

## COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the County Council held in the Hollinsworth Hall, The Canalside Conference Centre, Marsh Lane, Huntworth, Somerset, TA6 6LQ, on Wednesday 25 May 2022 at 10.00 am

**Present:** Cllr S Ashton, Cllr S Aujla, Cllr J Bailey, Cllr J Baker, Cllr L Baker, Cllr M Barr, Cllr M Best, Cllr B Bolt, Cllr A Boyden, Cllr A Bradford, Cllr H Bruce, Cllr T Butt-Philip, Cllr S Carswell, Cllr M Caswell, Cllr N Cavill, Cllr M Chilcott, Cllr N Clark, Cllr B Clarke, Cllr P Clayton, Cllr S Coles, Cllr S Collins, Cllr J Cook-Woodman, Cllr N Cottle, Cllr A Dance, Cllr D Darch, Cllr H Davies, Cllr T Deakin, Cllr D Denton, Cllr M Dimery, Cllr A Dingwall, Cllr L Duddridge, Cllr M Dunk, Cllr S Dyke, Cllr C Ellis, Cllr H Farbahi, Cllr B Ferguson, Cllr B Filmer, Cllr D Fothergill, Cllr A Govier, Cllr T Grimes, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr Pauline Ham, Cllr Philip Ham, Cllr S Hart, Cllr M Healey, Cllr B Height, Cllr A Hendry, Cllr R Henley, Cllr M Hewitson, Cllr E Hobbs, Cllr H Hobhouse, Cllr J Hunt, Cllr D Johnson, Cllr H Kay, Cllr V Keitch, Cllr A Kendall, Cllr J Kenton, Cllr T Kerley, Cllr M Kravis, Cllr C Lawrence, Cllr M Lewis, Cllr L Leyshon, Cllr T Lock, Cllr M Lovell, Cllr D Mansell, Cllr M Martin, Cllr H Munt, Cllr T Munt, Cllr M Murphy, Cllr F Nicholson, Cllr G Oakes, Cllr S Osborne, Cllr O Patrick, Cllr C Payne, Cllr K Pearce, Cllr E Pearlstone, Cllr D Perry, Cllr E Potts-Jones, Cllr T Power, Cllr H Prior-Sankey, Cllr S Pugsley, Cllr F Purbrick, Cllr W Read, Cllr L Redman, Cllr B Revans, Cllr M Rigby, Cllr T Robbins, Cllr D Rodrigues, Cllr D Ruddell, Cllr P Seib, Cllr H Shearer, Cllr G Slocombe, Cllr B Smedley, Cllr F Smith-Roberts, Cllr F Smith, Cllr J Snell, A Soughton, Cllr M Stanton, Cllr A Sully, Cllr C Sully, Cllr L Trimnell, Cllr S Wakefield, Cllr M Wale, Cllr R Wilkins, Cllr A Wiltshire, Cllr D Woan, Cllr R Woods, Cllr G Wren and Cllr R Wyke

### 1 **Election of the Chair of the Council** - Agenda Item 1

Councillor Peter Clayton, former Vice Chair of Council invited nominations from proposers and seconders for the election of Chair of Council, to serve until the first Annual General Meeting of Somerset Council in May 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Revans and Seconded by Councillor Fothergill, the Council elected Councillor Mike Best as Chair of the Council to serve until the next Annual General Meeting in May 2023. The Chair then read and signed the formal Declaration of Acceptance of Office and received the Chain of Office:

"I, Michael Best, having been elected to the Office of Chair of Somerset County Council, declare that I take that Office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgment and ability. I will now sign that declaration."

### 2 **Election of the Vice Chair of the Council** - Agenda Item 2

The Chair invited nominations from proposers and seconders for the election of Vice- Chair of Council, to serve until the first Annual General Meeting of Somerset Council in May 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Revans and Seconded by Councillor Fothergill, the Council elected Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey as Vice Chair of the Council to serve until the next Annual General Meeting in May 2023. The Vice Chair then read and signed the formal Declaration of Acceptance of Office and received the Chain of Office from the Chair:

"I, Hazel Prior-Sankey, having been elected to the Office of Vice Chair of Somerset County Council, declare that I take that Office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgment and ability. I will now sign that declaration."

**3 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 3**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jo Roundell Greene.

