South Somerset District Council

Minutes of the Annual meeting of the South Somerset District Council held on Tuesday 21 May 2019 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

(7.30 pm - 9.10 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Paul Maxwell (Chairman)
Councillor Jenny Kenton (Vice-Chairman)

Jason Baker
Robin Bastable
Mike Best
Neil Bloomfield
Dave Bulmer
Hayward Burt
Tony Capozzoli
Martin Carnell
Malcolm Cavill
John Clark
Nicola Clark
Louise Clarke
Nick Colbert
Adam Dance
Sarah Dyke
Karl Gill
David Gubbins

Peter Gubbins
Brian Hamilton
Mike Hewitson
Henry Hobhouse
Charlie Hull
Kaysar Hussain
Val Keitch
Andy Kendall
Tim Kerley
Mike Lock
Pauline Lock
Tony Lock
Kevin Messenger
Graham Oakes
Sue Osborne
Tiffany Osborne

Clare Paul
Crispin Raikes
Wes Read
David Recardo
Paul Rowsell
Gina Seaton
Peter Seib
Jeny Snell
Andy Soughton
Mike Stanton
Rob Stickland
Lucy Trimnell
Anthony Vaughan
Linda Vijeh
William Wallace
Colin Winder

Officers:

Alex Parmley
Netta Meadows
Clare Pestell
Martin Woods
Angela Watson
Paul Fitzgerald
Angela Cox
Chief Executive
Director (Strategy & Support Services)
Director (Commercial Services & Income Generation)
Director (Service Delivery)
Monitoring Officer
Section 151 Officer
Democratic Services Specialist

1. Election of Chairman (Agenda Item 1)

The retiring Chairman welcomed all returning and newly elected Councillors and asked that they work together with officers and respect each other. He thanked his retiring Vice Chairman and officers for supporting him in his year of office.

He called for nominations for the position of Chairman of Council.

Councillor Henry Hobhouse, seconded by Councillor Peter Gubbins nominated Councillor Paul Maxwell as Chairman of the Council.

Councillor Linda Vijeh, seconded by Councillor Nick Colbert, proposed Councillor Colin Winder as Chairman of Council.
A vote was taken and Councillor Paul Maxwell was declared elected as Chairman of Council (voting: Paul Maxwell: 36, Colin Winder: 13, 1 abstention). It was therefore:

RESOLVED: that Councillor Paul Maxwell be elected as Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2019/2020.

Following his appointment Councillor Maxwell read and signed the formal declaration of acceptance of office, and thanked Members for their support

2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman (Agenda Item 2)

The Chairman welcomed all Councillors to their first meeting and proposed that Councillor Jenny Kenton be appointed to the position of Vice Chairman of Council. This was seconded by Councillor John Clark.

Councillor Linda Vijeh, seconded by Councillor Sue Osborne, proposed Councillor Gina Seaton as Vice Chairman of Council.

A vote was taken and Councillor Jenny Kenton was declared elected as Vice Chairman of Council (voting: Jenny Kenton: 36, Gina Seaton: 12, 2 abstentions). It was therefore:

RESOLVED: that Councillor Jenny Kenton be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2019/2020.

Following her appointment Councillor Kenton read and signed the formal declaration of acceptance of office, and thanked Members for their support.

3. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 3)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ben Hodgson, Michael Lewis, Tricia O’Brien, Dean Ruddle, Garry Shortland, Alan Smith, Gerard Tucker and Martin Wale.

4. Minutes (Agenda Item 4)

Due to their late publication, the signing of the minutes of the last meeting of Council were deferred to a future meeting.

5. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 5)

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

6. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 6)
The Council were addressed by two members of the public and two students regarding Agenda item 12: Motion to Declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency. Their comments included:

- I would remind you of Sir David Attenborough’s speech at the opening ceremony of United Nations-sponsored climate talks in December 2018 when he said “If we don't take action, the collapse of our civilisations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon”
- We urge you to plant 100,000 trees this year, review your Local Plan and Carbon Reduction Plan and work with Somerset County Council to establish a Citizens Assembly as many local residents will respond positively to help you.
- I want you to be aware the planet is in danger and the ice is melting fast.
- We have declared an emergency on climate change and it is time to put the fire out.
- We can all take individual responsibility to reduce, reuse and recycle but it is not enough. You have the power to make plans and bring in policies.
- The Met Office predict a 1m rise in sea level which could mean the loss of parts of the Somerset Levels. This could be a 2m rise by 2100.
- We urge you to show leadership by pledging to make the district of South Somerset carbon neutral by 2025 and act now by planting trees. The future of the planet and much of Somerset is in your hands.

7. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 7)

The Chairman thanked the immediate retiring Chairman, Councillor Tony Capozzoli, and, the immediate retiring Vice-Chairman, Councillor Mike Best for their service.

He also advised of the sudden death of ex-District Councillor Adrian Cavendish who was the Ward Member for Eggwood from 2003 to 2007 and also Chairman of Hinton St George Parish Council. He said Mr Cavendish had worked passionately for his community and would be greatly missed.

He welcomed the newly elected District Councillors to their first Council meeting and hoped they would find the role both rewarding and enjoyable.

He concluded by paying tribute to Councillors Derek Yeomans and Andrew Turpin who had unsuccessfully sought re-election to the Council.

8. Chairman's Engagements (Agenda Item 8)

The list of Chairman’s Engagements was noted.

9. Appointment of Member Level Bodies 2019/20 (Agenda Item 9)

The Leader of Council stated that the new Portfolio Holders responsibilities would be aligned to the Council Plan themes and Areas of focus for 2019/20. In response to a question she advised that very recent MHCLG advice said that authorities should consider a member’s experience, expertise, interests, ability to act impartially, ability to work as part of a group, and capacity to serve as well as the ability to lead and build a
sense of teamwork and consensus among committee members when appointing Chairman of Scrutiny Committees.

The Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Linda Vijeh, ask for her groups disappointment be recorded that the Area Committees would not be afforded the opportunity to appoint their own Chairman.

During discussion the following points were made:

- Councillors appointed as Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees should all undertake the Chairing Skills training courses offered.
- Councillors and any potential substitutes on the Audit, Licensing and Regulation Committees must undergo the full training for these committees.
- The Independent Members' Remuneration Panel should be reconvened to review the current Members Allowance Scheme.

The Chairman asked for Members to consider each recommendation individually and it was resolved that:-

Recommendation (1) – to agree the appointment of Leader of the Council

It was proposed by Councillor Peter Gubbins and seconded by Councillor Anthony Vaughan that Councillor Val Keitch be appointed Leader of the Council. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried. It was therefore:

RESOLVED: that Council appointed Councillor Val Keitch as Leader of the Council for a period of four years, starting on the day of her election (May 2019) and ending on the day of the post 4-year Council election annual meeting (May 2023).

Recommendation (2) – appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council

RESOLVED: that Council note the appointment of Councillor Peter Seib as Deputy Leader of the Council to hold office (subject to Article 7.03) until the end of the term of office of the Leader (May 2023).

Recommendations (3 & 4) - Appointment of Membership and establishment of District Executive Committee

RESOLVED: that the District Executive committee be established and that Council note the Leader’s appointment of the following Members and Portfolio responsibilities for 2019/20:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Portfolio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Val Keitch</td>
<td>Lib Dem</td>
<td>Leader: Strategy &amp; Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Seib</td>
<td>Lib Dem</td>
<td>Deputy Leader: Finance, Legal &amp; Democratic Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Best</td>
<td>Lib Dem</td>
<td>Health &amp; Well-Being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Clark</td>
<td>Lib Dem</td>
<td>Economic Development including Commercial Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Dyke</td>
<td>Lib Dem</td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendation (5) – Re-establishment of member level bodies for 2019/20

RESOLVED: that the following member-level bodies be re-established for 2019/20:

- 4 Area Committees (geographical representation)
- Scrutiny Committee (14 members)
- Audit Committee (10 members)
- Regulation Committee (14 members)
- Licensing Committee (15 members)
- Appointments Committee (8 members)
- Standards Committee (6 District Council members plus 5 co-optees)

Recommendation (6) - Appoint Members to Member-Level Bodies

RESOLVED: that the memberships of the bodies established as in recommendation (5) be approved as follows for 2019/20 having regard to the principles of political balance as set out in the report and giving effect to the wishes of the party political groups:

