

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **South Somerset District Council** held on **Thursday 26 February 2015** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT.

(7.30 - 8.25 pm)

### **Present:**

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

Cathy Bakewell	Jenny Kenton	Sylvia Seal
Dave Bulmer	Pauline Lock	Gina Seaton
John Calvert	Tony Lock	Peter Seib
Tim Carroll	Ian Martin	Angie Singleton
Tony Capozzoli	Paul Maxwell	Sue Steele
Pauline Clarke	Nigel Mermagen	Andrew Turpin
John Dyke	Roy Mills	Linda Vijeh
Nigel Gage	Graham Oakes	Barry Walker
Jon Gleeson	Ric Pallister	Lucy Wallace
Anna Groskop	Shane Pledger	William Wallace
Peter Gubbins	Wes Read	Nick Weeks
Henry Hobhouse	David Recardo	Colin Winder
Andy Kendall	John Richardson	

### **Officers**

Mark Williams	Chief Executive
Rina Singh	Strategic Director (Place & Performance)
Donna Parham	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)
Ian Clarke	Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services)
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Manager

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### **101. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mike Beech, John V Chainey, Nick Colbert, Tony Fife, Marcus Fysh, Dave Greene, Brennie Halse, Tim Inglefield, Mike Lewis, Graham Middleton, Terry Mounter, David Norris, Sue Osborne, Patrick Palmer, Ros Roderigo, Jo Roundell Greene, Paul Thompson, Kim Turner, Martin Wale and Derek Yeomans.

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### **102. Minutes (Agenda Item 2)**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2015, 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 15<sup>th</sup> January 2015 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

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

There were no declarations of interest made.

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

There were no questions from members of the public present.

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

The Chairman asked that Members had the correct paperwork for the evening including the two additional reports. He also asked that Members collect their agendas for the Council meeting the following week and deliver any to those Members not present at the meeting.

The Chairman also reminded Members of the evening of music, song and dance on 22nd April at the Octagon Theatre to raise funds for the Mayor of Yeovil's Charity, Flying High for Flying Colours for Yeovil Women's Hospital.

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

The list of Chairman's Engagements was noted.

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**107. Revenue Budget 2015/16 - Medium Term Financial Plan and Revised Capital Programme (Agenda Item 7)**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning, with the aid of a power point presentation, outlined the financial challenges and successes which had faced the Council over the last 4 years. He referred to the Council's successful investment programme and the grants of New Homes Bonus funding awarded and the challenge of the reductions in Rate Support Grant. He drew Members attention to paragraph 53 of the report which outlined the Council's reserves and he proposed an amendment to Recommendation D of the report to reduce Council Tax for the forthcoming financial year to £147.75 for a Band D property, to be funded from New Homes Bonus money representing a reduction of 1.99%. This proposal was seconded.

In response to the proposal, the following comments were made:-

- No increase in the level of Council Tax for the last 5 years has been laudable but taking the number of properties in the district, a modest increase would not have had a tremendous impact upon residents and the Council could have done much with the additional money.
- With the reducing budgets, services had been reorganised over the last 4 years with no reduction in service to the residents.
- Pleased we are in a position to give money back to the electorate.
- The reduced car park income is noted and perhaps it would be better to abolish car parking charges across the district.

- Abolishing car park charges would only benefit people who owned a car and not all of the residents in the district.
- Both officers and members have worked as a team to make a prudent position which allows the proposed reduction in Council Tax.

At the conclusion of the debate, a named vote was requested by more than 10 Members present and the voting was as follows:-

	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
CATHY BAKEWELL	x		
MIKE BEST	x		
DAVE BULMER	x		
JOHN CALVERT	x		
TONY CAPOZZOLI	x		
TIM CARROLL	x		
PAULINE CLARKE	x		
JOHN DYKE	x		
NIGEL GAGE	x		
JON GLEESON	x		
CAROL GOODALL	x		
ANNA GROSKOP			x
PETER GUBBINS	x		
HENRY HOBHOUSE	x		
ANDY KENDALL	x		
JENNY KENTON	x		
PAULINE LOCK	x		
TONY LOCK	x		
IAN MARTIN	x		
PAUL MAXWELL	x		
NIGEL MERMAGEN	x		
ROY MILLS	x		
GRAHAM OAKES	x		
RIC PALLISTER	x		
SHANE PLEDGER	x		
WES READ	x		
DAVID RECARDO	x		
JOHN RICHARDSON	x		

