

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10am on  
Wednesday 16 March 2022**

PRESENT

Cllr D Fothergill (in the Chair)

Cllr M Chilcott  
Cllr D Hall  
Cllr D Huxtable  
Cllr C Lawrence  
Cllr F Nicholson  
Cllr C Paul  
Cllr F Purbrick  
Cllr J Woodman

**Apologies:** Cllr M Pullin

**Other Members in attendance:** Cllr S Coles, Cllr L Leyshon, Cllr B Revans, Cllr M Rigby.

**Other Members in virtual attendance:** Cllr A Groskop, Cllr T Lock, Cllr G Noel, Cllr L Redman.

**450 Declarations of Interest** – Agenda item 2

Members of the Cabinet declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a District, City/Town, or Parish Council.

Cllr C Paul – South Somerset District Council  
Cllr J Woodman – Sedgemoor District Council

**451 Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16 March 2022** - Agenda item 3

**Amendments**

Item 442, Pg 14 amendment to read that all Somerset Authorities agreed a protocol for spending to help minimise any new financial pressures impacting on the new Somerset Council, subsequently Somerset West and Taunton Authority chose not to take it to their council.

Item 444, page 16 amendment to read partnership working with the Clinical Commissioning Group and the provision of better services at lower costs.

Subject to the above amendments the Cabinet agreed the minutes and amendments, of the meeting held on 14 February 2022 and the Chair agreed to sign these as a correct record of the proceedings.

#### **452 Public Question Time (PQT) – Agenda item 4**

The Chair noted that there had been three questions submitted by Mr Nigel Behan with the questions to be considered at the time of the relevant agenda items, Item 12 Somerset Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and Scheme(s) and Item 14 Business Process System - findings of the discovery phase.

#### **453 Covid-19 Update – Agenda item 5a**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Director of Public Health, Professor Trudi Grant, to present the Covid-19 Health update.

The Director of Public Health presented the report with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting that Covid-19 infection rates in Somerset had increased, with 940 cases per 100k of population; that infection rates were equally high across all District areas; that the Somerset infection rate currently sat above the southwest rate; that infection rates will likely to continue to be high as we learn to live with Covid-19 and the modified response; the continued significant pressure in hospitals and social care, with admissions mainly as result of other issues and identified as being Covid positive once in the hospital; the need for infection control measures to continue; and that the work of the COVID-19 Engagement Board to return to the Health and Well Being Board as the reporting point.

#### **Resettlement and Refugee update – Agenda 5b**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Education and Public Health, Cllr Claire Paul, to introduce the item.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Public Health introduced the item, highlighting that the Ukrainian resettlement need was a rapidly changing picture and invited Public Health Specialist – Health Inequalities, Brittney Strange to present the update.

Public Health Specialist – Health Inequalities, Brittney Strange presented the report, highlighting; the compassion and generosity demonstrated by the people of Somerset to support people impacted by the conflict in Ukraine; the continuing evolving programme of two schemes of resettlement: the Ukraine Family Scheme that allows applicants to join family members in the UK and the Local Sponsorship Scheme to provide self-contained unoccupied

accommodation, with a £350 support package from the Government per sponsored household; and that there will be some Government financial support for Local Authorities to provide some wrap around and educational support.

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill further added to above points regarding the situation in Ukraine and the County Council response, including: the proposal to adjust the budget to support the work that the Council will be proposing; the role of being a corporate parent to the county's most vulnerable children including those from the Ukraine; and that this Council will do all that it can to support all Ukrainians who become resident in Somerset.

Somerset County Council Chief Executive, Pat Flaherty further added to above points, highlighting; the multi-agency response, preparation and work of Somerset County Council and partners to support the arrival of Ukrainian refugees or evacuees into Somerset; the support activity, including working with both local and national agencies and with sponsors of the scheme; and on-going liaison with the voluntary and community sectors to expand the Ukrainian network in Somerset.

The Cabinet proceeded to debate the report and invited comments from other members present, points raised included: thank you to the Somerset Community for the initial response and the food, provisions and medical supplies that have been sent to help; and reporting of issues to ensure the protection, safety and support of Russian residents in the Somerset community.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Public Health and Resettlement Team for their continued hard work.