**Area North Committee**  12 members (exempt from political balance)

- Neil Bloomfield  Lib Dem
- Malcolm Cavill  Lib Dem
- Louise Clarke  Lib Dem
- Adam Dance  Lib Dem Chairman
- Mike Hewitson  Lib Dem
- Tim Kerley  Lib Dem
- Crispin Raikes  Lib Dem
- Mike Stanton  Lib Dem Vice Chairman
- Gerard Tucker  Independent
- Dean Ruddle  Independent
- Clare Paul  Conservative
- Tiffany Osborne  Conservative

**Area South Committee**  19 members (exempt from political balance)

- John Clark  Lib Dem
- Nicola Clark  Lib Dem
- Karl Gill  Lib Dem
David Gubbins  Lib Dem  
Peter Gubbins  Lib Dem  Chairman 
Kaysar Hussain  Lib Dem  
Andy Kendall  Lib Dem  
Mike Lock  Lib Dem  
Pauline Lock  Lib Dem  
Tony Lock  Lib Dem  
Graham Oakes  Lib Dem  
Wes Read  Lib Dem  
David Recardo  Lib Dem  Vice Chairman  
Peter Seib  Lib Dem  
Alan Smith  Lib Dem  
Jeny Snell  Lib Dem  
Andy Soughton  Lib Dem  
Rob Stickland  Lib Dem  
Gina Seaton  Conservative  

Area East Committee  13 members (exempt from political balance)  
Sarah Dyke  Lib Dem  
Henry Hobhouse  Lib Dem  Chairman  
Kevin Messenger  Lib Dem  
Paul Rowsell  Lib Dem  
Tony Capozzoli  Independent  Vice Chairman  
Robin Bastable  Conservative  
Hayward Burt  Conservative  
Nick Colbert  Conservative  
Charlie Hull  Conservative  
Michael Lewis  Conservative  
Lucy Trimnell  Conservative  
William Wallace  Conservative  
Colin Winder  Conservative  

Area West Committee  16 members (exempt from political balance)  
Jason Baker  Lib Dem  Chairman  
Mike Best  Lib Dem  
Martin Carnell  Lib Dem  
Brian Hamilton  Lib Dem  
Ben Hodgson  Lib Dem  
Val Keitch  Lib Dem  
Jenny Kenton  Lib Dem  
Paul Maxwell  Lib Dem  
Tricia O’Brien  Lib Dem  
Robin Pailthorpe  Lib Dem  Vice Chairman  
Garry Shortland  Lib Dem  
Anthony Vaughan  Lib Dem  
Scrutiny Committee 14 members (political balance)

2 Vice-Chairmen
Louise Clarke Lib Dem
Nicola Clark Lib Dem
Brian Hamilton Lib Dem
Mike Lock Lib Dem
Paul Maxwell Lib Dem
Robin Pailthorpe Lib Dem
Crispin Raikes Lib Dem Chairman
Jeny Snell Lib Dem
Mike Stanton Lib Dem
Rob Stickland Lib Dem
Gerard Tucker Independent Vice-Chairman
Robin Bastable Conservative
Charlie Hull Conservative
Sue Osborne Conservative Vice-Chairman

Audit Committee 10 members (political balance)

LD7, C2, I1
Mike Best Lib Dem Chairman
Martin Carnell Lib Dem
Louise Clarke Lib Dem
Brian Hamilton Lib Dem
Mike Hewitson Lib Dem Vice Chairman
Paul Maxwell Lib Dem
Robin Pailthorpe Lib Dem
Malcolm Cavill Conservative
William Wallace Conservative
Dave Bulmer Independent

Regulation Committee 14 members (political balance)

LD10, C3, I1
Jason Baker (W) Lib Dem Chairman
Neil Bloomfield (N) Lib Dem Vice Chairman
Adam Dance (N) Lib Dem
Peter Gubbins (S) Lib Dem Chairman
Henry Hobhouse (E) Lib Dem
Tony Lock (S) Lib Dem
Crispin Raikes (N) Lib Dem
David Recardo (S) Lib Dem
Paul Rowsell (E) Lib Dem
Andy Soughton (S) Lib Dem
Tony Capozzoli (E) Independent
Sue Osborne (W) Conservative
William Wallace (E) Conservative
Colin Winder (E) Conservative

