinky bus services.

The wells bus station Shepton Mallett cenotaph bus interchange to the Bath and west show ground is very welcome by Mendip district residents. And service no1 provided south west Coaches between Yeovil bus station to castle cary Town and Railway stations and the Bath and west show ground and shepton mallett cenotaph bus interchange. We work with first group south west the buses of Somerset. To provide a shuttle bus between Taunton town centre and Taunton racecourse vaccinations centre. Following the lack of Bus service to the vaccinations centre only first group bus 99 operates to the racecourse on its way from Taunton Town centre to chard every 3 hours funded by Somerset county council. The only other service is First south west buses of Somerset service 6 with a 15-minute walk to the racecourse vaccinations centre.

			<p>Community transport and slinky bus only provides a limited service.</p> <p>Would the country council please ask Somerset clinical commission group vaccinations NHS vaccinations lead to look urgently at public transport to this vaccinations centres with 900 vaccinations planned every day?</p>
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Response- Cllr John Woodman

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PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ6	John Hassel	Railfuture Severnside	Question 1 On Railways we welcome the return of trains over Christmas and hopefully again in the Summer

and the investment in the study for a Langport and Somerton Parkway station and progress on Wellington railway station and the need also to look at opening Chard Junction station. The regeneration of Taunton railway station with a public transport interchange. and the need to get Trains service operating on the west Somerset railway from Taunton Bishop lydeard to Wilton watchet and Minehead with both steam leisure service and Through passenger's services to the main line. By D MU services by First Great western railway. Is the county council able to support Go co-op rail proposals for an open access service from Swindon to Taunton and Bishop lydeard?

Question 2

Has the county council raised with the Department for Transport the loss of train catering services on the First MTR south western railway service from Exeter st David and central to London Waterloo?

During the Covid 19 emergency timetables it is very important that The Department for Transport, First Group Great Western Railway and South Western Railway have a emergency recovery plan to maintain connectivity across Somerset to the west country and connections elsewhere in the country for essential journeys.

Response - Cllr John Woodman

MEMBER QUESTIONS

MQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement
MQ1	Leigh Redman	Hinkley Point C	<p>Reference the impact of Hinkley Point C workforce to date, lessons learnt and following the proposed workforce increase.</p> <p>Question 1 Can the cabinet member please provide me with a list of 'what lessons have been learnt from the original assumptions of the project' and from those lessons what should we ask for to mitigate them if unresolved?</p> <p>Question 2 Can you also identify the 3 main areas, cross County, that may need additional mitigation following on from previous learning and the new request to increase workforce from 5600 to 8500?</p> <p>Question 3 Can the cabinet member also detail the impact on Bridgwater the proposed large increase of non-homebased workers could have on the town?</p>

Response - Cllr Clare Paul and Cllr David Hall

MQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement
<u>MQ2</u>	Jane Lock	A Block refurbishment	Could Council have an update on the income generated following the £10million refurbishment of A block?

Response Cllr Mandy Chilcott

MQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement
MQ3	Jane Lock	Government Grant spending	Could Council be told how much Somerset received from the Government Brexit transition grant and how was it spent?
<u>Response Cllr Mandy Chilcott & Cllr David Hall</u>			