

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **South Somerset District Council** held on **Thursday 21 July 2016** in the Council Chamber, Brympton Way, Yeovil, BA20 2HT.

(7.30 pm - 8.30 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Mike Best (Chairman)
Councillor Tony Capozzoli (Vice-Chairman)

Clare Aparicio Paul	Kaysar Hussain	Wes Read
Jason Baker	Tim Inglefield (from 7.50pm)	David Recardo
Cathy Bakewell	Val Keitch	Jo Roundell Greene
Marcus Barrett	Andy Kendall	Dean Ruddle
Mike Beech	Jenny Kenton	Sylvia Seal
Neil Bloomfield	Mike Lewis	Gina Seaton
Amanda Broom	Mike Lock	Garry Shortland
John Clark	Tony Lock	Angie Singleton
Nick Colbert	Paul Maxwell	Alan Smith
Adam Dance	Graham Middleton	Rob Stickland
Nigel Gage	David Norris	Andrew Turpin
Carol Goodall	Sue Osborne	Martin Wale
Anna Groskop	Tiffany Osborne	Nick Weeks
Peter Gubbins	Ric Pallister	Colin Winder
Henry Hobhouse	Crispin Raikes	Derek Yeomans

Officers

Ian Clarke	Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services)
Donna Parham	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)
Andrew Gillespie	Performance Manager
Becky Sanders	Democratic Services Officer
Kelly Wheeler	Democratic Services Officer

19. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dave Bulmer, Sarah Dyke, John Field, Sarah Lindsay, Graham Oakes, Stephen Page, Shane Pledger, Peter Seib, Sue Steele and William Wallace.

20. Minutes (Agenda Item 2)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2016, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

21. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillor Anna Groskop declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 – Heart of the South West Devolution Bid – as she had voted on the item as a County Councillor. She noted she would abstain from voting for that item.

22. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

Ms V Cornelius, referred to a recent Council press release about the hoard of Roman coins found at Yeovil Recreation Centre. She noted the Community Heritage Access Centre was located on an unattractive industrial estate and viewing was by appointment. She queried if there were any plans to re-open a museum in Yeovil.

Councillor Sylvia Seal, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture, provided a response noting that there were no plans to re-open a museum in Yeovil.

23. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman reminded members of two forthcoming Portfolio Holder briefing events on 22 July and 28 July.

24. Chairman's Engagements (Agenda Item 6)

The list of Chairman's Engagements was noted.

25. Heart of the South West Formal Devolution Bid (Agenda Item 7)

The Leader of Council introduced the report and noted details of costs and governance arrangements were still unknown. He explained the report was asking members to support the principle and to continue discussions with government. He felt now was not the time to leave discussions as there was a wish to get the best deal for Somerset.

During discussion, Councillor Mike Lewis on behalf of the Conservative group, expressed concern that if recommendation A, as detailed in the agenda was agreed, then government may think the Council is committed. He suggested deleting the wording referring to agreeing to sign up to the principle of creating a Combined Authority, and also that the word only at the end of recommendation B was moved to the middle of the sentence.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was agreed to amend the wording of recommendations A and B as suggested. The Leader noted that if the change of wording created an issue with the other authorities then he would bring back a report to the August meeting.

RESOLVED: That Council:

- a) Agreed to endorse the current approach to devolution as set out in the Prospectus for Prosperity and for this to be used as the basis for negotiation with Government towards a Devolution Deal for the area;
- b) Noted that this endorsement only commits the Council to take part in

further discussions;

- c) Noted that entering into a Devolution Deal or becoming a member of a Heart of the South West Combined Authority will be subject to future debate and agreement by the Council and subject to negotiations with Government.

Reason: To obtain authority to pursue solutions that help the Council maximise the opportunities of devolution.

(Voting: 44 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention)

26. **SSDC Annual Performance Report 2015/16 (Agenda Item 8)**

The Leader of Council, as Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy, introduced the report as detailed in the agenda report and highlighted key elements.

During discussion comments were made regarding:

- High target set for Chard regeneration and disappointed for people of Chard that there has been slow progress
- PI030 - could other groups be added for the indicator
- There had been a significant increase in the number of complaints compared to the figures of the previous two years but there was no explanation as to why.

In response to comments made, the Leader of Council agreed to provide information to explain the spike in the number of complaints and would get clarity regarding PI030 – the details to be circulated to members via email.

Members were content to note the report.

RESOLVED: That Council noted the 2015/16 performance information at Appendices A, B and C.

Reason: The Council is accountable for its performance to the local community and performance data is published to demonstrate achievements against targets.

27. **2015/16 Treasury Management Activity Report (Agenda Item 9)**

Councillor Derek Yeomans, as Chairman of the Audit Committee, noted all information was detailed in the report and highlighted that the value of dividends from a property fund had decreased following the Referendum.

There was no debate and Members were content to note the report.

RESOLVED: That Council agreed to:

- Note the Treasury Management Activity for the 2015/16 financial year;
- Note the position of the individual prudential indicators for the 2015/16 financial year;

- Note the outlook for the investment performance in 2016/17.

Reason: To review the treasury management activity and the performance against the Prudential Indicators for the 2015/16 financial year.