**4 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 4**

The following declarations of interest were made at the meeting:

- (a) Councillor Marcus Barr – member Wellington Town Council
- (b) Councillor Suria Aujila - member Bridgwater Town Council
- (c) Councillor S Ashton – member Crewkerne Town Council, Hinton St George Parish Council
- (d) Councillor Sue Osborne – member Ilminster Town Council
- (e) Councillor Adam Dance - Chairman South Petherton Parish Council
- (f) Councillor Heather Shearer – member Street Parish Council
- (g) Councillor Ros Wyke – Vice Chair Westbury sub Mendip Parish Council
- (h) Councillor Peter Seib – member Brympton Parish Council, member of Chilthorne Domer Parish Council
- (i) Councillor Richard Wilkins – member Curry Rivel Parish Council
- (j) Councillor Dean Ruddle – Chairman Somerton Town Council
- (k) Councillor Emily Pearlstone – member Ilchester Parish Council
- (l) Councillor Jeny Snell – member Yeovil Town Council, Brympton Parish Council
- (m) Councillor Val Keitch – member Ilminster Town Council
- (n) Councillor Graham Oakes – member Yeovil Town Council, Yeovil Without Parish Council
- (o) Councillor Wes Read – member Yeovil Town Council
- (p) Councillor Evie Potts-Jones – member Yeovil Town Council
- (q) Councillor Andy Soughton – member Yeovil Town Council
- (r) Councillor Dave Woan – member Yeovil Town Council
- (s) Councillor Andy Kendall – member Yeovil Town Council
- (t) Councillor Tony Lock – member Yeovil Town Council
- (u) Councillor Andy Soughton – member Yeovil Town Council, South Somerset District Council
- (v) Councillor Tim Kerley – member Somerton Town Council

- (w) Councillor Marcus Kravis – member Minehead Town Council
- (x) Councillor Martin Lovell – member Shepton Mallet Town Council
- (y) Councillor Jason Baker – member Chard Town Council
- (z) Councillor Lee Baker – member Cheddar Fitzpaine Parish Council
- (aa) Councillor Tim Carswell – member Mendip District Council
- (bb) Councillor Theo Butt-Philip – member of Wells – St Thomas Parish Council
- (cc) Councillor Nick Cottle – member Glastonbury St Edmunds Parish Council, Mendip District Council
- (dd) Councillor Ben Ferguson – member Axbridge Town Council
- (ee) Councillor Pauline Ham – member Axbridge Town Council
- (ff) Councillor Edric Hobbs – member Shepton Mallet Town Council
- (gg) Councillor Jenny Kenton -member Chard Town Council, South Somerset District Council
- (hh) Councillor Tony Robbins – member Wells City Council
- (ii) Councillor Bob Filmer – member Brent Knoll Parish Council
- (jj) Councillor Norman Cavill – member West Monkton Parish Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council
- (kk) Councillor Ross Henley – member Wellington Town Council
- (ll) Councillor Marcus Barr – member Wellington Town Council
- (mm) Councillor Andrew Govier – member Wellington Town Council
- (nn) Councillor Alan Bradford – member North Petherton Town Council, Sedgemoor District Council
- (oo) Councillor Gill Slowcombe – member Bridgwater Town Council
- (pp) Councillor Philip Ham – member Coleford Parish Council
- (qq) Councillor Peter Clayton – member Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge Town Council
- (rr) Councillor Kathy Pearce – member Bridgwater Town Council
- (ss) Councillor Brian Smedley – member Bridgwater Town Council
- (tt) Councillor John Hunt – member Bishop's Hull Parish Council
- (uu) Councillor Mike Rigby – member Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council
- (vv) Councillor Mike Best – member Crewkerne Town Council

5 **Minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 27 April 2022** - Agenda Item 5

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022 were accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair of the meeting.

6 **Chair's Announcements** - Agenda Item 6

The Chair of Council referred to the events detailed on the Chair's Information Sheet No. 16, circulated and published with the agenda. He also paid tribute to the former Chair of Council Nigel Taylor and to the former Vice Chair, Councillor Peter Clayton who had had to take on more duties when the Chair had become very unwell.

