

Minutes of a Meeting of the Full Council held in the Hollinsworth Hall, Canalside Conference Centre, Marsh Lane, Huntworth, Bridgwater, TA6 6LQ, on Wednesday, 26 July 2023 at 2.00 pm

**Present:**

Cllr Mike Best (Chair)

Cllr Lee Baker (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Steve Ashton

Cllr John Bailey

Cllr Marcus Barr

Cllr Alan Bradford

Cllr Theo Butt Philip

Cllr Mike Caswell

Cllr Nicola Clark

Cllr Barry Clarke

Cllr Simon Coles

Cllr Nick Cottle

Cllr Dixie Darch

Cllr Tom Deakin

Cllr Caroline Ellis

Cllr Ben Ferguson

Cllr David Fothergill

Cllr Tony Grimes

Cllr Susannah Hart

Cllr Alistair Hendry

Cllr Edric Hobbs

Cllr John Hunt

Cllr Helen Kay

Cllr Jenny Kenton

Cllr Liz Leyshon

Cllr Martin Lovell

Cllr Matthew Martin

Cllr Mike Murphy

Cllr Graham Oakes

Cllr Connor Payne

Cllr Suria Aujla

Cllr Jason Baker

Cllr Brian Bolt

Cllr Hilary Bruce

Cllr Simon Carswell

Cllr Norman Cavill

Cllr Mandy Chilcott

Cllr Peter Clayton

Cllr John Cook-Woodman

Cllr Adam Dance

Cllr Hugh Davies

Cllr Martin Dimery

Cllr Habib Farbahi

Cllr Bob Filmer

Cllr Andrew Govier

Cllr Philip Ham

Cllr Mark Healey

Cllr Ross Henley

Cllr Henry Hobhouse

Cllr Dawn Johnson

Cllr Val Keitch

Cllr Tim Kerley

Cllr Tony Lock

Cllr Dave Mansell

Cllr Tessa Munt

Cllr Frances Nicholson

Cllr Sue Osborne

Cllr Oliver Patrick

Cllr Derek Perry  
Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey  
Cllr Faye Purbrick  
Cllr Leigh Redman  
Cllr Mike Rigby  
Cllr Diogo Rodrigues  
Cllr Dean Ruddle  
Cllr Heather Shearer  
Cllr Fran Smith  
Cllr Claire Sully  
Cllr Lucy Trimnell  
Cllr Richard Wilkins  
Cllr Rosemary Woods

Cllr Tom Power  
Cllr Steven Pugsley  
Cllr Wes Read  
Cllr Bill Revans  
Cllr Tony Robbins  
Cllr Jo Roundell Greene  
Cllr Peter Seib  
Cllr Gill Slocombe  
Cllr Mike Stanton  
Cllr Andy Sully  
Cllr Martin Wale  
Cllr David Woan  
Cllr Ros Wyke

**Other Members present remotely:**

Cllr Dawn Denton  
Cllr Lance Duddridge  
Cllr Evie Potts-Jones  
Cllr Gwil Wren

Cllr Andy Dingwall  
Cllr Christine Lawrence  
Cllr Brian Smedley

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

Apologies were received from Councillors Adam Boyden, Dawn Denton, Andy Dingwall, Michael Dunk, Sarah Dyke, Andy Hadley, Pauline Ham, Bente Height, Mike Hewitson, Andy Kendall, Marcus Kravis, Christine Lawrence, Kathy Pearce, Emily Pearlstone, Evie Potts-Jones, Brian Smedley, Federica Smith-Roberts, Sarah Wakefield, Alex Wiltshire and Gwil Wren.

The Leader congratulated Councillor Sarah Dyke on her appointment as the local MP for Somerton and Frome. He further thanked all the staff who worked and contributed to the smooth running of the by-election.

**17 Minutes from the Previous Meeting** - Agenda Item 2

The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes of Annual Council Meeting held on 24 May 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

**18 Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 3

Councillors present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor of a Town or Parish Council or any other Local

