

## South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **South Somerset District Council** held on **Thursday 13 October 2016** in the Council Chamber.

(7.30 pm - 9.00 pm)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Tony Capozzoli (Chairman)  
Councillor David Recardo (Vice-Chairman)

Clare Aparicio Paul	Kaysar Hussain	Jo Roundell Greene
Cathy Bakewell	Val Keitch	Dean Ruddle
Mike Beech	Andy Kendall	Sylvia Seal
Neil Bloomfield	Mike Lewis	Gina Seaton
Amanda Broom	Mike Lock	Peter Seib
Dave Bulmer	Tony Lock	Angie Singleton
John Clark	Paul Maxwell	Alan Smith
Nick Colbert	Sam McAllister	Sue Steele
Adam Dance	Graham Middleton	Rob Stickland
Sarah Dyke	David Norris	Andrew Turpin
John Field	Graham Oakes	Martin Wale
Nigel Gage	Sue Osborne	William Wallace
Carol Goodall	Stephen Page	Nick Weeks
Anna Groskop	Ric Pallister	Colin Winder
Peter Gubbins	Crispin Raikes	Derek Yeomans
Henry Hobhouse	Wes Read	

**Officers:**

Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Rina Singh	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Ian Clarke	Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services)
Donna Parham	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Manager

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**51. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jason Baker, Marcus Barrett, Mike Best, Gye Dibben, Tim Inglefield, Jenny Kenton, Sarah Lindsay, Tiffany Osborne, Garry Shortland and Linda Vijeh.

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**52. Minutes (Agenda Item 2)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2016, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

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

There were no declarations of interest made.

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

There were no questions from members of the public present.

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

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman asked that Councillor David Recardo assist him as Vice Chairman for the meeting. Members were in agreement with this.

The Chairman reminded Members that the Gold Star Awards were due to be held on 25th October at the Octagon Theatre and he asked that they show their support by attending this very worthwhile and entertaining event.

The Leader of Council advised that since the announcement the previous week by GKN aerospace that over 200 jobs were at risk, he said district council would do all it could to support the GKN workers and their families and help to find them new jobs that kept their skills in the region. The Yeovil Innovation Centre had been offered as a venue for any jobs fairs at the appropriate time.

Councillor David Recardo advised that Yeovil in Bloom had recently been awarded gold at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) South West in Bloom competition. Wincanton had been awarded an outstanding It's Your Neighbourhood award and Milborne Port in Bloom was awarded gold in the In Bloom competition.

He also reminded Councillors of their annual Christmas dinner to be held on 15<sup>th</sup> December at Yeovil Golf Club.

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

The list of Chairman's Engagements was noted.

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**57. Senior Leadership Restructure (Agenda Item 7)**

The Leader of Council explained that the proposed the new senior leadership team was the result of an all-party working group. He confirmed the Chief Executive endorsed the proposed structure which would fit in with the Transformation project and there would be no increase in salary for any of the posts.

The Chief Executive advised the proposed changes would be unlike those seen before and SSDC would require different roles to deliver the Transformation project. He said the proposed structure would meet the needs of the district and realise its future ambitions.

Councillor Martin Wale questioned the need for the post of Deputy Chief Executive. He said the Council had never had the position of Deputy Chief Executive before and most other Local Authorities did not have one. He proposed that the post of Deputy Chief

Executive be deleted and the saving of £126,485 be added to the savings of £200,537 already listed. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Beech.

The Leader of Council responded that there was need for a post with strategic responsibility within the proposed senior leadership team to retain capacity at the top of the organisation. To reduce the structure from 8 ½ to 4 Directors would not work. The Chief Executive had to be given the capacity to deliver.

During discussion, varying views were expressed. Some Members expressed concern at the pace of implementation of the new senior leadership team, the amount allocated to redundancy payments and the small discrepancy in the salary figures listed within the Agenda report. Other Members expressed their support for the proposed senior leadership team which they said was the result of many hours of consideration and was fit for purpose.

At the conclusion of the debate, the proposal to delete the post of Deputy Chief Executive and add the saving of £126,485 to the total was put to the vote, but was declared lost (voting: 19 in favour, 28 against, 1 abstention). The original recommendations were then proposed and seconded and when put to the vote, were carried (voting: 30 in favour, 18 against, 1 abstention).