#### **454 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report – month 10 - Agenda item 6**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Resources, Cllr Mandy Chilcott to present the report.

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the report highlighting; that Covid-19 continued to affect the budget and services continued to provide mitigations to manage this; that taking into account all service expenditure and contingencies, that the overall position is a predicted underspend of £3m, which represents a variance of 0.8% against the net budget of £357.5m; that Adults and Children Services continue to project an overspend; that Economic and Community Infrastructure projected an underspend; that there is Corporate Contingency of £6m, £4.4m currently remains uncommitted, and an

assumption that £1m be utilised to cover the financial impacts of the now agreed National Pay award.

The Director of Finance and Governance, Jason Vaughan added to the above points, highlighting: the high-level analysis to provide a full report on the contingency for the pay award and carry forward requests; the monthly report work and the timetable review on the flow through the scrutiny committees.

There were no questions or comments received from the Cabinet or other Members present.

The Cabinet proceeded to vote on the proposal to amend the recommendations and add two further recommendations to aid support to inbound Ukrainian Refugees. This was followed by a vote to adopt the recommendations as amended. Both recommendations were agreed unanimously and are detailed below.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Finance Team for the report and on-going budget monitoring.

**Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Cabinet agreed to:**

- a) Note the overall forecast underspend of £3.0m and the key risks, future issues and opportunities detailed in the report which will be closely monitored and updated throughout the year.**
- b) Fund £10k expenditure within SSE for Carbon Literacy Training for Schools from the Corporate Contingency.**
- c) Fund £200,000 expenditure within public health to fund the work of the multi-agency group in supporting inbound Ukrainian refugees into the county from the corporate contingency.**
- d) That subject to the appropriate establishment of the Somerset Ukrainians Support Fund and its compliance with Good Fund management practice, to grant of £50,000 contribution from the corporate contingency.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

**455 Quarter 3 Performance Report-** Agenda item 7

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, introduced the report and invited the Corporate Performance and Planning Manager, Nicola Miles, to present the report.

The Corporate Performance and Planning Manager presented the report highlighting; that the report consists of 33 performance indicators from across the organisation and provides the latest information available in the period up until 31 December 2021, with 48% showing as being on target or improving; areas of success in this period include New Enterprise Centres, Improve Outcomes for Vulnerable Learners, Number of New Placements in Residential and Nursing Care in month, Domestic Abuse Improved Outcomes; areas of concern in this period include: Connecting Devon and Somerset Phase 2 (part 2), the Unmet Need and Returned Packages of Care and Business Continuity; the addition of two measures: Number of returned packages of care (homecare 'hand backs') and Number of care packages on unmet need list; and that work is taking place with SLT to focus on those measures that are consistently reporting.

The Cabinet proceeded to debate the report and invited comments from other members present, points raised included: the interventions taking place and the work to manage care packages and support within the Adult Social Care market; the Contact Centre reporting figures of handled adult contacts, the change of the reporting system and the report review and refresh expected in April 2022.

**Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion the Cabinet agreed to:**

**1. Considered and commented on the information contained within this report.**

**2. Agreed the report and any appendices as the latest position for Somerset County Council against its Council Vision.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

**456 Somerset Corporate Parenting Strategy - item 8**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Cllr Frances Nicholson, to introduce the report.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families introduced the report highlighting; her thanks to the team for the extremely valuable work in developing the strategy; the debt of gratitude to the children and young people in care for their hard work and contribution and using their experiences to contribute to the welfare not only of themselves, but for the benefit of others; that the Corporate Parenting Strategy takes into account children looked after; and the children and young people's Pledge Tree - their Tree of Life giving them stability, strength, support and shelter as they grow up and take their place in society.