The Chair paid tribute to the 14 County Councillors who had not been re-elected at the elections on 5 May 2022:

Cllr John Thorne – Blackdown and Neroche

First elected – 2017

Years served as a County Councillor – 5

Highlights – Member on various Committees and recently served as Chair of the Pensions Committee.

Cllr William Wallace – Blackmoor Vale

First elected – 2005

Years served as a County Councillor – 17

Highlights – Served as Chair of Council from 2017-2018. Cabinet Member and most recently served as Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee.

Cllr Dave Loveridge – Bridgwater East and Bawdrip

First elected – 1989

Years served as a County Councillor – 29

Highlights – Served as a Member of Scrutiny Committees, Constitution and Standards Committee and Regulation Committee.

Cllr Clare Paul – Curry Rivel and Langport

First elected – 2017

Years served as a County Councillor - 5

Highlights – Served as Cabinet Member, Chair of the Audit Committee and Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Cllr John Clarke – Frome North

First Elected – 2017

Highlights – Served as a Member of the Council and Regulation Committee.

Cllr David Huxtable – King Alfred

First elected – 1985

Years served as a County Councillor – 37

Highlights – Served as a Cabinet Member for 13 years and Chair of the Audit and Resources Committee for several years.

Cllr Gemma Verdon – Martock

First elected – 2017

Years served as a County Councillor – 5

Highlights – Served as Junior Cabinet Member and Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

Cllr Neil Bloomfield – Martock

First elected – 2017

Years served as a County Councillor – 5

Highlights – Served as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

Cllr John Parham – Mendip South  
First elected – 2013  
Years served as a County Councillor – 9  
Highlights – Served as Chair of the Regulation Committee.

Cllr Rod Williams – Rowbarton and Staplegrove  
First elected – 2017  
Years served as a County Councillor – 5  
Highlights – Served on Children and Families Scrutiny Committee as Vice Chair and Chair of Somerset Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership.

Cllr David Hall – Somerton  
First elected – 2009  
Years served as a County Councillor – 13  
Highlights – Served as a Cabinet Member for 12 years.

Cllr Terry Napper – Street  
First elected – 2009  
Years served as a County Councillor – 13  
Highlights – Served on Scrutiny Committees and Regulation Committee.

Cllr Giuseppe Frascini – Taunton North  
First elected – 2017  
Years served as a County Councillor – 5  
Highlights – Served as a Junior Cabinet Member and member of Scrutiny Committees.

Cllr James Hunt – Upper Tone  
First elected – 2013  
Years served as a County Councillor – 9  
Highlights – Served as a Member of Scrutiny Committees and the Audit and Pensions Committees.

The Chair then outlined his priorities for the forthcoming year and his plans to establish closer links with the four District Council Chairs. He will also be writing to Her Majesty the Queen, via the Lord Lieutenancy's office, passing on the Council's congratulations and thanks on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee.

The Council received and noted the report.

## **7 County Returning Officer's Report - Agenda Item 7**

The Council considered a report by the Returning Officer, Pat Flaherty which informed the County Council of the 110 persons elected as Members (also known as Councillors) of Somerset County Council at the elections held on 5 May 2022 and welcomed the members to their first meeting.

The Council **NOTED** the report of the Returning Officer which informed the County Council of the persons elected as members of Somerset County Council at the elections held on 5 May 2022.

## 8 **Election of the Leader of the Council** - Agenda Item 8

The Chair invited nominations from proposers and seconders for the election of Leader of the Council. Proposed by Councillor Liz Leyshon and Seconded by Councillor Graham Oakes, Councillor Bill Revans was duly elected as Leader of the Council.

## 9 **Statement by the Leader of the Council** - Agenda Item 9

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Revans made a statement to the Council, including his priorities for the forthcoming year and detailed the Executive Members and Associate lead members, as detailed below: -

- Leader of the Council – Bill Revans
- Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member on Finance and Human Resources – Liz Leyshon
- Lead Member for Children and Families – Tessa Munt
- Lead Member for Adult Social Care – Heather Shearer
- Lead Member for Transport and Digital – Mike Rigby
- Lead Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity – Adam Dance
- Lead Member for Local Government Reorganisation & Prosperity – Val Keitch
- Lead Member for Environment and Climate Change – Sarah Dyke
- Lead Member for Development and Assets – Ros Wyke
- Lead Member for Communities – Federica Smith-Roberts

