

COUNTY COUNCIL

Wednesday 27 April 2022

**10.00 am Luttrell Room and Wyndham
Room, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY**



To: The members of the County Council

Cllr M Best, Cllr N Bloomfield, Cllr A Bown, Cllr M Caswell, Cllr M Chilcott, Cllr J Clarke, Cllr P Clayton (Vice-Chair), Cllr S Coles, Cllr A Dance, Cllr H Davies, Cllr M Dimery, Cllr B Filmer, Cllr D Fothergill, Cllr G Fraschini, Cllr A Govier, Cllr A Groskop, Cllr D Hall, Cllr P Ham, Cllr M Healey, Cllr N Hewitt-Cooper, Cllr J Hunt, Cllr James Hunt, Cllr D Huxtable, Cllr D Johnson, Cllr M Keating, Cllr A Kendall, Cllr C Lawrence, Cllr M Lewis, Cllr L Leyshon, Cllr J Lock, Cllr T Lock, Cllr D Loveridge, Cllr T Munt, Cllr T Napper, Cllr F Nicholson, Cllr G Noel, Cllr L Oliver, Cllr J Parham, Cllr C Paul, Cllr H Prior-Sankey, Cllr M Pullin, Cllr F Purbrick, Cllr L Redman, Cllr B Revans, Cllr M Rigby, Cllr D Ruddle, Cllr N Taylor (Chair), Cllr J Thorne, Cllr G Verdon, Cllr W Wallace, Cllr J Williams, Cllr R Williams and Cllr J Woodman

Issued By Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer- Governance and Democratic Services - 19 April 2022

For further information about the meeting, please contact Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer on 01823 357628 or 07790 577336 or swouldridge@somerset.gov.uk; democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk

Guidance about procedures at the meeting follows the printed agenda.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

This agenda and the attached reports and background papers are available on request prior to the meeting in large print, Braille, audio tape & disc and can be translated into different languages. They can also be accessed via the council's website on www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers

Are you considering how your conversation today and the actions you propose to take contribute towards making Somerset Carbon Neutral by 2030?



RNID typetalk

AGENDA

Item County Council - 10.00 am Wednesday 27 April 2022

Full Council Guidance notes - see agenda annexe

1 **Apologies for Absence**

2 **Declarations of Interest**

Details of all Members' interests in District, Town and Parish Councils can be viewed on the Council Website at [County Councillors membership of Town, City, Parish or District Councils](#) and this will be displayed in the meeting room (Where relevant).

The Statutory Register of Member's Interests can be inspected via request to the Democratic Service Team.

3 **Minutes from the meeting held on 23 February 2022** (Pages 7 - 30)

Council is asked to confirm the minutes are accurate.

4 **Chair's Announcements** (Pages 31 - 32)

To receive a report by the Chair of Council.

5 **Public Question Time**

(see explanatory notes attached to agenda)

This item includes the presentation of petitions. Details of any public questions / petitions submitted will be included in the Chair's Schedule which will be made available to the members and to the public at the meeting.

For Decision

6 **Report of the Monitoring Officer** (Pages 33 - 110)

To consider a report with recommendations by the Monitoring Officer.

The recommendations relate to approving the accuracy of minutes of various Committee meetings held in late 2021 and early 2022.

7 **Report of the Chief Executive** (Pages 111 - 116)

To consider report following consultation with the HR Advisory Board.

Item County Council - 10.00 am Wednesday 27 April 2022

The recommendations relate to Chief Officers' pay awards for 2021/22.

8 **Chair of Council's final remarks and closure**

Concluding remarks by the Chair of the Council.

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SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL – FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

GUIDANCE FOR PRESS AND PUBLIC

Recording of Meetings

The Council in support of the principles of openness and transparency allows filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public providing it is done in a non-disruptive manner. Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings and a designated area will be provided for anyone who wishes to film part or all of the proceedings. No filming or recording will take place when the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting. As a matter of courtesy to the public, anyone wishing to film or record proceedings is asked to provide reasonable notice to Jamie Jackson, , County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY 01823 357628 democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk so that the Chairman of the meeting can inform those present.

We would ask that, as far as possible, members of the public aren't filmed unless they are playing an active role such as speaking within a meeting and there may be occasions when speaking members of the public request not to be filmed.

The Council meeting will be webcast and an audio recording made.

Members' Code of Conduct Requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: HONESTY; INTEGRITY; SELFLESSNESS; OBJECTIVITY; ACCOUNTABILITY; OPENNESS; LEADERSHIP. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: [Members' Code of Conduct](#)

EXPLANATORY NOTES: QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS/PETITIONS BY THE PUBLIC

General

Members of the public may ask questions at ordinary meetings of the Council or may make a statement or present a petition – **by giving advance notice.**

Notice of questions/statements/petitions

Prior submission of questions/statements/petitions is required in writing or by e-mail to the Monitoring Officer – Scott Wooldridge email: democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk by 5pm on Thursday 21 April. The Monitoring Officer may edit any question or statement in consultation with the author, before it is circulated, to bring it into an appropriate form for the Council.

In exceptional circumstances the Chairman has discretion at meetings to accept questions/statements/ petitions without any prior notice.

Scope of questions/statements/petitions

Questions/statements/petitions must: -

- (a) relate to a matter for which the County Council has a responsibility, or which affects the County,
- (b) not be defamatory, frivolous or offensive,
- (c) not be substantially the same as a question/statement/petition which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months and
- (d) not require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

The Monitoring Officer has discretion to reject any question that is not in accord with (a) to (d) above. The Monitoring Officer may also reject a statement or petition on similar grounds.

Record of questions/statement/petitions

Copies of all representations from the public received prior to the meeting will be circulated to all members and will be made available to the public attending the meeting in the Chairman's Schedule, which will be distributed at the meeting. Full copies of representations and answers given will be set out in the minutes of the meeting.

Response to Petitions

Normally the Council will refer any petition to an appropriate decision maker for response – see the [Council's Petition Scheme](#) for more details. The organiser will also be allowed 2 minutes at the meeting to introduce the petition and will receive a response from a relevant member (normally a Cabinet member).

If a petition organiser is not satisfied with the council's response to the petition and the petition contains more than 5000 signatures (approximately 1% of Somerset's population) the petition organiser can request a debate at a meeting of the County Council itself. The Chairman will decide when that debate will take place.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the County Council held in the Hollingsworth Hall, Canalside Conference Centre, Huntworth, Somerset TA6 6LQ, on Wednesday 23 February 2022 at 10.00 am

Present: Cllr M Best, Cllr A Bown, Cllr M Caswell, Cllr M Chilcott, Cllr J Clarke, Cllr P Clayton (Deputy Chair), Cllr S Coles, Cllr A Dance, Cllr M Dimery, Cllr B Filmer, Cllr D Fothergill, Cllr G Frascini, Cllr A Govier, Cllr A Groskop, Cllr D Hall, Cllr P Ham, Cllr M Healey, Cllr J Hunt, Cllr James Hunt, Cllr D Huxtable, Cllr A Kendall, Cllr C Lawrence, Cllr M Lewis, Cllr L Leyshon, Cllr J Lock, Cllr T Lock, Cllr D Loveridge, Cllr T Munt, Cllr T Napper, Cllr F Nicholson, Cllr G Noel, Cllr L Oliver, Cllr C Paul, Cllr H Prior-Sankey, Cllr M Pullin, Cllr F Purbrick, Cllr L Redman, Cllr D Ruddle, Cllr N Taylor (Chair), Cllr J Thorne, Cllr G Verdon, Cllr W Wallace, Cllr J Williams, Cllr R Williams and Cllr J Woodman

19 **Apologies for Absence** - Agenda Item 1

Cllr N Bloomfield, Cllr H Davies, Cllr N Hewitt-Cooper, Cllr D Johnson, Cllr M Keating, Cllr J Parham, Cllr B Revans and Cllr M Rigby.

20 **Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 2

There were no new declarations.

21 **Minutes from the meetings held on 24 November 2021 and 19 January 2022** - Agenda Item 3

The minutes of the meetings held on 24 November 2021 and 19 January 2022 were accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair of Council.

22 **Chair's Announcements** - Agenda Item 4

The Chair outlined the limited number of events attended due to the restrictions of Covid 19 the number of visits has been limited but those attended were listed. The Chair took this opportunity to express his support for local charities as their work was vital to the whole community in Somerset.

The Council received and noted the report.

23 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 5

There were public questions from: -

- Sigurd Reimers.

- Nigel Behan.
- Alan Debenham and
- David Redgewell.

The questions and answers are attached to these minutes.

In addition, a petition was presented to the County Council in relation to a recently introduced Parking Scheme around Weymouth Road in Frome. The petition requested a pause and review of the scheme.

24 **Report of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel - Members Allowances 2022/23** - Agenda Item 6

This report was to inform the Council adopting a new Members' Allowances Scheme before 1st April 2022 and as part of that process the Council must have regards to the recommendations from its Independent Remuneration Panel. The arrangements for determining allowances for elected members are set down in statutory regulations - the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021) and subsequent amendments to the regulations (SI 2003/1022 and SI 2003/1692). Each local authority is required to appoint and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council prior to the Council agreeing any amendments or setting a Members' Allowances Scheme. Somerset County Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council, and Mendip District Council established a joint panel to advise the councils on their respective Schemes.

The recommendations in the report were for the next financial year only as the roles and responsibilities under the Unitary Authority will change and these should be part of a further review by the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel over the coming year.

The importance of getting the allowances right is to recognise the time commitment of all councillors, including such inevitable calls on their time at meetings with officers and constituents and attendance at political group meetings. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of their homes, it is also expected to cover the occasional chairing of meetings, routine monitoring of services and budgets and taking part in performance management and training. The allowance is not a payment for a job, nor a wage or salary. It does however need to be a such a level to encourage a wide range of people to stand for public office and not deter those needing a wage.

The County Council discussed the proposals and thanked the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel for their work in proposing the recommendations. There was a recognition that next year with a wider remit and many more members there would be a need to make recommendations for the New Unitary

Authority. The Leader of the Council proposed to accept most of the recommendations apart from 1, 3, 4, 5 and 8.

1 and 8 were rejected as they linked the increase to the Basic Allowance to inflation and the Leader was concerned that they should be linked to Officer pay rather than RPI or Inflation as these are both higher.

The matter of County Councillors not being eligible to join the Pension scheme since 2014 was raised as a potential reason why younger people are not willing to stand for election to public office was raised as a concern. The JIRP Panel was invited to shadow Councillors to gain insight into the wide range of the work they undertake and the hours involved in the role.

The Council welcomed and thanked the Panel for its report and the recommendations, which were proposed by Cllr David Fothergill and seconded by Cllr Liz Leyshon and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Support and agree the Panel's recommendations 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16.
2. Reject the proposed Panel's recommendation 1 and 8 to increase the level of Basic Allowance for 2021/22 and 2022/23 by inflation (as determined by CPIH) and instead increase the level of Basic Allowances for 2021/22 and 2022/23 at the same level of increase as for officer pay levels.

(Reason for the revised proposal is to continue with the principle that the Council has adopted for several years and concern about agreeing a recommendation to increase Members Allowances at over twice the annual percentage increase that staff will receive)

3. Reject the Panel's recommendation 3 in relation to Junior Cabinet Members and instead propose that they are moved to Band 6 noting that these roles may be subject to review following the elections in May 2022.

(Reason for the revised proposal is it is felt the reduction to Band 7 does not adequately reflect the support and time that current Junior Cabinet Members provide when compared to comparable roles)

4. Reject the Panel's recommendation 4 and to continue with the current level of special responsibility allowance for Opposition Spokespersons.

(Reasons for the revised proposal is it is felt that the level of time and commitment given by Opposition Spokespersons warrants an allowance in line with the Council's arrangements for several years)

5. Reject the Panel's recommendation 5 and to increase the level of special responsibility allowance for Vice-Chairs of Regulation and Audit Committees to Band 6.

(Reasons for the revised proposal is it is felt that the level of responsibility and commitment given by the Vice-Chairs of these decision-making committees warrants an allowance in line with the Vice Chair of Scrutiny Committees)

6. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make any amendments to the existing Scheme of Allowances in order to publish the Scheme of Members' Allowances 2022/23 as a result of the Council's decisions to recommendations 1-5 above.

25 **Report of the Leader and Cabinet** - Agenda Item 7

This report sets out the Leader's and Cabinet's recommendations to Council arising from their consideration of reports at the Cabinet meetings on 15 December 2021, 19 January and 14 February 2022. The report was introduced by the Leader of Council who welcomed this positive and sustainable budget. This would be the last budget of Somerset County Council as the next would be set by the new Unitary Council (Somerset Council). The leader highlighted the increase expenditure on Adult Social Care (up £18m), the increase spend on Children (up £12m) and a £8.4 m increase in spending on schools. What was proposed was a balanced budget and did not rely on the use of reserves. All Somerset Local Authorities have agreed to a spending protocol, this ensured the new authority would start from a strong budget position.

The County Council discussed the proposed budget, and the following points were raised. There is still a budget gap from both the District Councils and Somerset County Council that will need to be addressed by the new authority. The cost of setting up the new authority were not known in their entirety and there was still a risk they could be higher than planned. Should the 'unitary divided' materialise it was not up to Somerset County Council to decide how to spend it; that decision lay with the new authority and the Councillors elected in May to deliver. Parish Councils have contributed to support many of the services in their areas when the budget from the County Council had been cut.

The level of funding for the Climate Change Emergency had not been projected as the same level as now and that was because things like electric vehicles and decarbonisation of some buildings will have happened, this is not an annual demand.

The borrowing strategy was discussed in some detail by the Councillors. The selling of the County Farm Estate was raised as a short-term solution. The

potential loss of Covid 19 funding from central government was also raised as a concern.

The Medium-Term Financial Plan 2022/23 (including the Revenue and Capital Budgets and Council Tax Setting etc as set out in Paper A and its appendices). Proposed by Cllr Fothergill and seconded by Cllr Chilcott.

Cllr David Fothergill, seconded by Cllr Mandy Chilcott, moved and the Council **RESOLVED** to:

Approve the General Fund net revenue budget for 2022/23 of £378,646,000 and the individual service budgets for 2022/23 as outlined in Appendix 1 including:

- a) The transformation, savings and income generation plans outlined in Appendix 2, noting the savings did not require detailed Equalities Impact Assessments.
- b) The additional funding requirements set out in Appendix 3.
- c) The Finance and Assets Protocol as part of Local Government Reorganisation implementation as attached at Appendix 11.
- d) An increase in Council Tax of 1.99% in 2022/23 (an increase of £26.94 per Band D property).
- e) An increase of 1.00% 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 £13.54 on a Band D property.
- f) 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 £2,577,594. Page 80
- g) Agree the precept requirement of £279,841,541 and set the County Council precept for Band D council tax charge at £1,394.00 for 2022/23.
- h) The use of reserves for once-off spend and the overall estimated position of Earmarked Reserves outlined in Appendix 4.
- i) Note the adequacy of General Reserves at £23.0m within a risk assessed range requirement of £20m - £30m.
- j) The Capital & Investment Strategy attached at Appendix 6.
- k) The Efficiency Strategy attached at Appendix 7.

l) The Capital Programme for 2022/23 of £110.2m including new capital bids of £48.4m outlined in Appendix 8, planned sources of funding, and notes the overall programme of £180.3m for 2023/24 to 2024/25 as outlined in Appendix 9.

m) The MRP Policy attached at Appendix 10.

n) The Capital Prudential Indicators outlined in tables 16-22.

o) To opt into the national procurement scheme for External Auditor Appointments administered through Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA).

p) Delegate any final Business Rates amendments to the Director of Finance and Governance in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

And to delegate any amendments within the final Government Financial Settlement and the final Business Rates amendments to the Director of Finance and Governance in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

A named vote was taken on the motion, with votes being cast 27 for and 13 against, as follows:

For	Against	Abstain
Cllr Ann Bown	Cllr Mike Best	
Cllr Peter Clayton	Cllr John Clarke	
Cllr Mike Caswell	Cllr Simon Coles	
Cllr Mandy Chilcott	Cllr Adam Dance	
Cllr Bob Filmer	Cllr Martin Dimery	
Cllr David Fothergill	Cllr Andrew Govier	
Cllr Giuseppe Frascini	Cllr John Hunt	
Cllr Anna Groskop	Cllr Andy Kendall	
Cllr David Hall	Cllr Liz Leyshon	
Cllr Philip Ham	Cllr Jane Lock	
Cllr Mark Healey	Cllr Dave Loveridge	
Cllr James Hunt	Cllr Tessa Munt	
Cllr David Huxtable	Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey	
Cllr Christine Lawrence		
Cllr Mike Lewis		
Cllr Terry Napper		
Cllr Frances Nicholson		
Cllr Graham Noel		
Cllr Linda Oliver		
Cllr Claire Paul		
Cllr Faye Purbrick		

Cllr John Thorne Cllr Gemma Verdon Cllr William Wallace Cllr Josh Williams Cllr Rod Williams Cllr John Woodman		
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Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022-23 (as set out in Paper B and its appendices).

The report was proposed by Cllr Chilcott and seconded by Cllr Lewis. The Council **RESOLVED** by majority to:

1. adopt the Treasury Borrowing 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 the report).
3. adopt the Prudential Treasury Indicators in section 4.
4. note Appendix A, that is adopted as part of the Councils Financial regulations.
5. note the current Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) attached at Appendix D to the report.

