



FULL COUNCIL

Wednesday, 24 May 2023

2.00 pm

**Hollinsworth Hall, Canalside Conference Centre,
Marsh Lane, Huntworth, Bridgwater TA6 6LQ**

SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA

To: The members of the Full Council

We are now able to enclose the following information which was unavailable when the agenda was published:

Agenda Item 15 Report of the Monitoring Officer - Decision (Pages 3 - 282)

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Somerset Council

Full Council – 24th May 2023



Report of the Monitoring Officer

Lead Officer: Scott Wooldridge - Monitoring Officer

Report author: Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer and Strategic Manager

Governance & Democratic Services

Contact Details: 01823 359043

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out for the 2023/24 municipal year the proposed allocation and appointment of members to committee places/seats (see Paper A), the proposed appointment of members to Outside Bodies (see Paper B) and the Council's approval to the accuracy of minutes of several former committees of legacy district councils (see Paper C).

On 1 March 2023, the former County Council agreed, on behalf of the new Somerset Council, the appointments of Chairs, Vice-Chairs, members and co-opted members to committees and joint committees. Those approvals included setting aside the political balance (proportionality) rules for the Standards Committee and the four area-based planning committees (see Paper A for details).

In accordance with the Constitution, Full Council is responsible for the appointment of Chairs, Vice-Chairs and members to committees and these appointments are usually agreed at the Annual General Meeting.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Council:

Paper A

- (1) Notes the political balance of the Council and agree the proposed allocation of committee places as set out in this report and its appendices;**

- (2) Agrees the terms of reference, size and quorum arrangements for all committees as set out in the Council's Constitution;**
- (3) Continues to agree the recommendation of the political group leaders to continue to set aside the political balance rules for the Standards Committee and the four area-based Planning Committees and instead allocate places for those committees on the basis set out in Appendix 3;**
- (4) Approves the appointment of Chairs, Vice-Chairs, members and co-opted members to the Council's committee and joint committees as set out in the Appointments Schedule (see Appendix 3);**
- (5) Delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the appropriate political group leader, to make in-year changes to committee and joint committee appointments (excluding the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs) in accordance with the allocation of places to political groups by the Council and the wishes of the relevant political group leader.**

Paper B

- (6) Agrees the appointment of members to internal, partnership and outside bodies for 2023/24 until the next Annual General Meeting, as set out in Appendix 1.**
- (7) Delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the the political group leaders, to make in-year changes to internal, partnership and outside bodies appointments in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group leader.**

Paper C

- (8) Approves the accuracy of the minutes of several former committee meetings of legacy councils as set out in Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.**

- (9) **Agree the case for exempt information for the minutes of the former Mendip District Council Audit Committee meeting on 22 March 2023 (Appendix 1), the Mendip District Council Asset Management Group meeting on 24 March 2023 (see Appendix 1), the Somerset Waste Board meeting on 10 February 2023 (see Appendix 3) and the Somerset Joint Waste Scrutiny meeting on 8 February 2023 (see Appendix 3) to be treated in confidence, as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing that information.**
- (10) **Agree to exclude the press and public from the meeting where there is any discussion at the meeting regarding the minutes of the former Mendip District Council Audit Committee meeting on 22 March 2023, or the former Mendip District Council Asset Management Group meeting on 24 March 2023, or Somerset Waste Board meeting on 10 February 2023 or the Somerset Joint Waste Scrutiny meeting on 8 February 2023 (to be treated as exempt information).**

5. Legal, Equalities and Financial Implications

5.1 These are as set out in Papers A, B and C to this report.

6. Background Papers

6.1 These are as set out in Papers A, B and C to this report.

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Report of the Monitoring Officer - Paper A

Proposed allocation of committee places

Lead Officer: Scott Wooldridge - Monitoring Officer

Report author: Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer and Strategic Manager

Governance & Democratic Services

Contact Details: 01823 359043

1. Summary

- 1.1 In accordance with legislation and the Council's Constitution, this is a report to the Annual General Meeting which sets out the political balance of the Council and the matters relating to the allocation and appointments of members for places (also known as seats) on the Council's committees for the 2023/24 municipal year (the period between the Annual General Meetings in May 2023 and May 2024).

Ahead of the establishment of the new Somerset Council, the former County Council agreed at its meeting on 1 March 2023, on behalf of the new Somerset Council, the appointment of Chairs, Vice-Chairs, members and co-opted members to Somerset Council's committees and joint committees. Those approvals included setting aside the political balance (also known as proportionality requirements) rules for the Council's Standards Committee and the four area-based planning committees.

The Council is also asked to endorse the terms of reference for all committees as set out in the Constitution and note that the programme of meetings for the 2023/24 municipal year was agreed by the Council on 1 March 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Council:

- (1) **Notes the political balance of the Council and agree the proposed allocation of committee places as set out in this report and its appendices;**

- (2) Agrees all of the committees terms of reference, size and quorum arrangements as set out in the Council’s Constitution;**
- (3) Continues to agree the recommendation of the political group leaders to continue to set aside the political balance rules for the Standards Committee and the four area-based Planning Committees and instead allocate places for those committees on the basis set out in Appendix 3;**
- (4) Approves the appointment of Chairs, Vice-Chairs, members and co-opted members to the Council’s committee and joint committees as set out in the Appointments Schedule (see Appendix 3);**
- (5) Delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the appropriate political group leader, to make in-year changes to committee and joint committee appointments (excluding the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs) in accordance with the allocation of places to political groups by the Council and the wishes of the relevant political group leader.**

3. Background

3.1 Democratic Arrangements

Following the approval of the Somerset Structural Changes Order 2022, Somerset Council came into effect on 1 April 2023 as part of local government reorganisation in Somerset. In accordance with the Structural Changes Order 2022, the 110 members elected on 5 May 2022 are the members of the new Somerset Council.

3.1.2 Where membership of Somerset Council is divided into political groups the Council is required to review and allocate the total number of seats on committees in accordance with the strength of each political group. The number of members of each political group on the Council results in the following political balance:

- Liberal Democrats = 61 members
- Conservative = 36 members
- Labour = 5 members
- Green = 5 members

- Independents = 3 members

The Liberal Democrat group form the majority Administration from 2022 – 27. This report has been prepared on the basis of the political groups reflecting the position set out above.

- 3.1.3 The above political balance results in the following entitlement to seats for committees where political balance rules apply:

Political Group	No of Members	Overall entitlement to committee seats
Liberal Democrat	61	55.5%
Conservative	36	32.7%
Labour	5	4.5%
Green	5	4.5%
Independent	3	3%
Individual member	0	0%
Totals	110	100%

3.1.4 **Council Committees**

The Constitution for Somerset Council was agreed at the meeting of Somerset council on the 22 February 2023. The committee structure for Somerset Council is detailed in Parts C, D, E, F and G of Constitution.

On 1 March 2023, the former County Council agreed, on behalf of the new Somerset Council, to set aside the political balance (also known as political proportionality requirements) for the Standards Committee and the four area-based planning committees. Under the Constitution, Full Council is responsible for the appointment of Chairs, Vice-Chairs and members to committees.

- 3.1.5 Since May 2022, the Council has operated with the majority of its committees with a membership of 13 elected members and a quorum of 5. This enables representation from the majority of political groups on committees. At its meetings on 22 February and 1 March the Council agreed the terms of reference for committees, their size and quorum arrangements:

Council Committees – required to be politically balanced	No of places	quorum
Appointments Committee	5	3
Audit	13	5
Constitution & Governance	13	5
Human Resources	13	5
Licensing and Regulatory	15	5
Licensing sub	3	3
Regulatory sub	3	3
Officer Appeals	13	3
Pension Fund Committee	7	3
Scrutiny – Corporate and Resources	13	5
Scrutiny -Climate and Place	13	5
Scrutiny -Adults & Health	13	5
Scrutiny – Children and Families	13	5
Scrutiny - Communities	13	5
Strategic Planning	13	5
Committee places total	163	

The Council agreed at its meeting on 1 March to set aside political balance rules for its Standards Committee and the four area-based Planning Committees. The leaders of the five political groups propose that the Council continues with those arrangements.

Council Committees – required to be politically balanced BUT proposed by political group leaders to continue to set aside political balance and be determined locally	No of places	quorum
Standards (and 5 independent co-opted members)	5	3
Area Planning committee North	13	5
Area Planning committee South	13	5
Area Planning committee East	13	5
Area Planning committee West	13	5

The following are joint committees in partnership with councils from Devon:

Joint Committees – politically balanced	No of places appointed from council
Heart of the South West Joint Committee	1
Heart of the South West Joint Scrutiny Committee (LEP)	4

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Council is required to appoint a Health and Wellbeing Board that works with partners, including the GP led Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), to prepare a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the Council and the CCG and to encourage the delivery of integrated services. The Board is to be regarded as an ordinary committee of the Council and is therefore appointed by the Council, reports to the Council and with membership, as defined by the legislation, agreed by the Council.

Council Committees – not required to be politically balanced	No of places	quorum
Somerset Health and Well-Being Board	5	3

Note that the political balance rules do not apply to the Executive or the Pension Board. Under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and consequent amendments to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, each administering authority is required to appoint a local pension board to assist the administering authority to comply with relevant legislation and guidance, and to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Such Boards are constituted entirely under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and are not local authority committees.

Board – not required to be politically balanced	No of places	quorum
Pension Board	1	

3.2 Appointments / Allocation of places

3.2.1 The Council agreed the appointment of Chairs, Vice-Chairs and membership of its committees on 1 March 2023 prior to the establishment of the new Somerset Council.

3.2.2 The Council's committee places (also known as seats) to be allocated to the political groups has been calculated and the political group leaders informed.

3.2.3 Appendix 1 sets out guidance regarding the method of allocation of seats / places on committees and comments on the application of this in relation to Appendix 2.

Appendix 2 sets out the calculation of aggregate entitlement to places on Committees on the basis that the Council continues to agree the recommendation of the political group leaders to set aside the political balance rules for the Standards Committee and the four area-based Planning Committees.

3.2.4 The Council agreed on 1 March 2023 to set aside political balance rules for the Standards Committee to instead enable one member to be appointed from each of the five political groups to ensure equal representation from each group. If the Council does not continue to set aside the political balance rules for the Standards Committee then the five committee places would instead be allocated on the basis of 3 places to the Liberal Democrat political group and 2 places to the Conservative political group.

3.2.5 The political balance of the Council is not distributed in the same proportions for each of the four geographic areas covered by the Planning Committees. The Council wanted to achieve local member representation on Planning Committees as a key principle. The Council agreed on 1 March 2023 to set aside political balance rules for the four area-based Planning Committees and instead allocate places to achieve local member representation. If Council does not continue to set aside political balance rules for the four area-based Planning Committees then the principle of achieving local member representation will be very difficult to achieve. The consequence would be that the thirteen committee places on each of those Planning Committees would instead be allocated on the basis of 7 places to the Liberal Democrat political group, 4 places to the Conservative political group and the remaining 2 places allocated between the three minority groups.

- 3.2.6 Appendix 3 sets out the political group leaders proposed nominations to the committee places. When approving Appendix 3 the Council will meet the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 which requires the application of certain rules to the appointment of council committees.

The Schedule provides for:

- (a) The appointment of members to the committees of the Council.
- (b) The appointment of chairs and vice-chairs of the committees where appropriate.

The political group leaders' nominations set out in the Appointments Schedule in Appendix 3 will be published on Tuesday 23 May.

- 3.2.7 A numerical guide to political proportionality representation on Committees is set out at Appendix 4 and reflects the Council's political composition.
- 3.2.8 Full Council may waive the political balance rules for any committee(s) where the Council wishes to appoint an alternative number of members from political groups. In order for political balance to be waived no member must vote against this motion, an objection by a single member would make it necessary to apply political balance rules. The Council previously agreed on 1 March 2023 to set aside the political balance rules for the Standards Committee and the four area-based Planning Committees.
- 3.2.9 It is proposed that the Council delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer to make in-year changes between Annual General Meetings to committee appointments (excluding Chairs and Vice-Chairs) in accordance with the wishes of the political group leader that relates to the relevant place(s) on a committee.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The rules governing the allocation of seats on Committees and Sub-Committees to political groups are set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made thereunder including the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

The provisions of the 1989 Act include the requirement that, where Members of the Council are divided into political groups, then the membership of its committees and sub-committees must reflect the political balance of the Council as a whole.

The proposals set out in this report comply with the Council's Constitution.

5. Impact Assessment

- 5.1 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 on the provision of services. There are no direct impacts of these recommendations on the provision of services. There are no direct impacts on sustainability, health and safety, community safety or privacy aspects as a result of this proposal.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The immediate financial implications from the proposals set out in this report will relate to posts qualifying for Special Responsibility Allowance payments, additional members' expenses and support costs for the new committees.

Note that the appointment of Executive Lead Members and any Associate Lead Members is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council. Therefore, there could be financial implications as a result of those appointments and they will be set out in any decision report that the Leader will consider. Additionally, the nominations for the appointment to Opposition Spokesperson roles would be recommended by the Opposition Group to Council to approve.

All of the above costs will need to be met by the resources allocated for Democratic Services in 2023/24. Resources will be kept under review by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Section 151 Officer throughout 2023/24.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Somerset Council Constitution

Somerset County Council meetings 22 February 2023 and 1 March 2023

Local Government Act 1972

Local Government Access to Information Act 1985

Local Government and Housing Act 1989

Local Government Act 2000

Local Government Structural Changes Transitional Arrangement Orders 2008

Localism Act 2011

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

Health and Social Care Act 2012

Public Service Pensions Act 2013

Somerset Structural Changes Order 2022

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author.

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Paper A Appendix 1 – Allocation of places on Committees

1.1 Method of allocation of places on committees to elected members

The rules governing the allocation of places (also known as seats) on Committees and Sub-Committees to political groups are set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made thereunder. The provisions of the 1989 Act include the requirement that, where Members of the Council are divided into political groups, then the membership of its committees and sub-committees must reflect the political balance of the Council as a whole.

1.2 The number of seats on committees are therefore allocated to each political group in the same proportion as the overall strength of each political group as far as practicable. This excludes the Executive as those appointments are made by the Leader of the Council and also any other committee where political balance is not required such as the Licensing Sub-Committee, Health and Well Being Board and the Pensions Board.

1.3 The Council is bound to have regards to the wishes of the political groups in allocating committee places to individual councillors. A list of those members put forward by political groups for each committee will be circulated to members as soon as they are available, in addition to nominations received for the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the appropriate committees.

1.4 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the principles to be used in agreeing the size of and allocation of places to committees (and sub-committees) of the Council and this process is repeated annually at the Council's Annual General Meeting. The principles must be followed so far as is reasonably practicable.

1.5 Principles for allocating places - the following principles from the 1989 Act, together with a commentary where appropriate, must be applied to the allocation of seats on committees.

1. *Preventing domination by a single group:* All the seats should not be allocated to the same political group.
2. *Ensuring a majority group enjoys a majority on all committees:* If one political group has a majority in the full Council, that political group should have a majority on each committee.

3. *Aggregating all committee places and allocating fair shares:* Subject to the above principles 1 and 2, the total number of seats on all the committees of the Council allocated to each political group should be in the same proportion as that political group's seats on the full Council.
 4. *Ensuring as far as practicable fairness on each committee:* Subject to the above principles 1, 2 and 3, the number of seats on each committee of the Council allocated to each political group should be in the same proportion as that political group's seats on the full Council.
- 1.6 **Application of the principles** – when the Council considers appointments to its committees it needs to be in accordance with the principles set out above. Each political group should state the names of the members it wishes to take its allocated places on committees, and when those wishes are known, the Council is under a duty to make the appointment of those councillors as soon as practicable.
- 1.7 **Method of Calculating the Allocation of Places to Political groups** - The principles in paragraph 1.5 can be applied in the following sequence:
- (i) Calculate the total number of seats with votes on all the committees and any Joint Committees.
 - (ii) Calculate the proportion that each political group forms of the total membership of the Council. Reserve an appropriate number of seats for any members not in a political group.
 - (iii) Apply those proportions to the total number of committee seats to give the aggregate entitlement of each group; the requirement to apply the proportions “so far as reasonably practicable” can be met by rounding down fractional entitlements of less than half, and rounding up entitlements of a half or more; if this results in a greater aggregate than the number of seats available, the fractional entitlement(s) closest to a half should be rounded in the other direction until entitlements balance the available seats.

- (iv) Apply the proportions to the number of members on each committee to give provisional entitlement to seats on that committee.
 - (v) If the provisional entitlement gives only one group seats on the committee, adjust the entitlement so that the next largest group has a seat (thus applying principle (1) in paragraph 1.5).
 - (vi) Finally, adjust the seats on each committee so that the total allocated to each group is as near as possible to their aggregate entitlement, whilst preserving the results reached at steps (iv) and (v) (thus applying principle (3) in paragraph 1.5).
- 1.8 This means that the committees are set out as proportionately balanced, but the numbers across the committees are then altered, whilst trying to ensure the committees keep to this proportionality as far as is possible, to ensure that the total number of all the committee places when taken together are politically balanced.
- 1.9 The Council is free to adopt any aggregate number of places on committees so long as it follows the principles in paragraph 1.5 and the sequence outlined above. The proposed allocation of committee places to political groups in order to seek their nominations is set out at **Appendix 2**. This has been developed in line with the recommendations of the political group leaders and the allocation of places that the Council agreed on 1 March 2023.
- 1.10 A numerical guide to proportional representation on Committees is set out at **Appendix 4** to reflect the Council's political composition.
- 1.11 **Members not in a political group** - In the case of members who are not members of a political group, a proportion of seats on committees equal to the proportion of Council members who do not belong to a political group, has to be reserved, with appointments to these seats being made by the Council at its discretion. There are no members on this Council that are not in a political group so this requirement is not relevant.

- 1.12 Full Council may waive the political balance rules for any committee(s) where the Council wishes to appoint an alternative number of members from political groups. Full Council agreed on 1 March 2023 to set aside political balance rules for the Standards Committee and the four area-based Planning Committees.

In order for political balance to be waived no member must vote against this motion, an objection by a single member would make it necessary to revert back to the legal requirements to apply the political balance rules.

2.1 **Calculation of the political group's entitlement on Committees and Boards**

- 2.2 Appendix 2 sets out that there are a total of 163 seats / places to be allocated by the Council to various committees where political balance applies (assuming that the Council continues to set aside political balance rules requirements for the Standards Committee and four area-based Planning Committees).

- 2.3 As can be seen from the calculations in Appendix 2, when working out the total aggregate allocation to each political group relative to their composition on the Council, the Labour group should give up 4 places to other political groups, the Green group should give up 4 places to other political groups, the Liberal Democrat Group should receive 1 place, the Conservative Group should receive 2 places and the Independent Group should receive 5 places.

- 2.4 Appendix 3 will set out the nominations from the political group leaders which addresses the actions required in 2.3 above.

3.1 **Joint Committees**

- 3.2 The Council is a member of several joint committees as follows:

- (i) Heart of the South West Joint Committee - this is a joint committee of the fourteen councils across Somerset and Devon (all councils within the Heart of the South Local Enterprise Partnership area). Each council appoints one member to the joint committee and this is usually their Leader or alternatively an Executive Lead Member. As this is an executive appointment the political balance rules do not apply.

- (ii) Heart of the South West LEP Scrutiny Joint Committee – this is a joint overview and scrutiny committee for the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership.

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Paper A Appendix 2 – Table of allocations of committee places for political groups to nominate to (assuming Council continues to set aside political balance rules for Standards Committee and four area-based Planning Committees)

Political Group	Liberal Democrat	Conservative	Labour	Green	Independent	No group	Total
Seats held on the Council	61	36	5	5	3	0	110
Appointments Committee (3-5 members)	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
Audit Committee	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Constitution and Governance	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Human Resources Committee	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Officer Appeals Committee	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Pension Fund Committee	4	2	1	0	0	0	7
Scrutiny (Climate & Place)	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Scrutiny (Communities)	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Scrutiny (Adults & Health)	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Scrutiny (Children & Families)	7	4	1	1	0	0	13

Political Group	Liberal Democrat	Conservative	Labour	Green	Independent	No group	Total
Scrutiny (Corporate & Resources)	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Strategic Planning Committee	7	4	1	1	0	0	13
Licensing and Regulatory Committee	8	5	1	1	0	0	15
Licensing Sub Committee(s)	2	1			0	0	3
Regulatory Sub Committee(s)	2	1			0	0	3
Totals	89	51	12	11	0		163
Overall calculation - entitlement	90.39	53.35	7.41	7.41	4.45		163
Adjustment required	+1	+2	-4	-4	+5		

Political Group	Liberal Democrat	Conservative	Labour	Green	Independent	No group	Total
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Committees where political balance waived by Council on 1 March 2023

Area Planning Sub Committee (N)	4	6	3	0	0	0	13
Area Planning Sub Committee (S)	10	3	0	0	0	0	13
Area Planning Sub Committee (E)	7	4	0	2	0	0	13
Area Planning Sub Committee (W) *	7	4			1	0	13
Standards Committee **	1	1	1	1	1	0	5
Standards Hearing Panel Sub-Committee (3 members from the 5 members appointed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

*1 vacancy for Labour, Green or Independent to allocate to

** - political balance waived and one member from each group

Committees not required to be politically balanced

Somerset Health & Well-Being Board	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
Pension Fund Board	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

Joint Committees

Political Group	Liberal Democrat	Conservative	Labour	Green	Independent	No group	Total
Heart of the South West Joint Committee	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Heart of the South West Joint Scrutiny Committee (LEP)	3	1	0	0	0	0	4

APPENDIX FOUR - NUMERICAL GUIDE OF PROPORTIONALITY IN COMMITTEES (Mar 23)

POLITICAL GROUP	Liberal Democrat	Conservative	Labour	Green	Independent	No Group	TOTALS
NUMBER OF MEMBERS	61	36	5	5	3	0	110
% OF TOTAL MEMBERS	55.5%	32.7%	4.5%	4.5%	2.7%	0.0%	100.0%
COMMITTEE SIZE							
3	1.66	0.98	0.14	0.14	0.08	0.00	3.00
4	2.22	1.31	0.18	0.18	0.11	0.00	4.00
5	2.77	1.64	0.23	0.23	0.14	0.00	5.00
6	3.33	1.96	0.27	0.27	0.16	0.00	6.00
7	3.88	2.29	0.32	0.32	0.19	0.00	7.00
8	4.44	2.62	0.36	0.36	0.22	0.00	8.00
9	4.99	2.95	0.41	0.41	0.25	0.00	9.00
10	5.55	3.27	0.45	0.45	0.27	0.00	10.00
11	6.10	3.60	0.50	0.50	0.30	0.00	11.00
12	6.65	3.93	0.55	0.55	0.33	0.00	12.00
13	7.21	4.25	0.59	0.59	0.35	0.00	13.00
14	7.76	4.58	0.64	0.64	0.38	0.00	14.00
15	8.32	4.91	0.68	0.68	0.41	0.00	15.00
16	8.87	5.24	0.73	0.73	0.44	0.00	16.00
17	9.43	5.56	0.77	0.77	0.46	0.00	17.00
18	9.98	5.89	0.82	0.82	0.49	0.00	18.00
19	10.54	6.22	0.86	0.86	0.52	0.00	19.00
20	11.09	6.55	0.91	0.91	0.55	0.00	20.00
110	61.00	36.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	0.00	110.00

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24 May 2023

Report of the Monitoring Officer – Paper B
Appointments to internal, partnership and outside bodies

Executive Member(s): Cllr Liz Leyshon, Deputy Leader of the Council

Lead Officer: Scott Wooldridge - Monitoring Officer and Head of Governance & Democratic Services

Authors: Scott Wooldridge and Dave Burn, Interim Democratic Services Manager

Contact Details: 01823 359043

Summary / Background

1. This report sets out the proposed nominations for the appointment of members to internal, partnerships and outside bodies for 2023/24, following the meeting of Council on 1 March 2023.
2. As a result, this report sets out the recommended changes to the Members appointed to serve on the bodies listed, as advised by relevant political group leaders to the Monitoring Officer (see Appendix 1 – likely to be published on 23 May). Council is asked to note that a detailed review of outside and partnership bodies is currently being undertaken. It is anticipated that a report on the outcome of that review will be submitted to Council by no later than February 2024.

Recommendations

3. **That the Council :**
 1. **Agrees the appointment of members to internal, partnership and outside bodies for 2023/24 until the next Annual General Meeting, as set out in Appendix 1; and**
 2. **Delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the the political group leaders, to make in-year changes to internal, partnership and outside bodies appointments in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group leader.**

Reasons for recommendations

4. The Council and the Leader of the Council (for some of the bodies) appoints Members to serve on a range of internal and external bodies. Council is therefore recommended to approve the appointments listed in **Appendix 1**.
5. Appendix 1 sets out the nominations for appointments to internal, partnerships and outside bodies to which it is responsible for making appointments. These include national, regional, countywide, and local bodies and partnerships. In some cases, these are strategic organisations where Members can shape and influence better outcomes for Somerset's communities and policy affecting Somerset. In others, the role of the appointed Member is important in promoting the relationship with the Council.
6. Council is reminded that further work is being undertaken by the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the political group leaders and Executive Directors, to review the Council's role and membership in the various outside and partnership bodies to which appointments are made. This review will be reported to Council in by no later than February 2024.

Other options considered

7. It is in the interests of the Council to ensure the appointments are made as soon as practicable both from a reputational and governance perspective.

Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan

8. The nominations combined touch on all of the Council's objectives. Representation on the outside and partnership bodies will assist with the Council's community leadership responsibilities.

Financial and Risk Implications

10. No additional special responsibility allowance is payable by the Council for appointments to the outside and partnership bodies listed in Appendix 1. Any travel and subsistence claims in accordance with the Scheme of Members' Allowances 2023/24 will be met by the Members Expenses budget 2023/24.

11. It is important to ensure that all appointments are made and maintained as soon as practicably possible to ensure those bodies are fully functional and the Council’s interests are represented.

Likelihood	1	Impact	5	Risk Score	5
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Legal Implications

12. There are no legal implications arising from this report. All of the appointments listed accord with the Council’s Constitution and legislation.

HR Implications

14. There are none.

Other Implications:

15. Equalities, Community Safety, Climate Change and Sustainability, Health and Safety, Health and Wellbeing
16. 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 on the provision of services. There are no direct impacts of these recommendations on the provision of services. There are no direct impacts on sustainability, health and safety, community safety or privacy aspects as a result of this proposal. Members will however, be expected to have regard to these matters when representing the Council on these bodies and generally.

Background Papers

- Council’s Constitution
- Somerset County Council – 1 March 2023 – reports and minutes
- Monitoring Officer delegated decision – 12 April 2023 - decision notice

Appendices

- **Appendix 1 – Changes and appointments to places on outside and partnership bodies**

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Report of the Monitoring Officer – Paper C

Approval to minutes of committees of legacy councils

Lead Officer: Scott Wooldridge - Monitoring Officer

Report author: Scott Wooldridge, Strategic Manager Governance & Democratic Services

Contact Details: 01823 359043

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following the establishment of the new Somerset Council, this report seeks approval to the accuracy of several minutes of former committees of the County Council and the former four district councils (Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset West & Taunton Council and South Somerset District Council) as set out in Appendix 1.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Council:

- (1) Approves the accuracy of the minutes of several former committee meetings of legacy councils as set out in Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.**
- (2) Agree the case for exempt information for the minutes of the former Mendip District Council Audit Committee meeting on 22 March 2023 (Appendix 1), the Mendip District Council Asset Management Group meeting on 24 March 2023 (see Appendix 1), the Somerset Waste Board meeting on 10 February 2023 (see Appendix 3) and the Somerset Joint Waste Scrutiny meeting on 8 February 2023 (see Appendix 3) 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) Agree to exclude the press and public from the meeting where there is any discussion at the meeting regarding the minutes of the former Mendip District Council Audit Committee meeting on 22 March 2023, or the former Mendip District Council Asset Management Group meeting on 24 March 2023, or Somerset Waste Board meeting on 10 February 2023 or the Somerset Joint Waste Scrutiny meeting on 8 February 2023 (to be treated as exempt information).**

3. Background

- 3.1 Following the approval of the Somerset Structural Changes Order 2022, Somerset Council came into effect on 1 April 2023 as part of local government reorganisation in Somerset.
- 3.2 Following vesting day for the new Somerset Council the 1 April 2023, the former four district council have been abolished. There are draft minutes from several former committees of those councils and the County Council which have not been agreed as records of those meetings. Those draft minutes are set out in Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- 4.3 Draft minutes of a meeting are submitted for confirmation of their accuracy to the next succeeding meeting. The minutes are merely a record of what has already taken place at a meeting. The confirmation of accuracy is not a further opportunity for debate on items recorded in the minutes nor the reporting of subsequent actions.
- 4.3 In accordance with the Somerset Structural Changes Order 2022, the new Somerset Council undertakes all of powers and functions of the former County Council and the four district councils.
- 4.4 The draft minutes need approval and it is therefore proposed that the Council approves the accuracy of the minutes set out in Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

It is highlighted that the sets of minutes, from the meeting on 22 March 2023 of the former Mendip District Council's Audit Committee and 24 March 2023 of the former Mendip District Council's Asset Management Group, the former Somerset Waste Board meeting on 10 February 2023 and the former Somerset Joint Waste Scrutiny meeting on 8 February 2023 contain exempt information under category 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to the financial or business affairs of Mendip District Council. It

is recommended that the Council resolves to exclude the press and public should it wish to debate the accuracy of those minutes.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 These are as set out in the report.

6. Background Papers

6.1 Somerset Council Constitution

Local Government Act 1972

Local Government Access to Information Act 1985

Local Government Structural Changes Transitional Arrangement Orders 2008

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

Somerset Structural Changes Order 2022

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MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Open Minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management Group on Wednesday 24 March 2023 held in the Committee Room, Mendip District Council, Shepton Mallet, commencing at 10.45 am.

PRESENT: Councillors Ros Wyke (Chair), Liz Leyshon and Richard Pinnock

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Toby Adams	Land and Development Surveyor
Helen Bowen	Democratic Services Officer
Ian Munday	Senior Property Team Co-ordinator
Keith Pennyfather	Property Team Leader

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned by
1	<p>Chair’s Announcements</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced herself.</p> <p>She confirmed the Members and Officers in the room and online via Teams.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Councillors Tom Killen and Barry O’Leary had sent apologies.</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were none.</p>	
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) Items on the agenda</p> <p>None</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b) Items not on the agenda</p> <p>None</p>	
5	<p>Previous Open Minutes</p> <p>The open Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2023 were reviewed.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p>	Helen Bowen

	That the open Minutes for the meeting held on 25 January 2023 be approved as an accurate record.	
6	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>Councillor Liz Leyshon advised that she had some urgent business to be discussed in the closed part of the meeting on the progress of the disposal of a site in Glastonbury.</p>	
7	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>It was moved by Councillor Richard Pinnock, seconded by Councillor Liz Leyshon and</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of items 8 to 10 of the agenda, on the grounds that exempt information (as defined in Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972) relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including those of the Council) would be disclosed. (Category 3).</p>	
8	<p>Previous Exempt Minutes</p> <p>The Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2023 were reviewed.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the confidential Minutes for the meeting held on 25 January 2023 be approved as an accurate record.</p>	
9	<p>Sale of Land – Shepton Mallet</p> <p>The Land and Development Surveyor had provided a Report which gave details of a plot of land owned by Mendip District Council which he proposed should be sold by auction.</p> <p>The Report said that the land was likely to have been retained by the Council after the 2001 Voluntary Stock Transfer (“VST”) and was currently let on a licence. The majority of the land was not used and was on a sheer slope that was significantly overgrown and wild.</p> <p>Local planning policy for the site was supportive of development and the site was not designated as open space nor conservation area.</p>	Toby Adams

	<p>Members discussed the potential of the site for development.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor Liz Leyshon and seconded by Councillor Richard Pinnock to approve the sale by auction. All approved.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>It was resolved that AMG:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That approval be given to the sale by auction of a plot of land in Shepton Mallet. 2. That approval be given to an auction reserve price for the disposal site. 3. That delegated authority be granted to the Property Team Leader, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Projects, to progress and complete the sale – including consideration of any responses received to consultation under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. 	
<p>10</p>	<p>Sale of Land – Wells</p> <p>The Land and Development Surveyor had provided a Report which gave details of some land which had been identified as a potential development site for a pair of semi-detached houses. The proposal in the Report was to submit an application for Outline Planning Permission with a view to dispose of the land by auction once the planning permission had been acquired.</p> <p>The Report continued that the site was laid to grass which had become worn in areas and that local planning policy for the site was supportive of development and the site was not designated as open space nor conservation area.</p> <p>The Report went on to give details of the valuation of the site with and without planning permission and the recommendation within the Report was that AMG:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the submission of an Outline Planning Application with a view to dispose of the site via auction afterwards. 2. Delegate authority to the Property Team Leader, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Projects, to progress and complete the sale – including consideration of any responses received to consultation under s.123 Local Government Act 1972 	<p>Toby Adams</p>

	<p>On completion of the presentation of the Report, Members discussed the need to look at the possibilities of the plot of land as a whole and to establish the route of a planned Multi-User path and the Council's legal position regarding access for neighbouring properties.</p> <p>Contrary to the Officer's Recommendation, Councillor Liz Leyshon made a different proposal which was seconded by Councillor Richard Pinnock and approved by all.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>It was resolved by AMG that Officers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Appoint the selected architect to prepare cohesive proposals for the wider site.2. Review the access from the north from a safety and legal point of view.3. Protect the route of a Multi-user path.4. Bring back and report on the options to Members.	
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The meeting closed at 11.45 am.

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on Wednesday, 22 March 2023 commencing at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors Rob Ayres (Chair), Michael Gay (Deputy Chair), Francis Hayden

Apologies: John Greenhalgh deceased
Jon Cousins (substituted for by Francis Hayden)

ALSO PRESENT:

Co-Opted Member: Philip Gait

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Richard Bates	Section 151 Officer
Helen Bowen	Democratic Services Officer
Matthew Cook (Online)	Chief Accountant
Duncan Moss (Online)	Deputy Section 151 Officer
Debbie Widdows	Democratic Services Officer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kevin Suter (Online)	Director, Audit and Assurance Ernst & Young LLP
Alistair Woodland (Online)	South West Audit Partnership (SWAP)

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned By
1	<p>Chair's Announcements</p> <p>The Chair began by welcoming participants to the meeting.</p> <p>He reminded people that phones should be switched to silent and he gave the evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency.</p> <p>The Chair gave a minute's silence for the passing of Councillor John Greenhalgh.</p> <p>Councillor Michael Gay gave a tribute to the late Councillor John Greenhalgh. He said that it was important to remember him as a man who understood duty and public service. He had a natural authority and a no-nonsense style. Softened by his natural kindness and wit.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all the hardworking staff at Mendip District Council (MDC) and for them caring</p>	

	<p>for the Council, the people and community and listening to them.</p> <p>He then went on to thank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Philip Gait for being a member of the audit committee for 16 years, and the Section 151 Officer for being a steady hand in offering advice, explaining things in good detail and understanding. • Julie Jackson who had worked hard on the risks. <p>Councillor Michael Gay also thanked Councillor Rob Ayres for chairing the audit committee and to the committee member past and present who had kept this going.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Councillor Gay for being studious in his work.</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer thanked the committee for a genuine commitment and interest.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Cllr Jon Cousins (Substituted for by Francis Hayden)</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None</p>	
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>a) For items on the agenda</p> <p>None</p> <p>b) For items not on the agenda</p> <p>None</p>	
5	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 9 November 2022 were considered.</p> <p>The following comments on minutes were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Section 151 Officer agreed that the Councillors would be kept up to date on situation 	

	<p>with Saxonvale. In the meantime the update was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were reminded that on Friday, 31 March, there would be a verbal hearing in relation to the Judicial Review from Mayday. This would be a preamble meeting where the preamble of the potential case will be explored and subsequently it would be decided if this would go before court. Things had not moved significantly since the last meeting. • CBRE (the Real Estate Company) were asked to do an options appraisal and this was supposed to have already be obtained and will have to be chased <p>Councillor Philip Gait asked when the accounts will be ready and was advised that it was highly unlikely that they will be signed off by the end of Mendip District Council. The new audit committee of the new somerset council would sign them off.</p> <p>Councillor Michael Gay asked how record management would be management in the new Unitary Council across all the districts and was advised that some work still needed to be done but it looked positive and there was no further information at this stage to share.</p> <p>Councillor Michael Gay proposed the approval of the minutes. This was seconded by Councillor Philip gait and carried unanimously.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 9 November 2022 were approved.</p>	
6	<p>External Audit – Audit Progress Update Report February 2023</p> <p>The Associate Partner, Ernst & Young LLP (The Associate Partner) presented the Audit Progress Report, February 2023 which set out the work that has been completed since the 9 November 2022.</p> <p>The Associate Partner, Ernst & Young indicated that the audit had not yet been completed due to staff changes and resignations which held up the completion of the audit in time for the end of Mendip District Council but the audit remains in process. He</p>	Kevin Suter

	<p>indicated that it was progressing well and there were no significant findings.</p> <p>The Associate Partner confirmed that the scope of the audit had not changed, and the risks which were presented in November also remained unchanged.</p> <p>He further confirmed that the audit will be signed off by the new Unitary Council.</p> <p>There was some concern about staff turnover and whether this would cause further delays in the completion of the audit but the Members were assured that the plan was to resolve the staffing issues in April but if not they have to move on to the NHS audit urgently and they would try to fill in the gaps on the Mendip audit should they arise. The Section 151 Officer reminded everyone that there was a statutory deadline to have the audit ready by end May and signed off. However, if this was not possible, then a draft set of accounts needed to be presented.</p> <p>Some delays were also caused by the IT cutover and access to information.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the minutes of this meeting would be signed off by the new Council and</p> <p>Councillor Gay thanked The Associate Partner, Ernst & Young for all his hard work</p> <p>It was queried where previous minutes would be made available for viewing and whether the recording of this meeting would be available for the new council to view. It was to be recorded in the minutes that the Chair of the new audit committee be made aware that he could access the previous minutes at the Mendip District Council Offices.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Audit Progress Report for February 2023 be noted.</p>	
7	<p>Internal Audit Activity Report</p> <p>The Assistant Director of SWAP requested that Agenda Item 7 be brought before agenda item 8 for ease of flow as agenda item 8 brought everyone up to date with the current plan and activities from the previous update in November and agenda item 7</p>	<p>Alistair Woodland</p>

merely gave a reflection on the year of where the annual opinion was.

