

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Motions to Council – Assessment Form

On receipt of a Motion from a Councillor, the Governance Team will carry out an assessment as to its contents to establish whether there are likely to be significant consequences to the Council should the Motion be carried at the subsequent Full Council meeting.

The first question to be addressed will be:-

“Can the Motion, if approved, be implemented without the need for any resource (financial and otherwise) to be identified outside existing budgets or staffing capacity?”

If the answer is ‘yes’, then the Motion can proceed towards discussion and resolution.

An example of a Motion which would fall into the above category would be where the Council is being asked to lobby the Government, Somerset County Council or other body on a particular issue. If the motion is carried, the action required will usually involve no more than a letter being prepared and sent to the intended recipient.

However, as in the case of the recent Motion on ‘Climate Change’, the answer to the above question would clearly be ‘no’.

In such circumstances, detailed analysis of the wording of the Motion will be required to identify what will be needed if the Motion – when it comes before Full Council – is carried.

Such analysis will include:-

- What additional resource would be required to ensure the Motion (if approved) could be implemented?
- What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?
- Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?
- Will this require reports to be submitted through Scrutiny and the Executive? If a Supplementary Estimate is required, Full Council approval will be required too.

If such analysis is required, the Governance Team will arrange for the attached pro-forma to be completed and this will accompany the relevant Motion onto the agenda of the Full Council meeting so all Members are aware that further investigation will be required before the Motion – even if it is carried – can be implemented.

Motions to Council – Assessment Proforma

(To be used in circumstances where it appears the wording of a proposed Motion will commit the Council to providing further financial or staffing resources which cannot be met from existing budgets)

**Brief Details of the Motion –
Council resolves:**

- To declare a “Cost of Living Emergency”
- Council instructs the leader of this council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to express the Council’s demands for VAT to be cut to 17.5% for 12 months, for the re-introduction of the pension triple-lock and for the £20 Universal Credit supplement to be restored.
- Council instructs the leader of this council to write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to express Council’s view that the Government commit to further fuel duty reductions in rural areas (Somerset is currently not eligible). The leader is to also urge the Government to move faster on cross-party desires to uncouple power prices from gas prices in an effort to cut household bills with prices to increase further in October.
- Endorse a local Cost of Living Emergency Summit to be led by the leader of this council, with stakeholders including Citizens Advice, Food Banks, Local Trades Unions, Somerset Community Foundation, Spark Somerset, MIND, Chambers of Commerce and invite both local MPs to attend this hybrid meeting
- Somerset West and Taunton Council will continue working on a £50,000 support fund for residents suffering from energy and food price increases in conjunction with Citizens Advice to be ready by the end of the summer. This will be funded from an underspend in the previous financial year.

Questions to be addressed

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What additional resource would be required to ensure the Motion (if approved) could be implemented?</i> |
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Answer – the summit will require additional resource and capacity to secure a venue, content, speakers, generate interest and administer the event etc. It is not clear at this stage that it could be adequately resourced within existing staff and budgets

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?</i> |
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Answer – the summit will require initial meeting, potential to look at external provider(s), initial discussion with key stakeholders

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?</i> |
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| Answer – there is no budget to support a summit this currently, so will require some approval |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Will this require reports to be submitted through Scrutiny and the Executive? If a Supplementary Estimate is required, Full Council approval will be required too.</i> |
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| Answer – not thought likely at this stage |
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Likely timescale involved –

Earliest delivery for a summit would be late autumn 2022