A named vote was taken on the motion, with votes being cast 27 for and 13 abstentions, as follows:

For	Against	Abstain
Cllr Ann Bown Cllr Peter Clayton Cllr Mike Caswell Cllr Mandy Chilcott Cllr Bob Filmer Cllr David Fothergill Cllr Giuseppe Frascini Cllr Anna Groskop Cllr David Hall Cllr Philip Ham Cllr Mark Healey Cllr Nigel Hewitt-Cooper Cllr James Hunt		Cllr Mike Best Cllr John Clarke Cllr Simon Coles Cllr Adam Dance Cllr Martin Dimery Cllr Andrew Govier Cllr John Hunt Cllr Andy Kendall Cllr Liz Leyshon Cllr Jane Lock Cllr Dave Loveridge Cllr Tessa Munt Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey

Cllr David Huxtable Cllr Christine Lawrence Cllr Mike Lewis Cllr Terry Napper Cllr Frances Nicholson Cllr Graham Noel Cllr Linda Oliver Cllr Claire Paul Cllr John Thorne Cllr Gemma Verdon Cllr William Wallace Cllr Josh Williams Cllr Rod Williams Cllr John Woodman		
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26 **Report of the Monitoring Officer** - Agenda Item 8

This report set out proposals for decisions on appointments and constitutional matters, the proposed scale of fees and charges for the May 2022 elections, proposals relating to revised Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders and a proposed revised Members Code of Conduct.

The Government has set out its proposals for the election of 110 councillors to Somerset County Council to be held on 5 May 2022 and to serve a five-year term of office. Subject to the Government's approval of its Structural Changes Order (expected in early March 2022), for 2022/23 the 110 councillors will have responsibility for all current County Council services and oversee the local government reorganisation to establish a single unitary council on 1 April 2023. From 1 April 2023, the 110 councillors of the new Somerset Council will assume responsibility for all local government functions for Somerset, including those of the current four district councils. District Councils will remain until 31 March 2023 and the councillors serving those councils will continue in their roles until that date.

The Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders (the Rules) are made under Section 135 of the Local Government Act. Their purpose is to provide a framework for the making of contracts for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works that ensures Somerset County Council's approach complies with the relevant national legislation, in particular the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The Rules also help ensure the provision for securing competition in the procurement process.

The opportunity has been taken to review the County Council's Members Code of Conduct with the benefit of the LGA's Model Code as part of the Local Government Reorganisation work in collaboration with the Monitoring Officers of the four district councils. The aim has been to recommend a Members Code

of Conduct to come into effect from 6 May 2022 following the elections and to support the transition towards the new Somerset Council. The role of councillor in all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. In voting for a local councillor, the public is imbuing that person and position with their trust. As such, it is important that councillors can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviours and responsibilities associated with the role. The conduct of an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors.

All five Somerset Monitoring Officers were last year investigating the possibility of adopting the LGA Model Code of Conduct in their councils but efforts to take a consistent approach across Somerset, together with the decision on Local Government Reorganisation, meant that the focus moved to the code of conduct for the transitional council and new unitary. It is recommended that a new code is in place for the elections in May 2022 and training on that Code can then form part of the member induction process. In the circumstances, a review has been conducted to establish the position in other Councils and whether they are choosing to move to the LGA Code.

There was a suggestion that the proposed final meeting of the County Council was in Shire Hall and that number kept to a minimum as there would be no issues to debate as its purpose was to approve minutes of Committee meetings and other procedural matters.

Cllr William Wallace, seconded by Cllr Tessa Munt, moved and the Council **RESOLVED** to:

Regarding the May 2022 elections:

Approve the scale of fees and charges for the elections on 5 May 2022 as set out in Appendix 1 and to delegate authority to the Returning Officer to agree any subsequent variations.

Regarding the Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Order:

Approve the revised Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders as set out in Appendix 2; including the updated approach to assessing the Most Economically Advantageous Tender of 60% price, 30% quality and 10% social value.

Regarding the proposed revised Members Code of Conduct

Agree the adoption of the revised Members Code of Conduct as set out in Appendix 3 for implementation from 6 May 2022 following the elections;

Agree that the revised Code of Conduct is incorporated into the Council's Constitution from 6 May 2022;

Authorise the Monitoring Officer to develop and promote a Member Development programme to support the implementation of the revised Code of Conduct;

Agree that the revised Code of Conduct is promoted with Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) for adoption by City, Town and Parish Councils for implementation from 6 May 2022;

Endorse the Monitoring Officer to review and make any appropriate amendments to the Council's complaints procedures for handling allegations about potential breaches of the Members Code of Conduct with reference to the LGA Guidance.

Regarding the proposed additional meeting of the County Council

Agree to hold a meeting of the County Council on Wednesday 27 April 2022 to approve the minutes of Committee meetings and other procedural matters before the elections are held in May 2022.

27 Report of the HR Policy Committee and Pay Policy Statement - Agenda Item 9

This report covered the meeting of the HR Policy Committee workshop meeting on 18 January 2022 which considered a single item of business the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23. Officers prepared a draft 2022/23 Pay Policy Statement (PPS), which the HR Policy Committee workshop considered and requested that the Director for Human Resources present it to Full Council for its approval. The amendments are very minor and mainly relate to date changes and change in job titles.

The HR Policy Committee forms a key part of the Council's constitutional arrangements which underpin the aims and delivery of the Somerset County Plan. The Committee exercises delegated authority from the Council in respect of the approval of the Council's HR policies. However, legislation requires the Pay Policy Statement (PPS) itself to be approved by Full Council. The PPS needs to be approved in time for implementation from the beginning of the financial year.

The County Council was informed that the current pay award was awaiting national agreement and would be paid as soon as possible but that agreement had not been achieved yet.

Cllr Mandy Chilcott, seconded by Cllr Liz Leyshon, moved and the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Pay Policy Statement (PPS) for the Council for 2022-23.

28 **Requisitioned Item** - Agenda Item 10

This requisitioned item related to support and assessments for Carers who are entitled to a formal Care Assessment under the Care Act 2014. In Somerset there have been 72 formal Care Assessments against an understanding that there are 58,000 Carers in Somerset. There was some discussion around why so few have taken up their right to have an assessment. It was acknowledged that for many reasons Carers, especially Young Carers do not wish to take advantage of this.

Supporting Carers in Somerset

Cllr Tessa Munt, seconded by Cllr Jane Lock, moved and the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the item, as amended, regarding Supporting Carers in Somerset.

The Council thanks all unpaid carers for looking after their loved ones through the difficult time of the pandemic, caring for their loved ones without the support that they rely on.

The Council believes that caring for our carers needs to be at the heart of our approach to creating a sustainable future for social care in Somerset.

That the Council notes that of the 58,000 carers in Somerset the vast majority do not seek financial support from the Council. Instead, they seek emotional support through carers groups both on-line and in person, or information on where to get support through our micro providers and volunteer networks and is the reason why the Council funds an independent carers service designed by carers for carers.

The Council commits to work with the NHS and voluntary sector to guarantee an assessment for carers' support for all who want one, including the offer of short breaks and other options.

That the Council lobby central government to ensure that carers assessments are properly funded so that we can support people to stay in their own homes while unpaid carers can take the break they deserve.

29 **Report of the Leader and Cabinet** - Agenda Item 11

This report covers key decisions taken by the Leader, Cabinet Members and officers between 13 November 2021 and 11 February 2022, together with the

items of business discussed at the Cabinet meetings on 15 December 2021, 19 January 2022 and 15 February 2022.

The Council received and noted this report.

30 **Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Families** - Agenda Item 12

This report covered children's social care, inclusion, early years, the West Somerset Opportunity area, commissioning and performance, and the support given to Children's Services by the council as a whole. The strategic multi-agency framework for children's services in Somerset, is met by 'Our Plan' – the Somerset's Children and Young People's Plan 2019– 2022. The plan for 2019– 2022 was co-produced through a series of consultation and engagement events in 2018 with children, young people, their families, practitioners and decision-makers from the local authority, health, police and the voluntary and community sector.

The comprehensive report was discussed and a question about staff development for nursery staff was raised. It was confirmed that the County Council was expected to hold back 5% of the budget for staff development but a decision had been taken to reduce that to 3% in order to maximise the grant to nurseries.

The Council received and noted this report.

31 **Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Education and Public Health** - Agenda Item 13

This report provided a comprehensive and high-level overview of the work undertaken in the past year under the whole of the health and wellbeing portfolio. It focused particularly on the excellent work done during the pandemic to protect, maintain and improve the health of the local population. It gave some insight into the hard work and considerable successes that the public health team have delivered or enabled throughout a further turbulent year in responding to Covid-19 and provided a picture of what worked well and what can be improved for the future.

The Council received and noted this report.

32 **Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Local Government Reform** - Agenda Item 14

This report covered the progress made on transformation across the major county council services and Local Government Review (LGR) since the last report to Council. Staff and elected members have collaborated closely to

deliver improved performance for many services and a once in a generation new approach to local government in the county for residents and businesses alike. Members and officers from across the five Somerset Councils now work closely day-to-day to design and develop the new Somerset Council. The LGR programme is complex and the biggest programme of change ever undertaken in Somerset. A programme governance model was approved by all five councils before Christmas, and committees of elected members have already met. The development programme for the new Somerset Council is now led by a Joint Committee with members from all five Councils. Its work is reviewed by Joint Scrutiny arrangements and each week's work is led by a Programme Board comprising each council's Chief Executive and supported by a Programme Management Office.

Since the Secretary of State made his decision, the County Council and District Councils have come together to work as partners to deliver the new authority, which will come into existence on Vesting Day on 1st April 2023. Through the incredible efforts of the teams involved across the County and District Councils, building on the strong relationships developed tackling Covid, remarkable progress has been made since the summer and the Council is on track to deliver by Vesting Day despite the ever-present need to tackle Covid and its impacts, whilst continuing to deliver services and support vulnerable residents.

There was a question asking if the business case could change now it has been signed off by the Secretary of State and it was confirmed that it would not change apart from any recommendations from a Boundary Review that might in 5 years' time recommend single Member representation which could reduce the number of Unitary Councillors to 100.

The Council received and noted this report.

33 **Report of the Scrutiny for Adults and Health Committee** - Agenda Item 15

The Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee is required by the Constitution to provide full Council with a summary progress report and outcomes of scrutiny. This report covers meetings since November 2021.

The Committee had asked that the County Council support the findings of the Oral Health Needs Assessment of 2021 that called for a Dental Reform Bill to be expedited.

The Council received and noted this report.

34 **Report of the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee** - Agenda Item 16

The Scrutiny Committee for Policies and Place is required by the Constitution to make an annual report to the Council and also to provide each other meeting

of the Council with a summary progress report and outcomes of scrutiny. This regular report covers the work of the Committee meetings held on 7 December, 12 January and the Advisory Board held on 1st February 2022.

The Council received and noted this report.

35 **Report of the Scrutiny for Children and Families Committee** - Agenda Item 17

The Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee is required by the Constitution to provide Full Council with a summary progress report and outcomes of scrutiny. This report covers the work of the Scrutiny Committee from November 2021 to January 2022 and provides information on the items to be considered at the meeting on 28 February 2022 and the informal workshop on 6 April 2022.

The Council received and noted this report.

(The meeting ended at 2.00 pm)

CHAIR

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Public Questions

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PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ1	Sigurd Reimers	Climate Change Policy	<p>Last week it was three years since the five Councils in Somerset declared a climate emergency, and it is good to note that the climate strategy of both Somerset County and Somerset West and Taunton Councils featured at the top of the ranking of over 300 Councils by <i>Climate Change UK</i> (www.councilclimatescorecards.uk).</p> <p>In the County Council document "What we are already doing" there are examples of a number of climate change initiatives that have already been carried out. With the annual budget being debated today, I wonder when the County Council will be publishing a detailed timeline for all its climate change policies leading up to its Net Zero commitment in 2030.</p>

Response – Cllr David Hall

I would like to thank Mr Reimers for his kind words, Somerset County Council, as he has pointed out, having been assessed by Climate Change UK, as having the most robust strategy of any County Council in the country. We are justifiably proud of this achievement.

As you suggest, there are a significant number of projects currently underway across the County which are aimed at delivering on our ambitious goals to make Somerset resilient to the impacts of Climate Change. Somerset County Council is investing significantly in our own decarbonisation agenda, and we are also investing £1.5m through our Climate Investment Fund, in supporting a wide range of projects and schemes proposed by local communities to tackle the effects of Climate Change. Progress towards Strategy Goals and Outcomes is continuous, and we do not intend to rest on our laurels. We will continue to chart our progress against ambitious targets, and we will revisit our strategy and supporting policies as new thinking and government guidance emerge.

With regard to when we might publish a detailed timeline for all our climate change related policies leading up to our 2030 Net Zero commitment, that target date is well beyond the scope of the budget being debated here today. You will be aware we are moving towards a single Unitary Authority in Somerset. This will mean the creation of a new organisation, that will be responsible for the development and delivery of all Strategies, Policies and Services. Following the elections in May the leadership on the new Somerset Council will be developing the timeline for all future actions, and these will no doubt include Somerset Councils drive to achieve our 2030 goal.

PQ/	From	Topic	Question/Statement
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PQ2	Nigel Behan	Contract Tender Procedure	<p>In Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders (Item 8 Report of the Monitoring Officer Appendix 2) it is stated:</p> <p>“27. Most Economically Advantageous Tender</p> <p>27.1. In selecting a preferred supplier, the Council must comply with the general principles of proportionality, mutual recognition, transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment. In doing so all contract awards must be based on the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (the "MEAT").</p> <p>27.2. The MEAT may be identified by using a price-quality ratio and the default position for such evaluations is a ratio of 60:30:10, 60% price, 30% quality and 10% social value.</p> <p>27.3. However, in discussion with Commercial and Procurement, Officers must ensure the approach used to achieve MEAT is by the best means, using a methodology which is relevant and proportionate to the particular procurement being undertaken.”</p> <p>The ratios don't include environmental and climate change factors explicitly – should this be revisited – perhaps 50:30:10:10 - the remaining 10% to include climate change and the environment?</p>
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Response – Cllr Mandy Chilcott

As well as the revision to the weightings for the Most Economically Advantageous Tender within the Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders (CSOs), Cabinet has also approved a revised Social Value Policy (policy) this month. The policy provides greater direction on the evaluation of social value through the procurement process and complements the CSOs.

Within the revised policy, detailed consideration was given to the social value priorities for Somerset and whilst the County Council has declared a climate emergency, there are a number of identified priorities;

- Support for Somerset Armed Forces Covenant
- Improved employability of young people in Somerset.
- More Somerset people in employment
- Improving Supplier diversity

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- Creating a healthier community in Somerset.
- Carbon Emissions Reduced
- Reduced Waste.

These factors will receive higher weighting to other social benefits through the procurement process, furthermore the 10% for social value within the Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders is the default (i.e. starting) position. Commissioners will determine, together with colleagues in procurement, what is the appropriate percentage weighting for social value on a case by case basis. Therefore, the percentage of social value will be higher in some instances, where this is proportionate and relevant to that specific procurement.

This approach will be reviewed annually.

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PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ3	Nigel Behan	District Council Reserves	Given that the budget shortfalls (from Agenda Item 7 Report of the Leader and Cabinet) in Paper A for the respective councils forming the unitary are:

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Table 5 – Projected Budget Gaps of the five authorities in Somerset

Authority	2022/23 Estimated Net Budget £'m	2023/24 Estimated Budget Gap £'m	% of Net Budget
Somerset	376.3	14.2	3.8%
Mendip	16.7	1.9	11.4%
Sedgemoor	17.4	2.8	16.1%
South Somerset	19.6	4.1	20.1%
Somerset West & Taunton	16.7	5.5	32.9%
Total	446.7	28.5	6.4%

Can you provide the combined “reserves” position as well for the respective Local Authorities (general and earmarked)? And as percentages of the respective revenue budgets?

Response Cllr Mandy Chilcott

All of these details were included in the report to the LGR Joint Committee Report on 4 February and each of the councils budget reports to their February full Council meetings.

PQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement
PQ4	Nigel Behan	Local Government Pay	Many commissioned contract(s) annual uplifts are based on the Retail Price Index (RPI) – will the proposed budget calculations take account of the current inflation rates and the fact that in real terms Local Government Pay has reduced over the last 10 years (by over 20%).

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Therefore will SCC (and the new Unitary Councillors) propose at the Local Government Association (LGA) a pay offer for 2022/23 that, at least, exceeds (RPI?) inflation (noting the NI increase, energy, food price increases etc etc) – since staff are valued?

Response Cllr Mandy Chilcott

- We value greatly all staff across Somerset County Council and our colleagues in Somerset's district councils. They play an essential role in the lives of our residents, in often very demanding circumstances as we have seen notably during the pandemic. We remain committed to partnership working, collective bargaining and national pay agreements;
- We are analysing our pay and rewards package, to ensure it remains fair and competitive in what is currently a very tight labour market;
- We have a number of mechanisms to address specific areas of concern, such as recruitment & retention premia;
- Inflation and cost of living increases are a concern. The majority of staff are still saving money due to hybrid working and subsequent lower commuting costs. We pay an allowance to staff who are losing money because of the increased cost of utilities (due to working at home) are greater than any savings from reduced commuting
- We have put a provisional figure of 2.5% for pay increases in our budget for next year and will continue our discussions with the Local Government Association on what a reasonable pay award would look like. We ask that any increase above our budgeted figure is fully funded by central government;
- Local government finances remain vulnerable. Somerset County Council has presented a truly balanced budget for next year, however, and this will help the new Somerset Council start on a sound financial footing.