For purposes of these minutes the two reports have been swapped around but the numbering has remained the same in order to remain consistent.

SWAP presented his report which set out a list of all audits as agreed in the Annual Audit Plan 2022/23 and the work they were undertaking to support Local Government Review (LGR).

It was discussed that the change over to the Unitary was a perfect opportunity for fraud to take place and a keen eye needed to be kept on that to avoid it happening during the cutover.

He further discussed the LGR (Local Government Review) support and assurance work undertaken throughout the year. The LGR Program Risk Management review arrangements were confirmed to be concluded in November and the controls were found to be effective. Though there was some room for improvement which would continue to be monitored throughout quarter 4 as the LGR was progressing.

The Assistant Director of SWAP Internal Audit mentioned that creditors were given limited assurance.

One of the reasons was the high percentage of non-PO's (purchase orders), a number of which were not included on the exception document and the orders were not raised. This would be applicable in the new Authority as they were very keen to have all purchase orders are raised for expenditure to make sure that the expenditure is committed to the accounts and nothing is missed.

The Section 151 Officer confirmed that the Mendip team have been doing a lot of work in clearing out that all the old POs and this has been tidied up. The old POs have been removed and a clean system is being handed over to somerset.

Another point was to ensure that details on procurement cards were not shared, specifically confirming vendor changes to bank details. However, this should be remedied post vesting day (1 April) once the cutover as the new system is rolled out.

	<p>The Section 151 Officer confirmed that the procurement card holders have been contacted to remind them of the rules and the correct people at Mendip are getting monthly sign offs from the purchase card holders. There is the assurance that the correct person is signing off at the end of the day.</p> <p>It was confirmed that in the new council there will be a new financial system in place and it will not be possible to order anything without a purchase order.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Report of Internal Audit Activity 2022-23 be noted.</p>	
8	<p>Internal Audit Annual Opinion Report</p> <p>SWAP had provided a written report which set out an independent and objective opinion on the Authority's control environment by evaluating its effectiveness.</p> <p>The Assistant Director of SWAP explained that they needed to provide an independent and objective opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's risk management, control and governance processes. They need to comply with the International Practices Framework of the Institute of Internal Auditors, further guided by interpretation provided by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and the CIPFA Local Government Application Note.</p> <p>Based on the above SWAP ned to be externally assessed every 5 years. They were last externally assessed in February 2020 and found to be confirming to the standards. The next assessment is next year, however, SWAP endeavours to do annual self-assessments in order to ensure compliance.</p> <p>The Assistant Director of SWAP reported that There was generally a sound system of governance, risk management and control in place.</p> <p>He pointed out that there were some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement identified which may have put at risk the achievement of objectives.</p>	Alistair Woodland

He further reported that there was a medium risk rated weaknesses identified in individual audit engagements.

Further, there was an isolated high risk related weaknesses identified for isolated issues.

There was no critical risk rated weaknesses identified.

The Assistant Director of SWAP Internal Audit reported that they are broadly satisfied with management's approach to resolving identified issues.

The Assistant Director of SWAP Internal Audit further highlighted some changes to the audit plan. It was discussed that Somerset County Council agreed an action plan to make sure that their work was joined up with all the districts. SWAP had undertaken some work for Somerset County Council on climate change that picked up some actions that the districts were also responsible for in terms of achieving net zero carbon emissions. That report will be going through the audit committee process at Somerset Council.

The CIFAS (fraud prevention company) onboarding has been removed as this will now be done by the new Authority.

He went on to say that The Glastonbury Town Fund had also been removed as this would not be completed in time for the 22/23 Annual Opinion report. He affirmed that Further reviews in this area would be considered and prioritised as part of the Rolling Audit Plan for the new Authority in 2022-23.

The Assistant Director of SWAP Internal Audit explained that the IAA (Institute of Internal Auditors) have a good framework on how audit can be involved in climate change. The Council did have a measurable and meaningful strategy which was underpinned by an action plan in place to deliver this strategy. The new audit committee would look at delivering this action plan.

It was discussed that the change over to the Unitary was a perfect opportunity for fraud to take place and a keen eye needed to be kept on that to avoid it happening during the cutover.

	<p>The Assistant Director of SWAP Internal Audit was thanked for his hard work.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Internal Audit Annual Opinion 2022-23 be noted.</p>	
9	<p>Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023</p> <p>This report reviewed the treasury performance for the year ended 31 March 2023 and is a draft.</p> <p>As part of the impact of Local Government Review (LGR) the Cabinet proposed a reduction in the areas of focus over the final two years of the council, recognising that in this the final year particularly there would be a rising need to redeploy staff to set up the new organisation.</p> <p>Officers were aware of and know how to engage with and support the Scrutiny Board Committee and working groups.</p> <p>It was discussed that, as this Annual Governance Statement is a draft and a work in progress, it was important that a factual document be produced.</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer affirmed that the new audit committee in Somerset would sign off a new governance review and it was further confirmed that Duncan Moss, Deputy Section 151 Officer, would still be leading the work in the new council and be involved in signing this off.</p> <p>It was requested that the Members be given a copy of the final version of the Governance Statement and it was confirmed that they may comment on it once it was made publicly available on the website when the next audit meeting would take place.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 report would not be signed off at this meeting and the above comments must be noted in the minutes.</p>	Duncan Moss
10	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>There was none.</p>	

11	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>The Audit Committee is asked to consider whether a resolution should be passed to exclude the press and public from the meeting during items 12 to 13 on the grounds that exempt information (as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended) of the following description is likely to be disclosed:</p> <p>Category 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including those of the Council).</p> <p>Councillor Michael Gay proposed going offline. This was seconded by Councillor Francis Hayden and carried unanimously.</p> <p>The public were asked to leave the room.</p>	
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The meeting finished at approximately 19:55 pm

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MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on Monday, 6 February 2023 in the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council, commencing at 6.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Simon Carswell	Portfolio Holder for Economic Development
Garfield Kennedy	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management
Liz Leyshon	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Projects
Richard Pinnock	Portfolio Holder for Housing Services and Governance
Tom Ronan	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Policy and Climate Change
Heather Shearer	Portfolio Holder for Community Health and Services
Ros Wyke (Chair)	Leader of Mendip District Council

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Councillors Michael Gay (online), Francis Hayden, Bente Height and Helen Kay (online)

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Richard Bates	Interim Section 151 Officer
Stuart Brown	Chief Executive
Dave Burn	Interim Democratic Services Manager
Claire Dicken	Democratic Services Officer
Jacob Hall	Climate Change and Resilience Officer
Ally Laing	Senior Media and Communications Officer
Jo Milling	Senior Planning Policy Officer
Julie Reader-Sullivan	Head of Planning & Growth Services
Nick Ryder	Democratic Services Officer
Sara Skirton	Head of Corporate Services
Debbie Widdows	Democratic Services Officer

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned by
1	Chair's Announcements The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and set out the hybrid meeting procedures that Cabinet would follow.	

2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Barry O’Leary.</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None.</p>	
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>a) Items on the agenda:</p> <p>Councillor Hasell, the Chair of Norton St Philip Parish Council, addressed Cabinet in relation to Item 8, regarding the Greenspace SPD.</p> <p>Mr Hasell added that the Parish Council supported the LPP2 and because of that support was unable to speak at the first round of hearings on the LPP2 despite requesting to do so. However, the developers who opposed the draft LPP2 were permitted to speak and objected to the LGS designations in the Norton St Philip Parish.</p> <p>It was stated that following the first round of hearings the Planning Inspector offered the Council two choices in terms of the LGS designations, one of which was to remove all LGS designations from LPP2. This was the course of action adopted by the Council much to the Parish Council’s disappointment. It was then highlighted that the Parish Council had adopted the same LGS designations, as contained with the LPP2, within the Parish’s Neighbourhood Plan. A plan that had been supported by Mendip District Council.</p> <p>Mr Hasell added that the Independent Examiner of the Parish’s draft Neighbourhood Plan supported the LGS designations. It was reported that the Examiner had visited and agreed with the LGS designations, as did the High Court and the Court of Appeal.</p> <p>Mr Hasell emphasised the importance of greenspaces to the Parish’s neighbourhood plan and highlighted the change to the greenspace definitions made by the Council, and the resultant changes to the sites across Mendip. It was reported that the Parish Council had scrutinised and commented on the Draft Greenspace SPD and, apart from some amendments to detail, strongly supported the principles contained within it.</p>	

The Leader thanked Mr Hasell for his comments and clarified that it was Planning Inspector who prevented the Parish from speaking at the first round of hearings not the Council.

b) Items not on the agenda:

Mr Hall addressed Cabinet regarding noise nuisance from the 2022 Glastonbury Festival.

Mr Hall advised that as a result of questions and a Freedom of Information request, we have now dragged the truth out of Mendip District Council about the noise nuisance from the 2022 Glastonbury Festival.

We added that we now know seven truths:

1. There were 43 noise complaints from 29 residents.
2. Before midnight on Friday, Saturday and Sunday officers observed at least six actual breaches of the License (under condition PN4).
3. The noise monitoring after midnight on Friday Saturday and Sunday and on Wednesday and Thursday, was informal and sporadic. Hence ineffective.
4. There is a loophole. Under condition PN1d, GFEL can simply request from the Licensing authority, without the need for a License variation, the use after midnight of a sound system greater than 12kW.
5. The noise condition PN2, which is there to protect residents from any audible and discernible sound has been unofficially downgraded – it now just needs to be an “unreasonable” sound which by your own omission cannot be enforced!
6. Our complaints about noise on Wednesday and Thursday, and overnight on Friday, Saturday and Sunday are still not addressed.
7. You are in discussion GFEL on how to control low frequency noise at the 2023 and future Festivals.

My conclusions:

1. Your 2022 Glastonbury Festival de-brief report glossed over the noise nuisance.

2. In the area of prevention of noise nuisance, your cooperative approach with GFEL is not leading to improvements.
3. Continuous monitoring of sound needs to be extended and needs to be independent of the License holder.
4. Formal controls on low frequency ('bass') noise – the so called dBC limits – need to be implemented without delay.
5. I will directly contact the new Unitary Authority and seek assurances that these issues will be addressed ahead of this year's Festival.

On another Licensing matter:

On 22 November 2022, Members of the Scrutiny Board expressed concerns about overcrowding and crushing at the 2022 Festival. They expressed strong views about the number of people on the site and their distribution.

Last week's Licensing Board was cancelled and so I can only ask you this question:

Is the Licensing Authority satisfied that it has done everything possible to prevent overcrowding, crushing or something worse at this year's Festival?

Ms Caroline Griffiths, a resident of Pilton, was then invited to address Cabinet, also in relation to the 2022 Glastonbury Festival.

Cabinet was advised that Ms Griffiths wished to highlight her perception of the way the Council dealt with the protection of residents.

Ms Griffiths stated that amongst other things, licensing conditions were there to protect residents from nuisance. Ms Griffiths was of the view that the necessary controls had failed and attended Scrutiny Board in November 2022, to highlight her concerns. These included:

- Repeated occurrences of loud base beat music until 4 am throughout the festival period.
- The direction of traffic through Pilton on narrow roads, whilst being advised that GFEL would look at alternative routes.

Ms Griffiths informed Cabinet that residents had been given assurances which had not been delivered.

	<p>Additionally, promises regarding controls, such as 24-hour helplines, had not been implemented.</p> <p>Ms Griffiths stated that Scrutiny Board had been informed there were no material breaches, which Ms Griffiths refuted. Additionally, Ms Griffiths was of the view that that monitoring had not been undertaken during the curfew time.</p>	
5	<p>Previous Cabinet Minutes</p> <p>Councillor Shearer and Councillor Leyshon proposed that the Minutes of the meetings held on 7 November 2022 and 5 December 2022, be approved as accurate records of those proceedings.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meetings held on 7 November and 5 December, be approved as accurate records of the proceedings.</p>	Claire Dicken
6	<p>Questions from Members</p> <p>No questions were submitted.</p>	
7	<p>Update Report on Mendip District Council's Civic Site Emissions</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Policy and Climate Change introduced the report which provided an update on the carbon emissions from the Council's Civic site and how it compared to the emissions pathway, as set out in the Carbon Management Plan.</p> <p>It was noted that the report covered the period from April 2021 to March 2022.</p> <p>A number of points were raised during the debate, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a need to learn lessons from the closure of offices during COVID to maximise energy efficiency, which may require staff training. • Gas consumption and identifying alternative green suppliers was a challenge and the Council should consider its own mitigations. 	Jacob Hall

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That where offsets such as tree planting were implemented, maintenance should be included. <p>Cabinet was informed that officers would seek to maximise reductions before mitigations were considered and that mitigations would be local.</p> <p>It was commented that metrics for homeworking were being established and likely to be included going forward.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the contents of the report and how Mendip District Council is performing against its Emissions pathway be noted.</p>	
8	<p>Greenspace Supplemental Planning Document (SPD)</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management introduced the report, which sought the adoption of Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) covering local greenspaces.</p> <p>The document provided guidance on the interpretation of adopted Local Plan Policies DP1, DP2 and DP16 for greenspaces. It also referred to an Audit of local greenspace, to be published alongside the SPD.</p> <p>The Chair highlighted that she represented a community who believed the report was adding to, not replacing the greenspaces initially made and sought clarification. Officers advised that the full audit whilst not contained within the report was available on the website. It was highlighted that the report covered additions.</p> <p>Officers advised that greenspaces categorised under policies DP2 and DP16 had a higher level of protection. For greenspaces falling within policy DP1, an assessment would be required on the effect any proposed development would have on the character and local distinctiveness of the area.</p> <p>Officers felt there would be opportunities to include new Spaces, where it was felt some had been missed, and that there would need to a formal review process.</p> <p>In terms of the protection afforded to the identified spaces, Cabinet was advised that the designation would help in assessing whether harm was going to be created by any proposed developments to the sites listed. It was confirmed that that the designation highlights the role of</p>	Jo Milling

	<p>the open space in creating the character and the local distinctiveness. For open areas of local significance, it was reported that it there was now a description of the value of open areas of local significance. Ultimately, this should be seen as a tool to allow for an assessment to be made as to whether there is harm, what that harm is likely to be and for developers to determine whether they can work around those parameters or not.</p> <p>Councillor Kennedy proposed that the recommendations in the report be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor Pinnock. The motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the “SPD for Greenspace”, as amended following consultation, be adopted. 2. That the Audit of Greenspaces, as amended following consultation, be approved as an evidence base. <p>Councillor Wyke requested that her abstention from the resolutions above be recorded.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>There was none.</p>	

<p>10</p>	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>Councillor Kennedy proposed that the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the reasons specified in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Leyshon. The motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried unanimously.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the press and public from the remainder of the meeting during discussion of items 11 on the grounds that exempt information (as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended) of the following description is likely to be disclosed:</p> <p>Category 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Previous Minutes Exempt Element</p> <p>Councillor Shearer proposed that the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2022 be approved as an accurate record. This was seconded by Councillor Leyshon. The motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried unanimously.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Exempt element of the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 November 2022 be approved as an accurate record.</p>	<p>Claire Dicken</p>

The meeting closed at approximately 8.07 pm.

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on Monday, 6 March 2023 in the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT, commencing at 6.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Simon Carswell	Portfolio Holder for Economic Development
Garfield Kennedy	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management
Liz Leyshon	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Projects
Barry O'Leary	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Enterprise and Finance
Richard Pinnock	Portfolio Holder for Housing Services and Governance
Tom Ronan	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Policy and Climate Change
Heather Shearer	Portfolio Holder for Community Health and Services
Ros Wyke (Chair)	Leader of Mendip District Council

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Councillor Laura Water, Cabinet Assistant

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Tracy Aarons	Deputy Chief Executive
Richard Bates	Section 151 Officer
Stuart Brown	Chief Executive
Claire Dicken	Democratic Services Supervisor
Julie Jackson	Performance and Improvement Officer
Ally Laing	Senior Media and Communications Officer
Curtis Lakin	Environmental Protection Manager
Claire Malcolmson	Assistant CEO and Head of Community Health Services
Jeremy Manners	Assistant Head of Housing
Sara Skirton	Head of Corporate Services
Haylee Wilkins	Assistant CEO and Head of Neighbourhood Services

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned by
1	Chair's Announcements The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	

2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Drew Gardner, Cabinet Assistant</p>	<p>Claire Dicken</p>
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None.</p>	<p>David Clark</p>
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>a) Items on the agenda: None</p> <p>b) Items not on the agenda: None</p>	
5	<p>Questions From Members</p> <p>None</p>	
6	<p>2022-23 Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Enterprise and Finance presented a report which summarised the forecast outturn position against the agreed Council budget for 2022-23 based on Quarter 3 projections.</p> <p>The report indicated a projected revenue budget variance of £67k underspend. The detail underpinning this had been included within the report.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder thanked the Cabinet and the Officers for their work.</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer was invited to speak. He said in terms of pooling; final calculations would happen when the Councils closed their accounts. However, he confirmed there was potential for additional money to be available to the new Council.</p> <p>He thanked his staff for their hard work. Particularly in retrieving debts and allocating hardship funds.</p> <p>During the discussion that followed Members thanked the Portfolio Holder for his work.</p> <p>Councillor Simon Carswell proposed additions to the recommendations in the report to approve the transfer of the unspent corporate priorities funding from Cleaner / Greener Mendip to Active Travel / Multi-user paths. And to delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Enterprise and Finance,</p>	<p>Richard Bates</p>

	<p>after consultation with the Leader and Section 151 Officer to allocate the final New Burdens non ring-fenced grant allocation of £21k.</p> <p>Councillor Heather Shearer seconded the proposal which was carried unanimously.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the report 2. To approve the drawdown of reserves and balances as set out in Appendix 2 of the report. 3. Approve the transfer of the unspent corporate priorities funding from Cleaner / Greener Mendip to Active Travel / Multi-user paths. 4. Delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Enterprise and Finance, after consultation with the Leader and Section 151 Officer to allocate the final New Burdens non ring-fenced grant allocation of £21k. 	
7	<p>Corporate Performance Quarter 3 Performance Report</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Projects presented a report which provided a summary of the high-level priorities that supported the delivery of the Corporate Delivery Plan.</p> <p>The report included a summary of the achievements and challenges throughout the term of the administration.</p> <p>She thanked the Officers for their support and hard work.</p> <p>During the discussion that followed Members were pleased to note that all the priorities and projects were progressing or complete.</p> <p>The Leader said that contacts at the Somerset County Council had been impressed by the work of Mendip Officers and she hoped that the new Somerset Council would continue to work as successfully as Mendip had done.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>To note the report, and further note the performance indicator outturns for Quarter 4 2022-2023 would be used as a baseline for Somerset Council.</p>	Julie Jackson

<p>8</p>	<p>Enhancing Air Quality in Mendip (Update Report)</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Community Health and Services presented a report which explained that air quality remained good within Mendip. Nevertheless, air pollution was associated with several adverse health impacts and as such air quality was recognised as a key public health consideration.</p> <p>Since the March 2022 Cabinet report, achievements contributing to the enhancement of air quality have included the following key successes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have maintained the diffusion tube monitoring network for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). • The 2022 annual report for air quality (for 2021 data) was approved by DEFRA and was subsequently uploaded to the Mendip Website. DEFRA were complimentary regarding the approach Mendip has adopted towards air quality. • We have, offered anti-idling signage to 16 supermarkets and to the NHS Estate. Two signs have been provided to a surgery in Shepton Mallet. • An Earthsense Zephyr (Zephyr Air Quality Monitor EarthSense) Continuous Air Quality monitor, which measures Nitrogen Dioxide, Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) has been installed in Frome. This has been as a result of have an initiative of 2 Somerset Air Quality Steering Group funding identified from Somerset County Council budget. • Resources permitting, the option to run the school's campaign on air quality, will be taken forward as an initiative for the new Somerset Council. <p>During the discussion that followed Members said they were concerned that air quality should not suffer as a result of increased housing developments. They hoped that in future the new Somerset Council would be in a position to be aware of the impact of developments on the environment.</p> <p>Members noted the new Council would be required to have an Air Quality Strategy, and that some areas would be allocated additional air quality monitoring.</p> <p>There was a discussion about pollution in general. It was hoped that the new Council would be able to make tackling pollution a priority.</p>	<p>Curtis Lakin</p>
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	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the progress and successes identified since March 2022. 2. To be aware that Officers will seek to continue measures designed to enhance air quality, as they move into the new Somerset Council. 	
<p>9</p>	<p>Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services and Governance presented a report which explained that Mendip District Council had developed a proposal which had been accepted by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). It was to accept £975,004 of Government capital funding, matched by £1,122,934 of funding from Somerset County Council (SCC), to acquire and deliver 8 homes in Mendip to provide settled homes for Afghan's and Ukrainian's who had arrived through the resettlement and relocation schemes.</p> <p>As a result Cabinet was asked to approve the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as issued by Central Government subject to the Somerset County Council agreeing s24 consent, agreeing to commit the required match funding up to £4million and approving the addition of £7.5million capital funding to the Capital Programme Budget in 2023/24 for the new Somerset Council. And to authorise the Council's Monitoring Officer to sign the MoU after 15 March 2023 once confident the necessary consent and commitment was in place from Somerset County Council.</p> <p>No capital or revenue funding was being sought from Mendip District Council.</p> <p>During the discussion that followed Members said they were pleased to support people in need. However, there concern that finding housing was challenging. There was further concern that the timeframe was very tight.</p> <p>Members hoped that the new Somerset Council would be able to work with greater resources than Mendip would have been able to, thus improving the situation.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Pinnock proposed the recommendations in the report. Councillor Heather Shearer seconded the proposal, which was carried unanimously.</p>	<p>Jeremy Manners</p>

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the signing of the MoU as issued by Central Government subject to Somerset County Council agreeing s24 consent, agreeing to commit the required match funding up to £4million and approving the addition of £7.5million capital funding to the Capital Programme Budget in 2023/24 for the new Somerset Council. 2. To authorise the Council’s Monitoring Officer to sign the MoU after 15 March 2023 once confident the necessary consent and commitment is in place from Somerset County Council. 	
<p>10</p>	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>None</p> <p>The Leader of the Council thanked the Officers and her fellow Cabinet Members for their support whilst she had been Leader.</p>	

The meeting closed at approximately 7.45 pm

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday, 27 February 2023 in the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT, commencing at 6.30 pm

COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Helen Sprawson-White (Chair of the Council)
Councillors Rob Ayres, Alison Barkshire (online), Eve Berry, Adam Boyden (online), Shannon Brooke (online), Simon Carswell, John Clarke, Shane Collins, Nick Cottle (Deputy Chair of the Council), Jon Cousins, Michael Dunk, Drew Gardner, Michael Gay, Peter Goater, John Greenhalgh, Philip Ham, Francis Hayden, Bente Height, Steve Henderson, Nigel Hewitt-Cooper, Edric Hobbs, Damon Hooton, Chris Inchley, Helen Kay, Garfield Kennedy, Tom Killen, Liz Leyshon, Barbi Lund, Lindsay MacDougall, Matt Martin, Terry Napper, Barry O'Leary, Richard Pinnock, Mike Pullin, Lois Rogers (online from item 8), Tom Ronan, Heather Shearer, Lucie Taylor-Hood, Alan Townsend, Laura Waters and Ros Wyke

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Tracy Aarons	Deputy Chief Executive
Richard Bates	Section 151 Officer
Helen Bowen	Democratic Services Officer
Stuart Brown	Chief Executive
David Clark	Head of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Claire Dicken	Democratic Services Supervisor
Jacob Hall	Climate Change and Resilience Officer
Ally Laing	Senior Media and Communications Officer
Claire Malcolmson	Head of Community Health Services
Julie Reader-Sullivan	Head of Planning & Growth Services
Nick Ryder	Democratic Services Officer
Sara Skirton	Head of Corporate Services
Haylee Wilkins	Head of Housing Services
Nataliya Wills	Community Health and Wellbeing Officer

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned by
1	Welcome and Chair's Announcements The Chair welcomed everyone to the last meeting of Full Council of Mendip District Council. She advised that the meeting would follow the procedures set out in the Council's Hybrid Meeting Guidance.	

	<p>She went on to outline the announcements in the updates regarding the forthcoming IT Switchover, and the Finale Event.</p> <p>She said she spoke with a mix of pride and sadness. She said she felt it was a travesty that the wishes of the district councils and the residents had been dismissed so easily by the central government.</p> <p>She said there were concerns about a single unitary authority for Somerset; about the reduction in democracy and about the reduction in local representation.</p> <p>She hoped those Councillors who were standing down would remain involved in the communities.</p> <p>She said she was immensely proud to have been able to sit as Chair of the Council for four years. However, most of her pride was in the staff. Over the past four years, they had faced some of the biggest challenges ever. She thanked the staff for their hard work.</p> <p>Two thoughts for the day:</p> <p>“Life is like riding a bicycle; to keep your balance, you must keep moving” – Albert Einstein</p> <p>“Just don’t give up trying to do what you really want to do. Where there is love and inspiration, I don’t think you can go wrong” – Ella Fitzgerald</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Josh Burr, Ken Maddock, Janine Nash, Sam Phripp and Tanys Pullin,</p>	Claire Dicken
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None.</p>	David Clark
4	<p>Recent Chairs Engagements</p> <p>The Chair said there had been few engagements in February. However, March promised to be very busy.</p>	
5	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>a) Items on the agenda: None</p>	

	<p>b) Items not on the agenda:</p> <p>1) Alan Miller had requested to speak. He said he represented a number of residents of Roman Way, Glastonbury. He said that some caravans had arrived recently at the bottom of Roman Way. He did not want to complain about them, rather he was concerned about the way money was being spent in dealing with the problem. For instance, he quoted £35,000 had been spent on rocks to prevent encampments in Roman Way. However, he suggested they could easily be moved by two people. He felt the money would have been better spent on providing somewhere for the travelling community with access to clean water and toilets. He was concerned about the problems associated with people living in caravans. For instance, he stated a number of caravans had been burned out, and tonnes of rubbish had had to be cleared and significant cost. He concluded by saying that continuing to spend money on trying to prevent the travelling community from parking was wasteful because the travelling community had nowhere to go.</p> <p>2) Jim Mochnacz was invited to speak. He said that he had two outstanding issues that needed to be resolved as soon as possible or passed to the new unitary authority. The first issue was how the funfair had arrived in the Cranhill Road Car Park, Street in May 2022 and he felt had been positioned too close to the houses. He also felt one of the rides was unsafe and uninsured.</p> <p>The second issue he raised referred to a complaint he had made about skimmed milk. He was unsatisfied at the way Mendip District Council had handled his complaint. He expressed hope the new unitary authority would learn best practice from other Councils.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the speakers for their contribution.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>Councillor Barry O’Leary proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Laura Waters, put to the vote and declared to be carried unanimously.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023 be approved as accurate records of those proceedings.</p>	<p>Claire Dicken</p>

	The Chair altered the order of the items as follows:	
8	<p>Update on Progress to Address the climate and Ecological Emergency</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Policy and Climate Change presented a report which stated a Climate and Ecological Emergency had been declared at Full Council in February 2019.</p> <p>In August 2021 Mendip District Council's Carbon Management Plan was approved, setting out Mendip's current emissions profile and our future pathway both within the council and across Mendip, including how the emissions reductions could be achieved within our own power.</p> <p>This report provided an update on the progress made between September 2022 and February 2023.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder thanked the members of the Scrutiny Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Group for their work.</p> <p>During the discussion that followed Members said they welcomed the progress which had been made.</p> <p>Members were particularly interested in the performance against the targets which had been set. Going forward, Members hoped the new authority would include RAG scores in future reports.</p> <p>Members commented that more could have been done if more resource had been allocated to tackling the emergency.</p> <p>In response to queries, the Portfolio Holder was pleased to report that all the Somerset Councils had performed well when compared to national targets.</p> <p>He went on to confirm the updated target the Council had set itself had been to get to 30% less carbon emission 2030.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder thanked individual Councillors including Councillor Gay and Councillor Dunk for their questions. He said, he and the Climate Change and Resilience Officer would be happy to answer them after the meeting. In the meantime, he was asking Full Council to note the progress report.</p>	Jacob Hall

	<p>The Leader of the Council said she had spoken to the Secretary of State personally about the issue of carbon emissions. In addition to this, Mendip District Council was a member of the UK100; a cross-party membership organisation that supported the most ambitious councils to go further and faster on their Net Zero and Clean Air targets.</p> <p>Members recognised the balance of reducing carbon emissions alongside allowing industry to continue.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>To note the work completed by the Council between September 2022 and February 2023 towards the objectives set out in the Council's Carbon Management Plan.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Mental Health Champions Report</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Community Health and Services presented a report which stated that Mendip District Council had mental health awareness firmly embedded within its own corporate objectives as well as those of the Mendip Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>The report was an update on the work around mental health and next steps in the context of the Local Government Reform, the changing landscape of Integrated Care Systems and the development of Local Community Networks.</p> <p>The report covered the period from December 2021 to November 2022 with plans to March 2023 when the role of Mental Health Champions comes to an end.</p> <p>In particular, work had been done on creating awareness, digital hoarding and first aid for mental health.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder thanked the Mental Health Champions and the Officers for their hard work in progressing mental health awareness.</p> <p>In response to queries, the Portfolio Holder said she would be able to update Members about the move of the St Andrews Ward from Wells to Yeovil after the meeting.</p> <p>During the discussion that followed, Members said mental health was a constant issue. They were particularly interested in the work to help farmers. Members hoped the mental health support work would continue in the new authority.</p>	<p>Nataliya Wills</p>

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note the progress which had been made; • To note that the role comes to an end on 1 April 2023; • To endorse the continued promotion and facilitation of events and activities, including room provision wherever possible in line with the latest Government guidance up to and including 31 March 2023. 	
<p>10</p>	<p>Motions to Council</p> <p>The Chair of Council advised that one Motion had been received.</p> <p>Motion 1 Proposed by Councillor Damon Hooton and seconded by Councillor Drew Gardner</p> <p>Council notes that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving our democracy is an important end in itself, but it is also a necessary means to building a better country. 2. Within Europe, only the United Kingdom and authoritarian Belarus still use single-round First Past the Post (FPTP) system for Parliamentary and local Elections. 3. The FPTP voting system is fundamentally unfair, disproportionate and unrepresentative - in the December 2019 General Election it took just 38,264 votes to elect each Conservative MP, while it needed 336,038 votes to elect each Liberal Democrat and 865,715 votes to elect the lone Green MP. In the 'Greater Somerset' area, Conservative candidates won 53% of the vote but won 8 of the 9 constituencies. 4. First Past the Post creates too many safe seats where the outcome is a foregone conclusion, meaning that people can be taken for granted by politicians and parties, and are unable to properly hold their representatives to account. It can also deny voters a genuine choice as it forces many to vote tactically against their least favoured candidate instead of voting for their most favoured one. 5. Internationally, a form of Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. PR can ensure that all votes count and have equal value, that the seats won more closely match the votes cast. This would help to rebuild public trust in our democracy, by ensuring that all political views are represented in proportion to their level of public support, which better reflects the electorate's wishes. PR would also end minority rule - in 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a Government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. 	<p>Stuart Brown</p>

6. PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in local council elections in Scotland and Northern Ireland. So why not in the UK Parliament and for local elections in England?
7. In addition this Council is deeply concerned that the requirement to provide Photo ID will present a significant barrier for thousands of residents in the constituencies of Wells and Somerton & Frome (the parliamentary constituencies representing Mendip) and the wider Somerset County to exercise their right to vote – and these barriers will disproportionately affect ethnic minority, low income, disabled, LGBTQ+, elderly and most especially young voters.
8. Council notes the acceptable forms of ID listed by the Government are weighted towards more affluent and older voters who are more likely to possess passports, driving licenses, older persons bus passes and senior PASS cards. Forms of photo ID most likely to be held by younger people (such as young persons' railcards) have been excluded.
9. Council believes the rushed and last-minute timeframe in which this legislation has been enacted will put an enormous strain on staff and resources at Mendip and its successor council to communicate the new rules to voters, provide Voter Authority Certificates to thousands of local residents and training polling station staff right when our local government is moving through a structural change to Unitary.

Councillor Damon Hooton therefore proposed a motion which had been circulated in the updating sheets.

During the discussion that followed Members noted there were a number of PR systems. Members were concerned that any motion should be clear as to which version of PR was being supported. And that this should be based on advice from experts in the field.

There were further discussions about the cost of introducing additional requirements for ID and whether elections needed further security. Members went on to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of PR and FPTP systems.

Councillor Drew Gardner requested a recorded vote. Councillor Nick Cottle seconded this request.

The motion was put to the vote. The following Councillors supported the motion:

Councillors Rob Ayres, Simon Carswell, John Clarke, Shane Collins, Nick Cottle, Jon Cousins, Michael Dunk, Drew

	<p>Gardner, Michael Gay, Peter Goater, Francis Hayden, Steve Henderson, Edric Hobbs, Damon Hooton, Chris Inchley, Helen Kay, Garfield Kennedy, Liz Leyshon, Barbi Lund, Lindsay MacDougall, Matt Martin, Barry O'Leary, Richard Pinnock, Tom Ronan, Heather Shearer, Helen Sprawson-White, Lucie Taylor-Hood, Laura Waters and Ros Wyke.</p> <p>The following Councillors voted against the motion:</p> <p>Councillors Eve Berry, John Greenhalgh, Philip Ham, Bente Height, Nigel Hewitt-Cooper, Tom Killen, Terry Napper and Alan Townsend</p> <p>The following Councillors abstained from voting:</p> <p>Councillor Mike Pullin</p> <p>The motion was therefore carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for General and Local elections in England; and 2. To call upon Mendip's two MPs to push for a change to electoral law to enable Proportional Representation and to promote the matter for debate within Parliament. 3. To request that for future unitary Somerset Council elections, 50% of the members are elected from a list system using a PR voting method. 4. To instruct the Chief Executive and request the Leader of the Council and all other group leaders write to the Cabinet Office to express the Council's complete opposition about the damaging effect on democracy that mandatory Voter ID will have in UK elections and to demand that this section of the new legislation is repealed immediately. 5. To request that a short update note from electoral services is sent to all Members to outline the preparations we, and the successor authority, have in place to ensure all voters are fully aware of the new rules and to provide special Voting ID to those who do not possess an existing form of photo ID. 	
11	<p>Questions from the Public</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Andre Sestini</p>

<p>12</p>	<p>Questions from Members</p> <p>Question from Councillor Helen Kay:</p> <p>Further to our motion at September 2022 Full Council asking that planners request information from Wessex Water about sewage capacity and the likelihood of exceeding acceptable levels of discharge into our rivers, and to report the information in planning reports, it appears that this question is NOT being asked. It appears that only the statutory questions are being asked and reported.</p> <p>While I understand the situation is quite complex and there are different requirements for different sorts of applications, the idea of a full council motion was to put down some markers for good practice to take into the new authority.</p> <p>Further, while I understand there is no duty for such information to be provided until AFTER planning permission is granted for speculative planning applications, in my view this is putting the cart before the horse and needs to change.</p> <p>Therefore, I must ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why was a motion from Full Council not followed through? 2. Is there a special process for doing this which I should be aware of, to ensure any motions passed at the new authority are carried through? 3. Could Planning Officers moving to the new authority please now be briefed to ask this question and report the answers for all new applications and reports for the new Area East Somerset Planning committee? This will require them to act only as communicators, not specialists. <p>Responses:</p> <p>Why was a motion from Full Council not followed through?</p> <p>Considerable work has been taking place to standardise practice and systems to ensure that the new Somerset Council has a properly functioning planning service from Vesting Day. There has also been a heavy focus on progressing discussions on phosphate solutions which Members have, understandably, been keen to see in place. Unfortunately, this has meant that we have struggled with capacity to bring the actions from Full Council forward in the way that we would like, for which we would apologise. However, Officers did approach Wessex Water to establish their position and they confirmed that they would not be able to provide a response to every application.</p>	<p>Stuart Brown</p>
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Is there a special process for doing this which I should be aware of, to ensure any motions passed at the new authority are carried through?