Service Manager Partnership Business Manager SCT & SCPB, Fiona Phur, presented the report: highlighting; that the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2022 – 2025 was coproduced by the Corporate Parenting Board and Somerset Leaving Care Council (SLCC) and was approved by the Corporate Parenting Board in February 2022; that the Strategy aimed to strengthen good practice through a whole council approach to corporate parenting and a strong and effective approach to partnership working, improving the achievement, life chances and opportunities for all children looked after and care leavers; that the Strategy sets out how Somerset intends to fulfil its responsibilities against the Seven Principles of Corporate Parenting in a way that puts children and young people at the centre of improvements in the planning, delivery and evaluation of services; that the new Strategy is underpinned by an annual action plan, focusing on five key areas, with sub-groups each having the responsibility for delivering against these key areas; that the Strategy was interactive including documents produced for staff awareness and training; that the young people had written the pledge based upon the idea of a tree - it puts down roots for security, a trunk for support and stability and branches and leaves that give them shelter and shade; and the support and training offered to elected Members in their role as a Corporate parent.

The Cabinet proceeded to discuss the report and invited comments from other members present, points raised included: thanks to all the team for the tremendous efforts and achievements; the importance and responsibility of the role of a Councillor as a Corporate Parent; the clear messages from the children of Somerset; and the value of the input of young people to shape the future of Somerset.

The Director of Children's Services, Julian Wooster added to the above points thanking Fiona Phur, her team and the dedicated Members from across all political parties in their engagement and commitment for corporate parenting.

**Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion the Cabinet endorsed publication of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2022 – 2025 and associated action plans.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

**457 Extension of Equality Objectives – item 9**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Education and Public Health, Cllr Claire Paul to introduce the report.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Public Health presented the report highlighting; that Somerset County Council [SCC] is required by statute to review and establish organisational equality objectives, with the existing objectives due to end in September 2023; the request for approval to extend the current objectives to September 2024 and provide the appropriate time and work required to implement a new set of objectives and support the implementation of the Local Government Reform in Somerset; that the Anti-Racism statement for the organisation will be supported by an action plan and supports a commitment in the Council's approach to racism.

There were no questions or comments received from the Cabinet or other Members present.

**Following consideration of the officer report, appendices, PowerPoint Presentation and discussion the Cabinet agreed:**

- 1. The update to the current Equality Objectives**
- 2. Extension to current objectives till September 2024**
- 3. The Anti Racism statement and commitment for a supporting action plan.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

**458 Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) 2022-23 Enhanced Programme and signing the SRA Memorandum of Understanding and Constitution service – Agenda item 10**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure, Cllr David Hall to introduce the report.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure introduced the report highlighting; that the SRA is a unique partnership of Somerset County Council (SCC), 4 district councils, 2 Internal Drainage Boards, the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Wessex Regional Flood & Coastal Committee; that SCC hosts the SRA and is the accountable body for financial and legal matters; that SRA funds projects across the whole of Somerset that protect our county, mitigating against flooding, making sure that residents stay safe and protecting our environment; that SRA is funded through a precept ringfenced for the SRA – precept amount has remained the same since inception and raised a further £22.97m to address flooding in Somerset; ; and that agreeing the recommendations would allow the Somerset Rivers Authority to continue with its excellent work.

The Cabinet proceeded to discuss the report and invited comments from other members present, points raised included: the recognition of the great work that the SRA is done since its inception and its importance to all of the residents of Somerset; the possibility of the SRA in its formation in the new unitary authority; the provision of resource and current vacant posts within the function of lead local flood authority and the challenge to fill posts; the future reporting and collection of the precept; and the possibility of separate precepting basis.

The SRA Manager, David Mitchell in response to above points advised that: there is recruitment process being undertaken; and interim support is actively been sought to fill vacancies.

**Following consideration of the officer report, appendices, PowerPoint presentation and discussion the Cabinet agreed:**

- 1. To approve the revised Local Memorandum of Understanding (including the Constitution of the SRA) set out in Appendix 1 and authorise the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure to sign this on behalf of Somerset County Council.**
- 2. The case (set out in 'legal implications' for exempt information) for Appendix 3 2022-23 SRA Enhanced Programme List with Costs to be treated in confidence, as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing that information.**
- 3. To approve the SRA Budget for 2022-23, (Appendix 2 SRA 2022-23 Budget) in accordance with the recommendations of the SRA Board from its meeting on the 4th of March 2022.**