PQ	From	Topic	Question/Statement
<u>PQ5</u>	Alan Debenham	Cost of Debt	<p>In the Leader's latest election address to Somerset residents, he lambasts the Liberal Democrats when last in power in 2008 for running -up a debt of £324 million costing £42,000 a day to repay., further arrogantly saying that other parties cannot be trusted to run our public services and it is his party which can deliver what Somerset needs.</p> <p>How can any of this stand-up to any sort of honest scrutiny when the history of Tory government since 2010 has seen nothing but severe austerity and cuts imposed on County Council's by complete decimation of central government revenue support funding, loss of hundreds of Council jobs, and loss of so many much needed services a list of which would fill</p>

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			<p>the rest of this paper ?</p> <p>If Conservatives are so good at delivering services and espousing the virtues of the new Somerset Unitary (which over 60% of Somerset residents voted against) when are we likely to see the restoration of all the services lost through this period of mindless ideological austerity against local government services, especially when we see the estimated cost of this latest badly timed and unessential re-organisation at tens of millions?</p> <p>What is the total debt for the council as it stands today and what is the daily cost to service it?</p>
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Response Cllr David Fothergill

2022/23 has seen one of the largest increases in councils funding nationally, with Core Spending Power increasing by 6.9%. This means we are able to put forward significant increases in funding for all of our major services as part of today's budget proposals.

The external debt in 2008/09 was actually £353.750m and this has been reduced down to £324.55m of debt as per Table 1 in section 11 of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022-23. The interest cost on this debt is £15.134m per annum, equivalent to £41,463.01 per day.

PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ6	David Redgewell	Levelling up	With the government 12 priorities for leveling up what case is Somerset county council and Somerset west and Taunton council making to improve public transport in the economic growth area and corridor of Wellington, Taunton Bridgwater Highbridge and Burnham on sea. with improvements in bus and coach services in these town and corridor. not just opening Wellington Railway station or link up Taunton to Minehead via watchet.

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But to provide a new bus and coach station on the Tower street bus and coach station. joint with First group plc National Express coach ltd and other operators.
with Somerset west and Taunton council in view of the scrutiny commission meeting at Somerset west and Taunton council is their clear commitment to the regeneration of the bus and coach station.
which is required with urgently by passengers waiting for bus and coaches with very very poor waiting facilities in Taunton.
in Bath Somerset a temporary bus and coach station was set up with Porta cabins whilst a new transport interchanges was building built this could be the case in Taunton with a temporary provision.

Response Cllr John Woodman

I note that similar issues were raised by Mr Redgewell at last weeks Bus Advisory Board meeting and I will provide the same response now that I provided him with then. Somerset's ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) includes proposals to expand the core network across the County from 7am to 7pm, 7 days a week and to increase frequency of services, particularly on some key corridors, including the Wellington – Taunton- Bridgwater corridor. A funding request for Taunton Bus Station has also been included in the BSIP 'ask' for funding.

Therefore, we really need to wait and see what money is available from government for these developments in the first instance. The current bus station facility is owned by Somerset West and Taunton, District Council, although we are ensuring any discussions about the bus station include them to provide a joined-up approach.

PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ7	David Redgewell	Bus Services	With covid 19 bus operators recovery grant due to end on the 4th April 2022 with bus operators planning to cut services by 30 % 40 % if further covid 19 bus service recovery grant is not paid beyond April 2022 as bus service are only carrying 60 % of pre covid 19 levels.

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what progress is being made? with the Department for transport and Baroness Vere of Norberton the bus minister to protect Somerset bus Network and services in to Weston super Mare Bristol and Bath. Will Somerset county council follow the West of England mayoral combined Authority and North Somerset council and put some money to one side to protect the county bus network.

With bus service improvements plan funding allocation with the enhanced quality partnership not coming into being to later in the year by the Department for transport it is very important that bus service improvements move forward in the county and including new bus and coach stations at Bridgwater, Taunton new facility Wells, Yeovil, Wincanton and Shepton Mallet interchange.

Improvements to interchanges in Minehead town centre and Railway station and coach facilities for intercity coaches at Gateway park and ride.

or improvements to waiting facilities at riverside.

What progress is being made to invest in the county bus station and Transport interchange?

Response Cllr John Woodman

Somerset County Council has written to Baroness Vere expressing our concerns that the Bus Recovery Grant (BRG) is due to end 5th April 2022 and have asked her to consider the options for extending this. We have also written to the Treasury to raise our concerns with them as well. To date we have not received a response to either letter.

This correspondence is in-line with the ATCO position who have also written to Baroness Vere and the Treasury and have urged all Local Authorities to do the same.

As mentioned in response to the first question, a funding request for Taunton Bus Station, and other bus interchanges in Somerset, has been included in the BSIP ask, so we really need to wait and see what money is available from government for this in the first instance.

In the interim, we have commissioned WSP to undertake a further study in terms of facilities required within a bus station provision and accessibility to the site. They will also develop a 'commercial strategy' in respect of the bus station operation and they will review the interim

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proposals for utilisation of the bus station currently being progressed by Somerset West and Taunton Council, to ensure they are compatible with the preferred future scheme insofar as this is possible.

PQ	From	Topic	Question/statement
PQ8	David Redgewell	Public Transport	It is very important that provision is made to budget to maintain public transport bus service and lobby MP's members of the House of Lords and South West and Western Gateway Transport Board. and minister for an allocation of bus back better bus service improvements plan grant to Somerset and South west England. What progress is being made with the Region MP's on bus services?

As previously stated, the current facility is owned by Somerset West and Taunton, so we are working closely with our District colleagues to ensure they are involved in the study by WSP.

Response Cllr John Woodman

Our BSIP proposal includes £13.2m Somerset County Council revenue funding over 3 years, and £144k one-off SCC capital funding for new vehicles. This assumes a continuation of current (21/22) levels of SCC revenue funding for public transport. The bid also included £400k of match funding for electric vehicles.

We need to wait for the outcome of the BSIP settlement before we can consider the financial implications for the council. A balanced budget is proposed for 2022/23 and any further budget for public transport will need to be considered and approved by the unitary council.

We have taken the opportunity when writing to Baroness Vere and the Treasury to highlight Somerset as an ideal test-bed for transforming rural bus services, when considering the allocation of BSIP funding.

MEMBER QUESTIONS – NONE

Public and Member Questions County Council 23 February 2022

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Information

Chairman's
Information
Sheet No. 15

for County Councillors

From:	CLlr Nigel Taylor, Chair of Somerset County Council
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Date:	24/02/2022– 27/04/2022
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To:	All County Councillors
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Chairman's Report – 24/02/2022- 27/04/2022

MARCH 2022

- 4 March The Vice Chair attended as a guest of the Mayor of Burnham on Sea the Civic Award Ceremony held at The Princess Theatre, Burnham on Sea.
- 13 March The Vice Chair attended a Celebration Service at St Marys Magdalene Church, Taunton as a guest of the Mayor of Taunton.
- The Vice Chair attended the Mayor of Axbridge's Civic Service held at St John the Baptist Church, Axbridge.
- 20 March The Vice Chair was a guest of the High Sheriff of Somerset at The Legal Service held at Wells Cathedral.

APRIL 2022

- 9 April The Vice Chair and his consort were guest of the Mayor of Taunton at the Fundraising Concert held at St James Church, Taunton.

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Somerset County Council
County Council meeting
– 27 April 2022

Report of the Monitoring Officer – Approving the accuracy of various Committee meeting minutes held in late 2021 and early 2022.

Lead Member: Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of the Council

Lead Officer: Patrick Flaherty, Chief Executive

Author: Scott Wooldridge - Monitoring Officer

Contact Details: 01823 357628 or swouldridge@somerset.gov.uk

1. Summary of proposals

- 1.1** This report from the Monitoring Officer sets out proposals for Council to agree the accuracy of seven sets of Committee minutes that were unable to be formally agreed under the Advisory Board model the Council implemented in January 2022 and these now require formal sign off by Full Council. In addition the minutes from the final Cabinet meeting prior to the election, 16th March 2022, also require formal approval by Full Council.
- 1.2** As part of the national response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Parliament gave the Secretary of State the ability to make regulations to enable councils to hold remote meetings where all participants could participate remotely and elected members could also vote on decisions remotely. Those regulations (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings ((England and Wales) Regulations 2020) were used by the County Council throughout the rest of 2020 and into 2021 to hold virtual committee meetings but they ceased to have effect after 6 May 2021.
- 1.3** In parallel, the Council along with other councils and through the Local Government Association has been lobbying for the Government to bring forward primary legislation to enable virtual / hybrid meetings to take place again so that remote voting can be permitted. Despite many councils responding to Government consultation on this matter in June 2021 the Government is yet to announce its proposals for bringing forward legislation regarding virtual/hybrid meetings
- 1.4** Between May 2021 and 19 January 2022, the County Council returned to face to face committee meetings with covid 19 safety arrangements in place, which included live broadcasts of the proceedings to enable the public, partners and non-committee members to participate remotely.
- 1.5** In order to help with minimising the spread of Covid-19, an Extraordinary meeting of Full Council was convened on 19th January 2022, where it was proposed and agreed that a temporary change be made by converting all current non-executive committee meetings to advisory boards. These advisory board meetings would be held virtually and enable members and other

stakeholders to participate and give a steer to officers to consider when taking formal decisions using delegated powers

- 1.6** The recommendation agreed by Full Council at the Extraordinary Meeting on 19th January 2022 was formally worded as 'continue to hold Full Council meetings face to face and all other meetings to be held remotely with officers using delegated powers to take any decisions following members giving a steer on proposed decisions.'
- 1.7** Since the Advisory Boards are not Committees under the Local Government Act 1972 they do not have the authority to formally agree previous Committee meeting minutes. As a result there are eight sets of Committee minutes (including the last Cabinet meeting – 16th March 2022) that require a formal agreement by Full Council on 27th April 2022, as there has been no further opportunity do so by the individual Committee. The eight sets of minutes relate to the following meetings:
1. Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee – 3rd November 2021 – attached as Appendix A
 2. Constitution and Standards Committee – 12th November 2021 – attached as Appendix B
 3. Audit Committee – 30th November 2021 – attached as Appendix C
 4. Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee – 1st December 2021 – attached as Appendix D
 5. Pensions Committee – 7th January 2022 – attached as Appendix E
 6. Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee – 12th January 2022 – attached as Appendix F
 7. Regulation Committee – 13th January 2022 – attached as Appendix G
 8. Cabinet – 16th March 2022 – attached as Appendix H

2. Recommendations

2.1 Approving the accuracy of Committee Meeting minutes

That the Council:

- 1) Agrees the accuracy of the 8 sets of minutes attached to the report as Appendices A to H.
- 2) Agrees that the Vice Chair of Council signs a copy of each of the 8 sets of Committee minutes on behalf of their respective Committee Chair.
- 3) Authorises the Monitoring Officer to take forward the implementation of the recommendations above and ensure accurate records are kept.

3. Background

3.1. Covid - 19 and democratic arrangements put in place

- 3.1.1 The Government put in place emergency legislation including the Coronavirus Act during March 2020 and urged councils to continue delivering essential services including supporting vulnerable people and ensuring that important functions that have an economic impact such as planning and highways, continue to be delivered as close to normal as possible.
- 3.1.2 The legislation governing council decision making dates from 1972, a time before the technology to enable online remote meetings existed. Before changes introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 council decisions could be made only by councillors attending at a meeting of the Full Council, a committee or a sub-committee or by an individual officer with delegated powers. An individual councillor acting alone could not make a decision.
- 3.1.3 The 2000 Act introduced a distinction between executive and non-executive decision making. It enabled the Leader and other executive councillors to make individual executive decisions. Non-executive decisions such as planning decisions must still be made either by a committee of councillors or by an individual officer with delegated powers.
- 3.1.4 In April 2020, the Secretary of State for MHCLG agreed the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. These regulations gave local authorities new powers to hold public meetings virtually by using video or telephone conferencing technology.
- 3.1.5 The Council embraced the new regulations and moved rapidly to implement virtual committee meetings from early May using Microsoft Teams technology.
- 3.1.6 The Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation already provided delegated powers to the Chief Executive (and any officer authorised by the Chief Executive) to take any and all actions necessary to protect and / or further the best interests of the Council, the County of Somerset and the public.
- 3.1.7 The Constitution also empowers Senior Leadership Team officers to manage the services for which they are responsible for commissioning and delivering and to act to safeguard, protect and promote the interests of the Council.
- 3.1.8 Extensive corporate work by Democratic Services and Corporate ICT enabled the Council to put in place new ways of working within a very rapid time for members, public, partners, press and staff to participate in virtual committee meetings and virtual school appeals hearings from early May 2020 until May 2021. These arrangements were supplemented by members' briefing meetings convened by the Chief Executive and supported by the Senior Leadership Team.

- 3.1.9 Following the expiry of the virtual meeting regulations in May 2021, the Council put in place face to face and 'hybrid' meeting arrangements with a range of Covid 19 safety measures for all participants. 'Hybrid' meetings are meetings where members and other participants can attend a venue as well as other members and the public participating in the meeting by virtual means.
- 3.1.10 In addition to this, from December 2021 there was growing safety and resilience concerns for delivering the face to face and 'hybrid' meetings at the same time as the council was managing essential service delivery, supporting the pandemic response and the Local Government Reorganisation in Somerset in the midst of the latest significant national and local increases in Covid 19 infection rates.
- 3.1.11 There were a range of options available to how the Council could proceed ahead of the next Annual General Meeting in May 2022, presented to Full Council at the Extraordinary meeting on 19th January 2022:
- 1) Continue to hold face to face meetings, managed to reduce Covid 19 risks as best as possible for all involved
 - 2) Continue to hold Full Council meetings face to face and all other meetings to be held remotely with officers using delegated powers to take any decisions following members giving a steer on proposed decisions *
 - 3) Continue to hold Full Council meetings face to face and all other meetings to be held on a hybrid basis with managed attendance to limit numbers present to a minimum and for all other participants to join remotely *

*- in relation to the Cabinet it is for the Leader of the Council to determine what arrangements he wishes to put in place

Full Council voted to agree on recommendation 2, which was the Monitoring Officer's recommendation following consultation with the Cabinet and SLT.

- 3.1.12 Option 2 involved all non-executive committee meetings (except Full Council) being temporarily converted into 'advisory boards' that meet remotely and with the members of the advisory boards (the current committee members) giving a 'minded to' steer on recommendations set out in officer reports. Other members, the public and other stakeholders would still be able to observe and participate in the advisory boards. After the advisory boards, officers with delegated powers would make the formal decisions after considering the debate at the advisory boards and the 'minded to' steers expressed by members at the virtual meetings of the advisory boards.

4. Implications

- 4.1 Legal & Risk:** This report complies with all current legal requirements. The main risk to the Council is in the instance that Full Council does not approve the accuracy of these minutes.
- 4.2 Financial, equalities, sustainability and community safety implications:** There are no specific equalities implications arising from any of the proposals in this report. There are no specific sustainability or community safety implications as a result of these proposals.

5. Background papers

- 5.1** Council's Constitution
Report of the Monitoring Officer – Full Council meetings May 2021 and January 2022

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SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, ADULTS AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee held in the Luttrell Room, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY, on Wednesday 3 November 2021 at 10.00 am

Present: Cllr H Prior-Sankey (Chair), Cllr P Clayton, Cllr A Govier, Cllr J Lock, Cllr M Keating and Cllr J Thorne

Other Members present: Cllr M Chilcott, Cllr G Frascini, Cllr A Kendall, Cllr C Lawrence, Cllr T Munt, Cllr C Paul, Cllr L Redman and Cllr B Revans

Apologies for absence: Cllr M Healey, Cllr A Bown and Cllr M Caswell

23 **Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 2

There were no new declarations.

24 **Minutes from the previous meeting held on 08 September 2021** - Agenda Item 3

The minutes were agreed.

25 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 4

There were no public questions.

26 **Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee Work Programme** - Agenda Item 5

The Committee considered and noted the Council's Forward Plan of proposed key decisions in forthcoming months including Cabinet meetings. The Committee agreed to have a workshop with Scrutiny Children's and Families to look at Mental Health Services in general. To add the New Hospital Programme to the agenda for the meeting in January 2022

27 **Integrated Quality, Safety and Performance report.** - Agenda Item 6

The Committee had a report that provided an update on the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Integrated Quality, Safety and Performance and an overview of performance against the constitutional and other standards to the period ending July 2021. It was a retrospective report which compared the reported month (July 2021) to the same period in 2019/20 to provide a comparative view of performance. The report covered the following key areas and gave detailed information on each. This included a great deal of statistical historic information: -

- **Primary Care.** Where there were 227,471 consultations with either a GP or other healthcare professional of which 57.3% were face to face.
- **NHS 111.** Performance in July 2021 was better than the average for England and continued to experience ongoing pressures and demands.
- **A&E Performance.** For each of the four Hospitals covering the Somerset area was outlined. All have seen increased demand, but Yeovil District Hospital remains one of the highest performing Trust nationally.
- **Emergency Admissions.** The overall number of admissions was lower in all but Yeovil District Hospital where they had increased by 5.6%.
- **Elective Care – Referral to Treatment.** The number of elective referrals during 2021/22 have continued to restore with cancer demand returning to pre pandemic levels and routine referrals continuing to increase. The waiting times have all increased with particular pressure on General Surgery, Orthopaedics, ENT and Ophthalmology.
- **Elective Care -Diagnostic Waiting times.** All diagnostic modalities continue to be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic due to services working at reduced capacity as a result of the ongoing impact of social distancing in waiting rooms and enhanced infection control measures (PPE and cleaning measures between patients), staff sickness (isolation) and recruitment challenges and this has led to a significant increase in the number of patients waiting in excess of 6 weeks for their diagnostic test or procedure.
- **Elective Care – Cancer.** Referral levels have returned to pre Covid-19 levels with some cancer pathways showing a higher level of growth.
- **Mental Health -Improving Access to Psychological Therapies.** The number of people accessing treatment for the period April - July is 2,836 against a local indicative target of 3,442 (c.600 below plan); performance for the period is lower than plan and this is due to the annual target being profiled evenly across the year rather than increasing in the later quarters, however we anticipate access will increase over the course of the year as new staff commence in post and new access routes are put in place, e.g. Long Term Conditions (LTC).
- **Quality – Safeguarding.** Initial Health Assessments within 28 days: performance decreased further in June and July. Dental checks for children looked after for more than 1 year performance continues to recover with 47.1% of eligible CLA accessing a dental assessment T
- **Quality – Continuing Healthcare.** The focus of NHS England's CHC Assurance during 2021/22 will be on the system recovery and recovering performance on the following standards:
 - Performance against the 28 Day Standard for July 2021 was recorded at 88% (against the 28 day ambition) which is our highest level of attainment since the commencement of this Key Performance Indicator in April 2018.
- **Quality – LeDeR.** In July 2021, three Notifications were received into the Service, which is consistent with the number of notifications received on a monthly basis in 2021/22.