Council motions must be considered in any Local Authority and in accordance with the constitution and policies of the elected body concerned. The protocol for handling motions in the unitary would therefore need to be raised with Somerset Council directly.

Could Planning Officers moving to the new authority please now be briefed to ask this question and report the answers for all new applications and reports for the new Area East Somerset Planning committee? This will require them to act only as communicators, not specialists

Unfortunately, Mendip District Council is not able to direct the actions of the future Somerset Council and so the reporting to the new Area East Somerset Planning Committee will have to follow the procedure decided by the new Council.

Officers do recognise Member and public concern on sewage overflows and river pollution and the new Executive director of Climate and Place has been made aware of these issues and is being briefed on phosphate and sewage matters impacting on Somerset. This will include receiving a briefing on the recently published Wessex Water Investment Plan for 2025-2030. A joint Nutrient Member and senior officer Task and Finish Group was also set up in November 2022 to review actions which will evolve to include co-ordination of issues relating to phosphates and pollution at a catchment level. Mendip Planning Officers will also continue to engage with Wessex Water on the information that can be provided for individual applications and local investment during the outstanding life of the council.

Councillor Kay thanked the Officers for their response. However, she said she was still concerned about the issues and would raise them at the new council.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Projects said she had been pleased to learn that Mendip District Council had always been represented on Bristol Water and Wessex Water. She hoped the new council would continue to include these companies on its Outside Bodies arrangement.

7

Leader's Update and Reflecting on Mendip District Council

Councillor Tom Killen, Leader of the Conservative Group at Mendip, was invited to speak. He said the last four years had been a snapshot of the work of the Council. He outlined some of the momentous decisions and achievements over the last 50 years. He said the Council had been exemplar and innovative. Amongst its achievements it had revitalised its towns and made local government more efficient. He said he was grateful to the Members and Officers who had served over the years. He said the communities would continue and East Somerset should continue to thrive. He said the new Council must listen to the Local Community Networks which would be set up in this part of the county. He wished the new Council and its staff well for the future.

Councillor Michael Gay, Leader of the Green Group at Mendip, was invited to speak. He said that the Green Members respected the past and looked forward to being part of the future. He said the Council had met its challenges, such as COVID-19, very well. He thanked his colleagues in his group and those who had worked across party lines. He said, looking forwards, he had hoped the new Council would consider the committee system. He said the gap between rich and poor should be made smaller so that everyone could live well.

Councillor Chris Inchley, one of the Independent Members, was invited to speak. He was concerned that politics was increasingly held in low esteem. He felt local authority was very important and he thanked his colleagues for the grace he had been shown. He reminisced about people who had helped him and served the Council over the years. He said that organisations were often subject to restructure, and this was always a time for concern. He was proud of his role as Chair of Scrutiny, and he was particularly proud of the way the Council worked together to get through recent challenges.

Councillor Ros Wyke, Leader of Mendip District Council, said it was with both regret, to have to note the passing of the Mendip District Council into the history books, and recognition that this had not been of our making or had the full support of local people. It had been a central government initiative. Local government continued to change and the new Unitary Council in Taunton would have the responsibility to ensure that all residents were well served in the future.

Over the last 48 years Mendip Council had seen many changes in our governments and in our residents and

communities and their needs. The Council had changed to reflect the new services and opportunities. From the modern building we now meet in, to the many online services. Yet the need to ensure it met the residents' needs, and small things make a difference, Mendip, unlike so many councils, always stayed open to the public between Christmas and New Year.

There was much to celebrate over the last 48 years, many memories and successes. Individuals, both Officers and Members, who had contributed to our success story. Each Member would be receiving a legacy document the media team had worked hard to produce. In addition, at our finale event there would be photos and other memorabilia.

We can also recognise and celebrate our administration of the last four years, that has been fairer, more inclusive and environmental focused, even with the challenges of two elections in the first six months, COVID-19 within 10 months, and off and on for another two years, together with the unitary distractions.

We coped with an inherited Local Plan and its ramifications. Cllr Wyke said she could mention a long list of achievements from reduction in air pollution to the Special Planning Guidance on green spaces. 86 EV chargers had been installed across the district's car parks and ensured all our single glazed windows were replaced as part decarbonising our council estate. Also, the fields in trust in Glastonbury.

Glastonbury Town Deal had been awarded £24m; that's more per head of population than anywhere else in country. They had worked with a range of agencies to improve the historic traveller and van dwellers situation.

Talking of Glastonbury, or more accurately Pilton, the astonishing success of this much-loved festival. The largest in Europe, the size of Swindon, setting up on a green field site had been as much down to the planning, oversight and partnership working of Mendip staff than to any headliner or, indeed, Michael Eavis.

We have, despite COVID-19, placed emphasis on tourism and supported the wider business community. We supported our residents in numerous ways during the pandemic.

Wells Bishop's Barn and Recreation Ground, the Frome Boyles Cross, Egford Park and Broadway were among the assets returned to the local communities. We also supported a roll out of Changing Places to support the community.

	<p>Despite alarmist warnings we demonstrated that a Liberal Democrat council could run a financial competent council and indeed found further money to support Citizens Advice following the County Council withdrawing funding. We also started to financially support the Arts after more than 10 years. We continued the investments for return and ensured our capital was based on fixed long-term low-interest loans. We have worked to reduce the level of outsourcing and make the Council more efficient, effective with focus on serving our population.</p> <p>We have supported Parish Councils with the Parish Forum and a range of partner agencies through the local Health and Wellbeing Board, lottery, grants and funds to support our communities and councils.</p> <p>Housing: while the housing stock has been transferred to a Housing Association nearly 20 years ago, we take pride in proactively addressing homelessness and rough sleeping to ensure a limited number are in need in this area. We've also worked on supporting the green energy initiatives.</p> <p>Cllr Wyke said she personally took pleasure in many successes, especially seeing the cycle path formally open next month connecting east and west Shepton and seeing it go under a HRE bridge.</p> <p>And what of the future; many of our successes are going to be adopted by the new council. For instance, the innovative Mendip Business Hub which was scheduled to be rolled out across the county.</p> <p>But one of our strongest legacies will be our staff. Again and again, she heard the senior managers say just how good individuals are and what a credit to the organisation for the smallest Council in Somerset we are definitely making a difference.</p> <p>Cllr Wyke thanked the staff and Members, current and former. She said we had achieved much for our community and left it in a better place. Now we must look to the future and retain our focus on serving the people of Mendip.</p>	
10	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>There were no official items of Urgent Business.</p>	

	<p>The Chair took the opportunity to invite any other Member who wanted to speak about the work of Mendip District Council speak.</p> <p>Councillor Damon Hooton said he had become the longest serving Member of the Council. He reminisced about his time at the Council. He said we did well to remember those who had died during their service; Stephen Robinson, Danny Unwin and Nigel Woollcombe-Adams.</p> <p>Councillor Drew Gardner said it was important for people to get involved in politics. He said there was still a lot to do. He said current issues included increasing police numbers.</p> <p>Councillor Mike Pullin thanked those staff who had been particularly helpful.</p> <p>Councillor Edric Hobbs said he was very proud to have served on Mendip District Council. He recommended the role to everyone listening. He was particularly pleased to have been part of the development of the multi-user footpaths. He stated he would be busy in the new unitary authority.</p> <p>To mark the end of the last meeting of the Council and to remember those who had died, Members observed one minute of silence.</p>	
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The meeting closed at approximately 8.45 pm

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Board held on Wednesday, 26 October 2022 in the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT commencing at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors Shannon Brooke (online), Simon Carswell (Deputy Chair) (online), Nick Cottle, Michael Dunk (online), John Greenhalgh, Francis Hayden, Bente Height, Lindsay MacDougall and Tanys Pullin

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Claire Dicken	Democratic Services Officer
Marietta Gill	Team Leader – Public Protection
Jack Godley	Senior Licensing and Business Support Officer
Phil Wake	Licensing and Business Support Officer
Nick Ryder	Democratic Services Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

Pete Collins	Drug Expert Lead, Avon and Somerset Constabulary
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Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned by
1	<p>Neither the Chair nor the Deputy Chair of the Licensing Board had been able to attend the meeting in person. Therefore, the Democratic Services Officer opened the meeting by asking for nominations for a Chair for the duration of the meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Francis Hayden nominated Councillor Nick Cottle. This was seconded by Councillor Bente Height.</p> <p>There were no other nominations.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That Councillor Nick Cottle be the Chair for this meeting of the Licensing Board.</p> <p>Chair's Announcements</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He advised the meeting would be live streamed.</p>	

2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Damon Hooton, Garfield Kennedy, Barry O’Leary, Sam Phripp (Chair) and Helen Sprawson-White.</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None.</p>	
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>a) Items on the agenda None</p> <p>b) Items not on the agenda None</p>	
5	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>The Licensing Board considered the minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2022.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2022 be approved.</p>	<p>Claire Dicken</p>
6	<p>Avon and Somerset Constabulary Drug Expert</p> <p>Pete Collins, Drug Expert Lead, Avon and Somerset Constabulary had been invited to attend the meeting to discuss their role at licensed events held within the district. Particularly those at the Bath and West Showground and the Glastonbury Festival.</p> <p>He said they had been working at NASS, which was an event held at the Bath and West Showground, for the last 5-6 years. This year, drug seizures at the festival had been the largest amount yet. But that was not to say that there had been more drugs at the festival compared to previous years. Attendance figures had been lower this year, and security staff had had the opportunity to be very thorough. There had been several arrests made. One seizure had been about £30,000 worth of drugs.</p> <p>From the Police point of view the security companies at the NASS festival were very good at searching for drugs and</p>	<p>Jack Godley</p>

dealing with members of the public, thus that aspect of the festival had run smoothly.

He went on to explain the Police also worked on site during Glastonbury Festival. However, the seizure of drugs at the festival was carried out by a separate, licenced, private company. They carried out back of house testing. Details of their drugs seizures was not disclosed to the Avon and Somerset Constabulary. That data was held by Glastonbury Festival Ltd.

During the discussion that followed Members were interested in an initiative which had started in Bristol called the Loop. This offered a drug testing service in Bristol City Centre.

Mr Collins confirmed the Avon and Somerset Constabulary were pleased to be involved in the initiative. He said the Loop had obtained a Home Office Licence to operate in the Bristol. They were licenced to test drugs, which they would do in exchange for interaction with drug-users in an effort to reduce high risk drug-taking and understand the illicit drug market in the local area.

He reminded Members that the role of the Police was to enforce the law. However, he supported the service being carried out by the health care professionals at the Loop because such checks on drugs were useful to reduce the harm caused by drugs. Health care workers were in a position to offer advice to drug-users.

Members of the Licensing Board hoped that a similar drug testing service to that carried out by the Loop could be offered at the Glastonbury Festival.

Mr Collins said the Police would support such an initiative because it may help to keep people safe. However, the introduction of such drug testing at festivals was a decision for each of the festival organisers. Should they wish to have such testing it would then be necessary for them to obtain a Home Office Licence. Currently the Home Office had not issued any such licences to festivals.

Councillors agreed that the most important issue was to keep people safe.

In response to further queries, Mr Collins said from his knowledge the amount of drug seizures at Glastonbury Festival had been relatively low at this year's event.

However, he noted the security staff had been very busy with the crowds the day the festival had opened its gates.

He confirmed the Police worked well with the private company that were employed to carry out the back of house testing at Glastonbury Festival. Any drugs they seized or received in amnesty bins were tested and retained by the company. Members were assured the seized drugs were never sold or passed on. Cannabis, however, was handed over to the Police for them to dispose of.

Members were interested to know the data from drugs seized at Glastonbury Festival. They queried whether it could be a condition of the licence that they supply the data to the Council.

Mr Collins believed in the region of 99% of seized drugs at the Glastonbury Festival were tested on site. He said the purpose of such testing was to identify substances of issue. In the event of drugs being found to be unsafe, messages would be passed on immediately by the testing company to the festival organisers so they could make the festival-goers aware.

On one occasion at the NASS festival there had been an issue with certain ecstasy tablets. As a result, the organisers were able to post information about the risk on social media. On another occasion medical staff were able to find out about the make-up of drugs taken by a person in their care.

Mr Collins said the main purpose of back of house drug testing was to gather information which was then used to keep people safe.

Members were concerned about the risk that someone may not have received the warning message. Members were also concerned that modern cannabis was stronger than it had been years ago.

There was further serious concern that in the event that drugs are seized by security staff at the festival, the festivalgoer may buy more drugs, at greater risk to themselves, from a supplier at the festival whom they did not know or trust.

Mr Collins agreed. He said, whilst it was his role was to enforce the law, he was very passionate about keeping people safe. He said he would support any measures that kept people safe.

He explained that for festivals to have front of house testing, the festival must first agree to such a measure, and then obtain a Licence from the Home Office for such testing. The Home Office had not shown any willingness to introduce such licensing at festivals. However, he believed organisations such as the Loop would welcome the opportunity to operate in festivals.

Members suggested that maybe the Government needed to be lobbied to grant licences to organisations such as the Loop to operate in festivals.

The Senior Licensing and Business Support Officer was invited to comment on points which had been made during the discussion. He reminded members that it was only possible to add conditions to a Premises Licence in the event of a Review of the Licence.

Secondly, he reminded Members that the decision to introduce front of house drug testing at festivals would need to be made by the festival organisers as they would need to invite the testers on site. He recommended that organisers be approached in the first instance prior to making contact with the Home Office.

However, Members were keen to take action straight away.

Councillor Shannon Brooke said she would be happy to volunteer to lobby the Home Office. She further offered to forward to Members some in-depth research she had carried out into the topic of front of house drugs testing at festivals.

Members discussed whether the Premises Licence held by Glastonbury Festival could be reviewed based on the following licensing objectives; public safety and the protection of children from harm.

The Officer reminded them that there needed to be evidence to call a Review that the Licence conditions had been breached.

Members requested that the topic of front of house drug testing at festivals be added to the next meeting of the Licensing Board.

In the meantime, the Officer agreed to discuss the issue in more detail outside of the meeting with Councillor Francis Hayden, Simon Carswell and Councillor Shannon Brooke.

	<p>The Senior Licensing and Business Support Officer said the Council should be mindful that licence fee was a set amount. No more could be charged.</p> <p>Some Members said the Mendip District Council taxpayers should not be unduly burdened with paying to help resolve the problem.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Collins for his contribution to the meeting. He said it had been a very stimulating and useful debate.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the presentation and discussion be noted.</p>	
7	<p>Approval of Amendments to the Mendip District Council Taxi Policy</p> <p>The Licensing and Business Support Officer was invited to present a Report which sought approval for the following amendments to the Mendip District Council Taxi Licensing Policy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To amend paragraph 3.16 2. To remove Annex 13 from the Policy <p>Both amendments to the Policy related to CCTV / dashcams in a licensed vehicle.</p> <p>In the interests of simplifying the Council's stance and information regarding CCTV / dashcams in licensed vehicles it was proposed that Paragraph 3.16 of the Policy be replaced with the following:</p> <p>3.16 Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV) and Dashcams</p> <p>3.16.1 The use of CCTV in licensed vehicles can provide a safer environment for the benefit of taxi/private hire vehicle passengers and drivers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deterring and preventing the occurrence of crime; • reducing the fear of crime; • assisting the police in investigating incidents of crime; • assisting insurance companies in investigating motor vehicle accidents. 	Phil Wake

3.16.2 The installation of CCTV or dashcams in licensed vehicles is not mandatory, therefore the Authority is not the data controller. If CCTV / dashcam facilities are installed in a licensed vehicle, the proprietor will be responsible for ensuring the system conforms to the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation, such as displaying the necessary informative notices for passengers. Proprietors must take into consideration the guidance issued by the Information Commissioners Office.

3.16.3 All footage should be retained for a period of 28 days from the date of capture. The data controller must upon written request provide any footage to an investigating Authority.

3.16.4 If an audio recording function is available, it must only ever be used in exceptional circumstances and switched off at all other times. Audio recording can be triggered by a switch or button and all persons in the vehicle must be made aware that audio recording has started.

It was also proposed that Annex 13 within the policy be removed in its entirety as there was now a link to the ICO Guidance contained within Paragraph 3.16.2. The information on the link would be updated as and when necessary, this would then remove the need for the Authority to update the Policy to include any changes. The information detailed what vehicle proprietors should do to ensure compliance with the various pieces of legislation involved with CCTV / Dashcams.

During the discussion that followed the Officer explained all licenced drivers would be made aware of the update via the usual notifying systems which included text messages.

Members were concerned that the Council should not be absolving itself of its responsibility.

The Officer explained that a survey had been carried out to enquire as to how many taxis had CCTV and Dashcams installed. He said correct and safe installation of the equipment would be checked at the vehicle inspections which were carried out twice a year. Officers agreed to add a check that the correct notification was given in each taxi with such equipment installed.

The Senior Licensing and Business Support Officer said drivers were referred to the ICO guidance because they were the experts in the field, and this aligned with the other Councils in Somerset going forward. Members noted that

	<p>the guidance referred to both CCTV and Dashcam equipment in the same document and so the Council had done the same.</p> <p>It was noted that some authorities were making the installation of CCTV and Dashcams in taxis mandatory. However, if they did this the Council became the Data Controller.</p> <p>Councillor Francis Hayden proposed that the recommended change to the Taxi Policy be approved. This was seconded by Councillor Bente Height and carried unanimously.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>To approve the amendment to Paragraph 3.16 of the Taxi Licensing Policy and the removal of Annex 13 from the Policy.</p> <p>These changes should be made with immediate effect.</p>	
8	<p>Licensing Update</p> <p>The Senior Licensing and Business Support Officer was invited to present a report which set out the licensing activity, between 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022.</p> <p>During these months, the team had dealt with a total of 1129 licence applications, which consisted of 765 new applications/variations, 330 renewals/transfers and 34 replacement/change of details.</p> <p>The Officer gave detail of each of the new premises applications, along with detail of the applications for variations and the occasions where representations and objections had been received.</p> <p>In other business the Officer set out detail of meetings of the Licensing Sub Committee, joint visits and training sessions which had been held during the period.</p> <p>During the discussion that followed Members congratulated the team on their proactive approach.</p> <p>One Councillor suggested that the public should be encouraged to ask to see a licence whenever they used such services as dog breeders and skin piercers.</p> <p>Members noted that some licences lasted for 3 year and so</p>	Jack Godley

	<p>would not be on the list each year.</p> <p>The Officer confirmed that unlicensed street traders would be visited and given a letter explaining they should cease trading forthwith. Officer would work weekends if necessary to prevent unlicensed street traders from popping up.</p> <p>There was a discussion about how betting establishments would help prevent gambling addiction. However, it was noted that Mendip had not been made of aware of any serious concerns of this nature in the district.</p> <p>The whole Licensing Board thanked the Licensing Team for their work.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the update be noted.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>Members were thanked for their ongoing support of the licensing service, including the occasions they were called upon to sit on Licensing Sub Committee hearings.</p>	

The meeting finished at approximately 8.05 pm.

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MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Phoenix Board held on Wednesday 23 December 2020 via Live Stream at 2 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Josh Burr (Deputy Chair), Simon Carswell, Barry O’Leary, Ros Wyke (Chair)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Tom Killen

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT: John Clarke, Michael Dunk, Garfield Kennedy, Liz Leyshon, Heather Shearer and Alan Townsend

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Tracy Aarons	Deputy Chief Executive
Richard Bates	Section 151 Officer
Dave Burn	Democratic Services Manager
Claire Dicken	Democratic Services Officer
Lesley Dolan	Legal Advisor
Keith Pennyfather	Property Team Leader
Adam Savery	Senior Property Officer
Sara Skirton	Group Manager, Corporate Services
Ben Sugg	Democratic Services Officer

Agenda Item Number	Subject	To be actioned by
1	Chair’s Announcements The Chair requested that mobile phones be switched to silent and explained how the livestream meeting would proceed.	
2	Apologies For Absence None	
3	Declarations of Interest None	
4	Public Participation None	

<p>5</p>	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>It was moved by Councillor Barry O’Leary and seconded by Councillor Ros Wyke and</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the revised public minutes of the meeting held on 12 August 2020 be confirmed as an accurate record.</p>	<p>Claire Dicken</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Approval of the Revised Public Minutes from 1 April 2019 to Present</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer explained that the public minutes had been prepared following a complaint to the External Auditor that the public minutes were too limited in content and therefore lacked openness and transparency.</p> <p>It was moved by Councillor Barry O’Leary and seconded by Councillor Ros Wyke and</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the revised public minutes of the meetings held on the dates below be confirmed as accurate records:</p> <p>18 April 2019 1 July 2019 12 July 2019 14 August 2019 11 September 2019 23 September 2019 10 October 2019 6 November 2019 9 December 2019</p>	<p>Claire Dicken</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>Councillor Josh Burr and Councillor Barry O’Leary seconded the resolution to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting.</p>	

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of items 9 to 11 on the grounds that exempt information (as defined in Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, as amended) of the following description was likely to be disclosed:</p> <p>Category 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including those of the Council).</p>	
9	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>Councillor Barry O’Leary moved and Councillor Ros Wyke seconded the approval of the minutes.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the confidential element of the minutes of the meeting held on 12 August 2020 be confirmed as an accurate record.</p>	Claire Dicken
10	<p>Letting of Unit 2 – Fermentation Building, Finzels Reach, Bristol</p> <p>The Senior Property Officer had prepared a report which stated that since the acquisition of the Fermentation Building at Finzels Reach, Bristol on 28 November 2019, the Council had been seeking a tenant for Unit 2.</p> <p>In response to questions, the Officer said when the Council first bought the premises, it had a rent guarantee and its yield met our requirements. The initial rent guarantee was due to run out in May 2021.</p> <p>The Officer went on to confirm the proposed rent was not a concessionary rent.</p> <p>The Property Manager confirmed that officers had satisfied themselves that the tenancy should be recommended.</p> <p>During the discussion that followed Members could see no reason why the tenancy should not proceed.</p>	Adam Savery

	<p>Councillor Josh Burr proposed and Councillor Simon Carswell seconded the approval of the recommendations in the report.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That delegated authority be given to the Section 151 Officer, Group Manager for Corporate Services and the Portfolio Holder to finalise the position regarding the capital contribution, as set out in the report. 2. That the necessary legal due diligence and contract be undertaken to approve the progression of a lease. 	
<p>11</p>	<p>Saxonvale Project Governance Review</p> <p>The Board was advised that after two years there had been a change in Administration and Portfolio Holders along with changes in project team personnel. To reflect these changes, and the evolution of the project, it was considered timely to ask Phoenix Board to review the governance arrangements for the project.</p> <p>The Chair asked that within the Terms of Reference of the Saxonvale Project Board that paragraph “s” be revised to reflect that periodic reports be provided to the Phoenix Board on key issues that occurred every two months.</p> <p>Councillor Josh Burr proposed and Councillor Carswell seconded that the recommendations in the report, as amended, be accepted.</p> <p>Members asked that enquiries be made as to whether copies of the Terms of Reference could be made available to Frome Members on request, even though they were of a confidential nature.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the revised Saxonvale Governance Framework be approved. 2. That the revised Terms for Reference for the Saxonvale Project Board, subject to the inclusion in paragraph ‘S’ that periodic reports 	<p>Sara Skirton</p>

	<p>be provided to the Phoenix Board on key issues that occurred every two months.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. That the revised Terms of Reference for the Saxonvale Member Group be approved.4. That the revised Terms of Reference for the Saxonvale Stakeholder Group.5. That officers clarify the position regarding the dissemination of the Terms of Reference and supporting papers to non-members of the Phoenix Board, in particular Frome Ward Councillors.	
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The meeting closed at 2.40 pm.

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MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning Board held on Wednesday 15 March 2023 in the Council Chamber, Shepton Mallet, starting at 6pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors: Damon Hooton (Chair), Nigel Hewitt-Cooper (Deputy Chair), Eve Berry, Nick Cottle, Francis Hayden, Steve Henderson, Edric Hobbs, Helen Kay, Lindsay MacDougall, Matthew Martin, Lucie Taylor-Hood, Alan Townsend and Laura Waters.

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

Councillor Alan Townsend
Councillor Lois Rogers

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Tessa Hampden	Principal Economic Growth Planner
Martin Evans	Legal Advisor (online)
Tessa Hampden	Team Leader – Development Management
Julie Reader-Sullivan	Head of Service – Planning & Growth (online)
Nick Ryder	Democratic Services Officer
Simon Trafford	Team Leader – Development Management
Debbie Widdows	Democratic Services Officer

Agenda Item Number	Subject	Actioned By
1	Chair's Announcements The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave announcements. He also thanked everyone and wished everyone well.	
2	Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adam Boyden, Tom Killen (Lois Rogers substituted), and Mike Pullin (Alan Townsend substituted)	
3	Declarations of Interest There were none. Councillor Nigel Hewitt-Cooper stated that Items DM01 and DM02 on the agenda were deferrals. Although they had been previously discussed, Members at the meeting were of an open mind and not predetermined.	

4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>Items not on the agenda</p> <p>There were none.</p> <p>Items on the agenda</p> <p>There were none.</p>	
5	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>The Board was asked to consider the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023 and adjourned to 25 January 2023. Councillor Matt Martin proposed and Councillor Edric Hobbs seconded that they be accepted.</p> <p>These Minutes were taken as a true and accurate record and were approved.</p> <p>The Board was asked to consider the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023. Councillor Francis Hayden requested that the Minutes be amended on Page 10 in the top paragraph, where he was referred to as <i>another Member</i>, to be changed to his name.</p> <p>He also pointed out that on Page 17 of the Minutes item DM03 had been repeated on page 23. The Chair undertook to withdraw these Minutes from the agenda for this to be looked into and brought back for approval at a subsequent meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023 and adjourned to 25 January 2023 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings.</p>	Helen Bowen
6	<p>Resolution to Agree All Recommendations made on Development Management Applications Not Raised for Discussion.</p> <p>The Chair advised that as all items had been raised for discussion, this agenda item was not required. He also announced that the Items would be discussed in the following order – DM03, DM01 and DM02.</p>	

7	Development Management - Planning Applications	
DM03	<p data-bbox="371 253 1176 353">2022/1886/FUL East End Meadow, East End Lane, Chewton Mendip, Radstock Chewton Mendip and Ston Easton.</p> <p data-bbox="371 398 1176 544">The Officer presented a report in which she reminded Members that it was an update with reference to the full application considered at Planning Board on 25 January 2023 (adjourned from 18th January 2023).</p> <p data-bbox="371 584 1176 730">At the meeting on 25 January 2023, Members had agreed to defer the decision on the application to allow the applicant an opportunity to address the impact of the development on the visual amenity of the area.</p> <p data-bbox="371 779 1176 1111">Since the application was last presented to the Planning Board, the applicant had relocated the proposed building to the northwest corner of the site and amended the walling materials on the North, East and South elevations to wooden cladding rather than box profile sheeting. The applicant had also removed any roof lights proposed within the building and provided clarification that there would be no exterior lighting and any interior lighting would be by low energy/wattage fittings.</p> <p data-bbox="371 1149 1176 1216">Scope of Additional Information submitted to seek to redress the referral reason:</p> <ul data-bbox="371 1261 1176 1447" style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised block plan showed the relocation of the building. • Revised drawings showed the new proposed materials and removal of roof lights. • Revised Design and Access Statement. <p data-bbox="371 1485 1176 1664">The revised plans clarified and showed a relocation of the agricultural building to the northwest corner of the field which was approximately 43m further north than the previously proposed location and approximately 140m from the nearest residential property.</p> <p data-bbox="371 1704 1176 1816">A discussion followed regarding the addition of timber cladding on the west side of the building where the general public would see it.</p> <p data-bbox="371 1854 1176 2027">As per the report presented to the Board in January 2023, the Officer's Recommendation remained to approve the application subject to the recommended conditions and advice as set out in the original report which had been updated to reflect the additional matters</p>	Jennifer Alvis

	<p>addressed in the updating report and the additional information provided following the deferral decision.</p> <p>Councillor Edric Hobbs proposed that the revised application be approved in accordance with the Officer's recommendation but with an amendment to Condition 3 that the rear elevation be timber clad for reasons of visual amenity. This was seconded by Councillor Steve Henderson.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the revised application be approved in accordance with the Officer's Recommendation with an amendment to Condition 3 to require the timber cladding of the rear elevation.</p>	
<p>DM01</p>	<p>2021/1480/OTS Land At 366479 152724, Fosse Way, Stratton On The Fosse, Shepton Mallet Ashwick, Chilcompton And Stratton</p> <p>The application was originally heard at Board in July 2022 and Members resolved to grant planning permission in accordance with Officer's Recommendation. This was subject to the signing of a s106 legal agreement to secure the planning obligations as set out in this report.</p> <p>However, since the resolution, there had been a material change in the policy position which meant that this application had to be re-considered by Planning Board. These changes in circumstances did not however change the Officer Recommendation and it remained recommended for approval.</p> <p>The Officer presented her report which outlined planning permission for the erection of up to 270 dwellings, formation of vehicular accesses, open space, landscaping and associated works with all matters reserved except for access at the Land At 366479 152724 Fosse Way, Stratton on The Fosse, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.</p> <p>The Chair then invited John Carter to speak in opposition to the application. He questioned Mendip District Council's refusal to consider some issues as this, he believed, contravened the law as set out in the Judicial Review. He wished to point out the following, among other things, in support of this:</p>	<p>Tessa Hampden</p>

- The refusal to remove MN1 as designated status as ordered by the Judicial Review.
- The failure in the sustainability approach process to consider reasonable alternatives to the allocation of the 505 dwellings to only be in the Northeast area of the Mendip District.
- That MN1 should be given no weight in determining planning applications as this was struck out from the adopted Local Plan Part 2 (LLP2) and was disregarded.

The Chair then invited Jennifer Gregory who spoke on behalf of Stratton on the Fosse Parish Council who were in opposition to the application. She went on to say that despite the fact that MDC had to accept the Judicial Review, they had done so reluctantly and had supported this application as a result. She maintained that the number of houses was too large and this would have a negative effect on the local area. She confirmed that all of the surrounding councils, namely BANES, Westfield, Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Stratton on the Fosse, objected to this application as the responsibility for the sustainability of this site would fall on them to maintain for which they would receive no financial benefit. She concluded her speech by saying that Stratton on the Fosse could not support this type of development.

Next to speak was Simon Steel-Perkins, the Director of Waddeton Park Ltd and the applicant. He expressed that the benefits were substantial and he maintained that the impacts would be very limited. He stated that the erection of these dwellings would provide 81 new affordable homes.

The Chair noted that one of the County Councillors had attempted to submit a statement about the application but it had not been received by the Officer at Mendip District Council.

A discussion ensued which considered both positive and negative aspects of the development.

Councillor Nigel Hewitt-Cooper proposed the application be approved in accordance with the Officer Recommendation and this was seconded by Councillor Alan Townsend.

This proposal was carried by 11 votes in favour, 1 vote in opposition and 1 abstention.

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the application be approved in accordance with the Officer's Recommendation as a departure from the development plan.</p>	
<p>DM02</p>	<p>2022/1510/FUL The Annexe, Spring Heights, Coalash Lane, Spring Gardens, Frome, BA11 2PA Beckington and Selwood</p> <p>The Officer presented her report which outlined that the Annexe at Spring Heights was an existing residential property on the outskirts of Frome. There were residential properties located to the South and Southeast of the site. There was currently a building on the site that had previously been a swimming pool. This had been converted into an annexe. The annexe was subject to a Lawful Development Certificate for occupation as an independent dwelling.</p> <p>The proposal was for the erection of a new dwelling on the site. Although the description referred to a replacement dwelling the proposal did not include the removal of the existing building on the site but it had been explained in the submission that this building would become ancillary to the new dwelling.</p> <p>The site was outside of the development limits within the open countryside. The site was located within the Mells Valley Special Area of Conservation. The site was also identified as within 8m and 20m main river buffers.</p> <p>The application was recommended for refusal on grounds that the proposed development, by reason its scale, size, massing and location, would result in an incongruous development that would have a significant harmful impact on the rural character and appearance of the area and thus fail to preserve the character of the countryside for its own intrinsic value.</p> <p>The Chair read out a statement submitted by Selwood Parish Council which stated that initially they were opposed to this application as they had incorrectly thought that the replacement dwelling on the site would have to be the same footprint as the current swimming pool house, known as The Annexe. However, the agent made them aware that the 'Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use or Development' not only related to the pool house dwelling, but covered the same residential curtilage as was included with the application i.e. the</p>	<p>Lorna Elstob</p>

whole of the plot sold by the owner of Spring Heights to the applicants. Significantly, this meant that development could be undertaken anywhere on the site and was not limited to the same footprint as the pool house.

The matter was then discussed again at the next Parish Council meeting and the decision was changed to be in support of the application. Accordingly, the Parish Council reversed their previous response and now supported this proposal.

However, Selwood Parish Council wanted to note that because of the steep narrow access off Coalash Lane, there should be no more than the current two households given access to the site and the residential occupancy of the pool house, must be removed when the occupancy of the new property took place. It was confirmed by the Lead Officer that this could be controlled by planning condition.

The Chair then invited Lee Wright, who was the planning agent, to speak in support.

He explained that although the address made reference to an annexe, the application site, including the whole of the curtilage, benefited from a Certificate of Lawfulness granted by Mendip District Council in 2021 for use as a dwelling in its own right.

He further pointed out that the dwelling posed no visual impact on the surrounds and could not be seen from Coalash Lane to the south. It would largely be screened from distant public footpaths to the north by heavily landscaped boundaries. To the west there was the elevated railway that served the Mendip quarries and to the east there was an existing residential development with many similarly large dwellings.

He concluded his speech by pointing out that there had been no public objections to the application. It further had written support from the immediate neighbours, as well as support from the Parish Council and similarly the Ward Councillor.

The Chair invited Councillor Shannon Brooke to speak in support of the application. She agreed that, with no objections from any neighbours and with the support of the Parish Council and Ward Member, this application should be approved.

	<p>Councillor Shannon Brooke also read out the speech from County Councillor Martin Dimery which stated that he was very impressed by the plans and he also agreed that with no objections from the neighbours he was in support of the application being approved.</p> <p>Contrary to the Officer's Recommendation Councillor Matt Martin proposed the application should be approved on grounds that the proposed development would not have harmful impact on the rural character and appearance of the area. He also proposed that the approval be conditioned to ensure that the annexe could only be used for ancillary purposes and to reduce light spillage. This was seconded by Councillor Edric Hobbs with conditions delegated to the Chair, Deputy Chair, Ward Councillor and Planning Officers.</p> <p>This proposal was carried by 12 votes in favour and 1 against with no abstentions.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the application be approved contrary to the Officer's Recommendation on grounds that the proposed development would not have harmful impact on the rural character and appearance of the area.</p> <p>That delegated authority be granted to Officers, in consultation with the Chair, Deputy Chair and Ward Councillor, to impose planning conditions, including conditions to ensure that the annexe can only be used for ancillary purposes and to reduce light spillage from the development.</p>	
8	<p>Appeals Report</p> <p>The Head of Service - Planning and Growth Services had provided an Appeals Report. The Team Leader - Development Management took Members through the report, highlighting various appeals submitted and decided, which Members noted.</p>	
9	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>There was none.</p>	

The meeting finished at 19:45 pm

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning Board held on Wednesday, 29 March 2023 in the Council Chamber, Shepton Mallet, starting at 6 pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors: Damon Hooton (Chair) Nigel Hewitt-Cooper (Deputy Chair), Eve Berry, Adam Boyden, Nick Cottle, Francis Hayden, Steve Henderson, Edric Hobbs, Tom Killen, Lindsay MacDougall, Matthew Martin, Mike Pullin and Lucie Taylor-Hood.