SYLVIA SEAL	x		
GINA SEATON	x		
PETER SEIB	x		
ANGIE SINGLETON	x		
SUE STEELE	x		
ANDREW TURPIN	x		
LINDA VIJEH			x
BARRY WALKER			x
LUCY WALLACE			x
WILLIAM WALLACE			x
NICK WEEKS			x
COLIN WINDER			x

**RESOLVED:** That Council:-

- a. noted the report of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group attached at Appendix A.
- b. approved the overall Revenue Budget for 2015/16 of **£17,389,600** and the General Account Summary as shown at Appendix B and note future year projection:
- c. approved the detailed budgets for the District Executive and four Area Committees as shown at Appendix C;
- d. approved that there be a **reduction** in the Council Tax for 2015/16 for South Somerset District Council, which will result in a Band D charge of **£147.75**, and further;
  - i. approved that a further **£171,000** of New Homes Bonus is utilised in 2015/16 to maintain a balanced budget;
  - ii. noted that the amended budget shortfall in 2016/17 is now estimated to be **£1.67 million** from **£1.49 million**;
- e. approved the additional expenditure for budget pressure bids as shown in Appendix D;
- f. approved the savings proposals in Appendix E in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Schedule at Appendix G;
- g. approved the once-off items of expenditure as shown in Appendix F;
- h. approve the transfer of the NDR surplus (£0.9595 million) to the NDR Volatility Reserve;

- i. noted the current position and future estimation of reserves and balances as shown in paragraphs 53-56;
- j. approved the revised Capital Programme as shown in Appendix H;
- k. approved the new schemes to be included in the Capital Programme as shown in Appendix I;
- l. noted the scoring of new capital schemes outlined in Appendix K;
- m. noted the proposed funding of the Capital Programme as shown in paragraph 66.
- n. noted the detailed Capital Investment appraisal forms for new schemes, as shown at Appendix J.

**Reason:** To approve the proposed 2015/16 Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan (Revenue Budgets for 2015/16 to 2019/20) and the Capital Programme.

*(Voting: 33 in favour, 0 against, 7 abstentions)*

## 108. Council Tax Setting 2015/16 (Agenda Item 8)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning advised that the consequential amendments to the Council Tax setting were highlighted in the updated report circulated to all Members.

There was no debate and the majority of Members were content to confirm the Council Tax setting for 2015/16.

**RESOLVED:** That Full Council approved the following:

- (a) the formal council tax resolutions referred to in paragraphs 3 to 11 (as amended);
- (b) and the individual tax setting as follows:
  - (i) that the **Somerset County Council; Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset (PCC for Avon and Somerset); and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority** has stated the amounts shown in paragraph 7, 8 and 9 respectively of this report in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended), for each of the categories of dwelling;
  - (ii) that the **total amount** of council tax for each band of property in the South Somerset area for 2015/16 be as given in the table below:

A -	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
793.47	952.17	1,110.86	1,269.56	1,428.25	1,745.64	2,063.03	2,380.42	2,856.50

NB – The above figures exclude all **town/parish precepts**.

(iii) that, having calculated the totals of each precepting authority's amounts (including town and parish precepts), the Council (in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Act 1992) (as amended) hereby sets the amounts shown at **TOTAL** in the table shown at Appendix A as the council taxes for the year ending 31 March 2015 for each category of dwelling.

(c) the total Band D Council Tax will be as follows:

	<b>2014/15 £</b>	<b>2015/16 £</b>	<b>Increase %</b>
South Somerset District Council	150.74	147.75	(1.99)
Somerset County Council	1,027.30	1,027.30	0.00
PCC for Avon and Somerset	171.37	174.78	1.99
Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority	76.89	78.42	1.99
	<b>1,426.30</b>	<b>1,428.25</b>	<b>0.14</b>
Town and Parish Council (average)	71.89	73.34	2.02
	<b>1,498.19</b>	<b>1,501.59</b>	<b>0.23</b>

*(Voting: 34 in favour, 1 against, 5 abstentions)*

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## 109. Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2015/16 (Agenda Item 9)

Councillor Ian Martin, as Vice Chairman of the Audit Committee, stated that they had scrutinised the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy and he invited any questions upon it.

There was no debate and Members unanimously confirmed the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy for 2015/16.

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy for 2015/16 attached at Appendix 1.