- **Quality -Pressure Ulcers.** Pressure Ulcers information for both the trusts will differ from previous results due to the validation work that is undertaken on each incident. Please note that validation for Somerset FT is still ongoing and we have yet to receive the latest updated information. Somerset Foundation Trust have identified some additional leadership resource to support the team to aid validation
- **Quality -Infection Control.** There has been a national increase in C-Diff. infections resulting in a regional collaborative initiative to identify trends, themes etc. to ascertain development initiatives aimed at the reduction of C-Diff. nationally
- **Quality Maternity.** Both trusts currently under pressure due to increase in numbers and acuity, and Covid-19 related staff absence. Support available across the system and regionally. This is expected to ease as new midwives are recruited
- **Ambulance Services.** This was the main thrust of the presentation as the Committee had raised concerns at the last meeting and requested a targeted presentation. The Committee were given a presentation that covered all the performance areas. Category 1 response times have declined during the cumulative period April 2021 to August 2021 as a consequence of the increased activity levels; this increase is attributed to both an increase in demand as well as a re-categorisation of incidents from Category 2 to Category 1 during 2020/21. In addition, SWAST also introduced additional guidance to assist in the triage of patients with ineffective breathing. A consequence this has led to a deterioration in the time it is taking to hand over patients to the care of the Emergency Department or Ward and thus impacting upon ambulance resource availability.
- During August 2021 Category 1 performance was:
 - Somerset: 9.6 minutes against the 7-minute Mean standard, 21.0 minutes against the 15 minutes 90th Percentile standard
 - SWAST: 11.1 minutes against the 7-minute Mean standard, 18.32 minutes against the 15 minutes 90th Percentile standard
 - National: 8.3 minutes against the 7-minute Mean standard, 15.06 minutes against the 15 minutes 90th Percentile standard
- Category 2 response times have also deteriorated during the cumulative period April 2021 to August 2021 as a consequence of the increased activity levels and during August 2021 Category 2 performance was:
 - Somerset: 61.3 minutes against the 18-minute Mean standard, 126.2 minutes against the 40 minutes 90th Percentile standard
 - SWAST: 53.9 minutes against the 18-minute Mean standard, 118.1 minutes against the 40 minutes 90th Percentile standard

- National: 38.4 minutes against the 18-minute Mean standard, 84.2 minutes against the 40 minutes 90th Percentile standard

Overall, the volume of calls to the Ambulance Service have increased by 13.9% when comparing April 2021 to August 2021 to the same period in 2019, and the call outcome with the greatest level of growth is hear and treat.

To manage the high volumes of calls SWAST have significantly invested in the 2 clinical hubs and redeployed a number of senior clinicians including Specialist Paramedics and GPs to support remote triage which has resulted in the Hear & Treat rates increasing from 10% to 30% on most days (thus avoiding an ambulance to be dispatched). They have Secured additional resource to support the normal resourcing levels with an average of 5-6 additional crews each day. They have extended the agreement with Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service whereby a number of Co Responder fire fighter colleagues are working alongside the lead clinicians as drivers. Increased the overall operational resourcing levels within the county and based on 2019 figures equating to an additional 1000 hours of conveying ambulance resources each week and during the extreme pressures over the past 3 weeks have further extended this. SWAST is working with Acute Trusts in tackling ambulance handover delays; this is a system priority in order to reduce risk of harm to patients both in the community and delayed at hospital. By ensuring that the Patient Transport Service is being most effectively deployed to support Urgent and Emergency Care and elective recovery they have freed up more resources. They have put on place measures to assist in accepting ambulance transfers rapidly (including to SDEC and specialities) in order to improve bed flow and finally by ensuring the Directory of Services is fully updated in each area to ensure correct onwards patient care/referral to speciality.

The Committee discussed the report and during this discussion the following points were raised: -

- The report stated that 57% of the 227,471 consultations were face to face but it did not break that down between GP's and other Healthcare professionals and that was the figure that the Committee were interested in knowing. The Committee were advised that that breakdown was not immediately available but assured that 203 per 1,000 population were seen face to face and this was a higher than the national average. There was some concern raised in relation to repeat referrals to pharmacists who in fact had missed a serious illness. The Committee were aware that there is some political pressure on having face to face consultations when there were some significant advantages for a rural place like Somerset in using technology to communicate. The Committee also acknowledged that some of the pressures were due to staff shortages and not the pandemic.

- The use of Private and Community Hospitals was not covered in the report and the Committee asked that this be shared in a briefing paper so it could be scrutinised at a later date,
- There was nothing in the report about vaccination levels and the Committee requested an update on that with particular reference to the uptake by pregnant women.
- The Committee asked for more information on the targets for Mental Health services as the 75% 'national ambition'.

The Somerset Scrutiny for Policies Adults and Health Committee: -

Discussed the report and requested a further paper covering Ambulance telephone and response times, extremes not averages, further details on Community Hospitals beds, level of vaccinated pregnant women, Mental Health targets and the percentage of face-to-face GP appointments -excluding those seen by other healthcare professionals.

28 SSAB Annual Report - Agenda Item 7

The Committee had before it the Annual Report of the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB). The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) operates as an independently chaired, multi-agency body under The Care Act 2014. It became statutory from April 2015. The SSAB's role is to have an oversight of safeguarding arrangements within the County, not to deliver services or become involved in the day-to-day operations of individual organisations, including those of Somerset County Council. The Board is required by The Care Act 2014 to produce and publish an Annual Plan and Report each year. The plan is normally considered by the Scrutiny for Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee in the spring (this did not happen in 2020 or 2021 due to the Coronavirus Public Health Crisis) and the Annual Report in the autumn. The purpose of the report was to present both the Board's refreshed Annual Plan for 2021/22 and Annual Report for the 2020/21 financial year.

The main objective of the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) is to seek assurance that local safeguarding arrangements and partner organisations act to help and protect people aged 18 and over who:

- have needs for care and support; *and*
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect or exploitation; *and*
- are unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or experience of, abuse or neglect as a result of their care and support needs.

By its very nature a strategic plan is a high-level and contains objectives that will be updated as work progresses. The plan also does not reference specific groups of adults, other than in one specific case, in recognition that while the general level of risk may vary, safeguarding work is rarely group specific. Our overarching priorities for 2021-22 are:

- Listening and learning,

- Enabling people to keep themselves safe,
- Working together to safeguard people who can't keep themselves safe and
- Board Governance.:

The Committee discussed the report and strategic plan and were interested to know what actions were taken and if outcomes were followed up. They were assured they were. The Committee wanted confirmation that the links with other bodies were strong and that follow-up actions were followed through. They were satisfied that they were.

The Somerset Scrutiny for Policies Adults and Health Committee: -

Considered the Annual report, noted progress and agreed to continue to promote safeguarding across the County Council and in services that are commissioned.

29 **Adult Social Care Reform and Assurance** - Agenda Item 8

The Committee had a report and presentation on recent developments in relation to national plans relating to Adult Social Care reform and assurance. It was made clear that at this stage these represented directions of travel as the full details are not yet available.

Social Care Transformation: On 7 September 2021, the Government set out its new plan for health and social care. It provided an overview of how the plan would tackle the elective backlog in the NHS and put the NHS on a sustainable footing. It also set out details of the plan for adult social care in England, including a cap on social care costs and how financial assistance will work for those without substantial assets. The plan covers wider support that the government will provide for the social care system and explains how the government will improve the integration of health and social care. It also outlines the government's plan to introduce a new Health and Social Care Levy.

ASC Assurance: In February 2021, the Government set out legislative proposals for a Health and Care Bill, due to receive Royal Assent in Quarter 1, 2022. This included proposals for a new assurance framework for adult social care, and the introduction of a new duty for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to assess Local Authorities delivery of their statutory adult social care duties under The Care Act 2014:

- 'As social care affects a greater number of people at some point during their lives, accountability for services becomes increasingly important for both national and local government. It is therefore only reasonable for government to want to ensure the ASC system is delivering the right kind of care, and the best outcomes, with the resources available. We also want to be able to readily identify best practice across the system,

building on existing sector-led support and improvement programmes. To achieve this, we want to work with local authorities and the sector to enhance existing assurance frameworks that will support our drive to improve the outcomes and experience of people and their families in accessing high quality care and support, regardless of where they live. To support these goals, we propose to introduce through the Health and Care Bill, a new duty for the Care Quality Commission to assess local authorities' delivery of their adult social care duties'.

Both Government announcements will impact the Local Authority in terms of demands, expectations, and human / financial resources required to support the impacts of the activity. This level of detail has not yet been explored and it is therefore not possible to fully understand this impact or indeed any accompanying support that reflects it. It is anticipated that a higher level of care act assessments and brokerage/care sourcing functions on the back of proposed reforms. There are tight implementation timescales for all systems and processes to be in place for new reform and assurance activity.

The Committee discussed the report and asked about the likely time frame for a new White Paper on the much-anticipated changes to Deprivation of Liberty rules and was informed that it was due very soon. The Committee discussed the pressure the new arrangements will place on smaller providers, and it was acknowledged that some will be lost. The promised reforms, as a starting point, was welcomed but the finer details of the funding package were urgently needed and would no doubt need to lead to an increase in Council Tax at a local level.

The Somerset Scrutiny for Policies Adults and Health:

Considered and commented on the report.

30 Any other urgent items of business - Agenda Item 9

There were no other items of business.

(The meeting ended 12:15)

CHAIR

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CONSTITUTION & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Constitution and Standards Committee held on 12th November 2021 at 10.00am.

Present: Cllr W Wallace (Chair), Cllr M Dimery, Cllr T Munt, Cllr H Davies, Cllr D Loveridge, David Stripp, Alan Hemsley

Virtual attendance: Cllr T Munt, Cllr Loveridge, Robin Horton, Paul Hooper

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE- Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received by Wesley Wooding

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST- Agenda Item 2

Members of the Constitution and Standards Committee declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a District, City/Town or Parish Council:

Cllr D Loveridge Bridgwater Town Council
Cllr H Davies Somerset West and Taunton Council
Cllr W Wallace South Somerset District Council

In addition, Cllr T Munt declared a personal interest as a Director of Whistleblowers UK at Agenda item 7

11. MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING- Agenda Item 3

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9th July 2021 were approved as a correct record and the Chair agreed to sign them.

12. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME- Agenda Item 4

There were no public questions

13. Membership Update - Agenda Item 5

The Chair invited the Monitoring Officer, Scott Wooldridge, to provide a verbal update on the committee's membership.

The following was highlighted:

- over the last year that two co-opted members of the committee stood down from their duties.
- The committee had three vacancies for co-opted members.
- There was a total of 7 applications for the vacancies and three new members to the committee have now been successfully recruited as co-opted members
- The Monitoring Officer had made the formal decision which had been published to appoint Alan Hemsley, David Stripp and Paul Hooper.
- The committee dates for 2022 have been set out in the report with the meeting procedures.
- The newly recruited co-opted members introduced themselves to the committee and gave an insight to their background and what knowledge they will bring to the committee.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- It was highlighted that only one female sat on the committee, and it would be good to have a balance on the committee to better represent the population.
- A co-opted member highlighted to the board the importance of cognitive diversity. Capturing the interest of Somerset residents to post advertised in the future to achieve greater diversity should be an aim.
- This committee comprises all the political groups on the Council but it was noted that all the Greens, Independents Labour members were all male and therefore this lead to a greater proportion of men on the committee.
- A suggestion for the next recruitment drive to cover a wider audience.
- In recognition of the enormous amount of work that would be happening during the next council year as part of the transition to a unitary authority to only have four meetings during that period

The Monitoring Officer informed the committee that the advert for the vacancies were open to all e residents of Somerset. The recruitment process was open and highlighted opportunities in terms of promoting democracy and encourage people to stand. Unfortunately, there was another resignation from a co-opted member which left another vacancy. There was a new LGR joint Committee with specific responsibility for oversight of the implementation towards that unitary Council in terms of direct responsibilities for developing those sorts of key policies and proposals. In May 2022 following election the Council would have specific responsibility to oversee the development of the Constitution for that unitary council.

The Committee considered and noted the report on Membership Update.

14. LGR - Governance and Constitutional Programme- Agenda Item 6

The Chair invited the Monitoring Officer to provide a presentation on the LGR Governance and Constitutional programme.

The following was highlighted:

- The presentation provided an update to the committee and an opportunity to ask questions about the constitutional governance work that is currently being undertaken.
- The Secretary of State made the decision back in July to agree the business case to create a single unitary authority for Somerset to start by the 1st of April 2023.
- The draft structural change order is being prepared by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and it will include the proposed electoral arrangements for the unitary authority.
- The Structural Change Order is the responsibility of DLUHC to devise and determine prior to presenting it to Parliament for approval in early 2022.
- DLUHC advised that it does not fully support the business case proposal for 100 councillors. Work was undertaken in August and September across the 5 council to look at various options.
- The implementation plan and setting out key dates on the programme milestones and the workstreams.
- The Local Government Reorganisation Programme including the governance for the programme and workstream levels. There was a programme board made up of Chief Executives that met weekly with 151 section officers and program directors.
- There was a proposal to consider the creation of a joint scrutiny committee on behalf of the five councils as well to support the LGR.
- The activities that are part of the workstreams and the key elements of the structural change order.
- The transition period with the current phase of the work continuing to support the implementing of the unitary council and then stage two of implementing of the structural change order to election in May 2022. The third stage will be covering the post-election period prior to the vesting day of April 2023.
- In May 2022 the proposal was for 110 Councillors with 214 councillors in the four district councils still undertaking their roles until 31st March 2023. As of the 1st April 2023 when the new unitary authority is formed there will be 110 Unitary Authority Councillors only representing the whole of Somerset.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- The Government preferred option in terms of staffing and specified savings through redundancies etc.
- Financial and legal provisions in terminating contracts.
- At Somerset West and Taunton there was a motion to introduce a Taunton parish council how would this be governed.
- The future for existing parish and town councils in Somerset.

- Elections for the next parish and town council elections.
- Clarification on costs to parish councils if the elections go ahead.

The Monitoring Officer informed the committee that the legal provisions relating to contracts are standard provisions as part of the creation of a new unitary body, and there were regulations which enable this. The existing contracts that may have two or three years left to run unless any action is taken to amend them otherwise will be novated over to the new council, the predecessor council's arrangements are then accepted. In the preceding period, work would take place across the five Councils, looking at the contract registers to identify where there are opportunities for clear alignment. The business case put forward by Somerset County Council was a proposal for a continuing authority, Somerset County Council also was the largest of the five councils in terms of its staffing base.

The responsibility of a community governance review under statutory requirements where a principal Council considers the legal processes and the consultation that is required for creating a new town or new parish Council - this responsibility rested with the District Council. The design of the area, the geography of the proposed housing developments that have occurred on the periphery of the unparished area was a matter for Somerset West and Taunton District Council. Should a unitary election continue as scheduled in May 2022 it is very likely that the government will propose for the parish and town council elections to be brought forward to May 2022 as well in order to achieve that alignment, and this could continue going forward.

There is a cost of administering parish and town elections and the Monitoring Officer will seek clarification with the Finance Director. Across the five councils there are thousands of staff delivering a whole variety of services locally, which would continue, and existing authorities already have schemes of delegation in place which usually empower their Chief Executives and senior officers in order to take any type of urgent decision on the best interests of the Council.

The Committee considered and noted the LGR- Governance and Constitutional Programme.

15. Annual Councillors Complaints Report 2020/21

The Chair invited the Monitoring Officer Scott Wooldridge to provide an update on the complaints report 2020-2021. Highlighting the period 1 April 2020 until 31 March 2021, the Monitoring Officer explained he had received three complaints relating to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct by County Councillors. Two of the complaints related to the same elected member. Two of the complaints were upheld and recommendations made for the councillors to action. One of the complaints was not upheld due to insufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations.

An external independent investigator was commissioned by the Monitoring Officer to assist with these investigations due to other corporate pressures and insufficient internal capacity. The Council's Independent Person and Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee were consulted and supported the proposed recommendations prior to the Monitoring Officer's determination for each of the three complaints.

The following point was raised To increase the choice of using independent advisors when dealing with complaints

It was clarified there were two types of independent advisor, one is the legal role as well as the Councils independent person with specific duty in the process of considering the complaint and the proposed determination. Therefore, if the monitoring officer is unable to deal with a complaint the process for dealing with these could still continue.

