

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of the Annual meeting of the **South Somerset District Council** held on **Wednesday 5 May 2021** as a Virtual Meeting using Zoom meeting software.

(6.30 pm - 7.55 pm)

### **Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Paul Maxwell (Chairman)  
Councillor Wes Read (Vice-Chairman)

Jason Baker	Mike Hewitson	David Recardo
Robin Bastable	Ben Hodgson	Paul Rowsell
Mike Best	Charlie Hull	Peter Seib
Dave Bulmer	Val Keitch	Garry Shortland
Tony Capozzoli	Andy Kendall	Alan Smith
Martin Carnell	Jenny Kenton	Jeny Snell
John Clark	Tim Kerley	Andy Soughton
Louise Clarke	Tony Lock	Mike Stanton
Adam Dance	Kevin Messenger	Rob Stickland
Sarah Dyke	Graham Oakes	Lucy Trimnell
Karl Gill	Tricia O'Brien	Gerard Tucker
David Gubbins	Sue Osborne	Linda Vijeh
Peter Gubbins	Robin Pailthorpe	Martin Wale
Brian Hamilton	Crispin Raikes	William Wallace

### **Officers:**

Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Clare Pestell	Director (Commercial Services & Income Generation)
Jan Gamon	Director (Place and Recovery)
Nicola Hix	Director (Strategy and Support Services)
Jill Byron	Monitoring Officer
Karen Watling	Interim Section 151 Officer
Angela Cox	Specialist (Democratic Services)
Michelle Mainwaring	Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)
Becky Sanders	Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)

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### **1. Election of Chairman (Agenda Item 1)**

The Chief Executive welcomed all Councillors to the Annual Meeting of South Somerset District Council and asked for nominations for the position of Chairman of Council.

Councillor Val Keitch, seconded by Councillor Peter Seib nominated Councillor Paul Maxwell for Chairman of the Council.

There being no other nominations it was therefore:

**RESOLVED:** that Councillor Paul Maxwell be elected as Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

The Chairman thanked his fellow Councillors for supporting him and he read out his formal declaration of acceptance of office.

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

The Chairman thanked the retiring Vice-Chairman, Councillor Jenny Kenton, for her support during the past 2 years and he proposed that Councillor Wes Read be accepted as the new Vice-Chairman of Council. This was seconded by Councillor Val Keitch and, there being no other nominations, it was:

**RESOLVED:** that Councillor Wes Read be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

The Vice-Chairman thanked his fellow Councillors for supporting him and he read out his formal declaration of acceptance of office.

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**3. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 3)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Neil Bloomfield, Hayward Burt, Malcolm Cavill, Nicola Clark, Henry Hobhouse, Michael Lewis, Mike Lock, Pauline Lock, Tiffany Osborne, Clare Paul, Oliver Patrick, Dean Ruddle, Gina Seaton and Colin Winder.

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**4. Minutes (Agenda Item 4)**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record of the meeting and would be signed by the Chairman.

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**5. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 5)**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

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**6. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 6)**

There were no questions from members of the public.

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**7. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 7)**

The Chairman noted that the Chief Executive would be shortly leaving SSDC to take up the position of Chief Executive of Waitaki District Council, New Zealand. He paid tribute to the work of the Chief Executive during his 5 years at SSDC in leading the transformation project and introducing its commercial, economic and environmental strategies, regeneration projects and leading the Council through the Covid-19 pandemic. He thanked him for his contribution to South Somerset and wished him and his family well in his new life.

The Leader of Council thanked the Chief Executive for his support during her time as Leader. She said the Council and people of South Somerset owed him much and she would miss him both personally and professionally. She wished him well in his new role and for the future.

The Deputy Leader of Council said the Chief Executive had been very caring and protective of his staff and had served South Somerset well.

The Leader of the independent Group thanked him for his work during the past 5 years. He said that his leadership had been very calm during the Covid-19 pandemic and he thanked him for furthering the regeneration project in Chard. He thanked him for his service and wished him well in his new job.

The Leader of the Conservative Group said the Chief Executive had made his mark at SSDC as he had risen to the financial challenges and modernised and transformed the Council and its services. She said he had achieved much in South Somerset and with his family to consider, he was moving to new pastures.

Councillor Tony Capozzoli also thanked the Chief Executive for his assistance and said that he was sorry that he was leaving.

The Chief Executive thanked Councillors for their kind words and said that he was grateful for the excellent team of staff across the organisation who had worked together and also for the support from all Councillors during his time.

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## **8. Chairman's Engagements (Agenda Item 8)**

The Chairman noted that Somerset Day would be on 11<sup>th</sup> May and he would be attending a service at Wells Cathedral on 8<sup>th</sup> May to represent South Somerset.

The list of Chairman's engagements were noted.

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## **9. Appointment of Member Level Bodies 2021/22 (Agenda Item 9)**

The Leader of Council introduced the report to appoint the Member level bodies for 2021/22. The recommendations were proposed and agreed without dissent with the exception of the following:

### **Chairman of Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor John Clark, seconded by Councillor Tony Lock, proposed Councillor Gerard Tucker as Chairman of Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Linda Vijeh, seconded by Councillor Robin Bastable, proposed Councillor Sue Osborne as Chairman of Scrutiny Committee.