**Licensing Committee** 15 members (exempt from political balance)

- Jason Baker Lib Dem
- Karl Gill Lib Dem
- Jenny Kenton Lib Dem
- Tony Lock Lib Dem
- Kevin Messenger Lib Dem
- Crispin Raikes Lib Dem
- Wes Read Lib Dem Vice Chairman
- David Recardo Lib Dem Chairman
- Paul Rowsell Lib Dem
- Andy Soughton Lib Dem
- Dave Bulmer Independent
- Nick Colbert Conservative
- Linda Vijeh Conservative
- Martin Wale Conservative
- William Wallace Conservative

**Appointments Committee** 8 members (political balance)

LD5, C2, I1
- Val Keitch Lib Dem Chairman
- Peter Seib Lib Dem Vice Chairman
- Mike Best Lib Dem
- Crispin Raikes Lib Dem
- Mike Stanton Lib Dem
- Tony Capozzoli Independent
- Nick Colbert Conservative
- Linda Vijeh Conservative

LD4, C2
- Nicola Clark Lib Dem
- Peter Gubbins Lib Dem Chairman
- Jenny Kenton Lib Dem
- Crispin Raikes Lib Dem
- Hayward Burt Conservative
- Sue Osborne Conservative

**Standards Committee** 6 members (political balance)

(6 members,)

- Nicola Clark Lib Dem Chairman
- Peter Gubbins Lib Dem
- Jenny Kenton Lib Dem
- Crispin Raikes Lib Dem
- Hayward Burt Conservative
- Sue Osborne Conservative

Plus 3 parish representatives and 2 independent representatives:

- Vacancy Parish Rep
- Vacancy Parish Rep
- Vacancy Parish Rep
- Christopher Borland Independent
Recommendation (7) – to appoint the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Member-Level Bodies

RESOLVED: that the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the bodies listed under recommendations (5) above be approved for 2019/20 as shown in that resolution.

Recommendation (8) - Terms of Reference of Member-Level Bodies

RESOLVED: that the bodies appointed under recommendation (4) above will operate in accordance with their existing terms of reference (as attached at Appendix A to the report) and the scheme of delegation set out in Part 3 of the Constitution.

Recommendation (9) - Appointment to Council Wide Panels and Partnerships

RESOLVED: that the following appointments be made to Council wide panels and partnerships:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel or Partnership</th>
<th>Councillors appointed</th>
<th>Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appeals Panel (political balance) LD4, C3, I1</td>
<td>Jason Baker, Sarah Dyke, Peter Gubbins, Crispin Raikes, Peter Seib, Tony Capozzoli, Hayward Burt, Martin Wale, Linda Vijeh</td>
<td>Lib Dem, Lib Dem, Lib Dem, Lib Dem, Lib Dem, Ind, Cons, Cons, Cons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chard Regeneration Programme Board</td>
<td>(Area Chairmen) Jason Baker, Peter Gubbins, Henry Hobhouse</td>
<td>Lib Dem, Lib Dem, Lib Dem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeovil Regeneration Programme Board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wincanton Regeneration Programme Board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Alliance with</td>
<td>Val Keitch</td>
<td>Lib Dem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendation (10) - Appointment to Outside Bodies

**RESOLVED:** it was agreed to appoint members to the Council wide outside bodies as listed below and note that all other appointments to outside bodies would be made by the Area Committees for area specific issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Councillor appointed for 2019/20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board of Governors for Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</td>
<td>David Recardo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA General Assembly</td>
<td>Val Keitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Councils Network</td>
<td>Val Keitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West Provincial Employers</td>
<td>To be confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West Councils</td>
<td>Val Keitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset Rivers Authority</td>
<td>Mike Stanton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parrett Drainage Board</td>
<td>Mike Stanton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset Water Management Partnership</td>
<td>Sarah Dyke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Lewis (sub)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gerard Tucker (sub)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendation (11) - Members’ Allowances Panel

RESOLVED: to re-establish the Council’s independent Members’ Remuneration Panel to review the current Members Allowance Scheme.

Recommendation (12) – Continuation of Council Procedure Rule 40 (B)

RESOLVED: to agree the continuation of Council Procedure Rule 40 (B) – appointment of substitute members at meetings of Committees.

Recommendation (13) - Meetings Timetable

RESOLVED: that the Council’s annual meetings timetable be confirmed as attached at Appendix B.

