

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