Authority:-

<b>UNITARY COUNCILLOR</b>	<b>TOWN AND/OR PARISH COUNCIL</b>
Steve Ashton	Crewkerne Town Council / Hinton St George Parish Council
Suria Aujla	Bridgwater Town Council
Jason Baker	Chard Town Council
Lee Baker	Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council
Marcus Barr	Wellington Town Council
Mike Best	Crewkerne Town Council
Alan Bradford	North Petherton Town Council
Theo Butt Philip	Wells City Council
Simon Carswell	Street Parish Council
Norman Cavill	West Monkton Parish Council
Peter Clayton	Burnham Highbridge Town Council
Nick Cottle	Glastonbury Town Council / St Edmunds Parish Council
Adam Dance	South Petherton Parish Council
Tom Deakin	Taunton Town Council
Caroline Ellis	Taunton Town Council
Ben Ferguson	Axbridge Town Council
Bob Filmer	Brent Knoll Parish Council
Philip Ham	Coleford Parish Council
Ross Henley	Wellington Town Council
Edric Hobbs	Shepton Mallet Town Council
John Hunt	Bishop's Hull Parish Council
Val Keitch	Ilminster Town Council
Jenny Kenton	Chard Town Council
Tim Kerley	Somerton Town Council
Tony Lock	Yeovil Town Council
Martin Lovell	Shepton Mallet Town Council
Mike Murphy	Burnham Highbridge Town Council
Graham Oakes	Yeovil Town Council / Yeovil Without Parish Council
Sue Osborne	Ilminster Town Council
Wes Read	Yeovil Town Council
Leigh Redman	Bridgwater Town Council
Mike Rigby	Bishop's Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council
Tony Robbins	Wells City Council
Dean Ruddle	Somerton Town Council
Peter Seib	Brympton Parish Council / Chilthorne Domer Parish Council
Heather Shearer	Street Parish Council
Gill Slocombe	Bridgwater Town Council

Jeny Snell	Yeovil Town Council / Brympton Parish Council
Richard Wilkins	Curry Rivel Parish Council
Dave Woan	Yeovil Town Council
Ros Wyke	Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Council

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

Public Questions were received from:-

- David Redgewell – Bus/Rail Network and Ticket Office Closures
- Chris Barker – Chinnock Hollow Risk Assessments
- Eva Bryczkowski – Helping St Andrews Patients
- Nigel Behan – Addressing Carbon Emissions and Climate Change

The questions and responses provided are attached to the minutes in Appendix A.

**20 Chair's Announcements - Agenda Item 5**

The Chair of the Council, Councillor Mike Best, referred to the events detailed on the Chair's Information Sheet, circulated and published with the agenda.

The Chair also highlighted that the February meeting of Full Council would be moved to a start time of 10am to allow for proper debate of the budget.

**21 Report of the Executive - Street Naming and Numbering Policy - Decision - Agenda Item 6**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Revans, introduced the report which set out the recommendations to Council which arose from the consideration of the report at the Executive meeting held on 10 May 2023.

The purpose of the report was the adoption of the new Street Naming and Numbering Policy for Somerset Council.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors were pleased that the Policy stated that agreement was required from both the Council and Royal Mail.
- Councillors requested that Parish Councils were consulted at the start of the process rather than at the end, as stated in the Policy.

Councillor Bill Revans proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor John Hunt.

Having been duly proposed and seconded the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the legislation Sections 17-19 (inclusive) Public Health Act 1925 (Option A in the Executive report of 10 May 2023) and the proposed Street Naming and Numbering Policy (Paper A, Appendix A) to enable and support the operation of the Street Naming and Numbering Service.

## **22 Report of the Leader of the Council - Somerset Board Arrangements - Decision - Agenda Item 7**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Revans, introduced the report which detailed the proposal for two additional Board Members and the delegated authority to the Leader of the Council to make decisions on Board Membership.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- The Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor David Fothergill, supported the report, however, he raised concern on the delegated authority to the Leader of the Council for appointments to the Board. He further advised that the Conservative Group would be abstaining from the vote.
- In response, the Leader of the Council advised that he would follow the proper protocol for delegation and that he would always consult with the Opposition Groups.

Councillor Bill Revans proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Adam Dance.

Having been duly proposed and seconded the Council **RESOLVED** to:-

- 1) Include a Further Education representative and the Director of Strategy for the Integrated Care Board as a member of the Somerset Board
- 2) Delegate authority to the Leader of the Somerset Council to make decisions on Board membership without the need to wait for a meeting of the Full Council.

## **23 Report of the Standards Committee - Decision - Agenda Item 8**

The Chair of the Standards Committee, Councillor John Bailey, introduced the report which set out the recommendations to Council which arose from the consideration of the report at the Standards Committee meeting held on 28 June 2023.

The purpose of the report was the adoption of the Code of Conduct Complaint Procedure (which included the investigation and hearing procedures) and the Media Protocol for Somerset Council.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors supported the recommendations.
- Councillors from the Standards Committee advised Council on the work that had been undertaken on the Code of Conduct and associated protocols and guidance.

Councillor John Bailey proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Frances Nicholson.

Having been duly proposed and seconded the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the following:-

- a) Investigations and Hearing Procedure
- b) Somerset Council Guidance on making a Code of Conduct Complaint (including process flow chart)
- c) Somerset Council Code of Conduct Complaints Media Protocol

#### **24 Report of the Monitoring Officer - Minutes from two of the legacy District Councils - Decision - Agenda Item 9**

The Monitoring Officer, David Clark, introduced the report which sought the approval to the accuracy of several minutes of the former legacy district councils.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillor Bob Filmer proposed an amendment to the wording for the Development Committee that took place on 7 February 2023, under item 'Other Planning Applications' and application 07/22/00025 registered 07/11/2022: 'It was also requested to be noted that the scale of development was a factor in the decision of the committee and any expansion of the site would not be acceptable due to the impact on the amenity of the surrounding area.' The proposed amended wording was agreed by the proposer and seconder.
- The members of the Conservative Group who were not present at the meetings would not be taking part in the vote.