A vote was taken and it was confirmed that Councillor Gerard Tucker be Chairman of Scrutiny Committee for 2021/22.

#### **Chairman of Licensing Committee**

Councillor Val Keitch, seconded by Councillor Rob Stickland, proposed Councillor David Recardo as Chairman of Licensing Committee

Councillor Linda Vijeh, seconded by Councillor Robin Bastable, proposed Councillor Martin Wale as Chairman of Licensing Committee.

A vote was taken and it was confirmed that Councillor David Recardo be Chairman of Licensing Committee for 2021/22.

#### **Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel**

Councillor Val Keitch, seconded by Councillor Mike Hewitson, proposed Councillor Nicola Clark as the SSDC representative on the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel.

Councillor Linda Vijeh, seconded by Councillor Sue Osborne, proposed Councillor Martin Wale as the SSDC representative on the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel.

A vote was taken and it was confirmed that Councillor Nicola Clark be the SSDC representative on the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel for 2021/22.

During discussion it was noted that a South Somerset Recovery Board had been established as part of the Recovery Strategy and its membership would be appointed at a future meeting of Council.

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

- (1) To note that it appointed the Leader of the Council in May 2019 for a period of four years, starting on the day of her election and ending on the day of the post 4-year Council election annual meeting.
- (2) To note that the Leader appointed a Deputy Leader in May 2019 to hold office until the end of the term of office of the Leader.
- (3) The Leader appoint between 1 and 8 further District Executive Members.

- (4) The re-establishment of the following member-level bodies for 2021/2022:

**District Executive and Portfolios**

Val Keitch	Lib Dem	<b>Leader: Strategy &amp; Housing</b>
Peter Seib	Lib Dem	<b>Deputy Leader: Finance, Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>
Mike Best	Lib Dem	<b>Health &amp; Well-Being</b>
John Clark	Lib Dem	<b>Economic Development including Commercial Strategy</b>
Sarah Dyke	Lib Dem	<b>Environment</b>
Tony Lock	Lib Dem	<b>Protecting Core Services</b>
Jason Baker	Lib Dem	<b>Area West Chair</b>
Adam Dance	Lib Dem	<b>Area North Chair</b>
Henry Hobhouse	Lib Dem	<b>Area East Chair</b>
Peter Gubbins	Lib Dem	<b>Area South Chair</b>

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

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

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

John Clark	Lib Dem
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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	
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	
Mike Lock	Independent	
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
Charlie Hull	Green	
Robin Bastable	Conservative	
Hayward Burt	Conservative	
Nick Colbert	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	Vice Chairman

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
Oliver Patrick	Lib Dem
Garry Shortland	Lib Dem
Dave Bulmer	Independent
Sue Osborne	Conservative
Linda Vijeh	Conservative
Martin Wale	Conservative

**Scrutiny Committee 14 members (political balance)**

2 Vice-Chairmen  
LD9, C4, I1

Louise Clarke	Lib Dem	
Karl Gill	Lib Dem	
Brian Hamilton	Lib Dem	
Paul Maxwell	Lib Dem	
Robin Pailthorpe	Lib Dem	
Oliver Patrick	Lib Dem	
Crispin Raikes	Lib Dem	Vice-Chairman
Jeny Snell	Lib Dem	
Charlie Hull	Green	
Gerard Tucker	Independent	Chairman
Robin Bastable	Conservative	
Michael Lewis	Conservative	
Sue Osborne	Conservative	Vice-Chairman
Linda Vijeh	Conservative	

**Audit Committee 10 members (political balance)**

LD7, C2, I1

Mike Best	Lib Dem	
Martin Carnell	Lib Dem	Chairman
Brian Hamilton	Lib Dem	
Mike Hewitson	Lib Dem	Vice Chairman
Tim Kerley	Lib Dem	
Paul Maxwell	Lib Dem	
Jeny Snell	Lib Dem	
Robin Bastable	Conservative	
Malcolm Cavill	Conservative	(Colin Winder covering)

Dave Bulmer Independent

**Regulation  
Committee**

**14 members (political balance)**

LD9, C4, I1

Jason Baker (W)	Lib Dem	
Adam Dance (N)	Lib Dem	
Peter Gubbins (S)	Lib Dem	Chairman
Sarah Dyke (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	Vice Chairman
Neil Bloomfield (N)	Independent	
Malcolm Cavill (N)	Conservative	
Sue Osborne (W)	Conservative	
Linda Vijeh (W)	Conservative	
William Wallace (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	
Jeny Snell	Lib Dem	
Andy Soughton	Lib Dem	
Dave Bulmer	Independent	
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
Dave Bulmer	Independent
Nick Colbert	Conservative
Linda Vijeh	Conservative

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

(6 members,  
LD4, C2

Nicola Clark	Lib Dem	Vice Chairman
Peter Gubbins	Lib Dem	Chairman
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
Peter Forrester	Independent

