

## **Part 2**

# **Articles of the Constitution**

# **Article 1 – The Constitution**

## **1.01 Powers of the Council**

The Council will exercise all its powers and duties in accordance with the law and this Constitution.

## **1.02 The Constitution**

This Constitution, and all its appendices, is the Constitution of the South Somerset District Council.

## **1.03 Purpose of the Council and the Constitution**

The Council has adopted a corporate plan which sets out the council's ambition and focuses through the period 2020 - 2024. The plan puts a sharp focus on priorities and what we want to deliver within our available resources.

The Council's vision for South Somerset is: "A naturally beautiful and sustainable environment, which also allows business to flourish and good homes to be delivered. A place where our communities are safe, vibrant and healthy and have access to exceptional cultural and leisure activities."

The five Council Plan themes and areas of focus are:

- Environment - To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive and respond to the climate and ecological emergency.
- Healthy, self-reliant communities - To enable healthy communities which are cohesive, sustainable and enjoy a high quality of life.
- Economy - To assist businesses to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic whilst supporting growth within the South Somerset economy.
- Places where we live - To enable housing and communities to meet the existing and future needs of residents and employers.
- Local Government Reorganisation - To effect a safe and legal transition to the new Somerset Council on 1 April 2023.

The purpose of the Constitution is to:

- enable the Council to provide clear leadership to the community in partnership with the public, businesses and other organisations;
- support the active involvement of the public in the process of local authority decision-making;
- help councillors represent their constituents more effectively;
- enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively;
- create a powerful and effective means of holding decision-makers to public account;
- ensure that no one will review or scrutinise a decision in which they were directly involved;
- ensure that those responsible for decision making are clearly identifiable to local people and that they explain the reasons for decisions; and to

- provide a means of improving the delivery of services to the community.

#### **1.04 Interpretation and Review of the Constitution**

Where the Constitution permits the Council to choose between different courses of action, the Council will always choose that option which it thinks is closest to the purposes stated above.

The Council will monitor and evaluate the operation of the Constitution as set out in Article 15.