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

Councillor Michael Dunk

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Helen Bowen	Democratic Services Officer
Martin Evans	Legal Advisor
Tessa Hampden	Team Leader – Development Management
Carlton Langford	Planning Officer
Julie Reader-Sullivan	Head of Service – Planning & Growth
Charlotte Rogers	Assistant Planning Officer
Simon Trafford	Team Leader - Development Management

Agenda Item Number	Subject	Actioned By
1	<p>Chair’s Announcements</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave announcements. There was a short delay to the start of the meeting due to technical hitches. The Chair gave thanks to Officers Tracy Aarons and Julie Reader-Sullivan for their tremendous support.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Helen Kay and Laura Waters.</p> <p>Councillor Michael Dunk substituted for Councillor Helen Kay.</p>	

3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Councillor Francis Haydon declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Item DM01 – Land Adjacent to Worth Farm – as he regularly worked for the Applicant. He said he would leave the meeting during the discussion and vote of this item.</p> <p>Councillors Matt Martin, Steven Henderson and Nigel Hewitt-Cooper all declared a Personal and Non-Prejudicial Interest in the same item due to connections with Worthy Farm and the Glastonbury Festival. They would stay in the meeting to debate and vote.</p>	Helen Bowen
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>Items not on the agenda</p> <p>Jane Llewellyn and Councillor Steve Tanner from Frome Town Council conveyed their thanks to the Planning Board for all their hard work over the last few years and wished the non-returning Members well.</p> <p>Items on the agenda</p> <p>None</p>	
5	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>The Board was asked to consider the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023 and adjourned to 22 February 2023.</p> <p>Councillor Francis Hayden requested that at the top of Page 10, the words “another Member” was replaced by “Councillor Francis Hayden”.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor Matt Martin and seconded by Councillor Edric Hobbs that they be accepted with the requested amendment.</p> <p>Members were happy to approve.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 and 22 February 2023 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings with the amendment outlined above.</p>	

6	<p>Resolution to Agree All Recommendations made on Development Management Applications Not Raised for Discussion.</p> <p>The Chair advised that, as all items had been raised for discussion, this agenda item was not needed.</p>	
	<p>The Chair advised that the applications would be discussed in the following order – DM02, DM03, DM01</p>	
7	<p>Development Management - Planning Applications</p>	
DM02	<p>2022/0053/OTS Corner Cottage, Quarry Lane, Leigh on Mendip, Radstock, Somerset</p> <p>The Officer's Report stated this application had been referred to the Planning Board at the request of the Ward Councillors with the agreement of the Chair of the Planning Board. The application was for outline Planning Permission, with some matters reserved, for the erection of 3 dwellings with details of access.</p> <p>The Report confirmed that the site related to land north of Corner Cottage, Leigh on Mendip, Radstock, BA3 5QG. The application site was accessed from a northbound unclassified road with a 30mph speed limit and was currently vacant. The plot was 0.16ha and the proposed indicative layout would see a detached dwelling and a pair of semi-detached houses. It was a repeat application to one which had been refused by the Council in 2021 and the applicants had sought to address the previous reasons for refusal which were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sterilisation of the nearby mineral extraction. • Impact on ecology, no surveys carried out and no protection, mitigation or enhancement proposed. • No surface water drainage scheme submitted to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that an acceptable surface water drainage solution could be achieved to prevent flood risk and • No adequate pollution control of watercourses on the site. <p>Leigh on Mendip Parish Council had objected to the application on principle, saying it was it was isolated and removed from the limited services in the village. Also, they had concerns with minerals safeguarding, access,</p>	<p>Carlton Langford</p>

highways safety and traffic generation given the proximity to the school.

There had been 2 letters of objection from local residents. Concerns included highway safety, visual amenity and overlooking, loss of hedgerow and noise disturbance from the quarry blasts.

The Officer's Report continued that the current application had successfully addressed 3 previous reasons for refusal for the development of the site and that, whilst it was acknowledged that the development would be beyond the edge of the village and therefore would represent a departure from local plan policies, it could not be described as being in isolated open countryside.

It continued that, as the Council did not have a five-year housing land supply, the tilted balance of the NPPF would apply. The additional 3 dwellings would make a modest contribution to housing in the district, which would be of some weight. There would also be limited economic benefits through the construction period.

The assessment of the application had not identified any harm in terms of landscape and visual impact, impact on heritage assets and/or highway safety concerns. Overall, any harms arising from the application scheme were not considered to be significant and would not demonstrably outweigh the benefits delivered. On balance, the Officer Report recommended that planning permission be granted as a departure from the Development Plan.

First to speak was Councillor Vicki Taylor on behalf of Leigh on Mendip Parish Council. She said that the Parish Council considered the impact of the development on the setting of the church was a material planning matter which required consideration which the Conservation Officer had not done, even following the recent appeal decision. She said that there was no housing between the Grade 1 listed church and the application site. The road was considered to be the most dangerous within the parish and the village was not considered sustainable. There was no village shop, no public transport and the Parish Council considered the harm of the development outweighed the small benefit of contributing to the 5-year housing land supply.

The Chair then invited Ward Councillor Philip Ham to speak. He said he was making a joint statement with

fellow Ward Councillor Alan Townsend. They supported the Parish Council in their opposition of the application and were surprised that the Officer had said any harms were not considered to be significant and would not demonstrably outweigh the benefits delivered. At the recent appeal, the Inspector had ruled that the visual harms overruled any benefits. The Inspector had also devoted 12 paragraphs to the potential harm to the heritage asset of the church and gave significant weight to this. Both Ward Councillors recommended refusal of the application.

In the discussion which followed many Members were concerned about highway safety due to the proximity of the primary school. There was some discussion regarding the speed limit on the road and whether there were yellow flashing lights at school time and yellow zig zags painted on the road.

The discussion also included potential harm to the heritage asset of the Grade 1 listed church. One Member was concerned about the removal of hedgerows and was keen to know if the Conservation Officer had commented on the application. The Team Leader – Development Management confirmed that the Officer had been consulted but no comments were made. The same Member also queried the assertion in the Officer’s Report that there was already development between the church and the application site and agreed with the speaker from the Parish Council that the church and the vicarage would be adversely harmed.

The Team Leader – Development Management responded that Leigh on Mendip didn’t have a development boundary and he pointed out various buildings that were in the vicinity of the site. He said the development was quite different to the previously refused scheme as was the magnitude of the development. He added that Members must be careful not to say there was a clear, uninterrupted view presently as there was already a building there. Members would need to be clear that any heritage harm was well-founded and justified.

Members discussed the possibility of including new reasons to refuse the application, as 3 previous reasons for refusal had been overcome. The Legal Advisor said that as the original 3 reasons for refusal had been overcome it would be difficult to now apply new reasons for refusal. The two matters of concerns raised in debate were now heritage impact and highway safety but neither

	<p>appeared in previous reasons for refusal of the earlier scheme. He advised it would only be reasonable to use these reasons to refuse the application if there had been a material change in circumstances since the earlier decision</p> <p>Councillor Adam Boyden was concerned that there was not enough information provided to enable a decision to be made, namely the speed limit, parking restrictions and safety markings on the road and the lack of response from the Conservation Officer. He proposed that the application be deferred until this information could be provided.</p> <p>Other Members pointed out that the previous reasons for refusal had been addressed and so there were no longer any reasons to refuse. Councillor Nigel Hewitt-Cooper proposed to approve the application in accordance with the Officer's Recommendation. This was seconded by Councillor Steve Henderson.</p> <p>Councillor Francis Hayden then seconded the proposal to defer.</p> <p>The first substantive proposal to approve the application in accordance with the Officer's Recommendation was put to the vote. There were 3 votes to approve and 10 votes against.</p> <p>Members then voted on the proposal to defer the decision to enable further information to be provided. There were 10 votes in favour and 3 against, so the motion to defer the application was carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the application be deferred to enable further information to be provided regarding the highway speed limit, safety signage and road markings, and for a response from the Conservation Officer to be provided regarding impact upon heritage assets.</p>	
<p>DM03</p>	<p>2022/2148/FUL Land At 378271 145463, East Woodlands Road, Blatchbridge, Frome</p> <p>The Officer's Report stated this application had been referred to the Planning Board following referral to the Chair and Vice Chair. The application had received objections from the Parish Council and the Ward Member.</p>	<p>Charlotte Rogers</p>

The application related to a small field located off East Woodlands Road, south of Frome. There was a small collection of residential properties located near to the application site.

This application sought planning permission for the change of use of the land to horticulture, the installation of a polytunnel and the erection of a site office/welfare unit.

The Parish Council had initially recommended approval with conditions but changed the recommendation to refusal because the plans indicated that the site office/welfare unit was disproportionately large and not in keeping with a horticultural premises of this size. The Ward Councillor also objected to the application.

There had been one letter of support from local residents and one letter of objection. Reasons given for objection included the following:

- The proposed building is too large and resembles a residential property.
- The tool and equipment store are required to be accessed internally.
- The building and parking take up a significant portion of the site.
- Highway safety concerns along the narrow road.

The Officer Report continued that the installation of a polytunnel and formation of the parking area would not result in an unacceptable level of harm to the character and appearance of the street scene. The polytunnel would reflect the context and character of the surrounding area. The proposed site office/welfare unit was considered to be acceptable in terms of its impacts upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposed unit would provide welfare facilities for the intended employees as well as storage facilities for the required equipment. The positioning of the proposed unit has been determined to be away from the tree line situated on the north-eastern boundary of the application site.

The proposed development would alter the appearance of the site but given the surrounding context it was not considered to result in an unacceptable level of harm to the character of the street scene. The proposed horticultural activities were considered to be appropriate

for the existing context and would not result in an unacceptable level of harm to the amenities of the existing residential properties. The means of access and parking arrangements were considered acceptable and would maintain highway safety standards. Therefore, the application was deemed to be acceptable and the proposed development was recommended for approval.

The Chair then read a statement which had been provided by Selwood Parish Council. It said that initially the Parish Council had approved the application on the proviso that the welfare cabin and treatment plant should not be consented to. However, as the application would be determined including these, they would suggest refusal. They continued that they would look favourably at a re-submission of the application to use the entire site for horticulture with a composting toilet on site. They requested that if the Board was minded to approve the change to horticultural use, then a condition be applied to the consent that the land automatically reverted back to agricultural use should the applicant's business venture fail.

In support of the application, Richard Tremellen was invited to speak. He explained the reason that the proposed building seemed excessively large for the operation was because the applicant already owned the building and rather than purchase a new one, he wished to make use of something he already owned, thus saving money. He pointed out it was smaller than a garage on a neighbouring property. There would be minimal transport to and from the site as the internet-based orders would be for 100s of plants at a time. There would be a need to provide enough turning and parking for large vehicles and added that the positioning of the building had been changed to satisfy the Tree Officer.

Ward Councillor Shannon Brooke was next to speak. She said she agreed with the position of Selwood Parish Council and supported their request to refuse the application.

In the discussion which followed Councillor Lucie Taylor-Hood said Members should not second guess the needs of the business and proposed approval of the application in accordance with the Officer's Recommendation. This was seconded by Councillor Nick Cottle.

Other Members were concerned with the size of the building and said it was too large for the plot and scale of

	<p>the development. There was a suggestion that temporary permission could be granted for a period of 3 years and if the business was a success and expanding, the applicant could re-apply for full permission. The Legal Advisor said that this would be possible if the proposer and seconder were happy to change the substantive motion to include a condition to include a 3-year limit. Councillors Taylor-Hood and Cottle were content with this approach.</p> <p>Another Member pointed out that other conditions relating to drainage, treatment of foul waste and limiting the use of the welfare unit should also be added to the temporary permission, to ensure that the unit could not be used for anything else.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor Lucie Taylor-Hood and seconded by Councillor Nick Cottle to approve the application in accordance with the Officer's Recommendation but limited for a period of 3 years with additional conditions to be included covering drainage, foul water treatment and use of the welfare unit. The additional conditions would be agreed by Officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the new Planning East Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the application be approved in accordance with the Officers' Recommendation, but that the permission be limited for a period of 3 years, with additional conditions to be included covering drainage, foul water treatment and use of the welfare unit.</p> <p>That delegated authority be granted to Officers to include the additional conditions in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the new Planning East Committee.</p>	
<p>DM01</p>	<p>2022/2458/FUL Land at And Adjacent to Worthy Farm, Worthy Lane, Pilton, Somerset</p> <p>The Officer's Report said that this application had been referred to the Planning Board for a decision by Members at the request of Vice Chair of the Planning Board due to the importance of the site and for reasons of transparency.</p> <p>The application sought planning permission for the proposed mixed use comprising: (i) continuing agricultural use (ii) continuation of annual festival on a</p>	<p>Tessa Hampden</p>

permanent basis; (iii) continuation of the annual Pilton Party; (iv) permanent regularisation of Pyramid Structure and Festival Storage Building; and (v) provision of areas to accommodate the temporary festival workforce.

During the application process, the applicant confirmed they would omit the fallow year campsite from the application in response to concerns raised by the local community. The application description had therefore been amended accordingly.

The Report confirmed that the site predominantly comprised of dairy and arable productive land with clusters of agricultural buildings, often large-scale structures. There were also buildings within the site which were used for solely festival purposes. Public rights of way were located near the main farm complex and on the western part of the site near to the A361. The site comprised a number of Local Wildlife Sites and site was partly located in Flood Zone 2 and 3. There were a number of nearby listed buildings.

There had been objections from Pilton Parish Council and East Pennard Parish Council. West Pennard Parish Council had recommended approval with some provisos. From the local residents there had been 191 comments in support of the application and 21 comments of objection. Supportive comments included:

- One permission to cover the site is a benefit to the community.
- The Festival is a huge asset to the region, and the nation as a whole, both commercially, but also culturally.
- GFEL have made great improvements regarding traffic and pedestrian flow in the village.
- Noise levels for those in the village and have improved.
- The Festival is highly responsive and takes steps to resolve issues quickly.
- The Festival provides ongoing employment in the area.
- Important to have flexibility in the 'build and break' schedules.
- The cultural benefits are significant both to the rural and wider area.
- Any harm is far outweighed any perceived short term local nuisance factors.

- The management of traffic and bringing infrastructure on site for the 'build and break' operation has been very well managed.

Objectors' comments included:

- Noise levels/disturbance
- Residential Amenity
- Traffic/Highways issue
- Large areas of the current Festival are unlawful
- Size of proposed Festival significantly greater than the extant temporary permission
- Festival should be all within the fortress fence
- Lack of protection for the countryside
- Lack of pre application consultation
- Lack of planning obligations
- Impact of fortress fence on the visual amenities of the area
- Light pollution
- Premises Licences does not cover the 'build and break' period and other matters such as the pollution of rivers.

The Officer Report said that having one overarching permission covering the activities on site was a clearer approach in managing the operations on the site. The long-established agricultural use of the land would continue, predominantly as a dairy farm. The remaining uses were a form of farm diversification and economic development which was supported under both local and national policy.

Planning permission from the Local Planning Authority was required for the festival use because its associated 'build and break' period extended beyond the 28 days permitted development allowance as set out in the General Permitted Development Order. The principle of development for the festival use had been accepted historically albeit on a temporary basis. It should also be noted that the site area being considered was greater than that previously permitted.

The Report also explained the relationship between the Premises Licence and the Planning Regime. It considered whether it was necessary for the planning permission to deal with matters already dealt with under the licenses. Legal advice had concluded that it was neither necessary nor appropriate for the planning authority to seek to redetermine matters which were

already controlled by the licence and it would be both proper and safe in this instance to leave matters relating to the licensing objectives to be dealt with by the statutory system which specialised in these specific protections, and which had already been operated to do so. Officers concurred with this view.

The Officer's Report continued by assessing in detail all aspects of the application and as a result had recommended the application for approval.

In opposition to the application, the Chair invited Nick Hall to speak. He made a number of points which he said encompassed the Parish Council's and other villagers' concerns. These included the following:

- The application was for 3 times the size of the existing temporary permission, changing the development area from 162 ha to 492 ha.
- The permanent permission being sought would weaken the Council's ability to regularly review the impact of the site on the surrounding communities.
- Visual amenity would be further reduced. The proposed planning conditions would allow the pyramid stage to be clad for up to 5 months and the fortress fence be in place for up to 4 months.
- The 'build and break' period would be extended from 4 months to year-round.

Mr Hall suggested Members refuse the application and encourage the applicant to reapply for a site area delineated and contained by the fortress fence. He would like the applicant to properly address all the concerns of the local community.

Parish Councillor Joe King was the next to speak on behalf of Pilton Parish Council. He said that when the planning application was made it caused considerable unease in village. Locals were concerned about the scale of change in the application which, if approved, would make the 'build and break' period year-round causing much disruption. He also said that the notification letters were not sent out to large areas of the village and prior to the application being made, there should have been a period of consultation with the local community. He did add that he had spoken with Mr Melvin Benn from GFEL who had assured him that would only be 1 festival and 1 Pilton Party on the site per year and that in future consultation would take place with local communities and they would be given 3 months' notice of any application

to vary or modify any application. He also confirmed that the concept of the fallow year would continue. Mr King concluded that this was very important to give maximum protection to the village.

Parish Councillor Martin Llewellyn representing East Pennard PC was the next to speak. He said the Parish Councils objection was based on the extent of the impact that the new larger area would have on the local villages. Camping at Worthy View which was outside the fortress fence had not been considered or even mentioned in the application. Worthy View provided a geographical view of the escarpment and it should be protected. He was disappointed that East Pennard had not even been mentioned in the planning application.

In support of the application, Melvin Benn spoke on behalf of GFEL. He said that it had been over 52 years since the Festival began and they cared deeply about people and the environment. It had been a safe and licenced festival for many years. He said that the application was not a continuation of previous planning permissions. There was no actual growth in size to the Festival and the fence was required to control the number of people entering. The premises licence provision allowed this control. He said that permanent planning permission was required and the application sought to legitimise the necessary activities on the site.

The Team Leader – Development Management added that the increase in numbers was controlled by Licence, not this planning application. Regarding the ‘build and break’ period, it would not last all year and the activities were controlled by condition and this would allow a few people to remain on site for maintenance purposes. She reassured Members that Condition 14 would restrict the operations to 1 festival and 1 Pilton Party per year.

Ward Councillor Nigel Hewitt-Cooper then spoke. He admitted that the Festival could be very divisive and that Pilton PC were narrowly against the application but West Pennard were in favour. The fallow years were very important to villagers and he wondered if there could be some flexibility built into the permission to say that 1 in every 4 years, for example, must be a fallow year. He noted that there were many more comments in support than against the application and pointed out that Worthy View was outside the site area, as were many smaller campsites which meant that nothing could be done about these under this application. Finally, he wondered if it

could be conditioned that the permission would end once the Festival ceased to operate.

In response, the Team Leader – Development Management said that a condition to control when the fallow year took place would not be possible as it would not meet the tests in the NPPF and due to the impact on GFEL it was not feasible. There was no need to add a condition to cease the permission once the Festival ended as the permission was for the Festival, so once it stopped, the use authorised by the permission would also cease.

In the discussion which followed Councillor Matt Martin stated that the application made total sense and so he proposed approval in accordance with the Officer's Recommendation. Councillor Adam Boyden seconded the proposal, saying that the Festival was a global famous success story which brought joy to many people. He was satisfied that the impact on local communities was managed as best it could be.

The Team Leader – Development Management said she was comfortable that the applicants addressed issues that arose each year and learned from previous years problems. They did as much as possible to protect local residents and was pleased to see so many supportive comments recognising the improvements that had been made to protect the nearby communities.

Other Members discussed the improvements that had been made over the years with the Member for Glastonbury commenting that he had not received one complaint for over 10 years. The traffic issues had been addressed and he was able to drive past the entrance to the Festival without any traffic hold ups over the weekend of the Festival. Another Member pointed out that safety would be improved as the 'build and break' would not have to be rushed, thus avoiding potential accidents. They recognised that it was impossible to control how the sound of the Festival carried as this was dependent on the atmospheric conditions at the time.

Councillor Tom Killen, however, said that he would like the mistrust between the GFEL and local communities to be removed and this would be best done by consultation between the new Somerset Councillors and the parishes. He therefore proposed a deferral. The proposal to defer was not seconded.

	<p>A vote was taken to approve the application in accordance with the Officer's recommendation. There were 11 votes in favour and 1 abstention.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the application be approved in accordance with the Officer's Recommendation.</p>	
8	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>None.</p>	

The meeting finished at 20.35 pm.

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MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Somerset Building Control Partnership Joint Committee held on Thursday, 24 November 2022 at 2 pm in the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Mendip District Council
Cllr Damon Hooton (Chair 2022/23)

Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Andrew Gilling

Somerset West and Taunton Council
Cllr Marcus Kravis

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Helen Bowen	Democratic Services Officer
Claire Dicken	Democratic Services Officer
Sarah Dowden	Sedgemoor District Council
Paul Grummett	Somerset Building Control Partnership Manager, Sedgemoor District Council
Vicky Lowman	Somerset West and Taunton District Council
Janet Pascoe	Accountant, Sedgemoor District Council
Vicky Parsons	Mendip District Council

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned By
1	Chair's Announcements The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and set out the procedures the meeting would follow.	
2	Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from Cllr Mike Caswell, Sedgemoor District Council, Cllr Andrew Sully (Vice-Chair), Somerset West and Taunton Council and Cllr Laura Waters, Mendip District Council.	
3	Declarations of Interest None.	

<p>4</p>	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>The minutes for the meeting of 12 May 2022 were agreed.</p>	<p>Claire Dicken</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Revised Operational Plan and Targets for 2022-23</p> <p>The Somerset Building Control Partnership Manager presented a report which explained the main function of the Partnership was to ensure that the Councils could meet their statutory and regulatory duties in respect of building control matters in a timely manner. It was a statutory service which administered legislation relating to the built environment. It operated in such a manner as to establish and maintain a high reputation for both itself and the partner councils.</p> <p>The service had two elements which were described as fee earning and non-fee earning work.</p> <p>The Plan went on to set out the Operational Priorities for 2022/23 which included ensuring the Partnership was fully aware of the proposed changes in legislation and the responsibilities associated thereof, and the unification of Building Control in Somerset.</p> <p>This review of the Operational Plan had been prepared against the background of significant challenges posed by the Unitary proposals for Somerset, a New Regulator for the construction Industry and the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>Whilst application numbers had dropped slightly in the second quarter of this year, the market share had been maintained at 70%. The Partnership had performed well during the last financial year.</p> <p>A recent consultation had been carried out regarding fee charges, mainly for demolition notice and Initial Notice submissions. This could lead to an increase in income. Detailed results would be reported back when available.</p> <p>Forecasting in the short to medium term at the moment was very difficult due to the cost-of-living crisis, hopefully the original budget trends would be maintained.</p> <p>Performance indicators would remain as last year.</p>	<p>Paul Grummett</p>

	<p>The Partnership had continued to invest in training and development of staff.</p> <p>All staff were still embracing the remote working ethos, and it appeared in general terms that there had not been any reduction in service delivery to customers.</p> <p>The Partnership had its own standalone web presence and online payment system, as well as being directly contactable by client's. This meant staff were able to offer a seamless service.</p> <p>South Somerset Building Control had asked for some assistance regarding site inspections and the Partnership was in the process of doing this.</p> <p>During the discussion which followed the Manager said he hoped the service would continue to develop its staff after Vesting Day. However, this would be dependent on its new management.</p> <p>The Manager said significant work had been and would continue to be undertaken during the forthcoming year as part of the Unitary proposals. This included a newly branded website.</p> <p>He explained Building Control data migration would take place after Vesting Day.</p> <p>The democratic governance and oversight of the Building Control service after Vesting Day had yet to be decided.</p> <p>In response to queries, the Accountant explained that the staffing structure post Vesting Day had not been set yet. Once the staffing structure was known the Accountant would be able to set up the accounts for the service setting out the fee earning and nonfee earning parts of the service.</p> <p>Members welcomed the contents of the report.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>The revised Operational Plan and Targets for 2022-23 were noted.</p>	
7	<p>Conclusion of the Somerset Building Control Partnership</p> <p>The Partnership Manager gave a verbal report.</p>	Paul Grummett

	<p>He said he was personally pleased to have been part of such a successful Partnership. He said at the beginning the decision to enter into a Partnership had been difficult. However, through the commitment shown and particularly through the hard work of the staff the Partnership had worked very well.</p> <p>The Chair said he was also pleased to have been part of the Partnership which had proven to be exemplary.</p> <p>Sarah Dowden was invited to speak. She said the Partnership had worked incredibly well particularly throughout COVID. She said something which had made a massive difference was the way the Manager had pushed for the development of staff and this had been appreciated by the team.</p> <p>Although the Partnership was being closed down, an effort would be made to push its best interests forward.</p> <p>Members agreed the Partnership had proved to be a great success.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Noted.</p>	
8	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>None</p>	
9	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>The Somerset Building Control Partnership resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during item 10 on the grounds that exempt information (as defined in Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972) of the following description was likely to be disclosed:</p> <p>Category 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including those of the Council).</p>	
10	<p>Somerset Building Control Partnership Financial Report for 2022-2023</p> <p>The Accountant for Sedgemoor District Council had prepared a report.</p> <p>The report explained the Partnership was now part way through its seventh year of operation.</p>	<p>Janet Pascoe</p>

A financial performance report for 2022/23 was attached to the report for information. It covered the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022.

From 1 April 2023 the Local Government Reorganisation would commence. The new Somerset Council would have the responsibility of agreeing the 2023/24 budget.

Members thanked the Officer for a very clear report and clear explanation of it.

They agreed the Building Control Partnership had been a success story and this was down to its management and leadership. Members thanked the organisation for its hard work.

In response to queries the Accountant explained that any surplus of money would go to the new Somerset Council.

There was some concern that the new Council may see the service as an opportunity to raise funds.

The Officer explained the service would still be subject to CIPFA regulations. These ensured the service should break even. Building Control was a mandatory service and it should continue to be managed in the future so that it would continue to break even. Any reserves should be used to balance the books within the budget.

RESOLVED

To note the financial performance report for the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022.

The meeting finished at approximately 2.40 pm.

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THE MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 14 February 2023 in the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT, commencing at 6.30 pm.

SCRUTINY BOARD COUNCILLORS:

Councillors Alison Barkshire (substitute for Michael Dunk), Chris Inchley (Chair), Lindsay MacDougal (substituting for Barbi Lund), and Alan Townsend

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT (online):

Councillors Michael Dunk, Liz Leyshon, Richard Pinnock, Ros Wyke

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Julie Jackson	Performance and Improvement Officer and Scrutiny Assistant
Kelly Knight	Principal Sustainable Travel and Tourism Officer and Scrutiny Lead Officer
Nick Ryder	Democratic Services Officer
Debbie Widdows	Democratic Services Officer

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned by
1	<p>Chair's Announcements</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and set out the procedures the meeting would follow.</p> <p>The Chair reminded Members to switch their devices to silent and reminded those present that the proceedings were being live streamed.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the members of the Scrutiny Board. He mentioned they performed a good function and they had done their best to represent their community. He mentioned the good works of the previous Chair, Philip Ham, as he had left a good legacy as well as the previous Vice Chair, Garfield Kennedy.</p> <p>The Chair further thanked the Vice Chair for being a critical friend and making sure members' views were taken on board.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Chair thanked the members of the public and mentioned that if it was not for their voice, the Scrutiny Board may have seemed to be in a vacuum.</p> <p>The Vice Chair thanked the Chair for everything he had done for the Board and mentioned that she</p>	

	<p>enjoyed being Vice Chair and a member of the Board. She further mentioned that the Chair chaired the meetings with great care and patience.</p> <p>She also thanked Tracy Aarons, Julie Jackson and Kelly Knight.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Councillors Eve Berry; Adam Boyden, Michael Dunk, Damon Hooton, Terry Napper and Janine Nash</p> <p>Councillor Lindsay MacDougall substituted for Michael Dunk.</p> <p>Councillor Alison Barkshire substituted for Barbi Lund.</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None</p>	
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>a) Items on the agenda:</p> <p>None</p> <p>b) Items not on the agenda:</p> <p>Mr Nick Hall had requested to speak following on from the discussions at the 22 November 2022 meeting, about licensing issues associated with Glastonbury Festival, in particular the noise.</p> <p>Mr Hall went on to say that he was speaking in a personal capacity.</p> <p>He made reference to the fact that at the previous Scrutiny meeting on 22 November 2022, Ms Griffiths and himself expressed several concerns about the control of noise under the Premises License for Glastonbury Festival.</p> <p>He further pointed out that the Scrutiny Board did provide detailed answers to their questions and the outstanding freedom of information request.</p> <p>Furthermore, on 6 February 2023 they presented their conclusions directly to Cabinet but they felt</p>	

that it was appropriate to bring those conclusions back to the Scrutiny Board as, he maintained that:

- A. There were problems with the License itself:
 - a. The noise limits after midnight on Friday/Saturday/Sunday, and on Wednesday and Thursday, were not specific enough.
 - b. There was a loophole. Under condition PN1d, Glastonbury Festival Events Limited simply requested from the Licensing Authority, without the need for a License variation, the use after midnight of a sound system greater than 12kW.
 - c. There were no limits on low frequency ('bass') noise. The so called dBC limits needed to be implemented without delay.

- B. There needed to be a more robust approach from the Council:
 - a. The noise condition PN2, which was there to protect residents from any audible and discernible sound had been unofficially downgraded – it just needed to be an “unreasonable” sound (which by the Licence Authority’s own omission could not be enforced).
 - b. Continuous monitoring of sound needed to be extended and needed to be independent of the License holder.

- C. Reporting needed to be more transparent:
 - a. At the 2022 Festival there were 43 noise complaints from 29 residents and Mendip District Council officers evidenced at least six actual breaches of the License. Mr Hall enquired as to why these were not reported to the Scrutiny Board in the de-brief report?

Mr Hall then declared that it was heartening to know that there was now some recognition that something was wrong.

Mr Hall stated that, in the absence of any other suggestion, it was his intention to write directly to the new Unitary Authority and seek assurances that these issues will be addressed in the months ahead.

The Head of Community Health Services thanked Mr Hall for his comments and confirmed that the Scrutiny Board in November did support the officer recommendations to explore measures or restrictions to help address excessive loudness and low frequency. She confirmed that this work was being undertaken.

In response to Mr Hall's query regarding why the 43 noise complaints from 29 residents were not reported to the Scrutiny Board in the debrief, the Head of Community Health Services responded that the report by its nature was a summary. The emphasis of the summary report drew attention to the fact that *.....the noise levels and loudness did not drop away after the main stages..... and the high contribution of music noise and risk of bass beat adverse effects in 2022, and previously, strengthens the Council's viewpoint that more consideration needs to be invested to control the music noise.*

She stipulated that the officers were not in any doubt, supported by the Scrutiny Board, of the need for GFEL to have undertaken improvements and why it was brought to the attention of Scrutiny in November. She assured Mr Hall that work was progressing as they sought to establish better outcomes.

The Head of Community Health Services assured Mr Hall that a written response would be supplied to his question along with a written response to Cabinet.

Mr Hall ended his speech by saying that he appreciated the Scrutiny Board having engaged with his concerns and he thought that it seemed to be a Board which did well. He wished the members well in their future endeavours.

The Chair thanked the members of the public for coming to the Scrutiny Board meetings in order for to it to take their views into account.

He further thanked them for speaking to the Board about it and assured them that the Council would respond to their points, and he would be copied into the response.

	<p>Councillor Alison Barkshire asked if there was a sound expert who gave advice to the council in setting the sound restrictions.</p> <p>In reply to this query it was decided to be included in the written response.</p>	
5	<p>Previous Scrutiny Board Minutes</p> <p>The Scrutiny Board considered the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022.</p> <p>Councillor Lindsay MacDougall had proposed the following amendment on page 5:</p> <p><i>“...She said how a friend of hers had been attacked when she cycled there and was horrified at the state of the lane ...”</i></p> <p>Councillor Alan Townsend referred to page 9 and asked whether there was an action which should have been responded to?</p> <p>This section related to a resolution to the Glastonbury Festival Council De-Brief where it was resolved to request a written response to the recommendations from the Licensee.</p> <p>Councillor Townsend asked whether the request was actioned?</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the action was to request a response from the Festival and this had been made. She further confirmed that they are about to submit it or have just submitted it. She mentioned that this is something which is requested and provided every year.</p> <p>Councillor MacDougall proposed that the minutes of the meeting be approved. This was seconded by Councillor Inchley. This was put to the vote and declared to be carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022 be approved.</p>	Debbie Widdows
6	<p>Performance Review for SPARK Somerset Voluntary Sector Partnership Funding 2022/23</p>	

Jenny Harris from SPARK Somerset (a voluntary organisation which provided advice, guidance and training to the voluntary sector and community groups) made a presentation covering service performance for the year to date including the ongoing impact of the pandemic.

From April 2021, the Council entered into a 3-year funding agreement with SPARK Somerset to provide stability to their funding from the Council. This provided certainty over funding levels in the first year of the new Somerset Council who have agreed to honour this Service Level Agreement.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Projects' Assistant presented a report on core funding to SPARK Somerset of £31,500 for the financial year 2022/23 which provided an update on how the funds were used to provide support to the voluntary sector in Mendip, their residents, and communities.

This would provide certainty over funding in the first year of the new Somerset Council who had agreed to honour this Service Level Agreement.

It was pointed out that attendance on a couple of forums in Mendip were not well represented and the question was raised as to where the forums were held.

It was confirmed that they were online forums as well as in person forums the in-person forums were specifically in Chard, Taunton and Bridgwater. These were lottery funded. Which is the reason it looked as if the attendance was lower than in Mendip District Council (MDC).

The Volunteer Co-ordinator forum, which is a County wide forum, was held last year in Glastonbury. What SPARK would try to do for in-person attendance was to share them and distribute them around the County on a regular basis. The forum will be held in Sedgemoor next time and then will come back around to Mendip.

SPARK tried to rotate this to ensure that the public did not miss out.

It was questioned whether SPARK would continue to take their work forward into the new Unitary Council

	<p>Jenny Harris replied that they do have guaranteed funding for the next 12 months and will continue as they do now. Karen will still be an adviser to Mendip and there will be advisors in each area. The following email addresses were shared in order to be contactable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.sparksomerset.org.uk, • www.sparkachange.org.uk, • karen.leave@sparksomerset.org.uk <p>It was confirmed that SPARK have supported Local Community Networks such as the Frome pilot and working group</p> <p>The Chair raised the question of what the funding provided goes towards.</p> <p>Jenny Harris replied that the type of work they did was what the funding went towards, and suggested that SPARK could provide a list of what amount of money had come into the district as a result of the type of work they had done</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>Note the report and presentation.</p>	
7	<p>Performance Review for Citizens Advice Mendip Voluntary Sector Partnership Funding 2021/22</p> <p>The Project and Improvement Officer presented the report on Citizens Advice Mendip (a voluntary organisation comprised of services to provide additional support to some of Mendip’s most vulnerable residents and communities) on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who was unable to attend the meeting. She gave a presentation covering service performance for the year to date.</p> <p>The Project and Improvement Officer went on to say that she would take questions after the presentation and ask the CEO to provide an answer in writing before 1 April 2023.</p> <p>From April 2021, the Council entered into a 3-year funding agreement with CA Mendip which provided stability to their funding from the Council.</p>	

This provided certainty over funding levels in the first year of the new Somerset Council, who agreed to honour this Service Level Agreement.

The Chair requested to see the presentation at some stage when the CEO was recovered, as the Board would like to know what was happening in terms of the cost of living crisis and whether their service was under more pressure. For example, whether the Board should be recommending to the new Authority their need for more funding. Then, he maintained, further questions could be asked to obtain further information if required.

The Project and Improvement Officer reported that in terms of the future, the level of funding provided certainty over funding levels in the first year of the new Somerset Council, who had agreed to honour this Service Level Agreement.

The CEO provided some information, which was circulated during the meeting, regarding the Somerset Citizens Advice Offices considering a merger.

The issue regarding the roll out of the new telephone kiosks taking away the intimate face to face contact with people was raised.

It was confirmed that this project had just gone live but there was still a drop in service provided where face to face is available.

The question was asked whether going to Citizens Advice was via referral. For example, could someone, such as GP surgery, refer a person or did a person have to go through a kiosk?

It was confirmed that it did not have to be via a drop in at a kiosk. There was a website and a telephone line where they could get support. If the case was more complex then there was the opportunity of face to face if there was a need for it.

It was suggested to have a live chat facility on the website? This would be answered by the CEO in writing.

