

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **South Somerset District Council** held on **Thursday 15 January 2015** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT.

(7.30 pm - 7.45 pm)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Mike Best (Chairman)  
Councillor Carol Goodall (Vice-Chairman)

Dave Bulmer	Ian Martin	Sylvia Seal
John Calvert	Paul Maxwell	Gina Seaton
Tim Carroll	Nigel Mermagen	Peter Seib
Tony Capozzoli	Graham Middleton	Angie Singleton
Nick Colbert	Roy Mills	Sue Steele
Nigel Gage	Terry Mounter	Andrew Turpin
Jon Gleeson	Graham Oakes	Linda Vijeh
Dave Greene	Patrick Palmer	Martin Wale
Peter Gubbins	Ric Pallister	Lucy Wallace
Brennie Halse	Shane Pledger	William Wallace
Tim Inglefield	Wes Read	Nick Weeks
Andy Kendall	David Recardo	Colin Winder
Jenny Kenton	John Richardson	Derek Yeomans
Pauline Lock	Ros Roderigo	
Tony Lock	Jo Roundell Greene	

**Officers**

Mark Williams	Chief Executive
Vega Sturgess	Strategic Director (Operations & Customer Focus)
Ian Clarke	Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services)
Donna Parham	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)
Ian Potter	Revenues and Benefits Manager
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Manager

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### 86. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cathy Bakewell, Mike Beech, John V Chainey, Pauline Clarke, John Dyke, Tony Fife, Marcus Fysh, Anna Groskop, Henry Hobhouse, Mike Lewis, David Norris, Sue Osborne, Paul Thompson, Kim Turner, Barry Walker and Rina Singh (Strategic Director).

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### 87. Minutes (Agenda Item 2)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

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**88. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)**

There were no declarations of interest made.

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**89. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)**

There were no questions from members of the public present.

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**90. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)**

The Chairman reminded Members that a Special Meeting of Full Council would be held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at 7.30pm to consider the adoption of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028).

The Chairman also advised that Agenda Item 13, Motion submitted by Councillor Andrew Turpin, had been withdrawn from the Agenda.

Councillor Andrew Turpin thanked the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for agreeing to present his proposal to review the planning scheme of delegation to the Scrutiny Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2015. He also thanked the Councillors who had supported him in his request to review the scheme and the officers for facilitating his request.

Councillor Sue Steele, as Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, confirmed that Councillor Turpin's request would be put to the Committee but stressed that it was for them to decide whether to take it forward to a Task and Finish review.

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**91. Chairman's Engagements (Agenda Item 6)**

The list of Chairman's Engagements was noted.

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**92. Setting the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for 2015/16 (Agenda Item 7)**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning advised that this was the annual review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme which had been reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee. He drew Members attention to the executive summary to be included at the beginning of the policy document and the recommendation to keep the Hardship Scheme at the current level of £30,000.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee confirmed that a Scrutiny Task and Finish group would reconvene shortly to work on the 2016/17 scheme.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Members were content to confirm that the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2015/16 be adopted by Council.

**RESOLVED:** That Council agreed:-

- a. that personal allowances and premiums are uprated in line with those for Housing Benefit;
- b. that non-dependent deductions are uprated in line with the annual percentage increase in Council Tax;
- c. that the non-dependent income bands are increased by the same percentage as those in the Prescribed Scheme;
- d. that the hardship scheme budget be set at £30,000 for the 2015/16 financial year;
- e. that the remaining measures introduced from 1 April 2013 remain unchanged;
- f. that the 2015/16 Council Tax Reduction Scheme attached at Appendix A is adopted
- g. to note the scheme had been amended to reflect changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) Prescribed Requirements legislation.

**Reason:** To agree the proposed amendments to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the 2015/16 financial year.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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### **93. Council Tax - Discretionary Reduction in Liability Policy (Agenda Item 8)**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning advised that the widespread flooding during 2014 had highlighted that certain specific circumstances were not covered by the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and so not eligible for relief. The proposed policy formalised discretionary awards in certain circumstances, including flooding. He noted that during discussion at the District Executive meeting it had been agreed to amend Recommendation C to delegate decisions on individual applications to the Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning (rather than the Revenues and Benefits Manager).

During discussion, it was noted that some minor grammatical corrections were required before publication of the final policy document. With the above amendment to recommendation C and the minor corrections to the policy document, Members were content to agree the recommendations of the report.

**RESOLVED:** That Full Council agreed:-

- a. that the proposed Council Tax Discretionary Reduction in Liability Policy be adopted;
- b. that decisions on groups of applicants be delegated to District

Executive;

- c. that decisions on individual applications be delegated to the Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning.

**Reason:** To agree the proposed Council Tax Discretionary Reduction in Liability Policy.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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#### **94. Final Recommendation of the Community Governance Review of Lopen Parish Council (Agenda Item 9)**

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) advised that this was the final report of the Community Governance Review for Lopen to increase the number of Parish Councillors from 5 to 7. He noted that there had been no further public responses to the second public consultation and the increase in Councillors would take effect from May 2015.

The Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Democratic Services regretted the complexity of the process to effect a simple increase in the number of Parish Councillors.

There was no debate and Members were content to confirm the recommendations of the report.

**RESOLVED:** That Council:-

1. noted the results of the consultation agree to publish them;
2. agreed that the final recommendation be: "To accept the majority vote from the people of Lopen to agree to increase the number of Parish Councillors to seven";
3. agreed to draw up a Reorganisation Order to give effect to this recommendation;
4. agreed to contact the statutory agencies to effect the requested alteration to increase the number of Parish Councillors to seven.

**Reason:** To agree the outcome of the final public consultation (Community Governance Review) which has taken place in the parish of Lopen on the proposal to increase the number of Parish Councillors from five to seven (under the provisions of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007).

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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#### **95. Report of Executive Decisions (Agenda Item 10)**

The Leader of Council advised that he would be writing to the Chief Executive and Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council to offer his regrets following the arson attack on their main office building the previous day.

In response to a question, he confirmed that SSDC had a disaster recovery plan and it was currently being reviewed to ensure it dealt with a range of situations.

The report of Executive Decisions was noted.

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**96. Audit Committee (Agenda Item 11)**

The report of the Audit Committee was noted.

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**97. Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 12)**

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee reported that the Budget Task and Finish Review had been completed that day and she thanked the Chief Executive, both Strategic Directors and the Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) for their assistance in completing the review.

The report of the Scrutiny Committee was noted.

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**98. Motions (Agenda Item 13)**

The Motion submitted by Councillor Andrew Turpin had been withdrawn by him earlier in the meeting. No other Motions had been submitted.

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**99. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Agenda Item 14)**

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.

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**100. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 15)**

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council would take place on **Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015** in the Council Chamber, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 7.30 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date