The Committee considered and noted the Annual Councillors Complaints Report 2020/2021.

16. Whistleblowing update.

The Chair invited the Monitoring Officer Scott Wooldridge to provide a verbal update on the whistleblowing policy and the ongoing work with the legal team. The internal auditors were currently working on this, and the report would be coming to the next meeting in February.

The following point was raised:

- That fraud and safeguarding are not separated from whistleblowing and a disclosures are protected with members of staff having automatic protection under the law and being mindful of the grievance procedure.

The Monitoring Officer informed the committee that there are other committees and boards of the Council that also have an interest in some of these matters. Recognising that the anti-fraud and corruption activities are reported through to the Council's Audit Committee within their scope and functions.

17. Work Programme- Agenda Item 8

The Monitoring Officer reported on the proposed future work programme, and this was noted by the Committee.

The Monitoring officer highlighted the following items:

- The annual review of the Member Officer Protocol
- Members Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy

- Member and Officer Indemnity Policy
- Revised Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders
- Monitoring Officers Protocol

It was suggested that an extra hour be scheduled for the February meeting due to the amount of business that will need to be taken.

The Monitoring Officer informed the committee that some items that currently show on the work programme may not be ready to bring to the February meeting therefore they may need to move to the following meeting.

18. Any other urgent items of business

There was none.

The meeting ended at 11.58am

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Audit Committee held in the Luttrell Room, County Hall, Taunton, on Tuesday 30 November 2021 at 12:00 pm

Present: Cllr Mike Lewis (Chair), Cllr Mike Caswell (Vice Chair), Cllr Bob Filmer, Cllr Graham Noel, Cllr Hugh Davies, Cllr Liz Leyshon, Cllr Mike Rigby (virtual attendance)

Other Members present: Cllr Mandy Chilcott, Cllr Tessa Munt, Cllr Christine Lawrence, Cllr Bill Revans

Officers present: (JV) Director of Finance and Governance, (PG) Service Manager-Chief Accountant, (AS) Service Manager for Investments, (BB) Strategic Manager for Finance Systems and Governance, (OW) Head of Property, (LF) Assistant Director of SWAP, (BM) Key Audit Partner-Grant Thornton, (NM) Committee Manager, (TB) Committee Clerk

Apologies for absence – Agenda Item 1

Cllr Phillip Ham did not attend

Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

The Chair of the Committee noted the details of all Councillors' interests already declared in District, Town and Parish Councils and the Pension Fund.

There were no new declarations.

Minutes from the previous meeting - Agenda Item 3

The Audit Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2021 were accurate, and the Chair signed them.

Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

The Chair informed the meeting that no questions or statements were received by the PQT deadline of 5pm on Wednesday 24 November.

Internal Audit Update - Agenda Item 5

The Chair invited the Assistant Director of SWAP to present the progress update for November, which focused on high-risk areas, and limited assurance reporting forms an important part of that. No reports with limited assurance have been finalised, but two reasonable reports have been finalised, with more reports due to be finalised by January. There is much work in progress and new

work due to start in Quarter 4, but they are on track to deliver the scheduled audit plan.

As regards the reporting of implementation of agreed actions, which was introduced at the last meeting, implementation had been slowed due to the pandemic and limited resources, but agreed actions are beginning to be implemented more quickly with a 21% reduction in the number of outstanding actions. With reference to Page 21 of the report, the first paragraph refers to meetings with DMT's and heads of service which took place in October to ensure that audit plan scheduled for the second half of the year contained key risk areas; this has led to some changes in the plan. Page 22 demonstrates the mapping of SCC strategic risks against audit work; the only exception to the coverage of strategic risks regards climate change, which is scheduled for later in the fourth quarter. Page 23 gives an overview of the current status of implementation of agreed actions from the limited assurance reports, which have decreased from 113 to 89 over two months. Page 25 details the safeguarding in schools follow-up work (after the original audit last fiscal year in 2021), the results of which were fed to the local authority; good progress has been made in implementing the recommendations, although a couple of them are still not fully complete and will require more time to implement in full as part of a larger ongoing development in relation to safeguarding. They are satisfied, however, that enough work has been done to mitigate the original risks reported, and no further follow-up work is proposed.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee, and during consideration of the reports, issues/concerns were raised, questions were asked/answered, and further information was provided:

A question was raised with respect to Page 27 regarding the whistle blowing policy review and whether the whole of the policy would be reviewed by SWAP, or whether that would be reviewed internally. It was responded that it is the Council who will review the policy, while SWAP's fraud lead will contribute in an advisory capacity.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director of SWAP and stated that he looks forward to the January reports.

The Audit Committee considered and commented on the update report.

Approval of the Pension Fund Accounts 2020/2021- Agenda Item 6

The Chair invited the Key Audit Partner of Grant Thornton to present the Audit Findings Report, accounts, and Letter of Representation. It was noted that this report had already been presented to the Committee in September and that today's report would provide an update highlighting any changes, as there was

a small amount of work still outstanding in September. He referred to Page 51, Appendix A regarding audit adjustments, which highlights the only change which relates to testing and agreement of investments. It was noted that the UK equities figure of just over £12.9 million had been classified as Level 1, where inputs are directly observable, which they were unable to do, so this has been changed to Level 2 with management's approval (Note 30 has been updated to reflect that change). This is an immaterial reclassification in both the current and prior periods, so no further adjustments were required. Also, with respect to additional voluntary contributions to Prudential, this was not made available by Prudential but was a trivial amount; an additional amount of contributions approximating £400,000 annually with a total value of about £4 million was reported by a third party. This situation was not limited to only SCC and was the case against all pension funds with Brunel, so management has been asked to engage more with Prudential in future, but it was reiterated that this was an amount of low triviality and does not need to go into the report, hence the verbal update only.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee, and during consideration of the reports, issues/concerns were raised, questions were asked/answered, and further information was provided:

It was questioned why certain issues are referred to as "trivial" when they involve hundreds of thousands of pounds; it was responded that there are strict guidelines as to what is important to auditors and what would change the view of stakeholders, so on Page 39 of the report, it is set out what the materiality is based on the gross value of the fund. As the materiality for the Pension Fund audit is set at approximately £26.1 million, the triviality level is £1.3 million. Materiality is set at 1% of the Pension Fund balance, which is over £2.5 billion, with triviality set at 5% of materiality; so a figure of £1 million would not change the overall view of the financial information included in the report or compel a change in the financial statements.

With respect to the AVC's (voluntary contributions), it was queried whether this is a matter between the purchaser and the pension provider and whether it is audited; the response was that it is a requirement within the Pension Fund accounts to disclose the information provided, and it is not a comment on the performance of the Finance team that Prudential did not provide the information. It was added that the figures from Prudential are a disclosure but are not included in the primary statements and are not part of the valuation of the fund given in the net assets statement, nor are the contributions included in the fund account.

It was asked if were possible to have an update from the minutes of the last meeting, where it was noted with respect to the assets of the Pension Fund that 77% had been moved to Brunel by March and 93% by September; the reply was that the fund is valued monthly and the figure for the end of October was

£2.894 billion. What is left is principally cash and illiquid long-term investments; therefore, the amount moved will change very slowly over the next few years and will only reach a total of 97-98%, so the transition process is for all intents and purposes now complete. Cash will remain with the internal treasury team until further notice.

It was mentioned that, as we move to the unitary Council, and all Councillors and residents have a better understanding of the Pension Fund audit, there might be more interest with respect to investments involving fossil fuels and other considered investments; it was responded that a revised investment strategy statement for the Pension Fund is being examined and that there was a review by the Pension Board last week which will come before the Pensions Committee in December. The report will include enhanced disclosures regarding our carbon footprint, adjustments to mitigate it, and the adoption of a net zero target for the fund. They are waiting for the department for levelling up housing and communities to confirm their reporting requirements for LGPS funds to disclose; he is not sure whether this will be part of the accounts or part of the annual report of the fund. So preparations are being made to include this type of metrics, but guidance on what is needed is being awaited; once that is known, they may seek to even exceed the requirements.

The Key Audit Partner then discussed the Letter of Representation, noting that it is the standard letter and no additional disclosures are being asked; there is only one unadjusted misstatement of £7.6 million which has been identified and is well below the materiality figure, so subject to the Committee's approval, the letter can be signed.

The Audit Committee considered and commented on the report and unanimously approved the audited Pension Fund accounts and Letter of Representation on behalf of Somerset County Council.

Approval of the Statement of Accounts 2020/2021 - Agenda Item 7

The Chair invited the Key Audit Partner of Grant Thornton to present the Audit Findings Report. He confirmed that the audit has been completed and, subject to the Committee's approval of the report, the accounts, and the Letter of Representation, they should be able to issue the audit opinion later today.

As set out on Page 84, materiality was reviewed as a result of the financial statements received; it was noted that SCC's expenditure increased from £12.3 million at the planning stage to £13.5 million, and although there was no additional risk, the Council's expenditure did increase and the materiality setting is based on that. Page 85 sets out the significant risks that are required for consideration; the first is the management override of controls, where the key areas looked at were journal authorisations and transactions undertaken at

SCC, and management's use of estimates and judgements. It was highlighted that they are awaiting four responses from people who have posted journals to their standard confirmation requests, as two persons have left SCC's employ, one is off on long-term absence, and one is on maternity leave. It was identified that there is no formal approval process for posting journals, meaning some persons are able to approve their own journal transactions, which is an identified weakness, but a mitigating control measure is in progress. As far as the extent of journals being processed at SCC, there are 125 persons posting journals, more than 7500 journals, 480,000 transaction lines, and a value of £9.2 billion. The scope for error in so many journals is quite high, so the Finance team has been encouraged to review this situation, and management have agreed.

There are no issues regarding revenue and expenditure cycles. Page 87 sets out the work on the valuation of land and buildings, which contributed in the 2019/20 audit to a significant delay to the audit opinion; the process has been improved but is still in progress. A number of different issues have been raised with respect to property, plant and equipment; and there are some quite large figures in relation. Several million were involved, but they basically cancelled each other out; the net impact was £61,000, so it was not adjusted in the Financial Statements. Further work was done on the depreciated replacement costs assets, and there was assurance given that at 31 March these were not materially misstated. Page 89 discusses the Pension Fund liability from the Council's perspective (no issues); Pages 90-91 regard key judgements and estimates, and an assessment has been given with respect to the land and building valuation and the net pension fund liability.

On Page 92, considerable work was done, and there is much interest within some Councils, regarding the use of the Minimum Revenue Provision and ensuring that it is appropriate; this is often not focused on since the annual charge is quite low, but the cumulative impact could be significant. They are comfortable with SCC's MRP and the way it is calculated. On Page 93 there is one deficiency regarding internal control around the IT review; there are also couple of control deficiencies around the segregation of duties, as developers have access to the production environment within the financial system and some conflict within the SAP system. Management have agreed to review these processes, which have been identified as a deficiency but not a significant deficiency. There are no other matters regarding the Financial Statements, and no concerns with respect to SCC's preparation of them as a going concern.

As regards Value for Money (VFM) and the brief commentary on Page 99, the work has not concluded so they will not be issuing the certificate today, but they have given assurance that there is not a risk of significant weakness in the Council's arrangements. He confirmed their continuing independence and ethical declarations on Page 106; noted that management have responded to each of the recommendations made; pointed out the follow-up to their

recommendations made in the prior year on Page 110; and in Appendix C, set out the audit adjustments that have been made as well as the impact of unadjusted misstatements.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee, and during consideration of the reports, issues/concerns were raised, questions were asked/answered, and further information was provided:

As far as the issue of journals, the Director of Finance and Governance noted that this was covered at recent Member training; he added that the work from Grant Thornton on this matter has been very useful, as SCC is now looking at the number of persons with access to journals and looking at a new system to ensure proper training and cut down on the number of journals. It was asked if the persons approving the journals were able to approve their own expenditure; it was explained that the journals only entail moving money within the SCC finance system. Another query regarded what assurance there was that persons with access to journals and SAP would have that access revoked upon leaving the employ of the Council; the reply was that removing access is part of the termination process. The Key Audit Partner stated that they had examined if anyone who had left SCC's employ was processing journals, and no incidents had been identified. It was asked how SCC compares to other Councils as regards the number and amount involved; it was responded that it was on the high side, so this is being acted upon, and although it is not the highest number amongst Councils, it needed to be pointed out in the audit findings. The Service Manager-Chief Accountant noted that his team tests and reviews the journals; he stated that the value of the journals is less of a concern and that government regulations require that accounts are compliant with the code. Many journals are required to be done; what needs to be targeted is the number of users. Returning to the question of long-term absences by journal users, it was asserted that access to the journals should be revoked during the period of leave; it was agreed and said that this was high on the review list, and journals have to be assigned to a role rather than a person, so he is reviewing how the role is passed from one person to another during absences. It was asked how the Council cross-checks that a person has changed roles or is off long term; it was replied that transfers of roles are notified to the SAP delegations team, and the line manager of the person in question needs to reassign the role, although he will confirm these arrangements during his review.

It was questioned whether there could be a new system instead of SAP, and if there was any information available regarding MRP (Minimum Review Process) and Councils' borrowing for investments and yield; it was responded that an examination of finance systems was part of the unitary council transition process, but given the age of SAP and its configuration, there is a possibility of change to reduce the number of journals. As for investments and borrowing for yield, there has recently been a consultation by CIPFA on the treasury

management code and the prudential code that was closed just over a week ago; CIPFA is doing a 'soft launch' for next year's codes and then a full launch in 2023/24. Details on the codes are being awaited, but clearly there should not be borrowing for yield. The Key Audit Partner noted that it is a risk area for all Councils and is being tightened up; the guidance is clear where MRP has been charged on investment properties, and they are identifying any concerns at all Councils and reporting them.

With respect to VFM, it was noted that the commentary in the audit finding was positive, but it was asked when will it be concluded; it was replied that it was indeed positive, with SCC building up financial reserves and resilience, and as for the audit, the work has changed this year and become more detailed. Sufficient assurance has been given as there is no significant weakness, but some improvements may be suggested. Because of the pandemic and more detailed requirements, this work will be completed by the end of February, although it may be sooner; it is hoped that the report can be presented at the next Audit Committee meeting.

The Audit Committee:

- **Considered and commented on the report**
- **Noted the position of the external auditors' assessment of VFM**
- **Approved the audited Statement of Accounts 2020/21, including the updated annual governance statement**
- **Approved the Letter of Representation**

Appointment of External Auditors - Agenda Item 8

The Chair invited the Director of Finance and Governance to present the report. He noted that there will be a process from 1st April 2023 for appointing external auditors, and all Somerset local authorities have been invited to take part in the national auditor appointment arrangements established by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the period covering 2018/19 to 2022/23. If the Audit Committee recommends acceptance, the matter will go to Full Council in February with a decision for approval due by 11 March 2022.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee, and during consideration of the reports, issues/concerns were raised, questions were asked/answered, and further information was provided:

It was asked if the Council and all District Councils had the same external auditors; the response was that four out of five do, and while it would be easier if all five did, it will be the PSAA who will make the appointment. It was clarified that there is no immediate plan to change the auditors of that one Council, as this procurement will only take effect with the initiation of the new unitary Council. In response to a question about paying for the audits at that time, it

was stated that the 2022/23 financial year audit will be part of the new unitary council's responsibility and will be reported to the unitary Council's Audit Committee, but will cover all five previous Councils' accounts; the cost of delivering that audit will be met by predecessor bodies, but thereafter audit work will be paid by the unitary Council.

The Audit Committee:

Accepted the invitation to opt into the PSAA sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors for five financial years beginning on 1 April 2023; the matter will now go to Full Council.

Independent Member for the Audit Committee- Agenda Item 9

The Chair invited the Governance Specialist-Democratic Services to present the report from the Monitoring Officer following the recommendation within the Redmond Review earlier this year relating to the appointment of at least one independent member, suitably qualified with experience in audit but not a County, District or Parish Councillor, to the Audit Committee. This appointee will act in an advisory role and will not have voting rights. Recruitment is now live and ongoing, with the closing date for applications being 20th December, and it is proposed that recruitment will be completed in such time as to enable the successful candidate to attend the Audit Committee meeting on 27 January 2022.

The Chair invited questions from the Committee, and during consideration of the reports, issues/concerns were raised, questions were asked/answered, and further information was provided:

The eligibility of the independent member as stated on Page 378 of the report was queried, as it stated that this member could not be a Councillor for SCC or the Parish Council but did not mention the District Council; this was confirmed to be an omission. It was asked who would be on the interview panel; this will be comprised of the Director of Finance and Governance, the Strategic Manager for Finance Systems and Governance, and the Governance Specialist-Democratic Services. With respect to the person's qualifications and how they are checked, it was noted that Pages 380-382 of the recruitment pack (within the Agenda) provides the specifications that must be met, and colleagues in HR will carry out due diligence regarding the authenticity of the qualifications and experience claimed. Regarding how long the appointment will be for, the original appointment will be until March 30, 2023, but if the person is qualified and capable, this could be extended.

The Audit Committee:

Noted the report, recruitment pack and timetable for recruitment.

Committee Future Work Programme – Agenda Item 10

The Audit Committee:

Noted the work programme that listed future agenda items and reports.

Any Other Urgent Items of Business - Agenda Item 13

After ascertaining that there were no other items of business, the Chair noted that the next Audit Committee meeting will be held on 27 January 2022, and thanked the Governance Specialist-Democratic Services for all his hard work and valuable contribution, as he is now moving on to other work commitments; he also wished everyone a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year, and he closed the meeting.