It was further requested to see detail about the council tax support and whether a report could be given on how this was working and how much was

	<p>going to the service itself. This would also be answered by the CEO in writing.</p> <p>The Chair pointed out that various Town Councils, for example, donate sizable amounts of money to Citizens Advice and it was questioned as to how much Local Government was giving. He made the point as to how that would fit in if there was a merger as those Authorities would need to know this information. A complete breakdown of the support was requested.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>To note the contents of the report and presentation.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Outreach-Inreach Service Update</p> <p>The Community Health Co-ordinator and Policy Officer presented a report which provided an update on Mendip's newly established Outreach-Inreach service aligned with the National Rough Sleeper Strategy, which aimed at ending rough sleeping for good.</p> <p>She explained that the Outreach-Inreach service's mission was to find the rough sleepers, engage them and build trust in a gentle way, and slowly in order to get them off the street. She pointed out that they were keen to get them into accommodation as quickly as possible.</p> <p>She further stated that the sites were visited frequently and within 48 hours of a report being received.</p> <p>The Community Health Co-ordinator and Policy Officer expressed that thereafter there was ongoing support for the client to assure them that their human dignity was respected and that this was successful so far.</p> <p>She further explained that the homeless health team had increased its provision base and they now had a prescribing nurse and a part time GP, which helped them in terms of systems thinking around what was available and how it all worked together. If a person had gone through the trauma of homelessness, there were usually a number of factors which brought them to that position in the first place. They were likely to have had lots of underlying needs which also needed attention.</p>	

One could not resolve one thing without ensuring you linked to the right support for those underlying needs whatever they were. This was often mental health, drug and alcohol related, or relationship breakdown such as divorce and job loss etc. They found themselves in a situation of not knowing what to do.

The Community Health Co-ordinator and Policy Officer reported that the total referrals received from April 2022 to January 2023 was 301 and the total rough sleeper verification was 86. She pointed out that some of the rough sleepers tried to stay under the radar and hid in places such as on the levels or in the woods and a fair amount of detective work was carried out to try and find people.

Questions were raised about how to contact Outreach-Inreach Services if someone was suspected of rough sleeping.

The Head of Service – Outreach-Inreach Services explained that there was a national service that linked directly through to the outreach service mailbox in Mendip (and every other outreach service in the country according to location) and which the service reported their follow up back to. The Department of Levelling up, Hosing Communities received monitoring reports on their [Streetlink](#) returns. [Streetlink](#) was provided by Homeless Link who also provided the quality control / audit around all street counts nationally.

The alternative to this was to email the outreach mailbox in Mendip, which was monitored daily, on outreach@mendip.gov.uk. Or to access this service, during office hours (8.30pm-5pm) call 01749 341666 and outside of office hours to call 0300 123 23 27.

The Community Health Co-ordinator and Policy Officer stated that they had published articles on the website and they highlighted how to get hold of the team. There were also signs in car parks of well known food providers.

It was pointed out that this could also be pushed through on Facebook and Messenger and the public in general were encourage to keep pushing the message to contact the team via Streetlink.

It was confirmed that there had been posts on Facebook giving out the contact details for Mendip.

It was pointed out that those who were helping were encouraging people to come to Mendip as they were a welcoming community. It was questioned whether there was any way that the housing team could encourage other communities to look after their own or to source alternative communities as Mendip were not the only community who might be welcoming.

The Community Health Co-ordinator and Policy Officer affirmed that this was a difficult balance between people who were highly at risk and prevention. Communities who were willing to help, and where there was help, attracted people. The Housing team were geared to moving rough sleepers forward from the position that they were in. She pointed out that they do encourage a more structured way of supporting people and particularly to involve the right service. She further requested that the public in general were the eyes and ears and to inform the Housing team straight away as the longer a person is left to fend for themselves on the streets the more they become entrenched in it.

It was questioned as to why the Housing team only provided a 5 day service.

The Community Health Co-ordinator and Policy Officer stated that the reason for this was the funding. She pointed out that the funding did not cover more than 5 days a week. She further pointed out that the Housing team would never send an individual member of staff out on their own. She stated that the government wanted to see more inreach and less outreach and the aim was to get people off the street quicker and prevent people being on the street and therefore staff would be able to spend more time in the office.

The Community Health Co-ordinator and Policy Officer further stated that they were a 365 day a week service and the out of office (OOO) duty team did cover it and if there was an emergency it was dealt with over the weekend. The Connect Centre (Elim) dealt with OOO emergencies and this has worked in practice. There is an excellent working relationship between the Connect Centre and the Housing team.

There was also the Dairy House project which was set up as a pilot project many years ago. They offered a much wider therapeutic environment, offering people something to do whilst they were there. There was added value at the farm as it could afford people time to take stock and see where next their path would lead. Most of the people they helped were living in the woods and this was why the team decided on a farm. The Dairy House was a Dutch owned farm. They had a vegetable project. Donations were through received through church donations but these had plummeted.

It was pointed out that there was a huge demand for accommodation. There was funding that the Housing team already had been given by Housing First which was provided by Connect Community Church. It was called Connected Housing. It had already expanded by 4 units this year and the aim was to keep on expanding it year on year. The team speculated that it would pick up the Housing First expansion elsewhere in Somerset. Housing First was for the people who were most entrenched with the most complex needs and there was no other solution whatsoever. It provided intensive support to an individual in a property that was generally provided by a registered provider, such as Social Housing. It puts the person first. If they were failing, the team keep trying. The service would always be there until the person no longer needed them. This has been highly successful.

The question was raised as to the service the Housing team was providing to the criminal justice scheme for people who are leaving prison and whether these people had an historic link to Mendip.

The Community Health Co-ordinator and Policy Officer confirm that it was for Mendip and for people who had a Mendip connection. However, it was pointed out that sometimes it was better if the funders were not in the location that they came from for reasons such as safety. This is not common but has been the case in the past.

Allison Barkshire proposed a recommendation that the Inreach-Outreach Service be made a permanent service rather than fixed term service and Lindsay MacDougall seconded it.

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the contents of the report be noted.</p> <p>That the Somerset Council consider making the Inreach–Outreach Service a permanent service rather than a fixed term service.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Updates from the Scrutiny Working Groups</p> <p>a) Climate and Ecological Working Group: Councillor Janine Nash (Lead)</p> <p>The Chair read out a statement from Councillor Janine Nash where she thanked everyone for allowing her to be part of this group.</p> <p>She also thanked the Councillors for their support, in particular Councillor Tom Ronan as well as the Officers, in particular, Hayley Warrens, Jacob Hall and Barbara Lakin.</p> <p>Councillor Nash further thanked Claire Malcolmson, Tracy Aarons, Andre Sestini and Jo Milling.</p> <p>The Climate and Ecological Working Group Officer gave an update on tree strategies and the Somerset energy plan. He mentioned that he would be presenting a final report to the group in March.</p> <p>A concern was raised as to whether a food strategy could be added to the new Council’s list of things to do to complement the National Food Strategy. It was suggested that having a food strategy at County level could help with that and this should absolutely be brought before the Scrutiny Board in the new County.</p> <p>b) Policies and Strategies Working Group:</p> <p>No update from the Policies and Strategies Working Group as the seat is vacant.</p> <p>c) Access Working Group: Councillor Phillip Ham (Lead) supported by Kelly Knight</p>	

	<p>The Principal Sustainable Travel & Tourism Officer gave her update on this Group.</p> <p>She explained that there was a lot of detail regarding the work of this entire group in the report which was given at the December Scrutiny meeting. Therefore this report was merely a summary.</p> <p>There were certain key actions with updates, namely:</p> <p>1) Funding for Active & In touch; The legal agreement had been completed and the funding issued; the services are secured for 3 years.</p> <p>2) Funding for Wells Trishaw Cycling With Age project; The legal agreement has been completed and funding issued; the trishaw has been purchased and the scheme will start early in the new financial year</p> <p>3) The Multi-User Path Project 5km of the Strawberry Line has been built. This means that access for over 60% of the route has been achieved. 3 crossings have been designed. Free bikeability courses have been made available across the district. 30 bespoke bike racks have been installed and improved access to the active travel infrastructure across Mendip is now in place</p> <p>d) Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage Working Group: Councillor Chris Inchley (Lead)</p> <p>The Chair thanked Jon Clarke, Francis Hayden and Adam Boyden. He acknowledged that together they had saved energy and money for Mendip.</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive wanted to make special mention of Nigel Woolcombe Adams as he was generous, intelligent and pragmatic. He was very involved in the community outreach and agreed to the pilot of The Dairy House. He left this legacy.</p>	
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There were 3 key areas which warranted updating, namely, place shaping, making places accessible and Mendip being a good and healthy place to live.

Stoke St Michael and good design coats work would now go forward into work and the new Council would carry this on.

Communities were enabled to support themselves. Holding street parties etc was now available on the website.

A lot of work had gone into the Local Community Networks. This would leave a legacy that would continue.

Another benefit from the District Council which would continue to support the community was Citizens Advice. The Council supported the people who give advice and the information that went out was streamlined.

There were a significant amount of volunteers giving specific people support.

These initiatives would all be lined together and brought as a package of sub workstreams to the Local Government Review (LGR) to feed into.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Chief Executive for her contribution to the working group.

e) Contracts Working Group: Councillor Barbi Lund (Lead)

The Principal Sustainable Travel & Tourism Officer presented the update on the Contracts Working Group.

She reported that the group had proactively reviewed a cohort of agreements, focusing on this with the largest remit and/or values. The Group had looked specifically at Waste services as well as the ground care and street scene functions within the IdVerde contract. In doing so, the working group had been able to satisfy that these contracts were working as the Council would expect and offered considerations for future contract reviews. During the latter phases of the Group, the focus returned to the Councils contracts register, where a far greater understanding of procurement was sought, as well

	<p>as the roles of the procurement panel within any purchase of service. A wider scrutiny of some of the smaller contracts were also looked at in order to ascertain whether these may have been able to be delivered differently.</p> <p>The Group was considered to have offered value to the processes of the Council and provided scrutiny to process and procures, which could be taken forward into the new Unitary Council for consideration.</p> <p>f) Glastonbury Town Deal:</p> <p>The Head of Service Planning and Growth presented her report on the Glastonbury Town Deal.</p> <p>She highlighted that the eleven projects within the Glastonbury Town Deal are making good progress following Government approval. The Scrutiny Task & Finish Group were instrumental in reviewing the business cases for all the projects. Planning permission has now been granted for the Sports Hub and Glastonbury Abbey projects.</p> <p>She further thanked the group.</p> <p>The Chair thanked The Head of Service Planning and Growth for all her hard work and staying with the project till the bitter end.</p> <p>Councillor Lindsay MacDougall, as a resident of Glastonbury, wanted to say a particular thanks to the Head of Service Planning and Growth because the Town Deal was all coming to fruition.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>None</p>	

The meeting closed at approximately 20:45 pm.

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 12 July 2022 in the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT commencing at 2.00 pm.

Councillors Present: Richard Pinnock (Chair) and Heather Shearer (Deputy Chair), Nick Cottle, Jon Cousins and John Greenhalgh

Online (Teams): Shane Collins

Officers Present:

Helen Bowen Democratic Services Officer
David Clark Head of Law and Governance Services and Monitoring Officer
Claire Dicken Democratic Services Supervisor
Debbie Widdows Democratic Services Officer

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned by
1	Election of the Chair The Monitoring Officer apologised for the delayed start. He said the first agenda item was the election of the Chair which, according to the Constitution, happens at the first meeting of the Standards Committee after the Council's Annual General Meeting which took place in May. He asked for nominations for the position of Chair. Councillor Heather Shearer nominated Councillor Richard Pinnock. This was seconded by Councillor Jon Cousins. There were no other nominations and Councillor Richard Pinnock was duly elected as Chair of the Standards Committee until April 2023.	David Clark
2	Election of the Deputy Chair Councillor Richard Pinnock then nominated Councillor Heather Shearer for the position of Deputy Chair. This was seconded by Councillor Nick Cottle. There were no other nominations and Councillor Heather Shearer was duly elected as Deputy Chair.	
3	Chair's Announcements The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He then spoke about the recent passing of Cllr Woollcombe-Adams and paid tribute to his fellow councillor. A moments	

	silence was observed to allow Members to reflect and remember Councillor Woolcombe-Adams.	
4	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Tom Killen and Liz Leyshon. Councillor Shane Collins was attending online via Teams.</p>	
5	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were none</p>	
6	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>Items not on the agenda None.</p> <p>Items on the agenda None.</p>	
7	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>Councillor Shearer proposed that the minutes of meeting held on 15 March 2022 be approved. This was seconded by Councillor Cottle and agreed unanimously.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings.</p>	Claire Dicken
8	<p>Model Code Endorsement</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer had prepared a report which said that following the Committee on Standards in Public Life's report into Local Government Ethical Standards (reported previously to the Committee), the Local Government Association (LGA) undertook consultation in Summer 2020 and issued a Model Code of Conduct for Elected Members in May 2021. The Monitoring Officers across the County took the opportunity to promote the model code within their organisations and to City, Town and Parish Councils within their area in the hope that, as far as possible, a single code could be adopted across all tiers of local government in Somerset and to support the transition to the new Somerset Council in 2023.</p> <p>The report continued that whilst moving to the new Model LGA Code of Conduct is not a mandatory requirement, a national single code for all elected Members, with clear wording, additional guidance, working examples and explanatory text introduces benefits for Councillors, Officers and the public.</p>	David Clark

The Model LGA Code had the benefit of written guidance that sits behind it. This guidance provides both those subject to the Code and those charged with assessing complaints, clear expectations and a commonly understood interpretation. This is something which has not been provided since the introduction of the Localism Act in 2011.

The Report noted that there were some omissions from the model code that it was felt to be prudent to address and listed a number of proposed amendments to the model code.

The recommendation within the report was that the Standards Committee:

1. Endorse the LGA Model Code with local variation (Draft Somerset Code of Conduct) as set out in this report and make a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Draft Somerset Code of Conduct for Mendip District Council.
2. Endorse the Draft Somerset Guidance and Process to accompany the Members Code of Conduct Complaint Form and make a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Draft Somerset Guidance and Process to accompany the Members Code of Conduct Complaint Form.
3. Endorse the Draft Somerset Code of Conduct Complaint Form and make a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Draft Somerset Members Code of Conduct Complaint Form.

On completion of the presentation, the Monitoring Officer clarified that all District and Parish Councils would adopt their own Code of Conduct but that for consistency, it was being suggested that Councils adopt the Model Code. Councils could make their own amendments, as was proposed in this report for Mendip District Council. The amendments were compiled by all the Monitoring Officers across the 5 councils and they have been approved by Somerset County Council at the Full Council meeting in May 2022.

In response to questions, the Monitoring Officer gave a definition of "trivial complaints" as those being made in a tit-for-tat way, as a response made to a complaint about a Councillor, rather than a standalone complaint.

It was proposed by Councillor Jon Cousins and seconded by Councillor Nick Cottle to endorse the recommendations.

A vote was taken and it was approved unanimously and

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>To</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorse the LGA Model Code with local variation (Draft Somerset Code of Conduct) as set out in this report and make a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Draft Somerset Code of Conduct for Mendip District Council. 2. Endorse the Draft Somerset Guidance and Process to accompany the Members Code of Conduct Complaint Form and make a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Draft Somerset Guidance and Process to accompany the Members Code of Conduct Complaint Form. 3. Endorse the Draft Somerset Code of Conduct Complaint Form and make a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Draft Somerset Members Code of Conduct Complaint Form. 	
<p>9</p>	<p>Independent Person Recruitment</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer presented a report regarding the recruitment of an Independent Person (IP), following the resignation of the existing IP in May 2022.</p> <p>The report stated that under the Localism Act, the Council is required to have at least one Independent Person. The Council decided when originally setting up the system to have one Independent Person with a reserve Independent Person being available from our Somerset Council Partners, if required.</p> <p>Each Member who is the subject of a complaint has the right to discuss the matter with the Independent Person, and the Monitoring Officer or his deputies has an obligation to consult the Independent Person on each case.</p> <p>An application pack for the role of Independent Person had been prepared and the opportunity was being advertised on the Council's website and in local newspapers.</p> <p>The report continued that Somerset County Council were also looking to recruit a Reserve Independent Person, therefore, both roles had been advertised as a single opportunity.</p> <p>The Recommendation within the report was:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That a recruitment process for a new Independent Person is commenced and the role of Independent 	<p>David Clark</p>

Person should be advertised on the Council's website and in local newspapers.

2. That Members note that in due course Full Council will be required to appoint the successful candidate.
3. Note that the position will be advertised jointly with Somerset County Council for their Reserve Independent Person and the remuneration of the Mendip District Council role will be £1,392 pa and £500 pa for the Somerset County Council role.
4. Delegate authority to the Head of Law & Governance Services and Monitoring Officer to undertake all steps necessary in relation to the recruitment process.

On completion of the presentation of the report, Councillor Heather Shearer wished to recognise the good work of Shirley Eden and hoped the Council would be able to recruit someone as good. There was concern that as the job was only going to last until the vesting day of the new Somerset Council, it may be difficult to attract a good standard of applicant. The Monitoring Officer advised that he had already spoken to a number of interested individuals and that the successful candidate would be in a good position to be retained by the new Somerset Council.

He advised that the position was already being advertised on the Council website, on various local council sites and on the "Indeed" job website.

It was proposed by Councillor Jon Cousins and seconded by Councillor Nick Cottle to approve the recommendations within the report.

A vote was taken and it was approved unanimously and

RESOLVED:

1. That a recruitment process for a new Independent Person is commenced and the role of Independent Person should be advertised on the Council's website and in local newspapers.
2. That Members note that in due course Full Council will be required to appoint the successful candidate.
3. Note that the position will be advertised jointly with Somerset County Council for their Reserve Independent Person and the remuneration of the

	<p>Mendip District Council role will be £1,392 pa and £500 pa for the Somerset County Council role.</p> <p>4. Delegate authority to the Head of Law & Governance Services and Monitoring Officer to undertake all steps necessary in relation to the recruitment process.</p>	
10	<p>Updates to the Constitution</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer had provided a report which set out amendments to specific elements of the Council's Constitution which have been made with delegated powers by the Monitoring Officer since the Constitution was last approved by full Council on 23 May 2022.</p> <p>In accordance with the Constitution these amendments have, where necessary, been developed in consultation with the following people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leader of the Council • The Chair of any Board or Committee affected by the change. <p>The report said that Mendip's Constitution had been amended at the following Sections in order to bring it into alignment with the make-up of the current arrangements for Cabinet:</p> <p>5.10.2 a Assets of Community Value Panel; to remove the Deputy Leader from the list of Members and to add the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Policy and Climate Change.</p> <p>5.10.2 b Phoenix Board; to remove the Deputy Leader from the list of Members.</p> <p>5.10.2 c Asset Management Group; to remove the Deputy Leader from the list of Members</p> <p>Members were asked to note the revised sections of the Constitution.</p> <p>Members noted the report.</p>	David Clark
11	<p>Gifts and Hospitality Annual Report</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer had provided a report which gave details of all entries in the Council's Gifts and Hospitality Register in respect of acceptance of gifts/hospitality made to both Members and Officers during the period of 1 June 2021 to 31 May 2022. It was for Members to note.</p> <p>The Chair asked that when the new Code of Conduct was</p>	David Clark

	<p>adopted, Members be reminded about the requirements to notify the Council of any Gifts or Hospitality offered and/or accepted and the criteria of the value of the gift that should be notified.</p> <p>Members noted the report.</p>	
	<p>The Monitoring Officer took the opportunity to give Members an update on the progress of collating and publishing the Parish Council Declaration of Interest forms which should have been published 28 days after the May election. Although this deadline had passed there had been good progress by Democratic Services with only a small percentage not received. A number had been returned due to errors or missing information.</p>	
12	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>Councillor Nick Cottle proposed that the meeting resolve to exclude the press and public. Councillor John Greenhalgh seconded the proposal, which was carried unanimously.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 13 of the agenda, on the grounds that exempt information (as defined in Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, as amended) of the following description is likely to be disclosed:</p> <p>Category 1 - information relating to any individual. Category 2 - information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.</p>	
13	<p>Register of Complaints Received</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer provided a summary of the Register of Complaints against Members received since the last meeting.</p> <p>He advised that there had been 8 complaints of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. In 5 of the cases the Councillor was found not to have breached the Code of Conduct and the complaints were closed. Another enquiry had not progressed as a formal complaint had not been submitted by the complainant and the case was closed. 2 cases remained open as investigations were ongoing.</p> <p>Members noted the report.</p>	David Clark

The meeting finished at approximately 3 pm.

DRAFT

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL
AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit & Standards Committee held in the Sedgemoor Room,
Bridgwater House, Bridgwater on Friday 24 March 2023 at 2.30pm**

Councillors Julie Pay (Chairman)
Present: Will Human (Deputy Chairman)
Hilary Bruce Alan Matthews
Mike Facey Lisa Methley
Liz Leavy

Town & Parish Council Representative Mr J Taylor

Apologies: Cllrs Lilley & Rodrigues and Mrs V Horman

42. MINUTES

The minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 13 February 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

43. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

44. PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

46. CONTRACT WAIVERS

The Committee received a report on the waivers, under £250,000, that had been approved by the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer during the last 18 months.

Members noted that 22 waivers had been granted totalling £1,036,269.80. Three of which had been for specialist vehicles. The Officer confirmed that since the report had

been published a further 3 waivers had been granted totalling £94,466.

Resolved:

To note the report.

47. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received an update on the internal audit activity undertaken by the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP).

They noted the audits had been completed since the last meeting, with the following assurances given:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| ▪ Firmstep | - Reasonable |
| ▪ Housing Rent Calculations | - Advisory |
| ▪ Business Support Programme | - Reasonable |

Resolved:

To note the update.

Cllr H Bruce joined the meeting.

48. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL OPINION REPORT 2022-2023

Members received SWAPs Internal Audit Annual Opinion and were advised that overall a reasonable assurance had been given and that no high corporate risks had been identified during 2022-2023.

Resolved:

To note the report.

49. OVERDUE SWAP AUDIT ACTIONS

The Committee received a report on overdue SWAP audit actions and again welcomed that there were currently no overdue high risk actions outstanding.

Resolved:

To note that there were no overdue high risk SWAP audit actions.

50. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022-2023

The Committee received the Annual Governance Statement which set out a review of the effectiveness of the organisations internal control, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Members noted that they were receiving this report earlier than they normally because all of the Somerset districts councils had agreed to sign off their own governance statements prior to vesting day.

Resolved:

To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2022-2023

51. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Members considered the report which gave an overview of the work of the Committee in relation to ethical standards.

They noted that 6 formal complaints had been made to the Monitoring Officer, These all related to town and parish councils.

The Monitoring Officer wished to thank the Committee, Mr J Taylor the Town and Parish Council representative and Mr G Lewis and Mrs V Horman the Independent Persons for all of their help over the years.

Resolved:

To note the report.

52. GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

The Committee received and an update regarding the registration of gifts and hospitality by Members and Officers.

They were advised that that there had been no declarations of gifts or hospitality recorded by Members since 1 December 2022 and no declarations from officers since the last report.

Resolved:

To note the report.

53. OFFICER REGISTER OF INTERESTS

The Committee received a report setting out an update on the Officer Register of Interests.

The Monitoring officer was pleased to report that interest forms had been completed by all of the Council's employees, with just the exception of those on long term sick.

Resolved:

To note the report.

In closing the meeting the Chairman wished to thank everyone for the support that they had given her and she wished everyone going forward to the new unitary authority good luck.

The meeting ended at 2.25pm.

CHAIRMAN

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL

SPECIAL AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit & Standards Committee held in the Sedgemoor Room,
Bridgwater House, Bridgwater on Thursday 9 March 2023 at 2.30pm

Councillors Present: Julie Pay (Chairman)
Will Human (Deputy Chairman)
Hilary Bruce Alan Matthews
Mike Facey Diogo Rodrigues
Liz Leavy

Town & Parish Council Representative: Mr Julian Taylor

Apologies: Cllrs Rachael Lilley & Lisa Methley, Mr G Lewis & Mrs V Horman

42. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

43. PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

45. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/2021

Members were presented with a report updating the previously audited Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021; this was due to the treatment of investment property income that meant that some of the 2020/21 along with the 2019/20 comparators required a change.

These were the final audited Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021.

Resolved:

1. To approve the change to the Statement of Accounts for the year 2020/21.
2. To authorise that the S151 Officer sign the Letter of Representation

46. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/2022

The committee received a presentation on the Statement of Accounts for 2021/2022 and the S151 officer highlighted certain areas of note contained within the accounts. It was noted that the accounts had now been audited by the Council's external auditors and have provided a formal opinion.

Resolved:

1. To authorise that the S151 Officer sign the Letter of Representation
2. To approve the Statement of Accounts for the year 2021/22.

47. AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT

This was a report presented from Sedgemoor District Council's external auditors Grant Thornton with one adjustment to be made to the financial statements that resulted in an adjustment in the council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement with the details detailed in Appendix C.

It was confirmed that after this meeting, it was anticipated that there would be 5 recommendations and these were detailed within appendix A of the report.

Resolved:

To note Grant Thornton's findings following their audit of the Council's financial statements for 2021/2022.

48. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Annual Governance statement for 2021/2022 as presented by the Responsible Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) was required to be carried out as a review of the effectiveness of the organisations internal control. The statement had been compiled based on the findings of a range of audit reports over the last 12 months, however it was noted that there were no additional projects or actions due to Local Government Reorganisation.

Resolved:

After consideration of the content, that the Annual Governance Statement as attached at Appendix A be approved.

49. VALUE FOR MONEY

Following a review by the auditors of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources with only one area of significant weakness highlighted; this being Treasury Management Activity which was not presented due to pressure of other work being undertaken as a result of LGR. It was noted that any recommendations would go forward for the new council to consider.

Resolved:

To note the report and issues highlighted.

50. ASSESSMENT OF GOING CONCERN STATUS

The report presented to the committee from the Section 1512 Officer was their assessment of the Council as a “Going Concern” for the purposes of approving the Statement of Accounts for 2021/22. It was noted that this assessment still needed to be undertaken even with the advent of the new authority as from 1 April 2023.

All assets, services and liabilities will be transferred to the new council and it was noted that all 5 of the authorities would be undertaking the same assessment.

Resolved:

To note the assessment made of the Council’s status as a “going concern” for the purposes of the Statement of Accounts 2021/2022.

The meeting ended at 3.45pm.

CHAIRMAN

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SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE ADVISORY MEETING

Minutes of the Executive Advisory Meeting held via Microsoft Teams on

Wednesday 20 March 2023 at 10.00am

This meeting will consider the reports listed on the Agenda and the final decisions will be taken by the Leader of Council under powers vested to the Leader as set out in the Council's Constitution

Councillors

Present:

Duncan McGinty	Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Gill Slocombe	Deputy Leader & Inward Investment & Growth
Mike Caswell	Infrastructure and Transport
Andrew Gilling	Housing
Mark Healey MBE	Commercial & Asset Management
Janet Keen	Communities & Wellbeing

Also Present: Cllrs Filmer & Redman

**50. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
(Agenda Item 1)**

None.

**51. MINUTES
(Agenda Item 2)**

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council to confirm the minutes of the Executive Advisory Meeting held on 8 February 2023 as a correct record.

**52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda Item 3)**

Cllr J Keen declared an other registerable interest in respect of Agenda Item 9, as she was a Council representative on the Homes in Sedgemoor Board until 31 March 2023.

**53. URGENT BUSINESS
(Agenda Item 4)**

None.

**54. PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME
(Agenda Item 5)**

No members of the public had registered to speak.

**55. CORPORATE DASHBOARD – QUARTER 3 (2022/2023)
(Agenda Item 6)**

Members received details of the last Corporate Dashboard report for Sedgemoor District Council and noted that future reports would be for the new council. They were advised that work was currently underway to align performance measures across the five existing councils and it was likely that the out-turn performance for 2022/23 would be included as a baseline in the performance reports for 2023/24.

The Corporate Performance Manager explained that he was pleased to report such fantastic performance with no high level actions or audit recommendations overdue and there were only a very few operational actions in progress, all of which were being well managed.

Executive members also noted whilst performance had dropped from 88% to 80% during quarter three there had been a considerable improvement during January and February.

Members thanked the Officer for all of his hard work and for the work done by the various departments in delivering the Council's services.

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council to:

Note the report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

**56. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 3 (2022/2023)
(Agenda Item 7)**

Members received details of the Corporate Performance Monitoring Report, including details of:

- General Fund and Retained HRA Financial Statement;
- Treasury Management Update;
- Aspen Housing & Development Ltd Monitoring;
- Procurement Plan
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) authorisations
- Human Resource Statement
- Risk Management – Quarterly Update
- Grants Awarded
- Northgate Yard
- Update on Planning Performance
- Homes in Sedgemoor's Critical PIs

The Section 151 Officer explained that Sedgemoor was in a good, health position and in joining the new council would be bringing significant balances. She believed that this

was a testament to the both the Executive and the Senior Management Team on how they had managed the finances over the last five years.

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council to:

Note the report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

**57. LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND 2022 AND 2023
(Agenda Item 8)**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing presented the report on entering into a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities in order to draw down Government funding to provide additional housing for refugees.

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council:

To approve the signing of an MoU with DLUHC for LAHF in order to receive the 22/23 tranche of funding before 1 April 2023.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

**58. ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION - HOMES IN SEDGEMOOR
(Agenda Item 9)**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing presented the report proposing amendments to the Articles of Association for Homes in Sedgemoor following a governance review.

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council:

To approve the amended Articles of Association for Homes in Sedgemoor to take effect from 1 April 2023.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

**59. ASPEN HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS PLAN
(Agenda Item 10)**

Members considered the Aspen Housing and Development Ltd. Business Plan 2023/24 and noted that the business was making a profit and was financially on target.

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council:

To approve the Aspen Housing and Development Ltd Business Plan 2023-2024.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

**60. ANNUAL WRITE OFF APPROVALS
(Agenda Item 11)**

The Leader of Council presented a report setting out details write off debts over £4,000 for the current financial year totalling £256,070.48.

Members noted that whilst quite a few debts were following deaths or insolvency, action could still be taken on written off debts that became collectable at a later stage.

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council:

To approve for write off those debts greater than £4,000 for the fiscal year 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix A of the report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

**61. ENERGY REFIT FRAMEWORK
(Agenda Item 12)**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing presented the seeking the approval of contractors who had tendered for an energy retrofit install service to carry out installations of measures to insulate and heat the homes of vulnerable, low income and able to pay households.

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council:

To approve the award of the contract to the accepted contractors.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

62. EXEMPT ITEM

The Executive Advisory Meeting unanimously recommended the Leader of Council to approve that the Press and Public are excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involves information which relates to the financial or business affairs of the Council defined as exempt by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

**63. CAPITAL INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF NEW COUNCIL HOMES – HAMP WARD
(Agenda Item 13)**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing presented the report outlining proposals to construct 11 new council homes.

The Executive Advisory Meeting recommended the Leader of Council:

To recommend FULL COUNCIL to approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

The meeting ended at 11.20am.

CHAIRMAN

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**SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL
GRANTS AWARD SUB COMMITTEE ADVISORY PANEL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Grants Award Sub Committee Advisory Panel
held remotely on
Monday 12 December 2022 at 2.30pm**

Councillors J Keen (Chairman)

Present: B Bolt
 J Cordiner
 P Costello
 G Godwin-Pearson
 C Riches

Officers Emmaline Kay – Grants Officer

Present: Lizzie Bull – Parks Assistant
 Dorothy O’Farrell – Legal Advisor to Committee

19. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Perry.

20. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 7 June 2022 and 19 July 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

21. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

23. PROJECT GRANTS

The Chairman explained that there was £810.00 of grant funding remaining and suggested that the four applications to be heard consecutively, followed by a discussion on how to distribute the available funds.

Benji Kingston

The Committee heard from Benji Kingston’s mother, who explained Benji had started his second year on the Royal Ballet School’s Mid Associate Programme,

in their specialist Boys Class. The lessons were held on Saturdays at the Royal Ballet School in London. The request was for £500 to help with the increasing costs of lessons, travel, and uniform.

Isabelle Curd

The Committee were informed of Isabelle's progression as a member of the Trampoline Team at Quayside Trampolining and Gymnastics Club. She had begun competing regionally, now progressing to compete nationally. The request was for £500 to help towards travel, kit and accommodation costs.

Seeds of Hope CIC

Kris Scotting explained to the Committee that Seeds of Hope CIC, a not-for-profit social enterprise, provided mental health support to the community through gardening activities and maintaining local community green spaces across the district for the wider community to enjoy and engage with. The request was for £2,500.

Burnham Book Festival

The Committee were informed of the request from a group of residents who had joined together to organise a literacy festival, connecting the local community with reading and writing. This was the second year of the festival being held. The request was for £800.

Members of the Committee, mindful of the fact that a balance of £810 was available, were originally minded to support all four applications by dividing this fairly between the four applications. However, following further debate, Members, conscious of the current mental health crisis facing the nation, resolved as follows.

RESOLVED:

To award Benji Kingston £205.

To award Isabelle Curd £205.

To award Seeds of Hope CIC £300.

To award Burnham Book Festival £100.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

The Chairman confirmed that there was now no grants funding remaining. As a result, the Grants Award Sub-Committee would no longer be able to consider Grant applications in this financial year.

24. RLT3 FUNDING

Lympsham Sports Club

Sally Ferguson spoke to the committee as the clerk of Lympsham Parish Council on behalf of Lympsham Sports Club. The request was for funding towards preparing the ground for foundations, as part of a wider project to build an extension, delivering improved changing room facilities to increase capacity and enable further community inclusion. The request was for a contribution of 80% which was £6,600, with the remainder funded by the Parish Council.

In order to ensure that the relevant RLT3 Funding was applied to appropriate projects before the end of this financial year, the Committee unanimously supported the application and agreed that the full amount of relevant RLT3 funding available be awarded as the request for funding satisfied the RLT3 policy requirements.

RESOLVED:

To award Lympsham Parish Council RLT3 funding of £7,712.78.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

Spaxton Sports Club

Cllr Bolt queried whether he had a declaration of interest to make as he had directed the club to the Parks Assistant as the Ward Councillor. The Legal Officer confirmed that he did not.

Members heard from Ben Rich of behalf of Spaxton Cricket Club regarding the success of the club and the hopes for getting more community involvement in cricket. The application for RLT3 funding was for a contribution towards the erection of essential Ball Stop Netting to the West Boundary of Spaxton Playing Field Cricket Ground.

The Committee supported the application and recognised the netting was essential to safeguard neighbouring properties.

RESOLVED:

To award Spaxton Parish Council RLT3 funding of £5,266.19.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

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

25. RLT2 FUNDING

Members received a report detailing the amount of RLT2 funding which remained for each Parish/town in the district and the applications that had been agreed in 2022.

RESOLVED:

To note the RLT2 funding granted in 2022/2023 and the amounts remaining for each Parish/Town Council.

In answer to a question on how unused amounts of RLT2 monies from one parish could be gifted to another, to enable them to complete a project, the Parks Assistant confirmed that this is possible where written consent is given from two neighbouring or close by parishes.

The Chairman thanked the Committee for their input and contributions towards leaving a strong legacy for the Council. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman were thanked by Members for their dedication towards the Committee over the years.

Meeting ended 3:31pm

CHAIRMAN

SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee held in a Virtual Meeting Room on Monday 20 March 2023 at 2.30pm

Councillors

Present:

Brian Smedley

Hilary Bruce

Bob Filmer

Liz Scott

Kathy Pearce

Barrie Crow

Liz Leavy

Graham Godwin-Pearson

Also Present: Jamie Jackson (SCC), Cllr Gill Slocombe

**1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN
(Agenda Item 1)**

Resolved

To appoint Cllr B Smedley for the duration of the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENSE
(Agenda Item 2)**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Rachael Lilley, Phil Harvey and Paul Fineran.

**3. MINUTES
(Agenda Item 3)**

The minutes of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Advisory Committee held on 10 January 2022, the Community Scrutiny Advisory Committee held on 23 January 2023 and the Corporate Scrutiny Advisory Committee on 30 January 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

**4. URGENT BUSINESS
(Agenda Item 4)**

None.

**5. PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME
(Agenda Item 5)**

None.

**6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda Item 6)**

None.

**7. SOMERSET SCRUTINY
(Agenda Item 7)**

The Scrutiny Manager from Somerset Council County gave an overview of the current Scrutiny arrangements at the County Council, and the task and finish group recommendations, which had established views and recommendations on how Scrutiny should function and operate post Vesting Day at Somerset Council.

The proposed scrutiny arrangements for Somerset Council from April 2023 were:

- Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee
- Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee
- Scrutiny for Policies, Corporate & Resources Committee
- Scrutiny for Policies and Communities Committee
- Scrutiny for Policies, Climate and Place Committee

Members understood that the working group's recommendations had included a dedicated scrutiny resource to support the five committees. It was confirmed that initially there would only be an interim staffing structure, with the hope to establish a dedicated resource later in the year.

The Committee welcomed the update.

Resolved

To note the report.

**8. SEDGEMOOR SCRUTINY
(Agenda Item 8)**

The Scrutiny Officer gave an overview of how Scrutiny began at Sedgemoor District Council in 2001, the system which predated, and how the current Scrutiny Committees had been in the present format since 2007.