28. Membership of Committees - Appointment of new Councillor to the Scrutiny Committee and Income Generation Board (Agenda Item 10)

The Leader of Council noted that the Conservative group now wished to appoint Councillor Neil Bloomfield to the Scrutiny Committee and not Councillor David Norris as detailed in the agenda report. The Leader also informed members that Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul had been appointed to the Somerset Waste Board instead of Councillor Angie Singleton, noting that the appointment had to be an Executive member.

There was no debate and members were content to confirm the appointments.

RESOLVED: That Council, in accordance with Section 16 (1) Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the duty therein to give effect to the wishes of the political group to which seats on any committee are allocated, confirmed that:-

1. Councillor Neil Bloomfield be appointed to the Scrutiny Committee.
2. Councillor Graham Middleton be appointed to the Income Generation Board.

Reason: To confirm a change of members appointed to the Scrutiny Committee and the Income Generation Board.

29. Increase in Councillors on Brympton Parish Council - Community Governance Review (CGR) (Agenda Item 11)

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) advised that a valid request had been received from Brympton Parish Council to increase the number of Parish Councillors. The necessary public consultation would be conducted by a Community Governance Review and he highlighted the process and timeframes involved.

There was no discussion and members unanimously agreed to a Community Governance Review of the Parish of Brympton being undertaken.

RESOLVED: That Council:

1. Noted the receipt of the request from Brympton Parish Council to increase the number of Parish Councillors and its validity;
2. Agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review of the Parish of Brympton;
3. Agreed the Terms of Reference of the review as detailed in Appendix A, including the timetable and arrangements for public consultation;
4. Agreed that the review will be carried out by the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with Ward Members, Assistant Director (Communities) and the Area South

Committee;

5. Noted that further reports will be brought to Council in order that decisions may be made in respect of draft proposals and final recommendations of the Review.

Reason: To commence a Community Governance Review of Brympton Parish Council to increase the size of the Parish Council from 11 to 12 Councillors (under the provisions of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007).

(Voting: Unanimous)

30. Report of Executive Decisions (Agenda Item 12)

The report of Executive Decisions was noted.

31. Audit Committee (Agenda Item 13)

Councillor Derek Yeomans, Chairman of the Audit Committee, introduced the report and asked if members had any questions. There were no questions and the report of the Audit Committee was noted.

32. Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 14)

Councillor John Clark, Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report and highlighted the comments made regarding the new Boards. He also noted it would be important to scrutinise the proposals coming forward regarding a combined authority.

There were no questions and the report of the Scrutiny Committee was noted.

33. Motions (Agenda Item 15)

The following motion was submitted by Councillor Crispin Raikes:-

In the wake of the recent killing of Jo Cox MP and the less savoury rhetoric of some in the referendum campaign, this council wishes to make it clear that we, the councillors, are proud to represent a vibrant and diverse community. We totally condemn any form of racism, intolerance, bigotry or xenophobia. Hate crimes have no place in our society and we will do all we can to prevent them. The residents of South Somerset, whatever their race, creed, age, colour or sexuality are equal and shall be treated as such.

Councillor Crispin Raikes, commented he hoped the motion was self-explanatory, and made reference to recent hate crime statistics in the area as provided by Avon & Somerset Police.

Councillor Amanda Broom noted she had been dismayed by comments made by some members of the public in her community regarding migrant workers. She suggested another paragraph was added to the motion so that as a Council a clear message was

being stated. She also asked that SSDC provide a clear guide as to what steps the Council will take to tackle such behaviour, and read out a statement outlining the points.

During discussion members suggested some slight changes to the wording of the original motion. Councillor Crispin Raikes was content to accept the changes and the additional wording of Councillor Amanda Broom. The motion, as amended, was seconded and on being put to the vote was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That Council supported the motion with minor amendments to the wording, and agreed the actions as follows:

In the wake of the recent killing of Jo Cox MP and the less savoury rhetoric of some in the referendum campaign, this Council wishes to make it clear that we, the councillors, are proud to represent a vibrant and diverse community. We totally condemn any form of racism, intolerance, bigotry or xenophobia. Hate crimes have no place in our society and we will do all we can to prevent them. The residents of South Somerset, whatever their gender, race, creed, age, colour or sexual orientation are treated equally.

And further, that the Council wish to send a clear message stating that:

“We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have no place in our country. Our council condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable. We will work to ensure that local bodies and programmes have the support and resources they need to fight and prevent racism and xenophobia. We reassure all people living in this area that they are valued members of our community.”

SSDC will

- Submit a press release stating the above – to be put on all social media and in the papers
- Send a letter to all Parishes and Councils within South Somerset confirming our commitment to this statement – asking them to do the same at their next council meetings
- Confirm in our statement the increase in hate crimes across South Somerset
- Work with SARI (Stand Against Racism and Inequality), local migrant groups, charities and support groups so we can agree the help they require from the Council in tackling hate crimes
- Set up a training session for Councillors with SARI to help us understand the signs of hate crimes and put us in a better position to help tackle this unacceptable problem.

(Voting: Unanimous)

34. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Agenda Item 16)

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.

35. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 17)

Councillor Mike Lewis, as leader of the Conservative group, expressed his regret regarding the change of date for the September Council meeting, as several members would be absent.

The Leader of Council apologised for any inconvenience, but noted all members had been consulted about the change of date. He referred to an email that had been circulated confirming the date would change to the 1st September 2016 as only four members had indicated they would not be able to attend a meeting on that date.

Members noted the next meeting of the Full Council would take place on Thursday 18th August 2016 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 7.30pm.

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Chairman

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Date