(The meeting ended at 13:15)

CHAIR

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SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton, on Wednesday 1 December 2021 at 2.00 pm

Present: Cllr L Redman (Chair), Cllr R Williams (Vice-Chair), Cllr M Dimery, Cllr James Hunt, Cllr B Revans, Cllr W Wallace and Cllr J Williams
The Revd T Osmond and E Tipper – co-opted members

Other Members present: Cllr F Nicholson

Other members attending virtually: Cllr C Paul and Cllr S Coles

Apologies for absence: Cllr L Vijeh and R Hobbs (co-opted member)

1 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

There were no new declarations of interest made at the meeting.

2 Minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 8 November 2021 - Agenda Item 3

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8 November 2021 were signed and approved as a correct record.

3 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

There were no questions submitted by members of the public.

4 Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee Work Programme - Agenda Item 5

The Committee considered and noted the work programme and outcome tracker and the Council's Forward Plan of proposed key decisions in the forthcoming months, including Cabinet meetings.

It was agreed that: -

- The Governance Specialist liaise with the Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee regarding the scheduling / prioritisation of the joint workshop items detailed in the work plan.
- The Chair asked that the Adoption Medicals item (lessons learnt) be brought to the Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- The following 'Items for information' will now be items on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee - (a) Scrutiny review update; (b) Progress on Actions from Joint Workshop in October 2020 – Transition arrangements preparing for adulthood.

That the Committee's work programme and outcome tracker be updated, as discussed at the meeting.

5 **Progress update on the Written Statement of Action** - Agenda Item 8

The Committee received a PowerPoint presentation from the Council's Assistant Director, Inclusion, Dr Rob Hart, who presented a progress update on the Written Statement of Action (WSoA). The Committee had received the following documents with the agenda papers for the meeting: -

- Written Statement of Action Progress Report that was shared with DfE and NHSE advisors in September 2021;
- Some short summary slides showing the most recent progress update to the SEND Improvement Board in November 2021; and
- The original Written Statement of Action (for context/ background)

Dr Hart covered the following in the presentation - background to the WSoA and what trying to achieve; how the WSoA is being implemented and monitoring; the difference being made, successes and impact; the risks and challenges; and priorities for the next 12 months.

The Committee asked detailed questions and made a number of comments, which were responded to at the meeting, covering – preparations being made and timeline for the reinspection; resourcing to deliver the WSoA; impact of covid on staff capacity; engagement with families; links / relationship of SEND Strategy for 2023 onwards, to the developing Education Strategy; information sharing. Dr Hart said that by December 2022, he is confident will have delivered WSoA and embedded the improvement need to do.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Dr Hart for the detailed presentation and asked that the WSoA be brought back to a future meeting to provide information in more depth on the following – the items identified in 'red' on the progress overview (listening to CYP and their families; consistency of practice); clarity on resourcing point; data and digital inclusion; explanation / clarity on the relationship with the developing Education Strategy. The Chair and the Vice Chair will discuss with officers the best way forward for this.

6 **Development of an Education Strategy for Somerset** - Agenda Item 6

The Committee received a PowerPoint presentation from the Council's Assistant Director, Education, Partnership and Skills, Ms Amelia Walker, on the development of an Education Strategy for Somerset. This followed on from the presentation given at the October 2021 meeting on changes to the education governance arrangements in Somerset. The Cabinet member, Councillor Frances Nicholson introduced the item and said that the new Schools Forum

had held its first meeting recently and it felt positive and effective. The new Strategy Board will hold its first formal meeting shortly.

In the presentation, Ms Walker outlined the complex education landscape and the local authority role in education. In conclusion she explained that there are a number of areas under development which might feed into a new *system* Strategy, including: -

- the findings from Inclusion Inquiry;
- a new project working with LA Maintained schools (with option to extend to academies and trusts in future) looking at opportunities to get better value for money so we can invest;
- Oxford Brookes's project on Early Help;
- work underway to re-imagine how SEND services are delivered;
- expanding opportunities for cross-border working on curriculum and subjects, building on West Somerset Opportunity Area project.

These can be reported back to this Committee as they develop over the course of the coming year. It was noted that the findings from the Inclusion Inquiry is scheduled for a meeting of the Committee early next year.

The Committee asked detailed questions about the development of the Strategy and the partnership approach needed to take this forward. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Ms Walker for the detailed presentation, recognising that it is still early on in the process and the Strategy Board is yet to meet. The Committee would welcome feedback on the development of the Strategy and this will be added to the Committees' outcome tracker.

7 Evaluation of Somerset Family Safeguarding: Interim Report - Agenda Item 7

This item was DEFERRED to next meeting.

8 Supporting Eco-Friendly Schools - Agenda Item 9

The Committee considered a report and received a PowerPoint presentation from the Council's Head of Support Services for Education, Mr Ian Rowswell on work undertaken on supporting eco-friendly schools [Eco-Friendly Schools | Support Services for Education](#)

The SSE website was launched recently and provides useful information on how schools can undertake activities and link into the eco schools programme for example. Mr Rowswell provided some detail of support around school meal provision. He also outlined the next steps, as follows: –

- continue to promote the website and for further online events for schools;

- adding further information and links to new projects and resources that could support schools;
- work closely with the School Improvement Team to help evaluate resources and identify good curriculum links and resources;
- SCC successful bid to the Forestry Commission's Local Authorities Treescape Fund should result in planting 320 trees across Somerset;
- closer working with stakeholders and in particular with District Council colleagues; and
- consider how to address risks around capacity.

In response to comments made, Mr Rowswell said that the website will provide signposting to other funding opportunities and have focussed attention on additional support which schools can access. He also commented that are working closely with the Somerset Waste Partnership as well.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Mr Rowswell for the detailed presentation. It was agreed that an information sheet would be circulated to all members in due course.

9 **Items for information** - Agenda Item 10

The Committee noted the following information item had been circulated since the last meeting: -

- (a) CAMHS service delivery update – considered by the [Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board at the meeting on Monday 22 November 2021](#)

10 **Any other urgent items of business** - Agenda Item 11

There were no other items of business.

(The meeting ended at 4.23 pm)

CHAIR

Pensions Committee

Minutes of the Pensions Committee held on Friday 7 January at 10.00am.

Committee Members Present:

Cllr J Thorne - Chair

Cllr G Noel, Mr. P Butler, and Mrs. S Payne

Also present: Mrs Burton – Independent Advisor.

1 Apologies for Absence - agenda item 1

Apologies were received from Cllr S Coles and Mr G. Bryant

2 Declarations of Interest - agenda item 2

No new declarations of interest were reported.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting - agenda item 3

The Committee were unable to agree and sign off the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2021 as a correct record, due to the meeting attendance not being quorate.

4 Public Question Time - agenda item 4

The Chair welcomed 1 member of the public who was present and invited them to address the Committee.

The Committee heard from Sigurd Reimers who raised the question of whether the Pensions Committee would be engaging with companies that invest in fossil fuels, rather than to investment/disinvestment. The Funds and Investments Manager provided a response noting that resources and expertise prohibited the Committee from directly engaging with companies and with over 90% of assets now invested through Brunel engagement was led by them and their engagement partner on the Committee's behalf. Members supported the work of Brunel and the approach they take.

5 Local Government Reorganization - agenda item 5

The Funds and Investments Manager addressed the meeting explaining that he would provide Members with a regular update at future meetings on the local government reorganization. A workstream for Pensions has been formed, and a meeting had been held last December to discuss issues.

It was suggested and accepted that this presented a good opportunity to refresh the Terms of Reference for both the Pensions Board and Pensions Committee, with any

suggested amendments being submitted to the Council's Constitution and Standards Committee and Full Council later in the year. The update was accepted.

6 LGPS Pooling of Investments - agenda item 6

The Funds and Investments Manager provided the Committee with an overview of his report, noting that overall, the pooled investments had remained the same. He noted that due to the issue of sensitivity around budgets, it might be necessary for some aspects to be discussed in a confidential session.. The request to approve a £60m investment in Brunel's private equity cycle 3 will be held over to the March meeting as the meeting was not quorate.

7 Independent Investment Advisor's Report - agenda item 7

The Independent Investment Advisor addressed the meeting and she began by noting that the market remained difficult to judge at the moment due to the number of uncertainties both economical and geopolitical.

There was a question about now would be a good time (post Brexit) to invest in Startups and new ventures and in response it was suggested that such business needed to be looked at carefully. There was a question about why gold had not performed as well as expected and Members heard that one reason was related to Indian weddings which usually took place in February and were an indicator of how gold performs (as it was an important part of the dowry) but with ongoing effects of COVID this has affected the price of gold.

The Committee noted the report.

8 Review of Investment Performance - agenda item 8

The Funds and Investments Manager provided the meeting with an overview of his report, noting that returns in the quarter to September remained healthy. With inflation and interest rates at their highest for some time, this had increased the cost of Pensions.

The Committee noted the report.

9 Review of Administration Performance - agenda item 9

The Committee considered this report which explained that the administrative team had been able to keep up with its internal workload, with 90% being completed within 10

days of all information being received. There had been, unfortunately, a continuing rise in the number of deaths and this would be monitored closely.

There was a question about performance can be improved on critical work as this had been a concern a couple of quarters ago. In response it was explained that there has been a reduction in the work the administrative team was required to complete, meaning more resources were available to assist in other areas. There was a question about Pension transfers and what checks were carried out and in response assurance was provided as regulations, effective from 30 November 2021, required stringent checks to be completed before transfers.

The Committee noted the report.

10 **Business Plan Update** - agenda item 10

The Funds and Investments Manager noted that there had been no changes since the last meeting. Members were pleased to note that there had been a significant number of applications for the Pensions Board vacancy.

New members had been appointed to the Pensions Board in October, Mrs Rachel Ellins and Cllr Anne Hills and Cllr Hills was subsequently elected by the Pensions Board to be its Chair at the November meeting.

Mr Roderick Bryant and Mr Antony White had been appointed last December to the Pensions Board.

The Committee noted the Update.

11 **Finance and Membership Statistics Update** - agenda item 11

Members considered a quarterly report by the Funds and Investments Manager, and he highlighted the long-term trends which were well established. The level of contributions was behind and would be made up at the year end.

There was a question requesting reassurance regarding the lag in contributions and whether this was similar with other Pension Funds and the Funds and Investments Manager provided an explanation about why this happens and that it would be caught up. The Committee noted the report.

12 **Review of Pension Fund Risk Register** – agenda item 12

The Funds and Investments Manager introduced the report that reviewed the Pension Fund's risk register, noting there had been no changes since the last report. The report was accepted.

13 **Investment Strategy Statement** – agenda item 13

The Funds and Investments Manager provided an overview of this report and explained that he would bring a draft version for adoption at the March meeting. He noted that the Pensions Board had approved the report at their meeting in November, with a few amendments, which he highlighted.

As the meeting was not quorate it was not possible to formally adopt the proposed Investment Strategy Statement and this decision will be held over to the March meeting.

14 **Pension Fund Annual Report** – agenda item 14

It was agreed at the September meeting that the draft presented then would be approved subject to their being no significant changes. The Funds & Investments Manager updated Members that in consultation with the Chair the final annual report, with minor amendments, had now been published.

The Committee noted the report.

15 **Any Other Business** - agenda item 15

The Chair, after ascertaining there were no further items, thanked all those present for attending and closed the meeting.

(The meeting ended at 11:05am)

CHAIR
Cllr J Thorne

SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES AND PLACE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee held in the Luttrell Room, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY, on Wednesday 12th January 2022 at 10.00 am

Present: Cllr A Groskop (Chair), Cllr A Bown, Cllr B Filmer, Cllr J Hunt, Cllr L Leyshon, and Cllr T Munt.

Other Members present: Cllr M Chilcott (attended virtually), Cllr D Hall, (attended virtually) Cllr C Paul, (attended virtually), Cllr D Jonson, (attended virtually), Cllr L Redman, (attended virtually), Cllr F Purbrick (attended virtually), Cllr M Rigby (attended in person) and Cllr J Woodman (attended virtually).

Apologies for absence: Apologies were received from Councillor G Verdon.

1 **Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 2

The Chair noted the details of all Councillors interests already declared in District, Town and Parish Councils.

2 **Minutes from the previous meeting held on 7th December 2021.** - Agenda Item 3

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7th December 2021 were approved as a correct record.

Under Committee members present, Cllr Purbrick was listed as present but not on the committee, agreed this will be changed.

3 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 4

There were no public questions.

4 **Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee Work Programme** – Agenda Item 5

The Committee considered and noted the Committee's current work programme and the Council's Cabinet Forward Plan of proposed key decisions in the forthcoming months.

The Scrutiny Manager provided an update on the forward plan with the next meeting scheduled on 1st February to consider the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The March meeting would be a workshop meeting, the subject of which was to be determined.

The Chair requested if the following two Scrutiny Place meetings could be held online. The agreement of holding virtual Advisory Boards would be decided at the Full Council meeting on 19th January 2022.

It was requested for capacity to remain in the forward plan for the Business Support System needed to be revisited in March.

The work programme would be updated, as per discussions at the meeting.

5 **Climate Change Update** – Agenda Item 6

Mark Fortune provided an introduction and provided a presentation and set out the following key points:-

The Climate Emergency Strategy had been adopted in Spring 2019.

3 distinct and interrelated Goals were set out:-

Goal 1 To decarbonise the Local Authority and wider Public Sector Estates and reduce our own Carbon Footprint.

Goal 2 Work towards making Somerset a Carbon Neutral County by 2030

Goal 3 To have a Somerset which is prepared for, and resilient to the impacts of Climate Change.

The Strategy set out the following 9 workstreams and 63 related outcomes:-

- Energy,
- Transport,
- Built Environment,
- Business & Supply Chain,
- Natural Environment,
- Farming and Food,
- Water,
- Waste & Resources,
- Communications.

Shared Climate Emergency Projects set out were The Local Area Energy Plan, Commercial Waste Collection, Electric Vehicles and EV Strategy.

Key Actions of the County Council included the Climate Emergency Community Fund which had funded 44 projects, Carbon Literacy Training, Energy Assessor and Community Engagement Officer. The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme had provided improvements to 12 Buildings including County Hall and Taunton and Yeovil Libraries which had led to a carbon reduction of up to 27% across the non-schools estate.

Future prioritisation of funding for the Climate Emergency was explored

Future obligations and Statutory Responsibilities were set out.

During the debate the following comments and questions were raised:-

- The increasing number of FOI requests were considered, it was questioned if this was as a result of a lack of information in the public domain?
- It was considered how many requests directed responses to the website and how many requests required a response and if this could be addressed by providing further information on the website.
- Usually asking specific questions around a certain area.
- Some are general and some of the public not aware of the climate strategy.
- There had been many requests which related to EV queries and interest from potential suppliers. The EV rollout solution needed to include the rural communities and not just the main towns.
- It was acknowledged that further work was required in relation to housing and retrofitting improvements housing stock to reduce energy used by Council tenants.
- Requests to fund interventions to cut energy bills targeted to low-income households were recognised, the challenge was to transition homes to a low carbon economy was recognised.
- There had been a lack of information from central government in relation to the green homes grant, a clearer direction of travel was required from central government.
- Bid for the fund BEIS funding was regional and £5 million had been made available for the Somerset/Devon area.
- Homeowners and householders could submit a simple form to complete an energy audit with recommendations to reduce energy costs. Air source heat pumps, solar PV and cavity wall could be funded following this audit.
- It was recognised in some instances air source heat pumps could increase heating costs without increase in insulation and other upgrades.
- The Saltlands energy park, Bridgwater and a Similar project as part of the Glastonbury town deal were referenced and questioned if this was well known? It was requested to ensure the link between the two projects is made.
- It was questioned how passive house standards for new schools and homes worked with the requirement of fresh air in the backdrop of Covid in schools? If windows needed to be open, then there would be increased energy requirements required to heat the buildings.
- Clean air was used in passive house design, this was primarily an issue pressure in relation to energy saving.

- Alternatives to build quality that were similar to passive house were requested to be considered, which could be comparable in carbon reduction with less expenditure.
- Bus Service improvements were required to reduce car use. If there were no bus services in the rural areas, residents needed to be encouraged to utilise public transport.
- The EV strategy set out the ambition, central gov had banned new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2030. Infrastructure in rural areas was a recognised challenge and part of the reasons for the cautious approach to EV rollout to ensure shared gain and not solely beneficial for urban areas.
- The cost of EV was still expensive, it was anticipated that price parity would be achieved by about 2025 with petrol and diesel fuelled cars.
- Big towns and cities had significantly transitioned to EV. A Reduction in car travel by 25% was needed to meet 2050 target.
- Significant Government funding had been assigned to the bus strategy but this had already been oversubscribed by Council's bus strategy bids.
- Utilising social media to promote messaging around climate change activity and making residents of Somerset more aware of the Climate Emergency was requested.
- Greater awareness was required and for the risks to be treated as an emergency, the restrictions around funding were understood in some respects, with greater financial support needed to be done to address the climate emergency ambitions.
- Passive House costs had reduced significantly with the technology not too different from standard construction costs, the price difference would be provided following the committee.
- Some communications had been released around community projects widely shared on social media which had received a high volume of views. The challenge around comms was recognised and acknowledged more could be done to improve this.
- The website had been refreshed to provide more information in relation to what residents could do to reduce their carbon footprint.
- Parish and Town Cllrs had received carbon literacy training, this was in the proves of being arranged for Officers and County Cllrs.
- In relation to projects such as new school builds and energy efficiency costs, moving forward these costs would be reduced with new technologies imbedded into the current budgets.
- In respect of the community fund, 9 projects had been completed with 35 projects underway, all progressing, it was questioned if more could be done and how it's monitored how these were progressing. More information would be provided on when tree planting schemes and when these will be effective.