Associate Lead Members:

- Associate Lead Member for Governance and Communications –Derek Perry
- Associate Lead Member for Finance – Peter Seib
- Associate Lead Member for Education – Caroline Ellis
- Associate Lead Member for Adult Social Care – Mike Stanton
- Associate Lead Member for Transport & Digital – Mike Hewitson
- Associate Lead Member for Public Health – Ross Henley
- Associate Lead Member for Economic Development & Inward Investment – David Woan
- Associate Lead Member for Environment & Climate Change – Dixie Darch
- Associate Lead Member for Development & Assets – Sarah Wakefield

- Associate Lead Member for Communities – Nic Clark

## 10 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 10

There were public questions received from Mr David Redgewell and Mr Alan Debenham. In the absence of Mr Redgewell, the questions were read out by the Monitoring officer on his behalf. The questions and the responses provided are attached to these minutes in Appendix A.

## 11 **Reports of the Monitoring Officer** - Agenda Item 11

This item was introduced by the Council's Monitoring Officer, Scott Wooldridge. The Council had before it the following reports by the Monitoring Officer regarding:

- A) Committee proportionality, Committee appointments and annual calendar of meetings
- B) Appointments to Partnership and Outside Bodies
- C) Interim Constitution 2022/23

The three reports set out decisions that are required at the Council's Annual General Meeting (AGM) regarding the appointment of members to internal, partnerships and outside bodies for 2022/23 (up until the next Annual General Meeting).

### **Paper A – Appointments to Committees and County Council meeting dates for 2022/23**

An updated Appendix 1 (proposed Committee and internal appointments) with names of Members had been published and circulated prior to the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Bill Revans and Seconded Cllr Leigh Redman, the Council **RESOLVED** to:

- 1. Note the election and appointment of the Chair of the Council, Vice Chair of the Council and Leader of the Council agreed at this Annual General Meeting prior to this agenda item.**
- 2. Approve the County Council Appointments Schedule to this report (Appendix 1), to include, as necessary, summary revised terms of reference for proposed new committees, the proposed committees for appointments to be made to and the proposed appointments to Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority and Exmoor National Park Authority – see sections 3.1 and 3.2 for more detail.**

- 3. That Councillor Peter Seib replace Councillor Henry Hobhouse as a representative on the Pension Fund Committee.**
- 4. To approve the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) for any new equivalent SRA qualifying posts created in 1 and 2 above that fit within the existing SRA bandings scheme, pending the Council considering recommendations of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to the review of the Members' Allowances Scheme.**
- 5. To agree the dates already agreed for ordinary meetings of the County Council for the year as set out in section 3.3.**

#### **Paper B – Appointments to Internal, Partnership and Outside Bodies**

An updated Appendix 1 (schedule of appointments to internal, partnership and outside bodies) had been published and circulated prior to the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Bill Revans and Seconded Cllr Liz Leyshon, the Council **RESOLVED** to:

- 1. Approve the appointment of members to internal, partnerships and outside bodies for 2022/2023 as set out at Appendix 1.**
- 2. Appoint Councillor Henry Hobhouse as the Armed Forces Member Champion.**
- 3. The representative to the Heart of South West LEP Board be changed to Councillor Nick Cottle.**
- 4. Appoint Councillor Mike Best as representative on the Passion for Somerset Board**
- 5. Appoint Jane Lock as the independent Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board and thanks be sent to the former Chair, Jill Johnson.**

#### **Paper C – Interim Constitution for 2022/23**

A revised Appendix 2 had been published and circulated prior to the meeting, to clarify that the proposed quorum for a Full Council meeting is now 28 members.

Proposed by Cllr Bill Revans and Seconded by Cllr David Fothergill, the Council **RESOLVED** to:

- 1. Approve the proposed revisions to its Constitution as set out in Appendices 2 (as revised) 3-5;**
- 2. That an updated Constitution will be brought to the July Council meeting, for information;**



- 3. Approve the proposed guidance documents set out in Appendices 6–9;**
- 4. Note the further constitutional work to be undertaken during 2022; and**
- 5. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make the necessary amendments required as a result of the decisions to the Council's Constitution and publish the revised documents on the Council's website.**

**(The meeting ended at 12.12 pm)**

**CHAIR**