**4. To the release of funding committed from all sources in 2022-23 for the purposes of the SRA, subject to receipt of those funds, in accordance with the budget for 2022-23 as set out in item 4 above.**

**5. That the detailed management of the 2022-23 Budget and Enhanced Programme within the control total allocated to the SRA is undertaken in accordance with the constitutional, financial regulations and decision making arrangements of SCC as accountable body.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

**459 Provision of Care and Support in Supported Living Accommodation for people with a learning disability – Agenda item 11**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Cllr David Huxtable to introduce the report.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care presented the report highlighting: the lack of modern suitable supported living opportunities in Somerset; and the work to establish three new Learning Disability and Autism supporting living schemes for the County.

The Strategic Manager - Adult Services, James Cawley, presented the report, highlighting: that the report outlined the proposed awards for care and support provision for three new properties to accommodate the County's Learning Disability and Autism clients in Minehead, Taunton and Yeovil; and the positive market engagements and longer term aims to provide more modern facilities and support for people with learning disabilities and autism within the County.

The Cabinet proceeded to discuss the report and invited comments from other members present, points raised included: the future strategy and ambition to positively link and join the system together under a unitary authority; the welcome geographical spread of provision; and the importance of understanding the need for people to be supported near to their families and support networks.

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

**1. The award of contract for the care and support for Ponsford Road,**

**Minehead to Supplier A. From 1st of April 2022 for a period of 5 years with an optional 5 additional years as detailed in Appendix A – Confidential Tender Evaluation Report**

**2. The award of contract for the care and support for The Paddocks, Taunton to Supplier A. From 1st of April 2022 for a period of 5 years with an optional 5 additional years as detailed in Appendix A – Confidential Tender Evaluation Report**

**3. The award of contract for the care and support for The Avenue, Yeovil to Supplier B. From 1st of May 2023 for a period of 5 years with an optional 5 additional years as detailed in Appendix A – Confidential Tender Evaluation Report**

**4. The case for applying the exempt information provision as set out in the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and therefore to treat the attached Appendix A in confidence, as it contains commercially sensitive information, and as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing that information**

**5. To authorise the Director of Adult Social Care to sign the contracts with the preferred suppliers on behalf of the authority.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

*The meeting was adjourned between 10.55am and 11.05am*

**460 Somerset Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and Scheme(s)– Agenda item 12**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Cllr John Woodman to introduce the report.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport introduced the report highlighting; that following the launch of the Government's National Bus Strategy: Bus Back Better in March 2021, Somerset County Council published an ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which was consulted on and approved October 2021; and the Enhanced Partnership (EP) proposal and provision of a robust framework in which to deliver the BSIP which imposes statutory duties on both the Local Authority and bus operators.

The Strategic Manager, Mike O'Dowd-Jones, presented the report, highlighting; the development of a detailed plan and scheme setting detailing requirements; the formation of a Bus Advisory Board and a Bus User and Stakeholder Group; the current shell agreement which sets out a high level set of requirements to be further developed and agreed once funding is agreed; that the process for creating the plan and scheme involved an operator objection period and a formal consultation period; and the requirement that that the process is completed and submitted to the Department for Transport in March 2022.

The Leader of the Council highlighted that a public representation had been received following the publication of the report from Mr Nigel Behan. At the Chair's invitation Mr Behan commented on a recent ruling regarding Greater Manchester and the franchising of bus services and asked what impact, implications, opportunities or modifications this could have on the application of the Bus Back Better strategy in the Somerset and the South West. Mr Behan further questioned if there was any opportunity for the plan to be revised or amended.

The Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways in response thanked Mr Behan for his question, highlighting that the Government requires local authorities to adopt either an enhanced partnership with bus operators or a franchising model in order to retain existing Government funds for bus services and bid for new funds through bus service improvement plans. The Cabinet considered the two options in June 2021 and agreed to pursue an Enhanced Partnership rather than a franchising model. Under a franchising model the Authority would take on the full cost of scheme preparation and most of the revenue risk for all bus operations. The Cabinet Member further noted that the confirmation that Greater Manchester followed a lawful route to franchising does not affect our decision to pursue an Enhanced Partnership.