Members were given scrutiny statistics and a summary of scrutiny topics covered within the last quadrennium.

Resolved

To note the report.

The Chairman of the Committee thanked the Committee Members, current and previous Chairmen, and officers involved in the Scrutiny Committees for their involvement over the years.

The meeting ended at 3.12pm

CHAIRMAN

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**Minutes of a Meeting of the Local Government Reorganisation
Implementation Board held 10am on the 21st of March 2023**

Luttrell Room, County Hall, Taunton

PRESENT:

Cllr V Keitch – Lead Member for LGR and Prosperity, Somerset County Council
(Chair)

Cllr Liz Leyshon – Deputy Leader, Lead Member for Finance and Human Resources –
Somerset County Council

Cllr Roz Wyke – Lead Member for Development and Assets, Somerset County
Council

Cllr Faye Purbrick – Somerset County Council

Cllr Frances Nicholson (Substituting) Somerset County Council

Cllr Mike Rigby- (Substituting) Somerset County Council

Cllr Mike Best-(Substituting) Somerset County Council

Cllr Sarah Wakefield (Substituting) Somerset County Council

Other Members Present in person: Cllr Tom Deakin

Other Members present – virtually.

Cllr John Hunt, Cllr Christine Lawrence, Cllr Bob Filmer, Cllr Brian Smedley, Cllr
Claire Sully, Cllr David Fothergill, Cllr Faye Purbrick, Cllr Leigh Redman, Cllr
Adam Boyden, Cllr John Wood-Cookman and Cllr Marcus Kravis.

1 Apologies

Apologies received from:

Cllr Bill Revans, Cllr David Fothergill, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts and Cllr John
Clark.

2 Declarations of Interest – Agenda item 2

Declarations of interest – none.

3 Minutes from the last meeting – Agenda item 3

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th December and 31st of
January 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Public Question Time (PQT) – Agenda item 4

The Chair informed the LGR Implementation Board that no public representations had been received by the submission deadline.

5 Programme Update- Agenda item 5

The Chair of the LGR Implementation Board, Cllr Val Keitch highlighted that the program is now marked as green overall and 66% of products are now delivered. The remainder were on track to be delivered; Service readiness is at 61% at the end of February. Somerset County Council had a visit from the Department of Levelling up Homes and Communities last week, who gave a glowing report on progress.

The Chair invited the LGR Programme Manager, Alastair Higton, to present the presentation highlighting; overall programme status of green also resources are green.

- The board were informed about the previous Amber RAG rating and it was explained how the programme has moved on to green.
- The workstreams are ready for vesting day and the change readiness continues to improve.
- The product deliver is on track there is one highlighted in red and mitigation are in place for this and will continue to monitor.
- A Service Readiness Checklist has been developed and in use since January 23. This will help provide crucial assurance to workstreams, the services and the programme that our services are ready to operate with continuity from Vesting Day, as part of the new Somerset Council. It is also a mechanism for services to use to raise any readiness issues that might need support or intervention, in order to be ready, and identify barriers to readiness that need resolving centrally.

The Programme Leader for LGR Sarah Hawkins highlighted the following:

- The day 1 readiness for vesting day and the vision and outcomes for day 1 and understanding the impact on customers and staff to manage.
- The Venn diagram shows individuals, customers and staff that the organisation is ready.

The Joint Lead for Customers, Communities and Partnership Sara Skirton highlighted the following:

- The customers will see one telephone number, single complaints policy, 19 customer access points, customer promise and standards.

- The customers on day 1 will hear the following natural language bot, empowered and trained staff ready to give the best customers services across the unitary function.
- The Staff and Member readiness and what they will see and hear with the transition support for the success for day 1 readiness with employee tool kits to support staff and managers.
- Peer network including tech champions, well-being ambassadors and other employee's support.
- Organisational readiness with the new leadership team in place, a new senior management structure, a new brand for Somerset Council, agreed the new model for ways of working for implementation after vesting day.
- A new operating model in place for vesting day.

The Programme Lead for LGR at Mendip District Council Elizabeth Dawson highlighted the delivery of the payroll structure for bringing all five councils into one for payroll purposes, essentially a safe landing point, but also to give staff a sense of belonging but ensuring that staff could get paid. The development of the structure prior and drawing the recruitment of Executive Directors and Service Directors.

A team was developed and set the principles to understand the future structure. Over five thousand staff would need to be placed in the structure briefing the senior management teams on the process and how it would look and ensuring the engagement and communication were key. FAQ are available on SharePoint and shows the structure and a directory is provided for staff to find their reporting lines. This is only a payroll structure and responsibilities will not change on day 1.

The Programme Communication Lead Steve Coomber informed the board staff surveys and track how sentiment is shaping and how staff are feeling about it and understand the New Council is ready for day 1. The last staff survey showed that 92% of the workforce of all five council agree to make the Council a success and 80% who had the knowledge around the move to Unitary Council. It was noted that 60% positively agree being part of the New Council.

The LGR Implementation Board proceeded to debate the report and invited comments from members and other members present, points raised included; Natural language bot can this be expressed differently; Amber rating the people workstream has been amber all the way through and averages on 50%. The team were thanked for the work and the progression that has been made, will the feedback go to members on how it has been after vesting day and the communications to members of the public. To send a briefing note out to members to keep them up to date. The responsibility to be present at Parish Council meetings and communicate and fortnightly with their Clerks and

explaining about what is happening moving to a Unitary Council. Is there a plan launch to the website before the 1st of April. Clear instruction of the day-to-day function to share with Parish Councils. In regard to the survey are we supporting the staff that may not have agreed or disagree. The out of hour systems in place and how to report issues. The stability for staff and the interim structure has there been communication to staff about a permanent structure.

Sarah Hawkins informed the board in the people workstream, currently the tier three recruitment being significant and deliverable for vesting day or part way through and progressing as planned. The amount of delivery going in for vesting day and ensuring everyone is ready. There are three areas that will be focused till vesting day.

The Programme Communication Lead Steve Coomber informed the board communication has been put in place on the new website with public information with council tax bills and measures in place of the interim period through the communication team and to respond to customers. All member briefing with town and parishes was also in place to ensure the communication is robust across all.

The Programme Director Alyn Jones informed the board the outward communication with Town and Parish Councils along with their clerks and checklist with a clear approach. The key areas are establishing the transition and transformation with a clear priority and building on the foundation that the Council had already begun. The next steps will be down to engagement and interim structures may be in place for some time and be based on the priority of the teams and functional areas. The Executive Directors will take the lead and tier four recruitment will take place in the next 3 to 6 months.

RESOLVED

That the LGR implementation Board note the programme update.

Risk update

The Chair of the LGR Implementation Board, Cllr Val Keitch, welcomed the LGR Risk Manager Angela Farmer to introduce the presentation highlighting;

- Where the risk had come from and the management of these and the progression made to date.
- Major review of the programme level risks in December and agreed in January resulting in 3 risks closed, 13 risks identified as risks to the programme.
- 50% of the programme level risks have been mitigated.
- The next phase of the program from a perspective of the program and looking at what those risks will be. On the 1st April with a small register, which is based on the work done today.

- From a strategic risk point of view, we are continuing with the Somerset County Council risks bar one and the one that will close obviously is the LGR 1.
- Identified 5 new risks that will be developing including housing, community resilience, staff resilience, waterborne risks and commercial investments. It was noted that a further risk around the voluntary and community sector may be added.
- Creation of the new Strategic risk register for Somerset Council already identified that a majority of current SCC strategic risks will move over. New risk areas based on the district strategic risks including housing, water borne risks, commercial investments, staff resilience and community resilience work to do with Executive Directors and Service Directors to support the development of these risks including what the risks are, scores, mitigation and ownership. This is expected to be completed by the end of April 2023.
- Creation of service level risk register for Somerset Council – bring forward the current district service risk registers and develop the service level risk registers for the new Council. These are expected to in place by the end of June 2023 but with ongoing monitoring and work as services align.
- Amalgamation of major project risk registers as needed. It is intended to work through these over a period 4 months, so that combined risk registers are in place by early August where necessary with clear understanding of ownership, monitoring and escalation routes.
- Ongoing Member participation so that they can seek assurance and scrutinise risks will include: SCC Audit Committee every other month, Major project programme boards, Performance, risk and budget monitoring board (joint officer and Member board) and Local Government Reorganisation Transition and Transformation Executive sub-committee.

The LGR Implementation Board proceeded to debate the report and invited comments from members and other members present, points raised included: the concerns around the volunteer section and taking the appropriate action as a risk. The Audit Committee will have one additional meeting during this course and risk will be continued to be identified. Concerned about some of the risk going from Red to Green.

The Programme Director informed the board Risk Management is making sure the mitigation is in place and that the team understand not only what that mitigation is, how it's monitored, and particularly a named accountable person for that risk. A service directory in place for the 1st of April that will take the lead on the engagement at a strategic level with the VCSFE and be able to work with that sector alongside the town.

The LGR Risk Manager Angela Farmer informed the board the risk owner makes those decision and perspective on how the risk have been mitigated, the risk team can advise on this.

RESOVLED

That the LGR implementation Board acknowledge the work done to date on the management of risks, noted the current programme risk position, the work that has been undertaken to deliver risk management for the New Council and transition.

Transition and Transformation Blueprint

The Chair of the LGR Implementation Board, Cllr Val Keitch, welcomed the LGR Programme Lead Roshan Robati to introduce the presentation highlighting;

- A plan that program in 2-3 tranches one, which was the focus on what needed to happen for vesting day. which is bringing more of the service alignment, making sure the teams are working as one team and that further alignment of the services and Tranche 3 which now we know it's a transformation.
- To maintain focus on planning and delivering the required transition, transformation, and change after Vesting Day to deliver the Local Government Reorganisation Business Case objectives, Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTEP).
- Highlighting the Council Plan Principles and Transition and Transformation Programme Principle.
- The move from Vesting Day onwards must be managed well. During the Transition and Transformation period and bring all service alignment, improvement, transformational and cost reduction activities across the Somerset Council together under a single programme.
- It provides a visible common plan and methodology that empowers whilst defining where accountability lies. It supports delivery of Somerset Council's priorities both in term of our capacity and ability to deliver.
- It is required to link the new council's operating model and emerging benefits strategy in an organisational framework to deliver the Council Plan and achieve the transformational potential of a single unitary council.
- The blueprint provides the detail necessary for officers, teams and Members to understand how the post-Vesting Day transition and transformation work is being delivered, see what is being delivered and monitor whether it is being done well.

The Programme Leader for LGR Sarah Hawkins highlighted the following:

- Programme principles aligned to Council Plan principles
- Transition period of up to 24 months. Single Transformation Programme for Somerset Council – running concurrently.

- A single board that will assure the delivery and the prioritisation of our transition program. The ongoing alignment as well as the priority transformation and improvement projects and programs Council wide. Bringing in adults, children's, public health and taking that holistic approach.
- Baseline of service's alignment on Vesting Day and transition activity planned by each service, to help define what transition activities are required and when.
- Programme Management Office built on LGR, Peer Review and other learning.
- Benefits Realisation Management for open and transparent delivery of financial and non-financial benefits of the programme.
- The benefits and opportunities with quality, transparency and accountability. This supports prioritisation of activity and allows difficult decisions to be taken transparently and with confidence. It enables the council to deploy limited resources (financial, people) on the right priorities at the right time.

The LGR Programme Manager Alastair Higton advised the board about the peer review, it forms a trio of plans. The operating model, when that's finalised, the blueprint summarises the benefits realisation is essentially delivering. Member physical engagement, participation is key, and this can be continued through transformation Executive Sub committees or the five scrutiny committees with also Audit and HR committee.

The LGR Implementation Board proceeded to debate the report and invited comments from members and other members present, points raised included: where will the transition, transformation Committee sit in the Scrutiny function. No mention of member in the principle and would be great to have this to value all 110 members to take part.

The LGR Programme Manager Alistair Higton advised the board that the transition, transformation committee board structure is still being determined how this will look.

The LGR Programme Manager Alyn Jones advised the board the overall program benefits map and the workaround transition and change as services transition in particular transformation that those are reported into the individual relevant scrutinise and clearly executive members and the administration would have a heavy hand in setting that direction first.

AOB –

The Chair highlighted the beginning of the board 18 months ago as Vice Chair and Chair was David Fothergill and thanked Cllr Faye Purbrick who led on the work initially before Cllr Val Keith took over in May 2022. The Chair thanked all staff for the hard work that had gone into the programme.

(The meeting ended at 11.45am)

Chair

JOINT SCRUTINY PANEL OF THE SOMERSET WASTE BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Panel of the Somerset Waste Board held via Microsoft Teams on 8th February at 2.00pm.

Present: Cllr Jo Roundell-Greene, Cllr Brian Hamilton, Cllr Michael Dunk, Cllr Harry Munt and Cllr Hilary Bruce.

Other Members Present: Cllr Sarah Dyke.

Officers: Mickey Green, Christian Evans, David Oaten, Jo Currie, Michael Cowdell, Mark Ford.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies received were Cllr Adam Boyden, Cllr John Hassall and Cllr Robin Bastable.

2. Declarations of Interest- Agenda Item 2

No declaration to declare.

3. Minutes from the previous meeting- Agenda Item 3

The Panel agreed the minutes from 7th December 2022 as an accurate record.

4. Public Question Time- Agenda Item 4

There were no public questions.

5. Recycle More Update- Agenda Item 8

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Head of Communications and Engagement Mark Ford to provide an update on Recycle More

The following was highlighted:

- The phased nature of the roll-out adds another layer of complexity. The longer the service in place, the clearer the long-term trends will be. Recycle More has reduced refuse/rubbish by around 20%.
- It has helped Somerset's recycling rate climb to 57.3% - its highest rate on record.

- Ensure that direct mailing is considered as part of the communications approach for future changes of this kind, subject to costs.
- SWP are in the process of distributing Service Guides to all residents and these will contain a collection day calendar.
- The Communication around the phased service changes were helpful for residents.
- The investment in good quality digital content, and time spent engaging/responding to comments helped deliver information and address concerns and this will remain a separate site on Facebook post vesting day.
- Make sure contingency planning and flexibility is in place before undertaking change of scale. Continued to recognise the value of appropriate level of communications and customer/data capability and resource.
- The improvements needed in the data held on communal collections.
- The Recycle More chatbot had limited success and SWP do not replicate in future change work - unless better iterations of the technology are available.
- SWP and SUEZ met regularly throughout. Meeting frequency varied with proximity to service changes and key milestones. This helped successfully manage the complex array of tasks and risks, allowed stakeholders to be updated milestones achieved. The only slippage was the communal phase that was supposed to be incorporated into Phase 4 (SDC) and the Schools Phase that was moved out of a Covid window.

The panel members asked the following questions: The general residual waste collection being moved to three weekly and the collecting of plastics physically being retrieved through the refuse collections. The textiles going into the residual waste at the kerbside and life expectancy on the blue bags. Additional black bins for larger families.

Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green informed the panel about separating the plastic materials from the kerbside waste and the wait for the composition analysis to retrieve the data. The challenges are clearly set out in the performance report with the details. The black bin request go through a triage process.

Somerset Waste Partnerships Contract Manager David Oaten informed the panel about the data analysis through the Waste transfer station due at the end march and contamination on materials and not being a good end product. Viridor are installing a new Shredder.

Somerset Waste Partnership Head of Communications Mark Ford informed the board that no issues have been reporting in regard to the wear and tear on the Blue

Recycle More bags and for request of a black bin through conversations and is on a long term.

The Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel considers and comments on the following recommendations in this report.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **Note the lessons learnt**

6. Flex Collect- Agenda Item 8

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Head of Communications and Engagement Mark Ford to provide an update on Flex Collect

The following was highlighted:

- Flexible plastics are a particularly difficult material to recycle, being low quality and made of many different plastic types. The national FlexCollect plastic recycling pilots is a great opportunity to take part in, learn from and help us achieve our aim of adding these materials to the kerbside collections in the future.
- SWP with WRAP conducted a small trial of collecting flexible plastics in 2015, covering 1400 households. The trial itself was successful, though participation levels were low.
- SWP are in the 'industrialisation' phase, and joining the pilot from April 2023, for 2 years. Five other local authorities are expected to join in this phase. 300-3500.
- Somerset has been chosen to represent a rural area with some levels of deprivation. The pilot area to be chosen needs to take this into account. Due to space constraints and capacity issues at the depots the pilot will need to be run from Evercreech Depot.
- Stage 2 areas will be determined at a later point and is not contingent on the stage 1 area chosen.
- Stage 1: Small pilot of 3,500 properties to run for 1 year.
- This will allow us to trial the collection system and learn lessons. Stage 2 the pilot will be extended to around 15-20,000 households enough to take it to a wider range of properties and learn from that.
- Residents will receive clear guidance developed by WRAP on what can and can't be accepted. Households involved in the pilot will receive a teaser leaflet 4 weeks ahead of the start, a reminder leaflet 2 weeks ahead of the start and a

'nudge' leaflet around 6 weeks post-start date. SWP will seek to apply the lessons learnt from the Recycle More roll-out test-driving bags with community champions.

- An information sheet will be circulated about the phased approach to members.

The panel members asked the following questions: Welcomed the pilot project and asked about who was funding the projects; the protocol for collecting soiled plastic and the contamination or issues around this and the quality of the product.

Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green informed the panel that the Government funding to fund this project and closely working the Waste and Resources Action Programme. The Plastic trialing is also down to the producer package responsibility and following the final review of the first phase no issues were reported about the processes or the quality.

The Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel considers and comments on the following recommendations in this report.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **To endorse the proposed approach to the flexible plastic pilot.**

7. Reuse and Community Action Group- Agenda Item 8

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Head of Communications and Engagement Mark Ford to provide an update on the reuse and Community Action Group

The following was highlighted:

- Delivered in partnership with Resource Futures, Fixy is supporting and promoting the repair and reuse of electricals and electronics throughout the county. It has been taken forward with grant funding from the Ecosurety Exploration Fund, the availability of which made this the priority reuse action.
- A popular strand of its work has been Fixy 'tech amnesties' – collecting unwanted tech items for refurbishment, data-cleansing, and redistribution to good causes by project partner Donate IT. Anything that cannot be fixed is recycled.

- SWP have recently sent a follow up survey to members of the public who had completed a general Fixy survey and agreed to be contacted again about the project. From this we can track attitudes on reuse and repair.
- The initial responses are showing very positive results: More than 90% saying they are very or quite likely to get something repaired for reuse. 60% plus saying they felt better informed about how and where to get things fixed, more than 50% saying they now think more about buying refurbished or second-hand items.
- Funding for Fixy formally runs out at the end of December. However, SWP have reached agreement to 'stretch' remaining funding to keep the service going until the end of February 2023.
- The aim is to develop a community group network with designated coordinators to help groups develop and expand, work more efficiently, collaborate better, strengthen community cohesion, facilitate skills share and maximise existing assets in the region.
- Resource Futures have successfully set up and managed CAGs in Oxfordshire and Devon. They also conducted research in Somerset whilst developing the proposal and found that there is a clear need and support from groups for the project. Developing a Community Action Group network will support community projects to reduce, reuse, recycle, share, swap, mend and compost.
- This will involve the recruitment of two community development managers to cover the whole county, and a CAG network officer to provide administrative support. Resource Futures will manage the project with support from SUEZ and SWP. There will also be a small grant fund to support groups with projects.
- The SWEEP fund is a joint fund developed by SWP and SUEZ, which is a behavioural change fund ringfenced from income from sales of materials for recycling.

The panel members asked the following questions: commented about the project helps divert the waste from landfill. The starting of a project in Frome for recycle Bikes and the community group involved would like to receive more bikes to fix and reuse.

Somerset Waste Board Managing Director Mickey Green informed the panel that Viridor sold part of their business and Biffa were the buyers. SWP have met with the Strategic Managers of Biffa to discuss the waste reduction going to landfill. There is a bike reuse shop in Wellington and Taunton and to liaise with others for the project in Frome.

Somerset Waste Partnerships Contract Manager David Oaten informed the panel that the operational part with Biffa there is a meeting to take place at the end of February and discussion about reuse shop in Somerset that will offer repair may happen.

The Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel considers and comments on the following recommendations in this report.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **Notes the progress made in the reuse and Community Action Groups**

8. Somerset Waste Board Business Plan 2023-2028 - Agenda Item 9

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green to provide an update on the Somerset Waste business plan 2023-2028.

The following was highlighted:

- The annual Business Plan sets key aims and priorities for Somerset Waste Partnership for the next 5 years, with a particular focus on the coming year. It may be revised if this is necessary to align with the Somerset Council County Plan.
- The Government published their response on Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) setting out how they intend it to work. Key points of the proposals are: Timetable, What was included, deposit, expected impact, Return points, enforcement, impact on kerbside collection.
- DRS will be an 'all in' type scheme covering plastic (PET) and Steel and Aluminium beverage cans up to 3 litres in volume. Glass will not be included in England or Northern Ireland but will be included in Wales and Scotland. Multi-packs are included. Things drunk inside pubs, cafes and restaurants don't need the deposit. Not taking glass as Defra feel this will add increased handling costs and equipment complexity (and concerns that what they collect will be worse quality than how we collect it at the kerbside).
- Government expect DRS to increase capture of in scope packaging from 70% to 90% within 3 years of scheme launch. Govt expect littering of in-scope packaging to decrease by 85% after scheme launch. Penalties on the DMO if they don't reach this level.
- This should help tackle littering (though we'll need to collectively think about what it means for growing on-street recycling), but it will cost us – we will lose the revenue from this high value material and there is no corresponding

efficiency in collection. Welsh research suggests each Local Authority could lose almost £100k.

- The composition and participation analysis we're undertaking in the next few months should help us understand the picture better.
- Action 4.2 in the Business Plan sets out SWP plan to review alternative fuels. Following the trials that took place in 2022/23 on using Hydrogenated 6 Vegetable Oil in the fleet, it has been decided not to move to develop a business case for using these fuels at this stage.
- Joint work SWP is participating in to support the development of a food strategy, finalisation of our contract with Biffa meaning SWP can finally work with them on reuse at HWRCs. Agreed funding for the Community Action Groups to support a growth in reuse and success in securing a place on the national flexible plastics trial.
- The need to review the business case on PV panels at two of our depots given price changes whilst we have been delayed in finalising this
- SWP joint success (working with economic development colleagues) in securing funding for a Green Business Support pilot.
- The need to review if and how SWP charge developers for costs associated with the bins and boxes for new housing, as many other authorities do - Noting the work needed to be undertaken in relation to branding as we become part of Somerset Council and hence remove the separate identity of SWP in order to improve transparency and accountability.

The Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel considers and comments on the following recommendations in this report.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **Approves the draft Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2023-28, noting that the format and approach to business planning may change in Somerset Council.**

9. Performance Monitoring Report Q3 October 2022- December 2022- Agenda Item 6

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director, Mickey Green, to provide an update on the performance report for performance monitoring report Q3 October 2022- December 2022 and compares these to the same last year.

The following was highlighted:

- SWP overall recycling rate continues to improve compared to last year (up 0.73% to 57.31% from 56.58%).
- For Q3 2022-23, almost 96.2% of materials stayed in the UK, with the amount that was reprocessed in Somerset decreasing to 50.0%, mainly due to reductions in garden waste tonnages at this time of the year, all of which is composted within the County.
- In addition to SWP corporate risk register we maintain a detailed risk register for Covid-19. The separate Recycle More risk register is now closed, and any remaining open risks incorporated into the main register.
- The expanded collections were introduced to the 273 schools in the county who have their waste services provided by SWP.
- Viridor/Biffa: As updated to the Board in December, the services provided through the Core Services Contract (Recycling Sites, Compost Sites, Walpole Anaerobic Digester & closed landfill management) was expected to transfer to Biffa shortly. It can now be confirmed that the contract novation has been completed. This allows greater control over future operational standards and presents the opportunity to formally discuss service enhancements & developments with Biffa. Now Biffa
- SUEZ/Veolia: As expected SUEZ Recycling & Recovery UK Limited re-joined the SUEZ Group after an offer of £2bn was matched to buy the business in the UK, with the sale finalised in December. Whilst the new group remains called SUEZ it is no longer a French stock market listed entity, but instead majority owned by a number of corporate investors (Meridiam and GIP)

Somerset Waste Partnership Strategic Manager Michael Cowdell highlighted.

- SUEZ commenced the waste collection contract in 2020. At contract commencement this required all waste collection staff to transition from Kier to SUEZ, a new organisation with different culture, values and working processes.
- Contract commencement coincided with the first national Covid -19 restrictions, the implication was that the hands-on induction of new starters as well as the scheduled culture change activities were delayed or only partially implemented.
- This change programme resulted in the redesign of over 600 collection rounds, from 5 (redesigned/rebuilt operating centres and represented a considerable challenge both in planning, communication, deployment and operation of the new service.
- There was tragic accident outside the Evercreech Depot on the 4 January involving a member of the public. The accident resulted in a road closure that

affected the recycling operation at the depot. Incomplete services effected just under 3000 properties for that day were suspended and recollected on their next collection day.

- Improvements with software systems and processes have now been specified to allow the timely identification and escalation of repeatedly missed collections. Our software developers are incorporating these improvements in both SWPs and SUEZ's systems and we expect to go live with this during April/May 2023.

The panel members asked the following questions: the figures in Mendip regarding the Fly tipping are higher than the other District and understanding the reasoning behind this. An explanation about Carbon Capture the RAG rating is highlighted as Green however the number of drivers were low against the Plastic collection trial. Could figures be shared of the total carbon capture and savings at the landfill sites.

Somerset Waste Partnerships Contract Manager David Oaten informed the panel historically fly tipping in the Mendip area is the same area that has become a hotspot and the situation has not changed over time. The green RAG rating are the admission target and the CO2 emissions are not reported however Viridor are putting some matrix's together in April and will be reported through the futures reporting arrangement.

The Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel considered and commented on the following recommendations in this report.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **Note the performance results in the Third Quarter 2022-23 Performance Report.**
- **To note the additional report- Key performance Indicators Review (Appendix 2)- updates for Q3**

10. Financial Performance Update 2022/2023 and Draft Annual Budget 2023/2024

The Chair invited Strategic Finance Manager, Christian Evans to provide a presentation and update the panel on the Performance Update 2022/2023 and Draft Annual Budget 2023/2024

The following was highlighted:

- Districts reporting updated forecast underspends figures for full year.

- Based on actual tonnages to November and forecasts for a fully rolled out service.
- Overall District predicted saving £1,635k District Recycle More savings are £1,149k, other variances for Districts is mainly £438k saving on Covid costs. Materials income has reduced significantly due to price reductions and is expected to remain at this level for the next quarter, this has reduced the saving to Districts compared to the last report by £300k.
- Overall County predicted saving £973k - £935k Recycle More saving.
- Equalisation fund estimated at £582K surplus for 22/23.
- The waste Budget for 23/24 now finalised subject to approval by Full Council, AFRs totalling £5.9m.
- £3.5m Inflation on the disposal contract - Baxter amended to 13%, RPI 12%, CPI 10% (1% lower than previous budget).
- £2.1m Inflation and housing growth on the collection contract inflation.
- £0.3m for increase in waste volumes for housing growth on the disposal contract.
- £3.1m Recycle More savings, £1.1m Capitalise bin/box delivery (like most districts already do), £0.6m Removal of Covid-19 measures.
- £0.4m Recycling revenue 100% - No equalisation reserve and £0.3m Increased fees & charges in line with inflation.
- Highlighted the draft budget figures in the report.
- The outstanding remand to sign off of MTFP from Executive and Full Council in February.
- The pay awards and utilities increase not yet included
- Disposal contract inflation not confirmed until March (as usual, estimate made)
- Potential legislative change: HWRC charging: £300k+ and POPs (tbc)
- Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility and consistency (food) appear more likely and therefore could be £millions extra income, though not until 2024/25 at the earliest.

The Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel considers and comments on the following recommendations in this report.

That the Somerset Waste Board: -

- **Notes the summary financial performance for 2022/2023 to the end of month 9 (April – Dec) and the potential outturn position for each partner authority.**
- **Considers the budget for 2023/2024.**

- **To discuss the Confidential Presentation.**

Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider passing a resolution having been duly proposed and seconded under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting, on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:

11. Any other urgent items of Business

Lunch on Friday after the Board and form part of the Climate and Place scrutiny Proposed to be open and transparent.

Cllr H Bruce thanked the SWP Managing Director Mickey Green and the team for all the work of the Joint Scrutiny Panel of Somerset Waste Board.

(The meeting ended at 15.44pm)

CHAIR

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THE SOMERSET WASTE BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Somerset Waste Board held in the Luttrell Room County Hall on 10th February at 10.00am

Present: Cllr Sarah Dyke, Cllr Peter Goater, Cllr Tom Ronan, Cllr Tin Kerley, Cllr Janet Keen, Cllr Dixie Darch (Substitute), Cllr Sarah Wakefield (Substitute) and Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts

Other Members Present: Cllr Andy Kendall and Cllr Marcus Kravis

Officers: Mickey Green, Christian Evans, David Oaten, Jo Currie, Michael Cowdell, Mark Ford and Paula Hewitt

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies received were as follows:

Cllr Dave Mansell-Cllr Sarah Wakefield Substituting
Cllr Andy Sully- Cllr Dixie Darch Substituting
Cllr Andrew Gilling

2. Declarations of Interest- Agenda Item 2

No declarations to declare.

3. Minutes from the previous meeting- Agenda Item 3

The Board agreed the minutes and Confidential minutes from 9th December 2022 as an accurate record.

4. Public Question Time- Agenda Item 4

There were no public questions.

Feedback from the Joint Scrutiny Panel of Somerset Waste Board

The Chair Highlighted the feedback that was discussed at the Joint Panel of Somerset Waste Board on Wednesday.

- The Panel welcomed the report for Recycle More Lessons learnt and commented on the life expectancy of the blue bags and discussion about the textile that goes into residual waste.
- The Panel welcomed the pilot trial of Soft Plastics highlighting if there were contamination issues that may arise.
- The Panel welcomed the reuse and Community action groups and discussed the community groups that were available for bike projects.
- The Panel welcomed the Business Plan.
- The Panel welcomed and commented on the fly tipping highlighted in the Performance report and to see figures on the Carbon capture in the future.
- The Panel welcomed the Finance performance update.

5. Recycle More Update- Agenda Item 8

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Head of Communications and Engagement Mark Ford to provide an update on Recycle More

The following was highlighted:

- The phased nature of the roll-out adds another layer of complexity. The longer the service was in place, the clearer the long-term trends would be. Recycle More has reduced refuse/rubbish by around 20%.
- It has helped Somerset's recycling rate climb to 57.3% - its highest rate on record.
- Ensure that direct mailing is considered as part of the communications approach for future changes of this kind, subject to costs.
- SWP are in the process of distributing Service Guides to all residents and these will contain a collection day calendar.
- The Communication around the phased service changes were helpful for residents.
- The investment in good quality digital content, and time spent engaging/responding to comments helped deliver information and address concerns and this will remain a separate site on Facebook post vesting day.
- Make sure contingency planning and flexibility is in place before undertaking change of scale. Continued to recognise the value of appropriate level of communications and customer/data capability and resource.

- The improvements needed in the data held on communal collections.
- The Recycle More chatbot had limited success and SWP do not replicate in future change work - unless better iterations of the technology are available.
- SWP and SUEZ met regularly throughout. Meeting frequency varied with proximity to service changes and key milestones. This helped successfully manage the complex array of tasks and risks, allowed stakeholders to be updated milestones achieved. The only slippage was the communal phase that was supposed to be incorporated into Phase 4 (SDC) and the Schools Phase that was moved out of a Covid window.

The Board members asked the following questions: the lessons learnt around the behaviour changes. The relationships with other authorities and how these relationships can be built on to help and teach others; through the lessons learnt has data been provided with the residents that are not participating in the Recycle More; The Calendars through feedback were useful and it was a good approach to re-introduce these in the future. The communal properties had been an ongoing problem and SWP need to have an approach to how this can be resolved. Debris on the roads and pavements left by SWP. The Social media engagement and the Facebook question and answer forums understanding why the Q&A will not be continued.

The 20% of reduction in reuse rubbish with the rollout of Recycle More.

Somerset Waste Partnerships Head of Communication and Engagement Mark Ford informed the board that the lessons learnt through Recycle More was the big change to residents' daily routine however the prior communication helped and the clear messaging about concerns and the encouragement from the communication team about trailing the Recycle More and those concerns did not continue once residents started the roll out. The Social Media communication worked well and a lot of engagement through social media now the roll out has been successful the Q&A has become more of a quieter platform to use for communications.

Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green informed the board about the behaviour change with the Recycle More project and the planning and operations, resources with also learning from the other authorities. Supervision and monitoring continue on the debris left from the recycling lorries on the road or pavement. With new building contractors and developing of the communal areas hoping that they would be developed for collections in the future. Improvements do continue and areas to focus on in the future.

The Chair thanked Mark for sharing the lessons learnt and reflecting on the service quality.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **Note the lessons learnt.**

6. Flex Collect- Agenda Item 8

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green to provide an update on Flex Collect

The following was highlighted:

- Flexible plastics are a particularly difficult material to recycle, being low quality and made of many different plastic types. The national FlexCollect plastic recycling pilots is a great opportunity to take part in, learn from and help us achieve our aim of adding these materials to the kerbside collections in the future.
- SWP with WRAP conducted a small trial of collecting flexible plastics in 2015, covering 1400 households. The trial itself was successful, though participation levels were low.
- SWP are in the 'industrialisation' phase, and joining the pilot from April 2023, for 2 years. Five other local authorities are expected to join in this phase. 300-3500.
- Somerset has been chosen to represent a rural area with some levels of deprivation. The pilot area to be chosen needs to take this into account. Due to space constraints and capacity issues at the depots the pilot will need to be run from Evercreech Depot.
- Stage 2 areas will be determined at a later point and is not contingent on the stage 1 area chosen.
- Stage 1: Small pilot of 3,500 properties to run for 1 year.
- This will allow SWP to trial the collection system and learn lessons. Stage 2 the pilot will be extended to around 15,000 -20,000 households enough to take it to a wider range of properties.
- Residents will receive clear guidance developed by WRAP on what was acceptable to be collected. Households involved in the pilot will receive a teaser leaflet 4 weeks ahead of the start, a reminder leaflet 2 weeks ahead of the start and a 'nudge' leaflet around 6 weeks post-start date. SWP will seek to apply the lessons learnt from the Recycle More roll-out test-driving bags with community champions.

- An information sheet will be circulated about the phased approach to members.

Somerset Waste Board Managing Director of Somerset Waste Board Mickey Green invited the Project Delivery Manager of Flex Collect Oliver Morrell.

Project Delivery Manger of Flex Collect Oliver Morrell highlighted the following:

- The project has been going for three years with £2.9m innovative project funding to provide evidence to support kerbside collection of flexible plastic packaging.
- Piloting kerbside collections and recycling for flexible plastic packaging
- Nine individual local authority pilots covering a range of rurality's, social-economics, collection methods, and service offerings.
- Most extensive flexible plastic packaging kerbside collection trial ever undertaken in UK.
- Stakeholder Panel and the cycling of the project placed on the market collections, the treatment and sorting.

The aim of the FlexCollect for the future highlighted as follows:

- Help industry and government prepare for the rollout of flexible plastic packaging municipal kerbside collection by 2027
- How to incorporate into existing collection services, likely volumes, participation and end markets
- Understand operational issues, communication approaches, and cost throughout the system and consider single use bags.
- Share learnings and create best practice guidance for local authorities to inform the value chain and any other leanings necessary.
- Highlighted how the project would work for example expending the trail model and experiment during the early stages and build on the finding through the project.
- Pioneers and the 5% of households in the first year and 25% in year two and up to 100% in three years
- The process and the involvement highlighting in the presentation onboarding of the recruitment, 5% Experiment, 25% Refine and the 100% delivery phase of the Flex collect.
- Three projects have already started covering 2,000 properties in Cheltenham Borough Council, South Gloucester Council and 7,000 properties in Maldon District Council twin stream authority highlight the collection methods, rurality and deprivation.

- Somerset to be rolled out in the rural areas, material collections and material PE/PP makes up the majority of flexible plastic covers and did not include "Wet" packaging for example pet food and baby pouches. Materials that would be collected included bread bags, frozen food bags, salad bags, cheese wrappers, crisp packets and confectionary wrappers. A graph showed the percentages currently been collected and low level of contamination.

The Board members asked the following questions: the weight of 300grams per bag and how many bags per household collection. Explanation of where cling film may go as this is both stretchy and tears; the £2.9 million for the project how much would the Somerset project have out of this; beyond the three-year trail what will be the expectation and to have tonnage figures available from this trial; The process of the plastic collections and is the expectation that residents have to wash and clean the plastic prior to kerbside and is the bag provided as part of the project a single use bag and could it be reused; understanding of the end uses from the plastics; was there an affect on the incineration contract as the waste collection will be diverted to different avenues; Companies thinking about the change of packaging and the dry pet food bags.