- Over 100 applications had been received, reports and assessments on the energy efficiency of buildings which were provided to those bids that were unsuccessful
- Completed projects were visited to monitor the energy use and success with the difference in carbon reduction the projects had made
- The Trees call for action fund was set out, the bid needed to be submitted by next week, to write a strategy for how, where and when trees were planted and how these were managed.
- Treescapes fund planned and addressed planting trees on public land.
- Housing quality and planning changes were considered, further requirements were needed to ensure all new housing incorporated energy saving adaptations, along with charging units for cars, to ensure all housing built is of superior quality, including social housing.
- Concerns in relation to affordable energy and travel in rural communities was highlighted by the committee.

Recommendations:

The Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee considered and noted the update.

6 Current Section 19 Flood Investigations - Agenda Item 7

Cllr Woodman gave a brief introduction in providing an update in relation to Flooding Investigations following the flooding in Chard in 2021.

Helen Smith provided a presentation and set out the following details of the key points:-

The role of the lead local flood authority was set out, and the role of the flood and water management team, and the instance where it was necessary to investigate a flood water event. Risk Management authorities exercising functions in these events. Publish results of the investigations and notify the risk management authorities.

The flooding was a surface water event, the Environment Agency wasn't involved in the flood event. Chard was already a known area of concern within Somerset and there was also an integrated catchment study underway before the flooding event.

A timeline of the incident response was set out. SCC was not a category 1 responder, so role was around emergency planning, recover and investigation.

Questions

- It was requested for future procedure to include the lessons learnt and ability to change future policy and procedure.
- Statutory obligations didn't include an obligation to provide lessons learnt and future procedure.
- A draft flood investigation policy, relating to investigation work to signpost and when a formal section 19 is instigated.
- Political and community pressure to ensure the formal section 19 investigation can be delivered so it can be resourced.
- Disused reservoir above the height of the flooded areas or is this below? This ran towards the reservoir so this wasn't a reason for the flooding.
- Flood areas experienced due to Wessex Water not replacing pipes which were at the end of their functional lifespan, with drainage systems not being able to cope with this.
- A predominant amount of time was spent with partnership working, integrated studies included Wessex water, EA and the districts Councils to ensure partnership working and agree on resourcing and priority areas.
- The Chair thanked officers for the report, with areas of concern requested to be fed into the planning department, and for a workshop to be arranged with the new organisation needing to be set up to consider flooding as a priority which needed to be addressed in the future.

Recommendations:

The Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee noted the update.

7 **2021/22 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report – Month 7 – End of October 2021.**

Councillor Chilcott provided a brief introduction and highlighted the key points:-

The overall forecast outturn position was a £1.3m favourable variance after taking into account all service expenditure and contingencies against a net budget of £357.4m which represented a variance of 0.36%. A summary of the budget was provided, with projections and variances on a service by service basis with further detail and mitigations being taken by the responsible director outlined in the body of the report.

The significant variances were:

- Adult Services had a £1.4m adverse variance against their budget (1% of service budget); a strengthening in position of £0.2m from month six. This was due to £0.4m reduction in projected spend within Adults Social Care Operations, however, this had been offset by £0.2m adverse movement within Mental Health as a result of two new high cost packages and a reduction of income which was being challenged.
- Children's Services had a £3m adverse variance against their budget (3% of service budget); a deterioration of £0.3m from month six. This related to External Placements and was due to increased weekly costs of Secure Placements. There has been a greater complexity of need and the requirement for longer assessment periods.
- Economic & Community Infrastructure (ECI) had a £0.5m adverse variance against their budget (0.7% of service budget); a strengthening in position of £0.3m from month six. Somerset Waste Partnership had a reduction in overspend by £0.2m which related to the reduction in tonnages through the Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- Corporate Costs had a (£3.4m) favourable variance against their budget 68% of service budget; a strengthening in position of £0.1m from month six. This was attributable to not using the budget for brokerage as a result of continued internal borrowing.
- Contingencies of £3m remained uncommitted with all of Covid-19 Emergency Funding forecast be spent by the end of the year.

Questions

- It was questioned how much remained in the outbreak management fund and carry forward. £10.9 million in total had been in the fund when allocated, around £6.5 million was understood to be committed, with £4.4 million uncommitted.
- Concerns were expressed in relation to the frequency of financial reporting being out of sync with Cabinet meetings, assurance was provided that work with corporate finance was ongoing to address this for the future workplans.
- Homecare hours delivered was considered on page 75 of the report. It was requested if up to date figures since September could be provided. There remained concerns over bed blocking in the NHS as a result of the elderly needing care.
- Figures of homecare house delivered had been increasing and work was ongoing to ensure beds in residential settings were available as far as possible across the county to prevent bed blocking in the NHS and support adult social care.

Recommendations:

The Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee

- a) **Noted the overall forecast underspend of £1.3m (section 12) and the key risks, future issues and opportunities detailed in the report which will be closely monitored and updated throughout the year.**
- b) **Noted that all of the £10.8m Covid- 19 Emergency Fund is expected to be fully spent within the year.**
- c) **Received a verbal update on the MTFP and Finance Settlement.**

8 Selection of Preferred Partner in relation to future business support system

Cllr Purbrick gave a brief introduction to the report.

The proposal and decision related to the first discovery phase. This would be looked at with the new councils IT requirements, working closely with the LGR team and district colleagues, progressing to the next decision gateway in March 2022. SAP end of life planning had been recognised for some time. A further decision in March would reflect the needs and ambitions for the new council.

Clare Griffiths, Head of Commercial Procurement and Andy Kennell provided a presentation which detailed the following key points:-

The Independent market assessment had been conducted which included costs, cloud support ability, good integration with Microsoft technologies. The preferred recommendation was that Microsoft dynamics was a favoured option. 98% of finance and procurement was provided within the base produced, there were not a lot of customisations required in what was being delivered.

A partner would be selected assist with delivery, there needed to be confidence this could be achieved between now and March. Further engagement was required with the requirements of District Council to consider what could be achieved for vesting day and if a fallback option could be achieved. Resource risk and timeline for solutions would be considered if agreement is reached.

SAP would no longer be supported in the longer term. Support was scheduled to cease before but this had been extended to 2027. The contract had been extended to next year, with all possible contact extensions now utilised.

The Council had invested significantly in the Microsoft suite of apps. All requirements analysis has been undertaken to consider what solution best suited this. All five councils would be required to be merge into a single

solution. It was fully recognised the timescales were challenging, with less than a year until the implementation of the new system to commence on the vesting day of the new authority.

During the debate the following comments and questions were raised:-

- Concerns were expressed over the table set out 1.5 providing information relating to the current systems at the current councils in Somerset were incorrect.
- Further concerns were expressed that the respective District Council's SLT teams had been unaware of this, which raised alarm bells due to the amount of time spent in collaboration with the 4 district councils as part of the early-stage planning. This was concern for the future of the success of Local Government Reorganisation and the new Council.
- It was further questioned where the system replacement sat on the risk register.
- Consideration of the discovery came before the decision, this was to provide greater transparency in considering the solutions.
- The interaction across Councils had been at an IT level which may not have been fed up to SLT, this had been discussed at CEO board.
- Collaboration would be ramped up throughout the planning and Local Government Reorganisation process to identify every need ensuring all recommendations coming forward in March be considered.
- Clarification was provided that the SAP system had been extended once as part of the current contract. The was considered in 2018 and agreed it was functioning correctly and agreed to continue with the existing arrangements.
- This was a 5-year contract with a 2 year option to extend with a project team convened to review the future options. Activities were put on hold due to the pandemic but revisited in the summer 2021.
- Cllr Rigby expressed concerns in relation to questions sent on Monday which had received no responses.
- Concerns were expressed that the process had selected the outcome at the outset, not involving the district councils whose services needed supporting following vesting day. An example of successful integration was requested. Harrow's Business system replacement project had been £2 million over budget.
- Concerns were expressed that there would be a significant risk to the New Council if there was no ledger system by March 2023.
- It was questioned in what way were the district officers involved and how was the decision made in relation to MS dynamics being a primary option.
- Serious consideration was requested to proceed to include the district councils functions into SAP and extend the SAP contract for a further year to provide additional time consider alternative options in greater detail.
- Reassurance was provided that this was a decision to proceed with discovery with a partner which would consider interim solutions with partners within

district councils. The discovery phase would look at programme and risks and make a decision to proceed or not in March.

- The Discovery phase was key to build on the initial business case to make a fully informed decision in relation to all options.
- It was questioned How many southwest councils were using the Microsoft system? Harrow Borough Council was the only Council which had gone live with finance and procurement system.
- SAP, Oracle were among many options including MS Dynamics and extending SAP, Consideration would be given over the best solution and to not rush the decision.
- A Comparison of costs were requested. District functions would need to be integrated into the County council's system so a cost would need to be determined.
- Risk were high in relation to the potential issues which could be experienced with the introduction of a new system before March 2023.
- Further explanation in freedom and flexibility in the discovery stage were requested, and if other options could be considered as part of this?
- Significant concern was raised regarding the proposal of the timeframe for the implementation of the new system and the impact to services, communities and staff if the new system couldn't be delivered to support service provision of all Council services on the vesting day of the New Council. Members also questioned the ability to achieve the introduction of the new system in the current timeframe.
- Following detailed questioning and lengthy debate, significant concern was raised regarding the proposal in selecting the preferred partner in relation to the future business support system. It was requested for further work to be undertaken to consider all options with full input with the District Councils.

Recommendations:

Following a detailed debate the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee agreed the following recommendations by majority, which were proposed by Cllr Leyshon and seconded by Cllr Munt:

- 1. The Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee recommends that Cabinet ensure that full integration with the District Councils occurs on this most critical of decisions, in consultation with the Senior Leadership and Political Leadership Teams.**
- 2. The Committee requested that a full exploration of a fall-back position of SAP takes place, led by the finance team.**
- 3. The risks of this decision be fully considered as part of Somerset**

**County Council's risk register and as part of the Local Government
Reorganisation risks.**

9 **Any other urgent items of business** - Agenda Item 10

There were no other items of business.

The next meeting was scheduled for 1st February 2022

(The meeting ended at 1.17pm)

CHAIR

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REGULATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Regulation Committee held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton, on Thursday 13 January 2022 at 10.00 am

Present: Cllr J Parham (Chair), Cllr N Hewitt-Cooper (Vice-Chair), Cllr M Caswell, Cllr S Coles, Cllr J Clarke, Cllr A Kendall and Cllr M Pullin (substitute)

Other Members present: Cllr C Paul - virtually

Apologies for absence: Cllr N Taylor (substituted by Cllr M Pullin)

1 **Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 2

There were no new declarations made at the meeting.

2 **Accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2021** - Agenda Item 3

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 October 2021 were accepted as accurate.

3 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 4

There were 5 members of the public speaking in opposition and 2 applicants / agents registered to speak and their statements were considered as part of Agenda Item 5, Application No. SCC/3839/2021. (All joined the meeting virtually).

4 **Application for temporary storage of Limestone Scalpings, Land to the North of Torr Works, East Cranmore, Shepton Mallet (SCC/3839/2021)** - Agenda Item 5

1. The Committee considered the report by the Service Manager – Planning and Development, concerning the application for temporary storage of Limestone Scalpings, land to the north of Torr Works, East Cranmore, Shepton Mallet (SCC/3839/2021). The application was submitted by Aggregate Industries UL Ltd. It was noted that the response from Natural England had been circulated to all Committee members on 11 January 2022 as a supplementary paper.
2. The Principal Planning Officer, with reference to the report, supporting papers and the use of maps, plans and photographs, outlined the proposal which involved the proposal for the temporary storage of Limestone

Scalpings in an adjacent field to the existing quarry at land to the north of Torr Works, and advised that: –

- the site is adjacent to Lodge Hill Farm, there is a hedgerow and is fairly isolated in terms of non-associated residential properties and will not be visually intrusive / viewed from the nearby village of Downhead
 - there will be a 2 metre bund adjacent to the bridleway to help screen the scalpings and the site slopes down which lessens the impact in situ
 - the proposal will not require any traffic to use the local road networks as the internal roads associated with the quarry will be used to transport the scalpings to the field
 - the site is proposed to be used and thereafter restored to an agricultural field over a time period of fifteen years
 - the field will be scraped with the removal of topsoil and turf and the scalpings will be moved using dumper trucks on the internal roads within the quarry. It is considered that this process will take a year in total
 - The stockpile will have a maximum height of 19 metres and on the north eastern slope seeded with grass to minimise its visual impact (it is appreciated that this may take a period of time to grow etc.). Once in situ the scalpings will be removed from the pile to go to the existing washing plant at Torr Works at a rate of approximately 100,000 tonnes per year
 - There is a public right of way which runs along the south-western boundary of the site which will remain in situ and in use throughout the works
 - 80 letters of objection had been received
 - No objections have been received from the County Highway Authority
 - Ecology – there were no objections from the County Ecologist, subject to conditions and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) shows the site as acceptable
 - The response from Natural England received on 11 January 2022 made no objection to the proposal and they are satisfied with the HRA
 - Other environmental impacts (a) Noise – proposal considered as acceptable nearest neighbour is in favour of the application and is also protected by condition; (b) Dust – ecologist has suggested conditions to control any dust issues; (c) Objectors concerns addressed within the report
 - The application complies with various planning policies and is required to enable the efficient running of the quarry and free up quarrying space
 - A Members site visit had taken place on 10 January 2022
 - The recommendation is to grant subject to the planning conditions as set out in section 9 of the submitted report.
3. The Committee heard from the following, with their comments/views summarised as shown: -

Michael Thompson – Objector had submitted a statement and raised a number of points including – the application comes at the same time as an application to reopen Westdown Quarry and the applications should not be considered in isolation. The EIA statement ought to contain a reference to Westdown and vice versa. Individually and together these projects will endanger the character of Asham Wood, an SSSI of ancient woodland.; the proposals would contravene Government policies set out in paragraphs 170 and 171 of National Planning policy; reference to climate emergency and to protecting natural environment; Asham Wood is 141 ha of protected landscape; urge the Council to reject this application and Westdown when reviewed.

Jessica Rothwell – Objector, had submitted a statement and raised a number of points and that the application should be refused based on the unavoidable deterioration it poses to the SSSI and the SAC and Nature Network Recovery Plan; Natural England recommend refusal; proposal area is within the Mendip Bat Consultation Zone, but impact data is lacking; removing topsoil negatively impact carbon and water cycles; climate change impacts are omitted.

Neil Crump - Objector, had submitted a statement and raised a number of points relating to impact on physical and mental health, the local economy and the village objection. He stated that the village submission by Paul Hooper, in response to the planning application, omitted to use the word 'objection' and it did not effectively capture the specific and more serious impact on the BA4 4LG postcode (the properties that will be affected the most by the proposed works); referenced the Nolan Principles and that conflicts of interest of attendees at the village meetings had not been formally declared; the closest neighbour to the site is related to the applicant; need to re-run the process, to be fair balanced and accurate; need to find a more sustainable and less impactful alternative.

Fiona Philip - Objector, had submitted a statement and raised a number of points including – urge to dismiss the application; there has been poor quarry management; lack of any previous planning history for change of use; there is an alternative available; the EIA is lacking; the applicants should be able to manage the scalplings on the existing site; the applicants could upgrade the existing washing plant to match capacity; could use the industrialised area around the proposed Somerset Factory and make use of rail infrastructure; duty to protect the environment.

Angela Mawer - Objector, due to technical difficulties, it was agreed that the submitted statement would be read out by Ms. Philip, as follows – lovely bridleway with lovely views; effect of the application on public rights of way; effects / impact on visual amenity; CPRE objection states impact of

extending quarry operations onto greenfield land is significant; effect on the general amenity of the bridleway, including number of truck movements; enormous adverse impact on the visual amenity of users of the bridleway and the virtual stopping up of it is just one reason why this application should be rejected; there were 107 objections.

Christopher Herbert, Aggregate Industries UK Limited, Supporter, had submitted a statement and raised a number of points including: –

- the proposed development is fundamental to the future of Torr works, its contribution to local and national minerals supply and the people who work there
- outlined why it is necessary to re-locate the scalplings outside of the quarry void
- the application is temporary, and the length of permission requested (15 years) is calculated by taking the worst-case scenario of destocking from the scalplings stockpile
- noise and dust – the proposed development will comply with the same noise limits already in place for the quarry
- all traffic will use internal quarry road and have consulted local users of the bridleway and made improvements to crossing point within the quarry
- landscaping – height of the tip has been designed so that screened from the village of Downhead
- ecology – the concerns raised by Natural England and the Wildlife Trust have been addressed. Surveys for reptiles, dormice and breeding hobby have confirmed that none of these species are present and mitigation schemes for bats and badgers have been submitted and are secured by the conditions proposed by officers
- are committed to working with local communities to ensure that high environmental standards are monitored and maintained and employ a full time Environmental coordinator.

Alex Johnson, Aggregate Industries UK Limited, Supporter, had submitted a statement and raised a number of points including: –

- explained why the stockpile needs to be moved in order to deepen the exiting void in accordance with the submitted scheme
- gave commitment that the development will be completed, and the site restored no later than the 15 years that we have applied for
- the proposal is essential to allow access to permitted reserves and to facilitate the recycling of what would otherwise be a waste material
- the proposed conditions will control and manage the environmental impacts of the stockpile; are committed to working with local communities to ensure that high environmental standards are monitored and maintained for all our developments at the quarry.