**RESOLVED:** That Council:

1. approved the revised senior leadership structure as set out in Appendix B;
2. noted the revised cost of the senior leadership structure which would produce a saving of £200,537 compared to current costs, this being a contribution towards the overall Transformation Programme savings target of £2,000,000.

**Reason:** To confirm the new senior leadership team (SLT) structure that aligns with and supports the implementation of the Future Operating Model (FM) for the council, as well as the delivery of the Council's ambitions, including income generation.

*(Voting: 30 in favour, 18 against, 1 abstention)*

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## 58. **Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan - Flexible use of Capital Receipts (Agenda Item 8)**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services advised that following the December 2015 Financial Settlement, under certain circumstances, Local Authorities could use capital receipts for revenue expenditure. He said agreeing the recommendation would allow SSDC to use its capital more flexibly and he proposed that Members support the recommendation.

This was seconded by Councillor Jo Roundell Greene. There was no debate and Members unanimously agreed the recommendation as proposed.

**RESOLVED:** That Council agreed to utilise the capital receipts outlined in the Efficiency Strategy attached at Appendix A for revenue costs.

**Reason:** To confirm the new ability to utilise new capital receipts to fund revenue projects.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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**59. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan - Four Year Settlement (Agenda Item 9)**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services advised that the Government's 4-year grant offer was unfair to the electorate in the final year (2019) as it amounted to spending SSDC ratepayers money outside the area. He said that since the District Executive meeting the previous week, the recommendations had been clarified to highlight the unfairness and he proposed that they be:

*That full Council:*

- a) Agree that that the proposed negative RSG in year four of the settlement, which will distribute £330,000 of South Somerset householders council tax to support services in other council areas is unfair;*
- b) In recognition of the added certainty it gives to our financial planning, agree to the four year financial settlement with the Government as proposed;*
- c) Agree that the Leader and Chief Executive continue to make representations to the Government to get a fairer settlement from them in the final year.*

This was seconded by Councillor Peter Gubbins.

Councillor Mike Lewis as Leader of the Conservative Group said they had not had sufficient time to consider the proposed recommendations and asked that Council revert to the original recommendation as listed in the Agenda report.

The Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) advised that the Council agenda had to be published before the District Executive meeting had been held so the original recommendations had remained.

During discussion, Members expressed concern at the Government's offer but felt they had little choice but to accept it as it provided some financial stability in the short term. The Leader of Council agreed to revert to the original recommendation as published in the Agenda papers and, at the conclusion of the debate, the majority of Members agreed to accept the 4-year settlement deal and agreed to publish the Efficiency Plan as detailed at Appendix A (voting: 48 in favour, 2 against, 0 abstentions).

**RESOLVED:** That full Council agreed to reluctantly accept the 4-year settlement deal offered by the Department for Communities and Local Government and agreed the publishing of the Efficiency Plan attached at Appendix A.

**Reason:** Following the meeting with Marcus Jones MP – the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Local Government), Council now agree to accept the 4-year settlement deal and agree to publish the Efficiency Plan attached at Appendix A.

*(Voting: 48 in favour, 2 against, 0 abstentions)*

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**60. Membership of Committees - Appointment of New Councillor to the Regulation Committee and the Appeals Panel (Agenda Item 10)**

This item was deferred until the next meeting of Full Council.

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**61. Report of Executive Decisions (Agenda Item 11)**

The report of Executive Decisions was noted.

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**62. Audit Committee (Agenda Item 12)**

Councillor Derek Yeomans, Chairman of the Audit Committee, introduced the report and noted that the Auditor had praised the Council's accounts.

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

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**63. Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 13)**

Councillor Sue Steele, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, presented the report and noted that although there were 8 separate Task and Finish Groups currently in operation, there would be capacity to scrutinise the Transformation Project.

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

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**64. Motions (Agenda Item 14)**

There were no Motions submitted by Members.

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**65. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Agenda Item 15)**

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

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**66. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 16)**

Members noted that unless there was any urgent business to conduct in the meantime, the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council due on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016 would be cancelled.

Therefore, unless notified to the contrary, the next scheduled meeting of the Full Council would take place on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 7.30 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date