The Cabinet proceeded to discuss the report and invited comments from other members present, points raised included: the welcome emphasis on an accessible network within the Somerset's rural areas; the longer-term strategy and improvement of accessibility for school transport services.

**Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion the Cabinet agreed to:**

- **Approve the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and Scheme (in Appendix A) in accordance with the statutory requirements of Section 138 of the Transport Act 2000**

- **Delegate authority to the Strategic Manager, Commissioning – Highways and Transport to undertake any process required to complete the EP Plan and Scheme and ensure it is duly made on behalf of Somerset County Council within the timescales required by the Department for Transport and the legal requirements of the Transport Act**
- **Approve submission of the EP Plan and Scheme to the Department for Transport and publication on Somerset County Council’s website**
- **Approve the use of the bespoke variation mechanism set out in section 5 of the Scheme to incorporate further enhancements to the Scheme which may be necessary or desirable following confirmation of Government funding for bus improvements.**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

**461 Decision regarding creation of a Solar Park at Saltlands, Bridgwater–**  
Agenda item 13

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Resources, Cllr Mandy Chilcott and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure, Cllr David Hall to introduce the report.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Cllr Mandy Chilcott introduced the report highlighting; that the proposed solar park represents an opportunity for the Council to generate a financial return from a site which is unsuitable for other types of development, whilst making a major contribution to the generation of clean renewable energy in the County; that it is notable that the consideration of this proposal is at time when energy security and global energy prices have rarely been higher in the national agenda; and the work to reduce the use of gas and other fossil fuels and improve energy efficiency across the SCC estate.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Community Infrastructure further added to the above introduction, highlighting; that the project continues the momentum of the Climate Change strategy delivering an estimated reduction in CO2 emissions; that the project is a significant scheme within our rapidly expanding portfolio aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and the work of officers to commence discussions on potential training opportunities for local engineering students.

The Head of Property, Oliver Woodhams, presented the report, highlighting; the design work and the proposed construction of the park, the proposed application for a connection to the local National Grid infrastructure; that the current finance in place relates to the east phase only; and the development of the west phase would be considered in due course.

The Cabinet proceeded to discuss the report and invited comments from other members present, points raised included: consideration of other potential sites; and the positive use of a former a landfill site.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the investment into Somerset.

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

**- To authorise the Strategic Manager for Estates, in consultation with the Head of Procurement under delegation, to competitively procure all construction contracts relating to the Saltlands Solar Park project in accordance with the Authority's Contract Procedure Rules and public procurement law.**

**- To authorise the Strategic Manager for Estates to make an application for a grid connection for the Saltlands Solar Park, which may be utilised for the East phase and / or the West phase of the overall site.**

**- To delegate authority to the Lead Director – ECI/Director of Commissioning, to take a key decision at the appropriate time, in conjunction with the County Solicitor and within the financial parameters set out in 'Confidential Appendix [1]', section 1, to enter into contracts to facilitate the sale or use of the generated electricity.**

**- The case for 'Appendix [1]: Business Case' and 'Appendix [2]' to be regarded as exempt information and to be treated in 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

**462 Business Process System - findings of the discovery phase – Agenda item 14**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill, invited the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Local Government Reform to introduce the report.

The Cabinet Member of Transformation and Local Government Reform introduced the report highlighting; the collaborative work across the five Somerset authorities to understand the collective requirements for the delivery of a functional system ahead of vesting day; the two options considered, Microsoft Dynamics and SAP; that the discovery phase concluded the risk profile to be broadly similar for both options; that the project includes the functionality of the system, providing a platform for the technical innovation to help enable transformation; and that discovery phase concluded that implementing Microsoft Dynamics provides the best technical solution, the best value for money, alongside the greatest support for transformation and is therefore the recommended way forward.

The Director of Finance and Governance, Jason Vaughan, presented the report, highlighting; the system implementation date of 1 April 2023; that both options are deliverable; consideration of the risks associated with both options; the resources and staffing required to ensure delivery; and the Council's ICT strategic direction.