Local Divisional Member Cllr Philip Ham – The Chair read out a statement he had received from the local Divisional Member, Councillor P Ham, as follows - Cllr Ham said that the application is for temporary storage and can be controlled through reporting and monitoring; the proposal is the best way forward to avoid waste and to extract stone and for the quarry to continue and asked that the Committee Members vote in favour of the application.

4. The Principal Planning Officer, responded as follows to the matters raised by the public speakers: -
 - The Westdown application has not been determined and this is an internal quarry application so the traffic will be internal only
 - Natural England have responded and are not objecting
 - Impact on bridleways – site is behind large hedge which already screens the site, largely, next to large working quarry
 - Traffic – 10 movements in / out per hour – there will be adequate signaling on site and the applicant is happy that that will work in practice
 - Alternatives – are not considered suitable and referred to pages 53 – 55 of the officer report which provided fuller information on this.

5. The Committee proceeded to debate during which members raised the following matters, which were responded to by officers: -
 - Cllr Coles – asked if the topsoil be scrapped off and to what depth and where stored – the Principal Planning Officer referred to the environmental statement in the report: the soil will be kept on site and will be reused on site.
 - Cllr Caswell – said that the allegations made by one of the speakers against the Parish Council are very strong and asked for the views of the Legal Advisor. The Legal Advisor to the Committee said that this is a matter for the Parish Council itself and not for this Committee. The Parish Council had submitted observations on the application (not 'for' / 'against'). Those observations have been considered and are reflected in the report.
 - Cllr Kendall – asked questions about the priority / phasing of the traffic lights and if there was priority for users on the bridleway; whether the scalping produce dust; the bridleway is in a good state and there seems to be good partnership there already. The Principal Planning Officer referred to proposed Condition 9 which states that 'no development hereby approved shall interfere with or compromise the use of bridleway until detailed drawings of the crossing point, signage and traffic light system have been submitted and approved in writing'. With regard to the question re dust, the officer said there will be an element of dust and

again there will be stringent conditions, to protect local people and local wildlife.

- Cllr Clarke - comments re the rationale for the application and reasons for moving the scalplings off site (onto productive farmland) and why another area on the site cannot be used since there is 19 hectares available, which is not quarried; the application is extending the industrial landscape; applicant said the application is about maintaining operational efficiency and that seems to be their primary consideration rather than the impact on the community assets and potential harm to nature and wildlife; made the observation that facing the climate emergency and that should be the priority, not about maximizing profits and should be about community well-being.
 - Cllr Pullin – said that he has known the site for many years – impressed by mitigations which have been put in place and certain these will be monitored going forward; propose that go with recommendation in the report. Also mentioned that the traffic lights are actually worked by the riders of the horses as they walk across.
 - Cllr Hewitt-Cooper – said that issues raised have been about the location and alternatives, which have been dealt with in the officers’ report. The statutory consultees are all content, including Natural England. Happy to support the recommendations in the report.
 - Cllr Parham – in conclusion, the Chair thanked everyone for their contributions, and in particular the public speakers and noted that objections / comments raised by the statutory consultees can be dealt with through the Conditions proposed.
6. Cllr M Pullin, seconded by Cllr N Hewitt-Cooper, moved that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in Section 9 of Pages 55 – 63 of the report.
7. A vote was taken on the recommendation and the Committee accordingly **RESOLVED:**
- (a) That planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions set out in Section 9 of the report.
 - (b) That authority to undertake any minor non-material editing which may be necessary to the wording of those conditions be delegated to the Service Manager - Planning and Development.

5 **Application for temporary planning permission for an extension to Chard Junction Quarry at Westford Park Farm, Chard (SCC/3907/2021) - Agenda Item 6**

1. The Committee considered the report by the Service Manager – Planning & Development, Enforcement & Compliance, concerning the application for

temporary planning permission for an extension to Chard Junction Quarry at Westford Park Farm, Chard (SCC/3907/2021).

2. The Principal Planning Officer, with reference to the report, supporting papers and the use of maps, plans and photographs, outlined the proposal which involved the proposal for an extension to the Quarry at Westford Park Farm for the winning and working of approximately 830,000 tonnes of sand and gravel with progressive restoration to agriculture and nature conservation, inclusive of a new internal haul road and the *retention* of the existing mineral processing facilities for a period of seven years, and advised that: -
 - duplicate planning applications have been submitted to Somerset and Dorset County Councils for a site straddling the county boundary, with only a very small proportion of the site being within Somerset
 - Somerset County Council (SCC) can discharge its function as the determining mineral planning authority for this application to Dorset County Council under Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972
 - It is recommended that the following functions be discharged to Dorset County Council (a) determination of planning application SCC/3907/2021; and (b) determination of any applications for the discharge of conditions or nonmaterial amendments pursuant to that application, subject to Somerset County Council in its roles as mineral planning authority and highway authority, together with the local Divisional Member, being consulted for their views regarding the application.

3. Committee Members had received a number of submissions from residents and Officers. A statement had been received from the local Divisional Member, Cllr G Verdon and circulated to the Committee members and was read out at the meeting, as follows:
 - that she had been petitioned to reflect the views and comments of Tatworth & Forton Parish Councillors together with the local residents of Chard South as their divisional County Councillor
 - SCC has not received a planning fee for this cross-border application since only 0.4 hectares of land is within its administrative area
 - however, the officer statement that the effect in Somerset is minimal is egregious due to the significant HGV movements required across narrow country lanes in Somerset
 - the noise samples used in the application only refer to locations in Dorset. There is no consideration of the residents living in Somerset less than 500 metres from the proposed workings
 - that the adverse visual impact on an AONB will be greatest from Somerset side of the River Axe and affects a considerable percentage of Tatworth residents

- on this very sensitive across border planning matter, it is requested that Somerset County Council do not discharge the following functions to Dorset in accordance with Section 101 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 – (a) determination of planning application SCC/3907/2021; and (b) determination of any applications for the discharge of conditions or non-material amendments pursuant to that application
 - instead, use the powers of Section 101 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 that authorises two or more local planning authorities to discharge any of their functions jointly - this arrangement can be achieved through the establishment of a joint committee which is more equitable in this and any further cross boundary applications.
4. The Principal Planning Officer, responded to the matters raised and questions from the Committee, as follows:
- all views received from residents will be forwarded to Dorset Council
 - visual impact etc. would be considered by Dorset Council and cannot see any reason why the application would not be discharged to Dorset
 - it would be difficult for 2 authorities trying to determine the same application
 - SCC in its roles as mineral planning authority and highway authority would be consulted for their views regarding the application.
5. Cllr Hewitt-Cooper, seconded by Cllr Clarke, moved the recommendation and the Committee **RESOLVED** that the following functions be discharged to Dorset County Council in accordance with Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, to: -
- (a) determination of planning application SCC/3907/2021; and
- (b) determination of any applications for the discharge of conditions or non-material amendments pursuant to that application;
- subject to Somerset County Council in its roles as mineral planning authority and highway authority, together with the local Divisional Member, being consulted for their views regarding the application.
- 6 **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 53, Schedule 14 - Application to Upgrade Footpath Y 9/46 in the Parish of East Coker to a Public Bridleway**
- Agenda Item 7
1. The Committee considered the report by the Rights of Way Officer, concerning the application under Schedule 14 and Section 53(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to upgrade public footpath Y 9/16 in the Parish of East Coker to a public bridleway.

2. The Rights of Way Officer outlined the application by reference to the report, supporting papers and the use of maps, plans and photographs and the report and the presentation covered: the application and supporting evidence; a description of the route; relevant legislation; documentary evidence; evidence from landowners, consultations and other submissions; discussions of the evidence; and included a summary, conclusions and recommendations. The Highway Board Map and Finance Act Record Plan offer strong evidence that the application route has historically carried public vehicular rights; various pieces of supporting evidence (including the tithe records and several commercial maps) are supportive of this conclusion; the majority of the evidence examined was not inconsistent with the existence of public rights; and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) extinguished mechanical vehicular rights over the route.
3. The Committee had received written statements from Philip Hackett, Access Field Officer, South West, The British Horse Society, and from Sarah Bucks, Chair of the South Somerset Bridleways Association, which had been circulated to all Committee members as a supplementary paper. Both submissions were in support of the application to upgrade the footpath Y 9/46 in the Parish of East Coker to a bridleway (371M).
4. The recommendation was that an order should be made to modify the Definitive Map and Statement on the basis that the surveying authority have discovered evidence which, when considered alongside all other available evidence, indicates "that a highway shown on the map and statement as a highway of a particular description ought to be shown as a highway of a different description" (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1971, Section 53(3)(c)(ii)).
5. The Committee discussed the matter and concluded that the evidence was strong to support the creation of an order.
6. Cllr Hewitt-Cooper, seconded by Cllr Pullin, moved the recommendation and the Committee **RESOLVED** that:
 1. an Order be made, the effect of which would be to amend the Definitive Map and Statement by upgrading Public Footpath Y 9/46 to a Restricted Byway, between points A – A1 – B – C – D as shown on Appendix 1 of the submitted report.
 2. if there are no unwithdrawn objections to such an Order, the Order be confirmed.

7 **Any Other Business of Urgency** - Agenda Item 8

There were no additional items of business raised at the meeting.

(The meeting ended at 11.49 am)

CHAIR

**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

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Somerset County Council
County Council
- 27th April 2022

Report of the HR Policy Advisory Committee – for decision

Chair: Cllr Mandy Chilcott – Cabinet Member for Resources

Division and Local Member: All

Lead Officer: Chris Squire - HR & OD Director

Author: Cherry Russell – Strategic Manager HR Business Relations

Contact Details: 01823 355085 cjrussell@somerset.gov.uk

Summary

1.1 This report covers the meeting of the HR Policy Committee (advisory board) on 5th April 2022 which considered a single item of business the Pay Award 2021/2022.

1.2 Officers prepared a report confirming the nationally agreed Green Book pay award for staff of 1.75% for 2021/22 and in line with this made a proposal for Chief Officers Somerset Grades 1-3 to receive a pay award of 1.75% for the same period, which the HR Policy Committee advisory meeting considered and requested that the Cabinet Member for Resources present it to Full Council for its approval.

1.3 The HR Policy Committee forms a key part of the Council's constitutional arrangements which underpin the aims and delivery of the Somerset County Plan. The Committee exercises delegated authority from the Council in respect of the approval of the Council's HR policies and deciding and implementing pay awards for the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team. However, due to the pre-election period, the Committee met as an advisory board to Full Council

Recommendations

- 1. Having considered the report and noting the Chief Executive and Chief Officers pay award proposal of 1.75%, in line with Green Book pay award, to be backdated to April 2021, the HR Policy Committee requests Cabinet Member for Resourcing presents to Full Council for approval. Full Council is therefore asked to approve the report of the Cabinet Member for Resourcing.**

The Committee considered this report which set out that since April 2012, determination of any salary/cost of living progression (pay award) for Chief Executive Grade 1 and Chief Officer Grade 2-3 is agreed locally by the HR Policy Committee.

The Committee discussed the key points in the report:

- In recent years the Chief Executive and Chief Officers grade 1-3 in Somerset have received the same percentage pay award as Green Book pay staff, which is intended to ensure fairness and equity.

- An alternative option to consider a pay award in line with nationally negotiated pay awards for Chief Executives and Chief Officer of 1.5%, although Somerset County Council is out of scope of this agreements.
- The proposed pay award of 1.75% for Somerset Grades 1-3 mirrors what Green Book staff received and falls within the 2021/22 agreed budget and additional contingency provision.
- Appropriate pay provisions for staff, SLT and Chief Executive are fundamental to the delivery of the Council's objectives and services as set out in the County Plan.

4. Background papers

Agenda and papers for the HR Policy Committee meeting on 5th April 2022.

Somerset County Council

HR Policy Committee

– 5 April 2022

Pay Award – 2021/2022

Cabinet Member: Cllr Mandy Chilcott, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources

Lead Officer: Chris Squire, HR&OD Director

Author: Cherry Russell, Strategic Manager HR Business Relations

Contact Details: 01823 355085. Cjrusell@somerset.gov.uk

<i>Please complete sign off boxes below prior to submission to Community Governance</i>			
Report Sign off	Seen by:	Name	Date
	Legal	Tom Woodhams	25/03/22
	Corporate Finance	Jason Vaughan	23/3/2022
	Human Resources	Chris Squire	22/3/2022
	Cabinet Member	Mandy Chilcott	01/04/22
	Monitoring Officer	Scott Wooldridge	25/03/22
Summary:	The Report sets out the changes to Green Book Pay as a result of the national agreement on the 2021/22 pay award. Also seeks a decision on the increase to Chief Executive Grade 1 and Chief Officers Grade 2-3 salaries for the same period now that the Green Book pay has been set nationally.		
Recommendations:	<p>The members of the HR Policy Committee are asked to :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note the nationally agreed Green Book pay award for 2021/22 is 1.75% backdated to April 2021. Request that a report is submitted to Full Council in April to approve a 1.75% pay increase backdated to April 2021 for Somerset Grades 1-3, to reflect the agreed national Green Book pay increase awarded. 		
Reasons for Recommendations:	As from 1st April 2012, determination of any salary/cost of living progression for Chief Executive and SLT is undertaken by the HR Policy Committee. In recent years this has mirrored the Green Book pay award for staff.		
Links to Priorities and Impact on Service Plans:	Appropriate pay provisions for staff, SLT and Chief Executive are fundamental to the delivery of the Council's objectives and services as set out in the County Plan.		
Financial, Legal and HR Implications:	The annual cost of living increase for SLT and Chief Executive pay falls within budget 2021/22. There are no other HR implications.		

Equalities Implications:	The Council's duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 is to have "due regard" to the matters set out in relation to equalities when considering and making decisions. There are no direct equality impacts associated with the proposed pay award. There are also no direct impacts on sustainability, health and safety, community safety or privacy aspects as a result of the recommendations
Risk Assessment:	Failure to pay competitive salaries for Chief Executive and SLT team members may result in turnover of Directors and therefore some instability for services.
Scrutiny comments / recommendation (if any):	None

1. Background

- 1.1.** At the end of February 2022, the National Joint Council (JNC) for local government services reached agreement on a 1.75% pay award applicable to Green Book staff backdated to 1st April 2021.

In addition, the NJC has agreed to recommence the review of Term-Time Only working arrangements, which was paused at the outbreak of the pandemic. Agreement was also agreed to enter into discussions on homeworking policies, mental health support and maternity etc leave.

- 1.2.** In recent years, the Green Book national pay award has been applied to Somersets Chief Executive Grades 1 and Chief Officers Grade 2-3. The HR Policy Committee is asked to determine whether to apply this 1.75% award to all Officers in Grades 1-3.

A 1.5% pay award has been agreed on behalf of local authorities Chief Executives and Chief Officer, for those still represented by JNC negotiations. SCC is out of scope of this agreement.

- 1.3.** In line with the HR Policy Committee workshop meeting discussion on 18th January 2022 and as noted at Full Council, agenda item 9, on 23rd February 2022, it was agreed that Grades 1-3 pay would be reviewed in line with Green Book pay negotiations.

- 1.4.** In terms of performance, Somerset County Council has achieved its key performance measures during the year as well as setting a balanced budget for 2022-23. The Leadership Team has also steered the Council through the pandemic and is leading local government reorganisation in the County.

2. Options Considered

- 2.1.** No alternatives are available in relation to the application of the 1.75% pay award for Green Book staff (staff in Grades 17 – 4 in both schools and SCC) as this is nationally agreed.
- 2.2.** There are two options for consideration for the Chief Executive Somerset Grade 1 and Chief Officers Somerset Grade 2-3 pay award, as outlined below:

2.2.1 Option 1

In recent years the Chief Executive Somerset Grade 1 and Chief Officers Somerset Grades 2-3 have received the same percentage pay increase as Green Book staff. On this basis a pay award of 1.75 % for the Chief Executive Grade 1 and Chief Officers Grades 2-3 is considered to cover the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

2.2.2 Option 2

Although SCC opted out of national pay negotiations for Chief Executives and Chief Officers of Local Authorities some years ago (1st April 2012) it is open to the council to follow the 2021/22 pay agreement for those within scope of the JNC. For Chief Executives and Chief Officers of local authorities this is an increase of 1.5%. In recent years the national negotiated pay awards for Chief Executives and Chief Officers has been the same as Green Book so the question has not arisen.

3. Consultations undertaken

- 3.1.** Updates on the Green Book NJC national pay negotiations have been discussed at the Joint Negotiation Forum in Somerset. Members were consulted throughout 2021 as to their views on the pay offer.
- 3.2.** The Chief Executive and Chief Officer pay award proposal has been circulated to the Joint Negotiation Forum for comment on 15th March 2022, requesting responses by end of the day on 23rd March 2022. No comments were received.

4. Implications

- 4.1.** The recommendation to apply a 1.75% pay award to the Chief Executive Grade 1 and Chief officers Grade 2-3, which is in line with Green Book staff, is intended to ensure fairness and equity in pay awards for the 2021-22 financial year.

- 4.2.** The 2021/22 budget and additional contingency provided for a pay award of 2%. The financial impact of a 1.75% pay award for chief officers is £40,000. As the backdated payments will be paid after April 2022 it will be subject to the additional 1.25% increase in National Insurance for both employer and employee.

5. Background papers

- 5.1** Appendix 1 – new salary rates by spinal column points for Green Book staff Grades 17-4.