<b>Panel or Partnership</b>	<b>Membership</b>
Appeals Panel (political balance) LD4, C3, I1	Jason Baker Sarah Dyke Peter Gubbins Crispin Raikes Peter Seib Tony Capozzoli Hayward Burt Martin Wale Linda Vijeh
Strategic Development Board	Val Keitch, Peter Gubbins, Jason Baker, Henry Hobhouse, John Clark, Sarah Dyke, Adam Dance
Chard Regeneration Programme Board	Jason Baker Garry Shortland Martin Wale

<b>Panel or Partnership</b>	<b>Membership</b>
Yeovil Regeneration Programme Board	Dave Bulmer Jenny Kenton Val Keitch  Peter Gubbins Tony Lock John Clark Val Keitch
Wincanton Regeneration Programme Board	Henry Hobhouse Colin Winder Nick Colbert Val Keitch
Strategic Alliance with Sedgemoor	Val Keitch Peter Seib Dave Bulmer Linda Vijeh
Income Generation Board	John Clark
Local Strategic Partnership	Val Keitch Peter Gubbins Jason Baker Adam Dance Henry Hobhouse
South West Internal Audit Partnership Ltd	Robin Bastable
Housing and Exceptions Appeals Panel	Louise Clarke Tim Kerley
Somerset Waste Board	Sarah Dyke Tim Kerley
PATROL Joint Committee (Parking and Traffic Regulation Outside London)	Tony Lock
Somerset Growth Board	John Clark

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Current representatives</b>
Board of Governors for Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	David Recardo
LGA General Assembly	Val Keitch
South West Provincial Employers	Linda Vijeh

South West Councils	Val Keitch
Somerset Rivers Authority	Mike Stanton Robin Bastable (sub)
Parrett Drainage Board	Mike Lewis Gerard Tucker (sub)
Somerset Water Management Partnership	Sarah Dyke
Health & Well-Being Board	Brian Hamilton
Safer Somerset Partnership	Tony Lock
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel	Nicola Clark
Somerset Building Preservation Trust	Tim Kerley
Armed Forces Community Covenant	Andy Kendall
Somerset Local Access Forum	Paul Maxwell
Homelessness Reduction Board	Val Keitch

- (10) To note the Independent Members' Remuneration Panel have not met for a number of years as Council agreed to an annual uplift of all Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances by the same percentage as the equivalent negotiated APT&C pay award for officers in 2009. We are currently seeking to join the County-wide Remuneration Panel.
- (11) To agree the continuation of Council Procedure Rule 40(B) - Appointment of substitute Members at meetings of Committees.
- (12) To confirm the Council's annual meetings timetable as attached at Appendix B.

*(Resolutions passed without dissent)*

## 10. Appointment of a Chief Executive Officer (Agenda Item 10)

The Leader of Council proposed that Members appoint Clare Pestell, Director for Commercial Services and Income Generation as interim Chief Executive. She said there were potential changes for local government in Somerset and if either of the two proposed unitary council options were accepted then South Somerset District Council would cease to exist in the future. It was therefore proposed that the appointment be on an interim basis. If the Secretary of State decided there would be no change in local government in Somerset then Council would review the position of Chief Executive. She noted that given the interim nature of the position, it would have been unlikely to attract external applicants and it was advantageous that the Director was already known to staff and Members. She said the selection process had been rigorous and although there was only one candidate, they had been under no obligation to appoint. She proposed the recommendation and added that the appointment included that of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Jason Baker.

The Chairman asked if anyone wished to vote against the recommendation, or abstain. Councillor Linda Vjeh noted that she had been a member of the Appointment Panel and she had some reservations regarding the appointment process and therefore would abstain from voting.

The Leader of Council confirmed that the current Chief Executive had given the required 3 months notice to resign up to 11<sup>th</sup> July, however, with annual leave owing, his final working day would be 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

The Chairman congratulated the Director for Commercial Services and Income Generation on her appointment as interim Chief Executive of South Somerset District Council.

**RESOLVED:** That Full Council accepted the recommendation of the Appointments Committee and that with effect from 7 June 2021 agreed to appoint Clare Pestell as the Chief Executive Officer, Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for South Somerset District Council on an interim basis for an 18 month period.

**Reason:** To confirm the recommendation of the Appointments Committee and appoint a new Chief Executive Officer for South Somerset District Council.

*(Voting: 45 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention)*

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## 11. Report of Executive Decisions (Agenda Item 11)

The report of executive decisions were noted.

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

The Chairman of the Audit Committee advised that they had received a thorough briefing on Cyber Security delivered by Officers in the Digital Team.

The report of the Audit Committee was noted.

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

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee introduced the report and invited questions.

The report of the Scrutiny Committee was noted.

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

There were no Motions submitted by Members.

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

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.

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

Members noted that the next scheduled meetings of the Full Council were reserve dates of **20<sup>th</sup> May and 17<sup>th</sup> June** and would only be called if there was business to progress.

Therefore, the next meeting of the Full Council would take place on **Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021** as a virtual meeting using Zoom meeting software **commencing at 6.30 p.m.**

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Chairman

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Date