Project Delivery Manager of Flex Collect Oliver Morrell informed the Board that one bag is supplied per household and the currently the project is around 40%-60%. The littering from the bags or bad weather conditions is not something that has been reported on as of yet or from the local authorities that are in the trial. The Project for Somerset will be fully funded and each individual authorities have different requirements therefore have different amounts of funding that may cover part of the delivery of the project, operations and driver services and the project will be running to 2025 with the view it will then be taken on.

The residents will have to rinse and dry the plastic packaging this will be part of the communications prior to the trail. There will be a delivery on the first delivery and then will not be replenished unless the residents have made a request. The primary treatment solution will be recycling, where options include both mechanical and chemical recycling and seeking to avoid down-cycling (using the material to make benches). Secondary options would send materials to be used as Solid Recovered Fuel, which would be used only as a last resort. Reprocessing within the UK will be prioritised; however, it may be necessary to process some material in EU facilities, particularly where technology is not yet commercially available in the UK. Materials arising from the trials will not be sent outside the UK or EU for sorting/reprocessing. The wet food pouches are not able to be recycled currently however they did provide less carbon footprint than food tins.

Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green informed the board that for the flex collection planned comparison analysis is due to take place and therefore will have a understanding of tonnages. In regard to the incineration diversion there would be no change to the contract.

Somerset Waste Partnership Contracts Manager David Oaten informed the panel about the ongoing negotiation with Viridor and with the Flex Collection project being trailed in Somerset and it was noted that it would not affect less waste going into the incinerator and was unlikely to affect the contract in place.

The Chair thanked the Contracts Manager for the presentation and the engagement of the Flex Collect and the exciting times ahead in Somerset for the project trail to start and the process.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **Endorse the proposed approach to the flexible plastic pilot.**

7. Reuse and Community Action Group- Agenda Item 8

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Head of Communications and Engagement Mark Ford to provide an update on the Reuse and Community Action Group (CAG).

The following was highlighted:

- Delivered in partnership with Resource Futures, Fixy is supporting and promoting the repair and reuse of electricals and electronics throughout the county. It has been taken forward with grant funding from the Ecosurety Exploration Fund, the availability of which made this the priority reuse action.
- A popular strand of its work has been Fixy 'tech amnesties' – collecting unwanted tech items for refurbishment, data-cleansing, and redistribution to good causes by project partner Donate IT. Anything that cannot be fixed is recycled.
- SWP have recently sent a follow up survey to members of the public who had completed a general Fixy survey and agreed to be contacted again about the project. From this we can track attitudes on reuse and repair.
- The initial responses are showing very positive results: More than 90% saying they are very or quite likely to get something repaired for reuse. 60% plus saying they felt better informed about how and where to get things fixed,

more than 50% saying they now think more about buying refurbished or second-hand items.

- Funding for Fixy formally runs out at the end of December. However, SWP have reached agreement to 'stretch' remaining funding to keep the service going until the end of February 2023.
- The aim is to develop a community group network with designated coordinators to help groups develop and expand, work more efficiently, collaborate better, strengthen community cohesion, facilitate skills share and maximise existing assets in the region.
- Resource Futures have successfully set up and managed CAGs in Oxfordshire and Devon. They also conducted research in Somerset whilst developing the proposal and found that there is a clear need and support from groups for the project. Developing a Community Action Group network will support community projects to reduce, reuse, recycle, share, swap, mend and compost.
- This will involve the recruitment of two community development managers to cover the whole county, and a CAG network officer to provide administrative support. Resource Futures will manage the project with support from Suez and SWP. There will also be a small grant fund to support groups with projects.
- The SWEEP fund is a joint fund developed by SWP and Suez, which is a behavioural change fund ringfenced from income from sales of materials for recycling.

The Board members asked the following questions: How would the CAG's work with the Local Community Network in the New Unitary Council. Pleased with the IT and the success with the Fixy Bus. The reusable items are SWP engaging with the recycle sites. Feedback from the community they are happy with seeing the Fixy bus and how it helped with Mental Health. The repair Cafes available in Somerset and the process for culture change with opportunities to reuse or recycle.

Somerset Waste Partnerships Head of Communications and Engagement Manager Mark Ford SWP have an event in March with Fixy and an opportunity to take electrical items for repair will be available. Hoping the Community Action Groups will link to the LCN's. SWP are promoting on Facebook about reuse of larger items such as sofas, chair and tables. Great news about the Fixy bus as SWP are part of a partnership of in-house designers who made the design and made it welcome for publicity.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **Notes the progress made in the reuse and Community Action Groups**

8. Somerset Waste Board Business Plan 2023-2028 - Agenda Item 9

The Chair invited Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green to provide an update on the Somerset Waste business plan 2023-2028.

The following was highlighted:

- The annual Business Plan sets key aims and priorities for Somerset Waste Partnership for the next 5 years, with a particular focus on the coming year. It may be revised if this is necessary to align with the Somerset Council County Plan.
- The Government published their response on Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) setting out how they intend it to work. Key points of the proposals are: Timetable, What's included, deposit, expected impact, Return points, enforcement, impact on kerbside collection.
- DRS will be an 'all in' type scheme covering plastic (PET) and Steel and Aluminium beverage cans up to 3 litres in volume. Glass will not be included in England or Northern Ireland but will be included in Wales and Scotland. Multi-packs are included. Things drunk inside pubs, cafes and restaurants don't need the deposit. Not taking glass as Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs feel this will add increased handling costs and equipment complexity (and concerns that what they collect will be worse quality than how we collect it at the kerbside).
- Government expect DRS to increase capture in scope packaging from 70% to 90% within 3 years of scheme launch. The Government anticipate that littering of in-scope packaging will decrease by 85% after scheme launch. Penalties on the DMO if they don't reach this level.
- This should help tackle littering (though we'll need to collectively think about what it means for growing on-street recycling), but it will cost us – we will lose the revenue from this high value material and there is no corresponding efficiency in collection. Welsh authority research suggests each Local Authority could lose almost £100k.
- The composition and participation analysis that is being undertaken in the next few months should help SWP understand the picture better.
- Action 4.2 in the Business Plan sets out SWP plan to review alternative fuels. Following the trials that took place in 2022/23 on using Hydrogenated 6 Vegetable Oil in the fleet, it has been decided not to move to develop a business case for using these fuels at this stage.

- Joint work SWP is participating in to support the development of a food strategy, finalisation of our contract with Biffa meaning SWP can finally work with them on reuse at Household Waste Recycling Centres. Agreed funding for the Community Action Groups to support a growth in reuse and success in securing a place on the national flexible plastics trial.
- The need to review the business case on solar panels at two depots given price changes whilst there had been delays in finalising this work.
- SWP joint success (working with economic development colleagues) in securing funding for a Green Business Support pilot.
- The need to review if and how SWP charge developers for costs associated with the bins and boxes for new housing, as many other authorities do - Noting the work needed to be undertaken in relation to branding as SWP became part of Somerset Council and hence remove the separate identity of SWP in order to improve transparency and accountability.

The Board members asked the following questions: The Deposit Return Scheme cost and enforcement and how it will impact the Council and would the Government welcome feedback on if it is working correctly; what SWP will be called in the Future.

Somerset Waste Board Managing Director Mickey Green informed the board that the engagement had been good and the responses on the consultation. SWP have an ongoing littering problem and will not have funding for the DRS. SWP will keep their Facebook page separate due to the number of followers attached and most likely just be the waste function to Somerset Council.

That the Somerset Waste Board:

- **Approves the draft Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2023-28, noting that the format and approach to business planning may change in Somerset Council.**

9. Performance Monitoring Report Q3 October 2022- December 2022- Agenda Item 6

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- Suez/Veolia: As expected SUEZ Recycling & Recovery UK Limited re-joined the SUEZ Group after an offer of £2bn was matched to buy the business in the UK, with the sale finalised in December. Whilst the new group remains called SUEZ it is no longer a French stock market listed entity, but instead majority owned by a number of corporate investors (Meridiam and GIP)

Somerset Waste Partnership Strategic Manager Michael Cowdell highlighted:

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- Contract commencement coincided with the first national Covid -19 restrictions, the implication was that the hands-on induction of new starters as well as the scheduled culture change activities were delayed or only partially implemented.
- This change programme resulted in the redesign of over 600 collection rounds, from 5 (redesigned/rebuilt operating centres and represented a considerable challenge both in planning, communication, deployment and operation of the new service.
- There was an accident outside the Evercreech Depot on the 4 January involving a member of the public. The accident resulted in a road closure that affected the recycling operation at the depot. Incomplete services effected

just under 3,000 properties for that day were suspended and recollected on their next collection day.

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- £0.3m for increase in waste volumes for housing growth on the disposal contract.
- £3.1m Recycle More savings, £1.1m Capitalise bin/box delivery (like most districts already do), £0.6m Removal of Covid-19 measures.

- £0.4m Recycling revenue 100% - No equalisation reserve and £0.3m Increased fees & charges in line with inflation.
- Highlighted the draft budget figures in the report.
- The outstanding remain to be signed off of as part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan process from Executive and Full Council in February.
- The pay awards and utilities increases were not yet included.
- Disposal contract inflation not confirmed until March (as usual, estimate made)
- Potential legislative change: HWRC charging: £300k+ and POPs to be confirmed.
- Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility and consistency (food) appear more likely and therefore could be £millions extra income, though not until 2024/25 at the earliest.

The Board members asked the following questions: the material value has increase for the Plastics packaging, the budget savings and the saving for Recycle More. The predictions before the rollout.

Strategic Manager of Finance Christian Evans informed the board the recycle more schemes has considerable savings disposal contract £3.5 million inflation collection 1.9 million the COVID cost were a considerable factor as part of the rollout due to for the cleaning and staffing.

Somerset Waste Partnership Managing Director Mickey Green informed the Board £1.7 million, was the original prediction, with procurement and contract costs the budget was considerably higher than the original prediction.

That the Somerset Waste Board: -

- **Notes the summary financial performance for 2022/2023 to the end of month 9 (April – Dec) and the potential outturn position for each partner authority.**
- **Considers the budget for 2023/2024.**
- **To discuss the Confidential Presentation.**

Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider passing a resolution having been duly proposed and seconded under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting, on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of

exempt information, within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:

Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts proposed going offline and this was seconded by Councillor Tim Kerley.

11. Any other urgent items of Business

The Chair thanked all Members for attending and thanked members for the participation on the board during this period and thanked the officers who had steered and supported the partnership through really challenging years and huge successes. The Chair expressed special thanks to the SWP Managing Director Mickey Green and congratulated him on his new role as Executive Director for Climate and Place.

Councillor Janet Keen thanked everyone for the last four years, and the fact that it's been a long learning experience which has been of great value in other aspects of life thanked the SWP Managing Director and all colleagues for the very helpful way and for being patient and answering questions and would personally carry away some very happy and constructive meetings and members of being as part of this committee, and wishes everyone who are moving to the New Unitary Council.

Councillor Tim Kerley thanked all members and Officer and a special thank you to Cllr Sarah Dyke who had been Chair of the Somerset Waste Board.

The Managing Director Mickey Green presented some highlights of the journey of the board.

- In 1981 there are about 8 million collections a year.
- 2022 about 6 million collections a year.
- 1.3 million bins, boxes or bags around the County
- Between 2007 and 2021-2022, the amount of material recycled or reused has saved 1.8 million tonnes of carbon the same as taking 70.000.00 cars of the road for a year.
- In 2007-2008 SWP sent 130,000,00 Tonnes to landfill and last year just over 12,000 equivalents to 115 million plastic bottles in terms of plastic.
- Kerbside recycling started in 2000's, in 2003 the first local authorise partnership, 2008, the first to publish that annually, exactly where SWP recycling goes.
- 2010 to 2012, the shift away from landfill.

- 2020 the Recycle More roll-out and the work with our contractors in the cruise with no matter what and staff at the recycling centres.

The SWP Managing Director introduced Steve Reed, who was the Managing Director before and Bruce Carpenter, who is the interim Managing Director of the SWP.

Bruce Carpenter highlighted:

- First recruited as services manager for Taunton Deane back in 1992 over 30 years ago. it's interesting to reflect back on that because there wasn't any Kerbside recycling. There was weekly refuse collections in black plastic sacks and it all went to landfill and things started to change fairly rapidly.
- The Government of the time had introduced the Environmental Protection Act that the District Councils to produce recycling plans and show their work to achieve a 25% Recycling target and now approaching 60% and shows the commitment.
- In the early days started working together with Members always fundamentally involved and the first group of Members that we brought together was called the Somerset Joint Council's Waste Management Group.
- The first jointly procured refuse and recycling combined Service contract and those developments that Mickey referred to, for example fortnightly refuse collections, introducing food waste, the commissioning of the AD plant by Viridor. All of these things starting to work together holistically, just as a virtual unitary waste authority should do.
- The procurement and delivery of recycle more and in terms of the six successes in performance and last years. Success in winning the local government Chronicle Environmental Services Award.
- Proud of what the organisations have achieved, and I think we should all be very proud of what the board the SWP is achieved over the year.
- It was the model of this virtual waste authority and now everybody's understood the benefits of that extended across all service areas to form the Somerset unitary authority.

(The meeting ended at 12.45pm)

CHAIR

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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SWT Planning Committee - 30 March 2023

Present: Councillor Simon Coles (Chair)

Councillors Marcia Hill, Ian Aldridge, Steve Griffiths, Roger Habgood, John Hassall, Mark Lithgow, Craig Palmer, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Ray Tully, Brenda Weston, Keith Wheatley, Loretta Whetlor and Gwil Wren

Officers: Alison Blom-Cooper, Martin Evans (Shape Legal Partnership), Sarah Stevens, John Burton, Kieran Reeves, Gareth Clifford Tracey Meadows

(The meeting commenced at 10.30 am)

131. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Firmin. Councillor Stock-Williams arrived at 11:58;

132. Declarations of Interest or Lobbying

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	Item 5 only	Williton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	Item 6	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr r Habgood	3/32/23/004	Chair of 'on your bike' receives charity support	Prejudicial	Spoke and left the room whilst the did not vote took place.
Cllr Mrs Hill	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Palmer	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr T Venner	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee &	Personal	Spoke and Voted

		Shadow Taunton Town		
Cllr K Wheatley	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	Item 4	SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

All Cllrs (except Cllr Palmer) declared that they knew the applicant/landowner for application 3/21/22/128 and 38/22/0344.

133. **Public Participation**

Application No.	Name	Position	Stance
38/22/0344	Cllr Sully	Councillor who lives in the area.	In favour
	Mr Ven	Agent	In favour

134. **3/32/23/004 - To enter into two supplemental S106 Agreements with EDF Energy. The first is to secure early payment of a £1 million (index linked) instalment of the EDF Energy Community Fund and the second is to secure an appropriate tourism focused mitigation fund and strategy relating to EDF's planned use of the former Pontins site in Brean, to accommodate Hinkley Point C workers.**

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Concerns raised on the regeneration funding spend on major urban regeneration;
- Pleased that this funding is coming forward for the residents of Bridgwater;
- Concerns with the adverse effect on the closing of the Pontins holiday camp;
- Concerns regarding moving funds from one to another;

Councillor Hill proposed, and Councillor Aldridge seconded a motion that Somerset West and Taunton Council, along with Somerset County Council and Sedgemoor District Council, enter two separate Supplemental S106 Agreement to secure the following:

1.2 The first Section 106 supplemental agreement:

- To secure the early payment of a £1 million (index linked) instalment of the EDF Community Fund towards regeneration projects in Bridgwater Town Centre (known as the 'Bridgwater Regeneration Fund').
- The mechanism for this is to divert the £1 million pounds currently

required contractually under the s106 agreement to be paid to the Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) to Sedgemoor District Council (SDC);

This is to be done by a deletion of the original contractual obligation for early payment to SCF and replace it with a supplemental section 106 obligation of payment to SDC for the purposes of the levelling up bid: and

1.3 The second Section 106 supplemental agreement:

- To provide an appropriate mitigation fund and associated measures to support the local economy during the use of the Pontins Brean Sands Holiday Park to accommodate workers involved in the construction of the Hinkley Point C Project for an expected 3 year temporary period.

1.4 Delegated Authority

- that delegated authority be given to the Director of Place and Climate Change and/or Assistant Director Strategic Place Planning to agree, approve terms and sign on behalf of the Council the supplemental deeds and after 1st April this delegation be extended to the requisite Executive Director at Somerset Council responsible for the function area of this report.
- As a result of the Somerset (Structural Changes) Order 2022, and, the provisions of the Local Government (Structural Changes) Transitional Arrangements No 2. Regulations 2008, the decisions of SWT will fall to be treated as decisions of the new Unitary Council after 1st April 2023. Accordingly, any issues of implementation in this matter will seamlessly fall to be dealt with by the new Somerset Council.

The motion was carried

135. **3/21/22/128 - Installation of solar panels on roof and rear balcony at The Arkade, Warren Road, Minehead TA24 5BG**

Comments from Members included; (summarised)

- Concerns with the visual aspect of the of the panels from the Train Station;
- The solar panels were a major enhancement to the building;
- We need to look at energy sustainability, so these panels were a good way to generate electricity;
- With regards to Condition 5, checks would need to be made to see that the solar panels were still being used after 6 months;

Councillor Lithgow proposed, and Councillor Aldridge seconded a motion that permission be **GRANTED** subject to Conditions;

The motion was carried.

136. **38/22/0344 - Demolition of outbuilding and erection of a 1 No. detached dwelling at Weir Lodge, Staplegrove Road, Taunton**

Comments by members of the public included;
(summarised)

- The building to be demolished is out of character in a Conservation area;
- The proposed application was a well designed much needed property in the area;
- The development would improve the street scene and be a positive enhancement to the conservation area and the setting of the listed building adjacent;
- This was a zero-carbon home with no impact on the setting of the area;
- The proposed dwelling was not out of keeping with the area;
- The proposed dwelling will reduce the number of connections to the sewer reducing the phosphate loading into the sewer;
- This was a sustainable development;
- No flood risk issues;
- No sequential test concerns;
- No letters of objection to the development received;

Comments by Members included;
(summarised)

- The building to be demolished did not fit in with the Conservation area, so the development would improve the brown field site;
- There was a local housing need in the area;
- No concerns for sustainability with a primary School nearby and it is within walking distance of the town so will not be totally car reliant;
- Pleased that the building would be raised due to the flood zone;
- The phosphate issues could be overcome with a timed Condition;
- This was a brown field site development and should be encouraged;
- The development has significant harm on planning grounds;
- Concerns with the impact on the listed building and Conservation area;
- Concerns with the loss of flood water storage in the area;
- The development was out of keeping in the area;
- The current building needs removing and not replaced;
- Concerns with the overdevelopment of the area;
- Concerns with building in the Conservation area;
- The development was not a good copy of the existing Weir Lodge. A better designed building was needed;
- The development contravened our Policies;

Councillor Lithgow proposed, and Councillor Hill seconded a motion for the application to be **APPROVED** against the Officer recommendation.

Proposed that delegated authority be given to officers to approve, subject to the resolution of the phosphate issues. Also, delegation to officers to impose suitable conditions for planning permission.

Approval is also on the basis that the planning committee do not feel that there is a harmful impact to the Listed Building or the Conservation area and there is mitigation for the flood zone flooding issue built into the development;

The motion was carried with the Chair using his casting vote.

(The Meeting ended at 12.15 pm)

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SWT Full Council – 28 March 2023

Present: Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey (Chair)

Councillors Richard Lees, Benet Allen, Lee Baker, Marcus Barr, Mark Blaker, Chris Booth, Sue Buller, Norman Cavill, Simon Coles, Dixie Darch, Hugh Davies, Tom Deakin, David Durdan, Kelly Durdan, Caroline Ellis, Habib Farbahi, Ed Firmin, Andrew Govier Steve Griffiths, Roger Habgood, Andrew Hadley, John Hassall, Ross Henley, Marcia Hill, John Hunt, Dawn Johnson, Sue Lees, Libby Lisgo, Mark Lithgow, Janet Lloyd, Dave Mansell, Simon Nicholls, Derek Perry, Martin Peters, Andy Pritchard, Steven Pugsley, Mike Rigby, Francesca Smith, Federica Smith-Roberts, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Andrew Sully, Nick Thwaites, Ray Tully, Sarah Wakefield, Brenda Weston, Keith Wheatley, Loretta Whetlor and Gwil Wren

Officers: Lesley Dolan, Paul Fitzgerald, Chris Hall, Andrew Pritchard, Sarah Povall, Marcus Prouse, Clare Rendell, Amy Tregellas, Kevin Williams, Graeme Thompson, Joe Wharton and Alison Blom-Cooper

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm)

94. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Ian Aldridge, Barrie Hall, Nicole Hawkins, Craig Palmer and Terry Venner.

Councillor Loretta Whetlor would be arriving late.

95. Minutes of the previous meeting of Full Council

(Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 7 February 2023 circulated with the agenda)

Resolved that the minutes of Full Council held on 7 February 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

96. Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr L Baker	All Items	SCC, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted

Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Darch	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr H Davies	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr T Deakin	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Ellis	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr H Farbahi	All Items	SCC & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoked and Voted
Cllr A Hadley	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Henley	All Items	SCC & Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr Mrs Hill	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr J Hunt	All Items	SCC & Bishop's Hull	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Lees	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Lees	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Lisgo	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr J Lloyd	All Items	Wellington & Sampford Arundel	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Nicholls	All Items	Comeytrove	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Perry	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Peters	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton	Personal	Spoke and Voted

		Town		
Cllr H Prior-Sankey	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Pugsley	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Rigby	All Items	SCC & Bishops Lydeard	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith-Roberts	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr A Sully	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Wakefield	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	All Items	SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

97.

Public Participation

Pauline and Sigurd Reimers submitted the following question:-

Four years ago, Somerset West and Taunton declared a climate emergency. Many good initiatives followed in its wake, and during this period local Extinction Rebellion and other groups had a number of meetings with the Council based on their concerns about climate breakdown. There was still much left to do, and there might now be only a few years left before an irretrievable tipping point in the climate was reached. This Council would be finishing as a local authority in a few weeks' time. Which of its climate change policies was it most concerned about losing in the transition to the new Unitary Authority?

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change gave the following response:-

In order to bring the five authorities together in time for the 1st April, workstreams for all council activities were set up. The workstreams included officer representation from the five authorities and were asked to produce workplans to ensure a successful transition of services into the new Council.

There had been a climate and water workstream for the past year, and covered climate change, nature recovery and flood water management. The workstream met weekly, and was led by a representative from the districts and one from the county council.

As a result of this, the joint working between the five authorities around climate and nature recovery agendas had increased significantly, and the relationships have

become very strong over the last year. Work underway via the workstream included the creation of a combined carbon baseline for the new authority which would be completed this spring, a longer term costed plan, a comms plan, a climate impact assessment tool to better inform the carbon impact of decision making and a new governance structure that would ensure greater internal and external accountability and scrutiny on progress against Net Zero commitments.

The workstream had also been able to pool funds to produce a countywide tree strategy with external partners such as the Somerset Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust, as well as commission a Local Area Energy Plan.

Staff were also working across the five authorities, supporting each other to progress this work. For example, officers at Somerset West and Taunton were using the expertise they had gained on EVCPs to support SCC's bid to the Government's Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) fund to plan and deliver chargepoint infrastructure for residents without off-street parking.

There were further examples of significant pieces of work to come. Somerset Council would be producing a new Local Plan and Local Transport Plans, which both offered huge opportunity to deliver on Net Zero commitments. The Council would also be the host authority for the Local Nature Partnership, responsible for delivery of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Those were all critical strategic pieces of work that would not progress without harmony between the five authorities, so in many ways we were excited about the opportunities to bring policies together rather than concerned about the ones we were losing.

Angus Mather submitted the following questions:-

Questions to be presented in respect of item 8 Wellington Place Plan Adoption at the Full Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 28th March 2023 at 6.15 pm in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.

Subject One – Local Travel Concepts [Sarah Elsmore]

With reference to the Wellington Place Plan Consultation Statement Appendix A, the following was listed as a key Point on page 34:

Sustainable transport - Mixed support for the 15-minute neighbourhood concept and concerns around a zero-tolerance approach to private journeys. Responses also suggested the need for development to incorporate EV charging points.

Question 1: 15 minute principles/concepts - The concerns raised were not addressed in the Council's response to this point. To clarify the situation we would appreciate a definitive definition to be provided with reference to specific documents which the Council were using as guidance to define the **15 minute principles/concepts** referred to on two occasions in the draft Wellington Place Plan, and did the term, **zero-tolerance approach to private journeys** originate in Council documents?

Subject Two – Next Steps, Implementation Plan [Diana Hunt]

Reference: Somerset West and Taunton Council Report No. SWT 163/22, Wellington Place Plan – Approval for Public Consultation item 1.4

It was not appropriate to adopt the Place Plan as part of the Local Development Scheme, at this moment in time, as the Local Plan for the new unitary authority was under consideration. However, this work would be fundamental in forming and supporting the development of the new Local Plan, which would then be formally adopted as policy.

Question 2: Could the Council clarify this statement and as the Place Plan was clearly perceived to be an important document to the Council on the way forward could they confirm that it would be properly annotated with an inset page similar to that shown below before it was issued so that updates and revisions could be

tracked?

Wellington Place Plan - Document Number SWT 0123456etc.				
	Name	Initials	Signature	Date
Originator				
Approver				
Revision 01				
Originator				
Approver				

Subject Three – Consultation Process [Angus Mather]

With reference to the Wellington Place Plan Consultation Statement Appendix A, the following could be found on page 24:

*The Wellington Place Plan consultation ran from 23 January to 20 February 2023 and followed a visioning exercise with the community in October 2022. The consultation followed the methods set out in our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out **the minimum requirements** for public participation in the preparation of a Local Plan.*

The Town and Country Planning Regulations referred to covers *Local Plans* and *Supplementary Plans* and these were defined in the Regulations. There was no reference or definition of **Place Plans** in the Regulations so we would contend that the requirements relating to consultation referred to in the Regulations are not applicable in this instance as they related more to clearly defined planning applications which the Wellington Place Plan was not. We think that the Wellington Place Plan would be more accurately described as a Local Development Strategy. Had the Wellington Place Plan been a Local Plan the Council could be regarded as having met, *the minimum requirements of public participation*. However, we contend that even if the Place Plan was actually a Local Plan then much more than *the minimum requirements of consultation* should have been met. This Plan would drastically change the way in which the population of Wellington would conduct their lives.

The consultation with the general public comprised the following:

The consultation process could be summarised as 20 hours face to face contact with the public and an on-line consultation process spread covered a 5 week period which solicited a total of 135 responses. Considering that the population of Wellington was 16,500 people and the population of the surrounding area was estimated to be 188,000 people we would say that 135 responses indicated that the consultation process had been an abject failure. With reference to Somerset West and Taunton Council Report No. SWT 163/22, Wellington Place Plan – Approval for Public Consultation, item 3 Risk Assessment:

The main risk was not managing to reach a representative proportion of all groups in Wellington, meaning that those voices were not heard in this consultation exercise. We consider those risks to have materialised. The UK Government produced a guidance document, *Consultation Principles 2018* which was perhaps more valid in this situation than the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012. When considering the Government’s guidance we believed that the consultation process was not long enough or detailed enough. For a project of this magnitude and considering the massive effect it would have on everyone’s lives we believed that the consultation period should have been much longer, up to 6 months. We believed that this Plan was being rushed through and there had not been an appropriate amount of time between closing the consultation and approving the results of the

consultation process.

Question 3: In view of the low number of respondents to the consultation process do the Council agreed that the consultation process had been a failure, had not met their own guidelines and would the Council agree that a further period of consultation would be appropriate?

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation gave the following response:-

Question 1

The 15-minute neighbourhood was a concept of local living, illustrated in the graphic on page 95. The concept was to promote sustainable and self-sufficient places, where access to 'daily services' such as schools, doctors, public open space, local transport, shops, employment were within a 15 minute walk or short cycle. The 15-minute neighbourhood served as a principle for development and urban life that made life more liveable for residents, by improving air quality and making neighbourhoods safer, quieter, more diverse, inclusive and economically vibrant. The "zero-tolerance approach to private journeys" was a phrase put forward by respondent WPP001.

Question 2

The Somerset Council would be preparing a Local Plan for the entire area. The requirement was to do this within 5 years of vesting day i.e by 1 April 2028. The evidence base from the Wellington Place Plan would inform this. Changes to the Wellington Place Plan, if any, would be agreed at Full Council this evening and recorded in the final Plan. The document, once adopted, would become a material planning consideration in the determination of planning proposals and for other development management purposes within Wellington until such time as we have developed the strategy for the new Somerset Wide Local Plan.

Question 3

The Wellington Place Plan consultation ran from 23 January to 20 February 2023 and followed a visioning exercise with the community in October 2022. The consultation followed the methods set out in our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

The Wellington Place Plan was not a Supplementary Planning Document, but we have treated the process and consultation in accordance with the requirements for SPD in order to ensure a thorough and robust process and for us to be able to agree the Plan as policy and a material planning consideration in accordance with best practice. We have consulted in line with the requirements the adoption of a Supplementary Planning Document set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The minimum requirements for public participation in the preparation of a Local Plan, which were to:

- Publicise the consultation on the **Council's website**, with evidence base studies and related information also available to view and download;
- Make hard copies of documents available at **inspection points** at the Council's offices; and
- **Notify** statutory bodies, stakeholders, relevant groups and other individuals or groups on our consultation database – either by email; or letters if they have specifically requested to be contacted by post.

In addition to this, the Place Plan had been informed by a diverse programme of engagement activities, which took place alongside our review of the evidence base, feeding into our understanding of opportunities, constraints and key priorities. This had shaped a clear set of thematic principles, projects and plans which responded to the main outcomes from a wide range of conversations with different stakeholders

and members of the community.

Engagement activities were held as follows:

- Officers workshop: 11th October 2022 10am-12pm (virtual)
- Members workshop: 18th October 2022 6-8pm (virtual)
- Drop-in event: 20th October 2022 11am-3pm (in-person - Quaker Meeting House)
- Community workshop: 20th October 2022 5.30-7pm (in-person - Wellington Community Centre)
- Survey: 10th-21st October 2022 (virtual and in-person)
- Schools engagement

For information, and as set out in the Consultation Statement (Appendix 1), Section 3, consultation took place with the following, from 23 January to 20 February 2023:

- Statutory consultees (defined in the Regulations);
- General public (residents)
- Local businesses
- Parish/town councils
- Special interest groups and organisations
- Community/residents groups, including individuals/groups protected under the Equalities Act
- Consultee database (those who have expressed an interest previously)
- Under-represented groups – in Wellington these have been identified as being residents on low incomes, ethnic minority groups and young people (0-17 years)

The methods of consultation included the following:

Website On the Planning Policy home page at:

<https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/planning-policy/> and on our consultation portal: <https://yoursay.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk>. Baseline Report, Vision Summary, related information and questionnaire available to view and download

Inspection Points Hard copies of documents and questionnaires available to view at the Wellington Town Council's offices and Wellington Library

Email Notifications sent from the generic email address

strategy@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk to all statutory consultees, stakeholders and relevant groups and other individuals and organisations on our consultation database.

Information boards at Wellington Library

Public exhibitions Three events at the Pop-Up Shop in Wellington

Robert Barnes spoke on many issues within the Taunton Town Centre area, which included concerns on homelessness, street cleanliness, cost of living crisis and the condition of some of the flower beds.

The Leader of the Council thanked Mr Barnes for his comments and would look into the issues raised.

98. **To receive any communications or announcements from the Chair of the Council**

The Chair of Council thanked everyone who attended the civic service.

99. **To receive any communications or announcements from the Leader of the Council**

The Leader of the Council advised councillors that as part of the closing of the council, sixty-five trees had been planted across the district, to represent each of the councillors.

100. **To receive any questions from Councillors in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13**

No questions had been received.

101. **Wellington Place Plan – Adoption**

During the discussion, the following point was raised:-

- Councillors supported the adoption of the Plan.
- Councillors highlighted certain aspects of Wellington that had shown progression and advancement.
- Councillors commended officers for the report.
- Councillors were surprised by the amount of public that had attended the Full Council meeting, as there had not been any signs of contention at previous events on the Place Plan.
- Councillors had attended previous events and advised that they had been very good for information sharing.
- Concern was raised on the low level of responses that had been received.
- Councillors highlighted that lessons could be learned from the process for future plans and consultations.
- Councillors were pleased to see that accessibility had been included to facilitate disabled users.
- Councillors were pleased to see a planning document implemented with such positive feedback.

Resolved that Full Council:-

- Adopted the Wellington Place Plan as a material planning consideration for the preparation of masterplans, pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes within the area of the Plan; and that;
- The Portfolio Holder, in consultation with the Assistant Director Strategic Place and Planning, be authorised to make minor amendments to the Place Plan prior to publication.

102. **Firepool Masterplan – Adoption**

During the discussion, the following point was raised:-

- Councillors were pleased to see works had started on the site.
- Councillors were pleased to see that there was inbuilt flexibility in the plans.
- Councillors were sad to see the loss of the multi-purpose venue (MPV) from the plans.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation advised that the MPV was still an aspiration but would depend on the economic outturn on other parts of the project.

- Councillors agreed that they needed to continue to look to the future because it was an important project for the town.
- Councillors praised the amount of work that had been put into the master plan and that it was positive project and would bring vitality to the town.

- Concern was raised on the zero carbon designs in the risk section of the report. *The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation took on the comments made on the risks.*
- Concern was raised on behalf of the local businesses and lack of trade once the boulevard had been installed. *The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation understood their concern but highlighted the other areas of town that had promoted their trade and built-up good levels of business.*
- Councillors highlighted that it was fundamentally important that the system embedded accessibility at the early stages of the project.
- Councillors were pleased with the progress made on the project over the past four years and were happy to support the report.

Resolved that Full Council:-

- 2.1 Adopted the Firepool Masterplan (see Appendix A) as a material planning consideration in the preparation of pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes.
- 2.2 Adopted the conclusions of the Habitat Regulations Assessment Report (see Appendix C) which stated that the Firepool Masterplan would not adversely affect the integrity of Hestercombe House SAC or the Somerset Level and Moors Ramsar site, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, subject to mitigation identified within.
- 2.3 Agreed that the Assistant Director Strategic Place and Planning in consultation with the Economic Development, Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder be authorised to approve and make minor amendments prior to the final publication of the Firepool Masterplan.

103. **Chair's Annual Reports**

The Chair's Annual Reports were presented for each of the following committee:-

- Audit and Governance Committee
- Community Scrutiny Committee
- Corporate Scrutiny Committee
- Standards Committee

All the Chair's thanked all their committee members and officers for all their hard work put in over the past year.

104. **Minutes from the last meeting of each of the Committees**

Resolved that Full Council noted the minutes of the following committees:-

Audit and Governance Committee 13 March 2023

Community Scrutiny Committee 22 February 2023

Corporate Scrutiny Committee 1 March 2023

Standards Committee 23 February 2023

Executive 15 March 2023

Licensing Committee 20 March 2023 – the minutes for this meeting would be taken to the first meeting of Full Council for the Somerset Council.

105. **To consider reports from Executive Councillors - For Information Only**

Resolved that Full Council noted the reports.

106. **Moments of Reflection**

The Group Leader for the Independents made the following points of reflection:-

Thanked all the councillors for their help and support;

Thanked the staff for the same;

Thanked her fellow Independents for making her their leader last year and thanked the previous leader for his sterling work;

She spoke of how excited she was when she was made a councillor back in 2019 little knowing what it entailed and what the future would bring;

She was proud to have been part of SWT and was very sad to see it go as it was just beginning to make its mark;

Now taking a long and well-earned rest but would be around to keep the New Council on its toes;

Wished everyone well for the future;

Goodbye and good luck to those who would be on the New Council and best wishes to those that wouldn't be there but sure they would still continue to help their communities.

The Group Leader for the Conservatives made the following points of reflection:-

What an inheritance SWT had left for the community!

Tonight was a celebration of SWT;

He mentioned past leaders of the party and the hard work they had put into the role;

So much work had been done by councillors over the years (West Somerset Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and now SWT);

He highlighted many projects that had been worked on in the area over the years and that he was very proud of what had been achieved;

Thanked all the officers for their work;

He wished everyone the best for the future;

He commended the work achieved by SWT.