The Leader of the Council highlighted that a public representation had been received following the publication of the report from Mr Nigel Behan. At the Chair's invitation Mr Behan addressed the Cabinet and referred to section 1.11 and 1.12 of the report noting the requirements and costs and asked if the same reasoning applied to implementing and integrating HR and payroll functions for the new Council at a later date. Mr Behan further referred to 11.5 of the report and questioned the estimated costs for a high-level consolidation of SAP for an interim period.

The Cabinet Member for Transformation and Local Government Reorganisation, Cllr Faye Purbrick thanked Mr Behan and responded, highlighting that a key part of the discovery phase was to more fully understand the costs of the options, including implementation and integrating the HR and payroll function later in the programme.

The Chair of the Scrutiny Polices and Place Advisory Board, Cllr Anna Groskop highlighted the recommendations of the Board, noting; concerns regarding cost implications and potential impacts should the system not be delivered on time; and the importance of engagement with District Councils.

The Cabinet Member for Transformation and Local Government Reform responded thanking Cllr Groskop and the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Advisory Board and further noted; details of District Council engagement is contained within the Confidential Appendix; and the work of the Council's Procurement Team to negotiate with suppliers.

The Cabinet proceeded to discuss the report and invited comments from other members present, points raised included: the robust discovery phase; the monitoring, reporting and mitigation of risks; staffing challenges and the culture of the new Somerset Council; the technical functions, organisational parameters and configuration of MS Dynamics; future proofing and potential efficiency opportunities; and potential cost implications if the programme were to overrun.

The Director of Customers, Digital and Workforce, Chris Squire, in response advised of work within the unitary programme including a series of all staff workshops.

The Chief Executive, Patrick Flaherty further added that the challenges and quantification of the risks and costs of the project were being considered as a part of the wider Local Government Reorganisation programme.

Following debate the Committee proceeded to vote on the proposal to add the recommendations of the Scrutiny Policies and Place Advisory Board to the recommendations as detailed in the officer report. This was followed by a vote to adopt the recommendations as amended and as detailed below. Both votes were agreed unanimously

**Following consideration of the officer report, appendices, PowerPoint Presentation and discussion the Cabinet agreed:**

- a) That the Director of Finance and Governance is authorised to enter into a contract with the preferred SI partner to implement MS Dynamics, subject to the County Solicitor's confirmation that the agreement appropriately manages the risks;**
- b) That a proposal to integrate District HR & Payroll functions into the SCC SAP system ahead of vesting day is discussed with senior officers from all Somerset Councils;**
- c) That the Director of Finance and Governance is authorised to enter into a contract on behalf of Somerset County Council with the SAP system contractor for the duration that support is required for HR & Payroll;**

**d) That by early 2023 the second phase of the MS Dynamics migration commences, migrating HR from SAP to MS Dynamics and an integrated solution for payroll, forming part of the contract under 2.1a) above;**

**e) That the Budget Equalisation Reserve is repurposed in order to fund the estimated project costs of £7.662m;**

**f) Any additional costs associated with internal staffing resources will be funded from a combination of underspend in the 2021/22 contingency budget and the 2022/23 annual budget which includes £1.473m to release staff and provide backfill, and will be reported through the monthly budget monitoring process;**

**g) That an officer-level Project Board is convened comprising appropriate representatives from all five councils to oversee the project, including programme management and ensuring appropriate resources are made available;**

**h) The case for Appendices Two, Three and Four to be regarded as exempt information and to be treated in confidence;**

**i) With regards to the minded to recommendations from the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Advisory Board, the Cabinet:**

**i.1) Endorsed the recommendation that MS Dynamics EY demonstrate their confidence by considering sharing the risk in the negotiations of the contract.**

**i.2) Acknowledged the advice from the Senior Responsible Officer regarding a list of critical interfaces with the services of what needs to be incorporated into the scope of the project post vesting day.**

**i.3) Acknowledged the advice from the Section 151 officer regarding a list of all other earmarked reserves that could be drawn upon and used to address significant costs to ensure the right result in time for vesting day**

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report



**463 Any Other Business** – Agenda item 15

None.

(The meeting ended at 12.05pm)

Chair