(Resolutions 3-13 put to the meeting and passed without dissent)

10. Notification of an Urgent Executive Decision to Fit Out the First Floor of Yeovil Innovation Centre (YIC) (Agenda Item 10)

The Leader of Council advised that the decision had been taken urgently to secure the tenant who could bring up to 100 jobs to the area.

In response to questions, the Chief Executive and the Director for Commercial Services & Income Generation confirmed that:-

- heads of terms had been agreed with the tenant but no money would be expended until the lease terms were agreed with the tenant.
- the fit-out works were for the benefit of the Landlord (YIC) not the tenant, but necessary for the tenant to be able to occupy the accommodation and pay the proposed rent. This included basics such as carpets, plug sockets and lights. These would be a permanent benefit to the YIC, not the tenant if they should leave the premises in future.
There was no debate and Council noted the decision taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with Council Leader.

**RESOLVED:** That Council noted that the Chief Executive in consultation with Council Leader approved:-

a. capital funding of up to £320,000 from the useable capital receipts reserve to meet the cost of fit-out works and furniture for First Floor at YIC2;

b. to add the revenue income stated in the confidential appendix to the Medium Term Financial Plan;

c. that expenditure shall only be committed if a legally binding agreement for lease has been concluded with the tenant on the basis set out in this report;

d. that prior confirmation shall be obtained from partners in YIC that SSDC may retain the full revenue impact of this letting to provide return on this capital and recovery of that capital until the full sum has been recovered, and thereafter revenue will accrue to YIC in the normal way; and

e. the Director of Commercial Services and Income Generation be authorised to approve the details of specification and lease terms, or to delegate as appropriate.

**Reason:** To report the details of an urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Council Leader for approval for SSDC to fund fit-out works for the first floor at Yeovil Innovation Centre phase 2 (YIC2) three years ahead of forecast.


The report of Executive decisions taken since the last meeting of Council was noted.

12. **Motions (Agenda Item 12)**

Councillor Henry Hobhouse proposed his Motion to Council which was seconded by Councillor Mike Hewitson. He said that a strategy would take time to be drawn up and all SSDC owned buildings would be carbon neutral by 2023. He also confirmed that:-

- although the Government were increasing VAT on solar panels, SSDC would investigate funding a proportion of this for local residents.
- the pension scheme investments would be reviewed.
- the Strategy would be developed in partnership with other Councils.

The Leader of Council said that as a responsible Council, they would work towards doing all they could to mitigate climate change however, they could not solve all the problems on their own although this was no reason for inaction. She said the Council was now in
a financial position to invest in its community and they would commit additional resource to deliver the amended recommendations. She proposed that recommendation 3 be amended so that the Strategy document be prepared by Autumn 2019 to allow sufficient time for officers to research evidence and for Members and others to be engaged in the development of the strategy.

Councillor Linda Vijeh said the Strategy document should have clear targets and it should be drawn up in liaison with other Councils and interested members of the Extinction Rebellion group.

During discussion, several Members expressed their support for the Motion and for proposals to plant trees, invest in electric vehicle charging points and solar panels.

Councillor Henry Hobhouse concluded by urging Members to support the motion and asked that interested public groups be included in the meetings to discuss the Strategy. The amended Motion was put to the vote and unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED:** That Council agreed to:-

1. Note the background information provided.
2. Declare its recognition of a ‘Climate and Ecological Emergency’
3. Develop a Strategy by the Full Council meeting in the Autumn of 2019, that sets ambitious targets to protect the environment and ecology; to reduce Carbon Emissions; and for a) South Somerset District and b) the Council to become carbon neutral
4. Develop a delivery plan that sets out the necessary policies, projects and actions to deliver the targets, and identifies the resources necessary to enable the delivery of the strategy
5. Work with councils and other partners in Somerset to develop collaboration, joint approaches and share resources in tackling climate change and protecting the environment

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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**13. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Agenda Item 13)**

There were no questions submitted by Members under Procedure Rule 10.

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**14. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 14)**

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council was a reserve date of 20th June 2019.
Unless there was any urgent business to progress on this date, the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council would take place on **Thursday, 18th July 2019** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil **commencing at 7.30 p.m.**


Chairman

Date