Councillor Gill Slocombe proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Alan Bradford.

Having been duly proposed and seconded the Council **RESOLVED** the following:-

- a) Approval to the accuracy of the minutes of the former committee meetings of two legacy councils as set out in Appendix 1 – 9 (Sedgemoor District Council Development Committee – 13 December 2022, 10 January 2023, 7 February

2023, 7 March 2023, 28 March 2023; Executive meeting on 30 November 2022 and Full Council on 29 March 2023 and Somerset West and Taunton Council Planning Committee on 8 December 2022).

- b) Agreed the case for exempt information for the minutes of the former Sedgemoor District Council Executive meeting on 30 November 2022 (Appendix 1) and the Sedgemoor District Council meeting on 29 March 2023 (Appendix 2) to be treated in confidence, as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing that information.
- c) Agreed to exclude the press and public from the meeting where there was any discussion at the meeting regarding the minutes of the former Sedgemoor District Council Executive meeting on 30 November 2022 and the former Sedgemoor District Council Full Council meeting on 29 March 2023 (to be treated as exempt information).

**25 Executive - Report for information and Executive Lead Member Reports - Annual Report of the Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources and Performance and Annual Report of the Lead Member for Children and Families - Agenda Item 10**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Revans, introduced the report which included a summary of the key decisions taken by the Leader and the Executive.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were addressed to Lead Members:-

- A request for an update regarding the judicial review with Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council
- Accessibility of documents on the Council's website
- Variances in support given to City, Town and Parish Councils
- Tree planting
- Changes to bus services
- Closure of the Bridgwater Bus Depot (clarification that it was the depot and not the station)
- Continuation of the 'Park and Ride' service
- Ticket office closures and an update on the consultation process and responses
- Expansion of funding for bus services outside of the Taunton area
- Local Community Network decision making powers on car parking
- Update on Taunton Bus Station
- Update on the EDF bus service
- Grass cutting frequency
- Use of the Council logo at events held across the county

Councillor Bill Revans proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Liz Leyshon.

Having been duly proposed and seconded the Council **RESOLVED** to note the reports.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Liz Leyshon, introduced her annual report.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors thanked officers for all their hard work in the creation of the New Council.
- Concern was raised that the report did not cover any information on the new year or any in-year recording.
- Background information was given on the installation of the new finance system and the impact that had had on the service.
- Councillors requested the Section 151 Officer view on the current financial situation.
- Councillors highlighted the funding deficit caused by Central Government.

The Lead Member for Children, Families and Education, Councillor Tessa Munt, introduced her annual report.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors were pleased to see the report included in the agenda.
- Councillors agreed that there was much to celebrate.
- Councillors agreed it was an important subject, as they all had responsibility as a corporate parent.
- Councillors highlighted the recent achievement award ceremony that had been held and praised the staff for all their hard work, including those from the Shaw Trust.
- Councillors were urged to read the engagement report.
- Councillors requested that more detail on the budget and priorities be included within the next report.
- Councillors received an update on schools and building projects.
- Concern was raised on the key stage level two results and that they were lower than the national average.

## **26 Annual Report of the Audit Committee - Information - Agenda Item 11**

The Vice Chair of the Audit Committee, Councillor Andy Sully, introduced the annual



report of the Committee.

The Council noted the report.

**27 Annual Report of the Health and Wellbeing Board - Information - Agenda Item 12**

The Lead Member for Public Health, Equality and Diversity, Councillor Adam Dance, introduced the annual report of the Board.

The Council discussed the report and the following points were raised:-

- Councillors agreed that it was a good report which detailed what had been a challenging year with lots achieved within the service.
- Councillors advised that they had learnt a lot on the service since being appointed.
- Councillors were aware that Somerset had an aging population and that action was needed to support the work within the service.

The Council noted the report.

**28 Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee - Adults and Health - Information - Agenda Item 13**

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee for Adults and Health, Councillor Gill Slocombe, introduced the annual report of the Committee.

The Council discussed the report and the following point was raised:-

- Councillors thanked the Committee and officers for all their hard work over the past year.

The Council noted the report.

**29 Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families - Information - Agenda Item 14**

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee for Children and Families, Councillor Leigh Redman, introduced the annual report of the Committee.

The Council discussed the report and the following point was raised:-

- Councillors thanked the Chair and the Committee for all their hard work over the past year.

The Council noted the report.

**(The meeting ended at Time Not Specified)**

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**CHAIR**