**Reason:** To approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy for 2015/16.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

## 110. Approval of Financial Procedure Rules (Agenda Item 10)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning advised that the amendments to the Financial Procedure rules were highlighted in the report and he asked that Members confirm them.

There was no debate and Members unanimously confirmed the updated Financial Procedure Rules.

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved the updated Financial Procedure Rules as attached to the Agenda report.

**Reason:** To agree the changes to the Financial Procedure Rules to reflect changes to other policies, decisions, and agreements.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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## 111. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests - Change to the Code of Conduct (Agenda Item 11)

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) advised that from 7<sup>th</sup> May, Councillors would be required to register the Disclosable Pecuniary Interests of their spouse or civil partner as well as their own, as part of the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. This required a small amendment to the Councillor's Code of Conduct which was detailed on Agenda page 74 at paragraph 2.2.

The Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Democratic Services asked if this change would affect the Council's registration with the Information Commissioners Office and the Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) confirmed that it was not required to be separately identified however, he would check this with the Commissioners office.

There being no other debate, Members confirmed the revised code of conduct to be formally adopted by Council.

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved that the revised code of conduct attached to the report as Appendix A be formally adopted by this Council to be the code of conduct which shall apply to all members elected to the District Council at the District Council Elections held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and to all members elected or co-opted thereafter.

**Reason:** To agree a slight change to the code of conduct to apply to all members post the District Council Election held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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## 112. Pay Policy Statement for Chief Officers (Agenda Item 12)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Spatial Planning stated that all Councils were obliged to publicise their chief officer's salaries and any other benefits received each year as a requirement of the Localism Act 2011. He noted that no other benefits were listed for SSDC senior officers.

There was no debate and Members were pleased to approve the proposed Statutory Pay Policy Statement for the year 2015/16 for publication.

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved the proposed Statutory Pay Policy Statement for the year 2015/16 for publication.

**Reason:** To agree the Pay Policy Statement for Chief Officers as required under Section 38 (1) of Localism Act 2011. This requires local authorities to prepare, approve and publish an annual statutory pay policy statement by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 for the year 2014/15 and for each financial year after that.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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### **113. Dispensation for Councillor John V Chainey (Agenda Item 12a)**

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) advised that Councillor Chainey was still unable to attend Council meetings and so the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Group Leaders, had agreed to extend his existing dispensation to allow him to remain a Councillor until his term of office ended.

Members were content to note the decision taken by the Chief Executive.

**RESOLVED:** That Council:-

1. noted that the Chief Executive, having obtained the agreement of all of the Group Leaders, had approved a further dispensation for Councillor John V Chainey from attending meetings of the Council by reason of illness for a six month period commencing 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015, in order to avoid Councillor Chainey ceasing to be a member of the authority under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. noted that the dispensation would last until 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015 which would be the date of re-election of all District Councillors.

**Reason:** To notify Members of a delegated decision taken by the Chief Executive, having obtained the agreement of the Group Leaders, to extend the dispensation for a Councillor from attending Council meetings due to on-going ill health over a twelve month period.

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### **114. Draft Meetings Calendar for 2015/16 (Agenda Item 13)**

The following amendments to the 2015/16 meetings timetable were noted:-

- Budget and Council Tax Setting Full Council meeting - moved to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved the meetings timetable for 2015/16 (as amended) subject to any further amendments made by the Annual Council meeting in May 2015.

**Reason:** To agree the 2015/16 meetings timetable for publication.



**115. Report of Executive Decisions (Agenda Item 14)**

In response to a question, the Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Democratic Services confirmed that Councillors current IT equipment could be purchased by them for a nominal sum, or returned to SSDC for recycling after the Election in May 2015.

The report of Executive Decisions was noted.

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**116. Audit Committee (Agenda Item 15)**

Councillor Ian Martin, Vice Chairman of the Audit Committee, advised that SSDC had received a positive outcome to their appeal to the Department of Work and Pensions, resulting in a small refund due to SSDC.

The report of the Audit Committee was noted.

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**117. Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 16)**

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee said a great deal of task and finish work had been completed during the year and she thanked both the officers and councillors who had contributed to them. She encouraged new Members to join the task and finish groups in the forthcoming council year.

The report of the Scrutiny Committee was noted.

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**118. Motions (Agenda Item 17)**

There were no Motions submitted by Members.

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**119. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Agenda Item 18)**

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.

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**120. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 19)**

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council would take place on **Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015** in the Council Chamber, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 7.30 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date