The Group Leader for the Labour Party made the following points of reflection:-

Thanked all for the opportunity to speak;

SWT had been the shortest-lived district council in the land;

She highlighted it had been a long four years with all the challenges that the Council had faced;

She highlighted that being part of the opposition group was not about being against the leading party but about challenging and holding the leading party to account by questioning their proposals and working collaboratively;

Spoke on big projects, like the North Taunton Woolaway Project and the Community Governance Review of the Unparished Area of Taunton;

Thanked the officers for their hard work and wished them well for the future;

Thanked the Chair and all the councillors;

Thanked the voters.

The Leader of the Council made the following points of reflection:-

She was excited about the future ahead at Somerset Council and embedding the SWT successes to benefit all of Somerset residents, she had, as the time got nearer to vesting day, felt a sense of sadness and loss;

SWT had achieved so much over the past four years despite the challenges

and curveballs that had been thrown at the Council, that the letting go of something that for many, gave so much energy and sacrifice, was a moment in time and consideration;

In May 2019, after the Lib Dems took office and their Executive was formed, the reality of quite what the situation was in bringing the Councils together; It was thanks to many of the officers who were sat in the room today and many who had gone on to pastures new, that we built up from the challenging start to what we were today and whilst needing to stabilise the Council as an organisation they took it in their stride the pace that was set by the Leader along with the Executive to achieve the ambitions that they not only set out in the manifesto which turned into their Corporate Plan but to deal with many of the unforeseen events that had happened;

She highlighted many of the achievements made in the first year which included dozens of Full Council meetings;

SWT then faced the pandemic, something that would leave an imprint on all of them as individuals and their communities though over the almost two years of measures, she was extremely proud of the Council and how it looked to support not just the most vulnerable in society but many others, in a variety of different ways;

Even during the pandemic they still looked to push on with what they wanted to achieve in line with our manifesto/corporate plan ethos;

She had spent several hours re-reading the Full Council agendas and looked at all that they as a collective had achieved, in her view it had truly been phenomenal, she knew that it had not been perfect and there were always things that could have been done better but she truly believed as a collective of all of the councillors and the wonderful staff, they had saved lives and made the area better for many of the residents and the environment;

She thanked all the Chief Executive's and their Senior Management Team, along with her Executive Assistant and all the officers in the Democratic Services Team;

To all of the councillors, those that stood down and to those who sadly passed away, they together, regardless of their political allegiance had stood up for their communities and looked to make it better, it took a lot to stand up and be in the firing line and it had been a pleasure to do that alongside all of them;

She closed by thanking all of her family for their support in her role as Leader of SWT.

The Chair of the Council made the following points of reflection:-

She gave a huge thank you to the officers for all their hard work;

Thanked all the councillors for their collaborative working over the four years;

Thanked the Leader of the Council for their achievements over the four years;

It had been a momentous four years;

She highlighted it had been a joy to represent the Council;

She closed by giving her final farewell to all of those present at the meeting and wished everyone well for the future.

(The Meeting ended at 8.30 pm)

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SWT Licensing Committee - 20 March 2023

Present: Councillor Mark Lithgow (Chair)

Councillors Janet Lloyd, Simon Coles, John Hassall, Ray Tully,
Brenda Weston, Keith Wheatley and Loretta Whetlor

Officers: John Rendell and Tracey Meadows

Also Councillor Davies

Present:

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm)

9. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors S Lees and Palmer.

10. Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr J Lloyd	All Items	Wellington & Sampford Arundel	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted

11. Public Participation

No members of the public had requested to speak on any item on the agenda.

12. Proposal to make changes to hackney carriage and private hire licensing policy

There were no comments or questions arising on this item.

Councillor Coles proposed, and Councillor Lloyd seconded a motion for the Licensing Committee to:-

Resolved to make the changes to the two taxi and private hire licensing policies as listed in Appendix A, to:

- Remove hackney carriage and private hire vehicle age restrictions.
- Make roof signs mandatory for hackney carriages but prohibit their use on private hire vehicles completely.
- Increase the frequency of driver medical checks.
- Allow vehicles with rear wheelchair loading facilities to be licensed as hackney carriages and private vehicles in the West Somerset area, as they are already in the Taunton Deane area.

The motion was carried unanimously.

13. **Proposal to adopt a new policy in relation to the regulation of Street Trading**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillors agreed that it was a good Policy and were happy to support the recommendation;

Resolved that:-

Councillor Whetlor proposed, and Councillor Coles seconded a motion for the Licensing Committee to adopt the proposed street trading policy attached as Appendix A, as recommended by both the report author and Street Trading policy review working group.

The motion was carried unanimously.

The Chair thanked the Licensing Officer and Committee members for their time they had given to the Committee in the past year.

(The Meeting ended at 6.34 pm)

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SWT Planning Committee - 2 March 2023

Present: Councillor Simon Coles (Chair)

Councillors Marcia Hill, Ian Aldridge, Steve Griffiths, Roger Habgood, John Hassall, Mark Lithgow, Craig Palmer, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Ray Tully, Brenda Weston, Keith Wheatley and Gwil Wren

Officers: Sarah Stevens, Martin Evans (Shape Legal Partnership), Simon Fox, Dr Jo O'Hara Briony Waterman and Tracey Meadows

(The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm)

115. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Whetlor.

116. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Planning Committee

(Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 2 February circulated with the agenda)

Resolved that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 2 February be confirmed as a correct record.

Proposed by Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Stock-Williams

The **Motion** was carried.

117. Declarations of Interest or Lobbying

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	All Items	Williton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr Mrs Hill	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton	Personal	Spoke and Voted

		Town		
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Palmer	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr K Wheatley	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	All Items	SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

118. **Public Participation**

Application No	Name	Position	Stance
42/22/0062	Mr T Smith Tessa Dean Olivia Davis	Local Resident Trull Parish Council Boyer Planning	Against Against In favour

119. **42/22/0062 - Application for the approval of Reserved Matters following Outline Application 42/14/0069 for the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 20 No. dwellings, hard and soft landscaping , car parking including garages, internal access roads, footpaths and circulation areas, public open space and drainage with associated infrastructure and engineering works comprising Parcel H1f(i) on land west of Comeytrowe Lane, Taunton, Orchard Grove, Land at Comeytrowe/Trull, Taunton**

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- Concerns that the developers had yet again changed their plans to defer remediation;
- Concerns with contamination on the industrial site;
- Concerns with Asbestos on the estate;
- Concerns regarding possible anthrax contamination at the site;
- Concerns that no contamination Condition was proposed;
- Concerns with the change of the boundary line;
- Road concerns for vehicular access, this was not needed;
- Clarity sought on EV charging points;
- The roads needed to be prioritised for walking and cycling over car usage;
- Residents requested that more trees be put into the application;
- Orchard Grove was first identified for the allocation of 2,000 homes more than a decade ago; and has since been allocated by both the Council's adopted Core Strategy and its Site Allocations Plan. During this time, the

Applicants have committed to working in partnership with the Council to help deliver this important site;

- At 25%, the level of affordable homes to be provided exceeds both the requirements of the S106 agreement and the council's affordable housing policy, with Vistry and LiveWest committed to helping the Council increase the number of quality affordable homes in Taunton;
- The Applicant scheme comprises high quality, well-designed, energy efficient homes. All homes have allocated parking in accordance with the local parking policy requirements as well as secure cycle storage within sheds or garages. All properties include an EV charging facility and as detailed within the approved Energy Statement, the carbon saving of each dwelling exceeds Building Regulations.
- The landscaping proposed for this parcel includes trees on all streets, hedges and shrubs to provide boundaries, landscaping within parking areas and within rear gardens. The overall comprehensive and high-quality landscape scheme will provide substantial areas of new public open space for future residents to enjoy;
- In addition to the above, the scheme has been designed in accordance with approved outline planning permission; the approved Design Guide for the Urban Extension; and the design policies contained within your Local Plan;
- There are no outstanding technical objections to the Reserved Matter proposal from any of the consultees;
- As was the case for the neighbouring Phases, this application for Phase H1Fi is also supported by a comprehensive and detailed Phosphate Mitigation Strategy for the site, which has been prepared in consultation with SWT, Somerset County and Natural England over several months. The final submitted report has been endorsed by Natural England as a robust strategy, which provides a firm basis for SWT to again reach a conclusion of no adverse effect on the integrity of the protected sites;

Comments made by Members included;
(summarised)

- Contaminated land concerns;
- We need to specify the trees to be planted so that they do not look artificial and were the correct type for the area;
- Higher graded EV charging points need to be installed for a quick charge;
- Pleased that this site has affordable housing funding;
- Concerns how the contamination in the ground will affect future builds on the site;
- Concerns with the lack of solar panels on the site;

Councillor Hill proposed, and Councillor Aldridge seconded a motion that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions. The committee voted on 2 additional conditions. 1. In conjunction with the tree officer to increase the number of native trees on site and 2. A specification for EV charging to be submitted;

The motion was carried.

120. **Appeals Decided**

Noted.

121. **Access to Information - Exclusion of the Press and Public - Agenda item 7**

Resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the next item of business (Agenda Item 8 on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

122. **Enforcement Report**

Enforcement case ref ECC/EN/22/00077 - Statutory Action APPROVED as per Officer recommendation.

Proposed by Cllr Hill, seconded by Cllr Lithgow to accept the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

1.To grant delegated authority to Officers to serve relevant statutory planning and listed building notices, to include notices pursuant to:

- (a) S215 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Amenity Orders);
- (b) S54 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990 (Urgent Works Notices);
- (c) S172 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Enforcement Notice);
- (d) S38 (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990 (Listed Building Enforcement Notice); and/or
- (e) S48 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990 (Repairs Notices)

To secure the Listed Building as appropriate.

2.To authorise Officers to interview the owners/agents under the PACE code to decide if a prosecution for unauthorised works to the listed building is necessary in the public interest (Section 9 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990;

The motion was carried.

(The Meeting ended at 2.35 pm)

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SWT Planning Committee - 23 February 2023

Present:

Councillors Marcia Hill (Chair), Ian Aldridge, Steve Griffiths, John Hassall, Mark Lithgow, Craig Palmer, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Ray Tully, Brenda Weston, Gwil Wren and Janet Lloyd

Officers: Alison Blom-Cooper, Martin Evans, Briony Waterman and Tracey Meadows

(The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm)

109. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Coles, Wheatley, and Coles.

Councillor Hill took the Chair for this meeting.

110. **Minutes of the previous meeting of the Planning Committee**

(Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committees held on the 5, 19 January and the 2 February circulated with the agenda)

Resolved that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on the 5,19 January and the 2 February be confirmed as a correct record.

5 January, proposed by Councillor Lithgow, seconded by Councillor Tully
19 January, proposed by Councillor Lithgow, seconded by Councillor Hassall
2 February, proposed by Councillor Hassall, seconded by Councillor Stock-Williams.

The **Motion** was carried.

111. **Declarations of Interest or Lobbying**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Application No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	42/22/0008	Williton. Correspondence received and responded to	Personal	Spoke and Voted

		stating that the application would be heard and viewed with an open mind.		
Cllr G Wren	3/37/22/019	SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

112. **Public Participation**

Application No.	Name	Position	Stance
3/37/22/019	Carron Clark	Local Resident	In favour
42/22/0008	Phillipa Hollands Dr Guru Karnati	Neighbour Applicant	Against In favour

113. **3/37/22/019 - Erection of memorial to Derek the Goose (retention of works already undertaken) Land at the Marina Edge, The Esplanade, Watchet, TA23 0AJ**

Comments made by members of the public included;
(summarised)

- The memorial statue was an interesting piece of history for Watchet;
- Please that a local designer was chosen to create the memorial statue;
- There was lots of local support for the memorial;
- The memorial has a communal value;

Comments made by Members included;
(summarised)

- The statue was an unobtrusive piece of Art;
- Clarification sought on why this statue needed planning permission;
- The memorial was commissioned and supported by the local people of Watchet;
- Concerns that this statue did not fit in with the two other statues on the esplanade;
- Concerns with the white trunking surrounding the statue;

Councillor Lithgow proposed and Councillor Tully seconded a motion that permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

The motion was carried.

114. **42/22/0008 - Application for approval of reserved matters, following outline application 42/19/0045, for the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 1 No. dwelling on land to the north west of Applecombe**

Cottage, Wild Oak Lane, Trull (resubmission of 42/21/0047) LAND TO THE NORTH WEST OF APPLECOMBE COTTAGE, WILD OAK LANE, TRULL, TAUNTON, TA3 7JS

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- The proposed development show no reference to the Council's Design Guide or Policy D7 regarding design quality;
- Concerns with the impact on the residential amenity of the adjoining properties;
- Concerns with the character and appearance in this semi-rural area;
- Overlooking with loss of privacy;
- The Parish Council did not support this application;
- The building will be largely screened from the trunk road and Wild Oak Lane by the existing buildings;
- The scale of the building was in keeping with most of the adjacent properties;
- One of the unique features of the proposal was it varied architecture and design with no two properties looking the same in the area;
- Measures have been taken to ensure that the development is phosphate neutral after using the Council's P Credit allocation scheme;
- The development will be an energy efficient family home;

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- A well-designed property to compliment other properties in the area;
- Overlooking concerns;
- Confirmation sought to confirm that this development would be carbon neutral;
- The development was against the Core Strategy of DM1 (D) in appearance;
- Not in keeping with the rural area;
- Concerns that the roof terrace and adjoining library would create a third floor and would overlook the neighbouring property;
- Screening or the property concerns;

Councillor Lithgow proposed and Councillor Stock-Williams seconded a motion the permission be GRANTED subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Agreement and conditions. The Committee also voted on a further Condition for the submission of a scheme for carbon neutral elements within the development;

The motion was carried.

(The Meeting ended at 1.56 pm)

SWT Planning Committee - 27 March 2023

Present: Councillor Simon Coles (Chair)

Councillors Marcia Hill, Ian Aldridge, Steve Griffiths, Roger Habgood, John Hassall, Mark Lithgow, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Ray Tully, Brenda Weston, Keith Wheatley, Loretta Whetlor and Gwil Wren

Officers: Alison Blom-Cooper, Roy Pinney, Sarah Stevens, Briony Waterman, Denise Tod, Russell Williams, and Tracey Meadows

(The meeting commenced at 10.00 am)

123. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Palmer

124. Declarations of Interest or Lobbying

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	All Items	Williton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Griffiths	Item 6	Building used as campaign site for election	Personal/pecuniary	Spoke did not vote
Cllr R Habgood	Item 5	Ward Member	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr Mrs Hill	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Lithgow	Item 7	Application came before Wellington TC. Discretion not	Personal	Spoke and Voted

		fettered.		
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr K Wheatley	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	Items 6 & 9	Applicant know for item 6. Discussions on the item but did not fetter discretion.	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	All Items	SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

125. **Public Participation**

Application No.	Name	Position	Stance
TPO	Ms S Smith	Neighbour	Objection
3/26/22/013	Ian Duncan	Old Cleeve PC	Objection
43/21/0061	Ms A Boyd Mr C Hansard Mr D Mitchell Cllr J Lloyd	Local resident Local resident Applicant Wellington ward	Objection Objection In favour Objection
46/22/0011	Mr J Venton	Agent	In favour
3/26/21/002	Ian Duncan Matt Tucker	Old Cleeve PC Agent	Objection In favour

126. **TPO West Buckland No.2 (SWT69)**

comments made by members of the public included:
(summarised)

- There is no risk to the trees. The only trees that have been removed in the past 50 years were removed because damaged or dangerous;
- The TPO was applied without the owner's permission, and without anyone asking for her permission;
- Concerns with the hedge obstructing the gateway;

Comments made by Members included:
(summarised)

- Concerns that if we were to start putting TPO's on farmers land we would get a lot of these going forward;
- Concerns with the lack of comments from the Landscape Officer;

- Concerns with the blocked gate due to the hedgerow;
- TPO's were needed to allow mature trees to grow in the countryside;

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Habgood seconded a motion that the Tree Preservation Order is confirmed but modified slightly with regards to G4.

The motion was carried.

127. **3/26/22/013 - Installation of solar panels on main building and static caravans along with ground mounted solar panels in the north-western garden area. Anchors Drop, (The Blue Anchor) Blue Anchor, TA24 6JP**

Comments from members of the public included:

(summarised)

- Old Cleeve PC support the principle of solar panels, but they need to be of a scale that is appropriate to the location;
- The site is in a highly prominent location between the cliff edge and the B3191 Road;
- Concerns with the visibility of the ground mounted panels;

Comments from Members included:

(summarised)

- Concerns with the number of panels on the caravans for a short life span;
- Concerns with the ground mounted panels on unstable ground;
- Concerns with the visual landscape impact;
- Concerns that there was no time limit condition on the solar panels;
- The development conflicts with Policies CC3 and CC4 of the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032;

Councillor Habgood proposed, and Councillor Aldridge seconded a motion for the application to be **REFUSED** –

Reasons (1) The site is located within an area identified as a coastal change management area and a coastal zone which is vulnerable to rapid coastal erosion and where development will only be permitted where a coastal location is essential, and which cannot be located elsewhere. The proposed ground mounted solar panels do not constitute tourism related development nor has any evidence been put forward to indicate that the scale of the proposed development is essential to support tourism related development on this site. The proposal is therefore considered to conflict with Policies CC3 and CC4 of the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032.

The motion was carried.

At this point in the meeting a 10 minute break was proposed;

128. **43/21/0061 - Application for Outline Planning, with all matters reserved, for**

the erection of 3 No. dwellings on land to the west of Haymans Mill, Westford, Wellington as amended by agents email of 15th September 2021 "Application for Outline Planning, with all matters reserved, for the erection of 2 No. dwellings on land to the west of Haymans Mill, Westford, Wellington"

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- Concerns that no comments had been received from the Heritage Officer;
- Concerns with the steep embankment;
- A full structural and environment survey was needed;
- Concerns with the loss of habitat in the area;
- Development not supported by new infrastructure;
- Highway concerns;
- Concerns that this was not a sustainable development;
- Concerns with the insufficient visibility splay;
- Incongruous development;
- The Clay bund at the leet was fragile;
- The development would impact the Rockwell residents;
- The Mill was not a listed building;
- No objections from Highways;
- The Dye ponds on the site are to be used for Phosphate Mitigation purposes only;
- The land was of historic value;
- Concerns with the blind corner and lack of pavements;
- Flood risk concerns;
- Concerns with the lack of a Heritage impact statement;

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Concerns with the lack of comments from the Highways Department;
- Concerns with the lack of a Heritage report for the Mill Pond and Leet;
- Concerns with the typography of the site;
- Concerns with the access road;
- Highway concerns with children walking to school from the site with no pavement;
- The site was not sustainable;
- Impact concerns with the traffic on an already busy road;
- No planning reasons to refuse this application;

Councillor Hill proposed, and Councillor Coles seconded a motion that permission be **GRANTED** subject to Conditions and a Legal Agreement to secure the phosphate mitigation measures;

The motion was carried.

129. **46/22/0011 - Demolition of bungalow and erection of 1 no dwelling and garage at Catsbeer Farm, Ruggin Road, West Buckland (revised design - reduced scale/chane to finish materials)**

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- The immediate landowner has supported this application;
- No objections from statutory consultees;
- The building has significantly deteriorated over the years with asbestos on site;
- The building is to be constructed on the exact footprint of the existing property;
- The proposal would be a huge improvement visually;

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Pleased that the agricultural tie was to be maintained;
- Concerns that this bungalow was only 46 years old and has to be rebuilt;
- A note to consider Bee bricks and House Martin boxes was needed to protect the local habitat;

Councillor Habgood proposed, and Councillor Hill seconded a motion that permission be GRANTED subject to conditions. With additional conditions for House Martin Boxes and Bee Bricks to be added.

The motion was carried.

130. **3/26/21/002 - Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access for the erection of 8 No. dwellings (amended scheme to 3/26/19/024) | Land north of Huish Lane, Washford**

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- The development was not sustainable in this small community with poor infrastructure and facilities;
- Highway concerns, no safe route from the development site for pedestrians or cyclists;
- Flooding issues;
- Additional traffic concerns;
- The cumulative effect was detrimental to Washford;
- Disappointed that the developer would not be contributing to other infrastructures, for example recreational facilities or Highway improvements;
- The site was difficult and complex and would create problems for existing residents
- The development conforms to Policy SC1 in the local plan;

- The development would preserve the Grade II listed building of the Lin Hay setting;
- No objections from technical consultees;
- The development was Policy compliant for social housing;
- The development would help the Council's 5 year land supply;
- The creation of 8 new households will help support the vitality of local businesses and facilities in the village;

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Highway concerns;
- Concerns with the poor access in and out of the site;
- Concerns with the unreliable, infrequent Bus service;
- Concerns with the loss of the green field;
- This was not a sustainable development;
- Concerns with the lack of employment in the area;
- Concerns with the lack of amenities;
- Concerns with the already undeveloped sites in Washford;
- Concerns that the site will be car reliant;

At this point in the meeting, Cllr's Lithgow and Wheatley left the meeting;

Councillor Habgood proposed, and Councillor Aldridge seconded a motion for the application be **DEFERRED**.

Reasons - That the application be deferred to allow Officers the opportunity to review the sustainability of Washford as a Primary settlement suitable for accommodating further new residential development. The review will allow Officers to assess the level of services and facilities currently available within and serving the settlement and for this to be considered against the evidence base supporting the adopted West Somerset Local Plan. This will allow further consideration as to whether the proposed development complies with Policy SC1 and OC1 of the Local Plan.

The motion was carried.

(The Meeting ended at 2.50 pm)

SWT Planning Committee - 30 March 2023

Present: Councillor Simon Coles (Chair)

Councillors Marcia Hill, Ian Aldridge, Steve Griffiths, Roger Habgood, John Hassall, Mark Lithgow, Craig Palmer, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Ray Tully, Brenda Weston, Keith Wheatley, Loretta Whetlor and Gwil Wren

Officers: Alison Blom-Cooper, Martin Evans (Shape Legal Partnership), Simon Fox, James Holbrook, Russell Williams, and Tracey Meadows

Also Present: Councillor Wakefield

(The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm)

137. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Firmin.

138. Declarations of Interest or Lobbying

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	Item 8, correspondence received from the public. Judgement not fettered.	Williton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Griffiths	Item 7	The pub was used as a campaign and voting centre	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr R Habgood	Item 8, correspondence received. Discretion not fettered	Personal emails received	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr Mrs Hill	Item 8. Correspondence	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted

	received. Discretion not fettered.	& Shadow Taunton Town		
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Palmer	Item 8. Attended Minehead Planning committee meetings regarding 3/21/23/014. Did not speak or vote on the application. Correspondences also received. Discretion not fettered.	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	Item 5, Ward Member. Also a member of Monkton Heathfield PC. Meetings have been had with the developer. Discretion not fettered.	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	Item 8, correspondence from members of the public, discretion not fettered.	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr K Wheatley	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	Items 7 & 8	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	Item 8, peripheral involvement with issues surrounding the Blenheim Gardens café. Attended zoom meetings on the matter. Scrutiny Chair going forward.	SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Withdraw from the meeting when this application is presented.

139. **Public Participation**

Application No.	Name	Position	Stance
14/21/0047/HYB	I Jewson	Agent	In favour
3/21/23/014	C Bolton	Local Resident	Opposed
	S Martyn	Local Resident	Opposed
	K Woolgar	Local Resident	Opposed
	Cllr Lawton	Minehead TC	Opposed
	Cllr Hodson	Minehead TC	Opposed
	A Seckleman	Local Resident	Opposed
37/22/0008	K Middleton-Smith	Applicant	In favour
	N Beddoe	Agent	In favour
	Cllr Wakefield	Ward Member	In favour

140. **14/21/0047/HYB - Application for a Hybrid Planning application for Outline planning permission with all matters reserved, except for access related to the A38, for the second phase of the Monkton Heathfield development comprising of a residential and mixed use Garden Neighbourhood including up to 1210 No. dwellings, up to 4.83 hectares of land for strategic employment uses, 8 hectares of land for a through school, mixed use district centre, community facilities, green infrastructure, drainage works, land for a 600 No. space 'Bus and Ride' facility, relief road (EER2) and associated works and for Full planning permission for the erection of 240 No. dwellings with access, including temporary access arrangements, and associated infrastructure works on land east of the A38, south of Walford Cross, Monkton Heathfield Land East of the A38, south of Walford Cross, Monkton Heathfield**

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- This was a large complex site and over the last 6 months meaningful discussions had been had with officers and consultees to get this site right;
- Engagement with the quality review panel had been had to discuss the proposals along with workshops and these had been very fruitful;
- Regular meetings have been had with the Parish Council and we were making great strides towards a successful outcome on this application;
- The Planning performance Agreement has been extended to provide further resources to officers to enable the discussions to go on and we are looking forward to presenting a revised proposals to the council as soon as possible in the coming months;

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Pleased with the progress that had been made on this site;
- An integrated village was planned, this has not happened. Now we are left with the village divided into 3 sections, splitting up the village;
- Concerns with the lack of a Community Centre in the village;

- Concerned that this development had been built 'piece meal' and not as one development;
- Lack of two further bus gates to calm the traffic in the village;
- Concerns with the Doctors surgeries being oversubscribed;

Councillor Hill proposed, and Councillor Tully seconded a motion for Officers to seek agreement from the Planning Committee to not enact part ii) of the previous resolution to refuse the application because in the view of Officers significant progress has been made but it is requested Members further resolve to give a further 6 months for the LPA and applicant to continue working towards an agreed masterplan and revised submission with Environment Statement addendum, but maintaining the option to delegate a refusal in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Somerset West Planning Committee of Somerset Council should progress not continue in the way required by the LPA.

The motion was carried.

141. **42/22/0076 - Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval 42/14/0069 for the appearance, layout and scale for the erection of a bat house and associated works at Orchard Grove Urban Extension at Comeytrove. Orchard Grove, Land at Comeytrove/Trull, Taunton**

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Concerns who will be responsible for the Bat house once it is built and how they will be attracted to the new structure;
- Pleased that we are supporting the local wildlife;
- Queries over the ongoing maintenance plan due to the structure being made of wood;
- Happy that due to the layout of the development this would allow the bats to avoid the built-up area and shield it from security lights on houses;

Councillor Hill proposed, and Councillor seconded a motion that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to Conditions.

The motion was carried.

142. **3/26/22/010 - Construction of coastal erosion risk management scheme to protect the B3191 comprising of the construction of rock armour revetment, cliff-face re-enforcement, re-profiling of the upper cliff face and other associated works to include stockpiling areas and construction compounds. Land adjacent to Blue Anchor Pub and section of the Blue Anchor foreshore and cliff at Blue Anchor**

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- The construction needs to be completed urgently to protect the road;
- Traffic concerns during construction;
- Concerns whether anyone has been monitoring the erosion at the tail end with the land stability. Long term planning was needed;
- Concerns for the future longevity of this road structure;
- If this work is not carried out, the future of the repair of the B3191 (Cleeve Hill) will not be carried out;

Councillor Hill proposed, and Councillor Whetlor seconded a motion that permission be **GRANTED** subject to Conditions.

The motion was carried.

At this point in the meeting a 10-minute break was proposed.

143. **3/21/23/014 - Refurbishment and alterations to single storey cafe building to include raised flat roof level, additional replacement windows and doors, construction of ramp and raised deck to entrance and installation of a mobile catering unit, cafe, Blenheim Gardens, Blenheim Road, Minehead TA24 5PY**

Comments by members of the public included;
(summarised)

- As part of the six acre site, the café is an integral part of the gardens bequeathed to the people of Minehead, for the enjoyment of the peace and tranquillity it provides;
- Concerns with the lack of disabled access to the front of the café;
- Concerns with crossing the busy carpark to get to access the rear of the café;
- Concerns with the operating hours of the café;
- Concerns with the lack of facilities for the disabled in the café;

Comments by Members included;
(summarised)

- Concerns with the lack of disabled access to the front of the café offering access to the wider gardens;
- Concerns with the disabled access from the rear car park;
- Concerns that the building is of poor design;
- Concerns with the lack of facilities in the café for the disabled;
- The café needs to align with the opening hours of the gardens in the interests of protecting residential amenity;
- The replacement trees need to be replaced to reflect the character and appearance of the area;
-

Councillor Hill proposed, and Councillor Stock-Williams seconded a motion that delegated authority be granted to Officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the new Planning West committee to grant planning permission, subject to the applicant submitting revised alternative plans for a disabled ramp at the front of the building to be submitted within 15 working days. Removed trees to be replaced after consultation with our tree officer for the most appropriate trees for the location and maintained for 5 years by the applicant. Opening hours to be no earlier than 8am and to close no later than 8pm.

The motion was carried.

At this point in the meeting a further 30-minute extension was proposed.

Cllr Hill left the meeting.

144. **37/22/0008 - Change of use of land from agricultural to residential curtilage with earth bund to boundary, erection of extension to garage block including games room and garden store and construction of tennis court with associated fencing at Haydon Farm Barn, Haydon Farm Lane, Stoke St Mary.**

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- The development would screen the site from the Nexus 25 development;
- The Parish Council and neighbours supported the application;
- The application would be a dedicated home office space in the home;
- The style of the development gave the impression of an agricultural out building;
- No harm to the listed building or its rural setting;
- The development would protect the environment by reduced travel;

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Over development of the site concerns;
- Concerns with the harm to the listed building in its rural setting;
- Concerns over the size of the footprint of the proposal for an office and recreation room;

Councillor Coles proposed, and Councillor Wheatley seconded a motion for permission to be **REFUSED** as per recommendation. The development would be detrimental to the setting of the Grade II listed barn.

The motion was carried.

(The Meeting ended at 5.22 pm)

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South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **South Somerset District Council** held on **Thursday 30 March 2023** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

(7.30 pm - 8.45 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Paul Maxwell (Chairman)
Councillor Wes Read (Vice-Chairman)

Jason Baker	Charlie Hull	David Recardo
Robin Bastable	Kaysar Hussain	Dean Ruddle
Mike Best	Val Keitch	Gina Seaton
Ray Buckler	Andy Kendall	Peter Seib
Dave Bulmer	Tim Kerley	Garry Shortland
Tony Capozzoli	Mike Lock	Jeny Snell
John Clark	Pauline Lock	Andy Soughton
Nicola Clark	Tony Lock	Mike Stanton
Louise Clarke	Kevin Messenger	Rob Stickland
Adam Dance	Graham Oakes	Lucy Trimnell
Sarah Dyke	Sue Osborne	Gerard Tucker
Karl Gill	Tiffany Osborne	Martin Wale
David Gubbins	Oliver Patrick	William Wallace
Peter Gubbins	Clare Paul	
Mike Hewitson	Crispin Raikes	

Officers:

Jane Portman	Chief Executive
Jan Gamon	Director (Place, Recovery, Arts & Entertainment)
Nicola Hix	Director (Strategy, Support & Environmental Services)
Kirsty Larkins	Director (Service Delivery)
Jill Byron	District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer
Robert Orrett	Commercial Property, Land & Development Manager
Angela Cox	Specialist (Democratic Services)
Becky Sanders	Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)
Ella Bending	Case Officer - Communications

117. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barbara Appleby, Neil Bloomfield, Hayward Burt, Martin Carnell, Nick Colbert, Henry Hobhouse, Ben Hodgson, Jenny Kenton, Mike Lewis, Tricia O'Brien, Paul Rowsell and Colin Winder.

118. Minutes (Agenda Item 2)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 19 January 2023 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

119. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

120. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

A resident of Yeovil advised she had started attending Council meetings a number of years ago for specific issues and had seen that Councillors could not please all residents but had to work within certain regulations. She felt that there was now a good mix of age and gender represented by Councillors and she wished them luck in the new Somerset Council.

A resident of Yeovil said he had been attending Council meetings since 2007 when campaigning to retain the Mudford recreation ground which had remained intact and he had become interested in Council meetings. He recalled past visitors to Council meetings and said some good decisions had been made for the benefit of Yeovil.

121. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman invited Members of Council to join him in a minute of silence to remember Councillor Malcolm Cavill who had recently passed away.

All Members stood for a minute of silence.

The Chairman then paid tribute to Jane Portman, Chief Executive, who would be leaving the Council and he presented her with a bouquet of flowers on behalf of Council members.

The Chief Executive thanked Members and said that it had been a pleasure to serve as Chief Executive for the final 18 months of SSDC. She paid tribute to the Council staff and wished all success moving forward.

The Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group paid tribute to the Leader of Council for her leadership during the last 5 years of SSDC and he presented her with a box of flowers on behalf of Council members.

The Leader of Council thanked all Members for the gift and said it was a sad day for SSDC but her leadership was as good as the people surrounding her.

The Chairman wished all Members and officers success in the future.

122. Chairman's Engagements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman said he had attended a very moving service at Wells Cathedral on 12 March to celebrate the five Councils of Somerset and he said that the South Somerset Chairman's Chain of Office would be displayed in Taunton Museum along with the other Somerset Chains of Office.

The list of Chairman's engagements were NOTED.

123. Confirmation of Minutes of Committee meetings held during March 2023 (Agenda Item 7)

The Chairman asked if Members were content to confirm the final minutes of the Committees of the Council. It was proposed and seconded to accept them as a true record of the meetings and they were signed by the relevant Committee Chairman.

RESOLVED: That Full Council agreed to confirm and authorise the relevant Committee Chair to sign as a correct record the minutes of:-

Area East Committee - 8 March 2023

Area North Committee – 22 Nov 2022

Area South Committee – 8 March 2023

Area West Committee – 15 Feb 2023

Audit Committee – 24 March 2023

District Executive – 2 March 2023

Licensing Committee – 13 Dec 2022

Licensing Sub Committee – 16 Jan 2023

Regulation Committee – 21 March 2023

Scrutiny Committee – 28 Feb 2023

Standards Committee – 6 Sept 2022

Reason: To confirm the final minutes of South Somerset District Council Committees.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

124. Reflections of South Somerset District Council (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman of Council recalled being elected to South Somerset District Council in 2011 and he said it had been a privilege to serve as Chairman for the last 4 years.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Leader of Council, the Deputy Leader, the Leader of the Conservative Group, the Leader of the Independent Group and several Councillors and Aldermen spoke of their pride in representing South Somerset District Council.

125. Sale of commercial development land at Lufton, Yeovil (Lufton 2000 joint venture) (Agenda Item 9)

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development advised that Abbey Manor Developments Ltd had made an offer to buy the Council's interest in the Lufton 2000 Joint Venture in March 2022 and due to movements in the property market the original price had been renegotiated which the Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager had advised was still a good offer. He concluded that the sale would simplify the Council's property portfolio.

There were no questions from Members and the recommendations to sell the Council's share in the Joint Venture in the asset named Lufton 2000 on the terms outlined in the confidential appendix to the report and other recommendations were proposed and seconded and unanimously agreed by Council.

RESOLVED: That Full Council agreed to:-

- a. note the contents of the report.
- b. approve the proposal to sell the Council's share in the Joint Venture in the asset named Lufton 2000 on the terms outlined in the confidential appendix to the report.
- c. authorise the Chief Financial Officer to seek the approval of the Somerset County Council to the sale under the S24 direction.
- d. if the proposal is approved, to delegate the power to the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer approval of detail of the sale.

Reason: To accept the reduced price for the sale of the Council's 50% share in the Lufton 2000 Joint Venture to its joint venture partner Abbey Manor Developments Limited from that agreed in September 2022.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

126. 2021/22 Auditor's Annual Report (Agenda Item 10)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services asked Members to note the recommendations of the report to improve the future for the Somerset Council.

The Chairman of the Audit Committee advised that officers had worked hard to improve the governance to hand over to the new Somerset Council and he particularly thanked the Monitoring Officer for her work to improve the internal governance of the Council.

There was no debate and Members were content to note the 2021/22 Auditor's Annual Report

RESOLVED: That Full Council agreed to:-

- a. note the Auditor's Annual Report and recommendations.
- b. note and endorse management's proposed responses and actions to the improvement recommendations.

Reason: Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountancy Act requires Full Council to discuss and respond publicly on the Auditor's Annual Report and the Council's management response.

127. Report of Executive Decisions (Agenda Item 11)

The Leader of Council introduced the report and invited questions.

There were no questions and the report of executive decisions was NOTED.

128. Audit Committee (Agenda Item 12)

The Chairman of the Audit Committee noted that the committee had met for the final time the previous week. He regretted that the finalised Auditor's Annual Report had not been ready to present to Council because of the nature of the Council's assets but he confirmed that it would be presented to the Somerset Council Audit Committee. He thanked the Audit Committee members, the officers who had supported them and the External Auditors, Grant Thornton.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services thanked the Audit Committee members for their critical friend role.

The report of the Audit Committee was NOTED.

129. Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 13)

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee said they had worked well together over the last 4 years and had achieved good outcomes for the council. He also thanked the officers who assisted them.

He concluded by thanking the Chairman of Council for his chairing of Council meetings, particularly during the Covid pandemic when meetings had been held on-line.

130. Motions (Agenda Item 14)

There were no Motions submitted by Members.

131. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Agenda Item 15)

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.

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Chairman

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Date