

WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 January 2016 at 4.30 pm

in the Council Chamber, Williton

Present:

Councillor G S Dowding Chairman
Councillor B Heywood Vice-Chairman

Councillor I Aldridge	Councillor D Archer
Councillor A Behan	Councillor M J Chilcott
Councillor R Clifford	Councillor M O A Dewdney
Councillor S Y Goss	Councillor A P Hadley
Councillor I Jones	Councillor B Leaker
Councillor R P Lillis	Councillor B Maitland-Walker
Councillor K M Mills	Councillor C Morgan
Councillor P H Murphy	Councillor J Parbrook
Councillor S J Pugsley	Councillor R Thomas
Councillor A Trollope-Bellew	Councillor K Turner
Councillor D J Westcott	Councillor R Woods

Officers in Attendance:

Chief Executive (P James)
Director of Operations (S Adams)
Assistant Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer (B Lang)
Revenues and Benefits Manager (H Tiso) – Item 7
Assistant Director – Operational Delivery (C Hall)
Assistant Director – Energy Infrastructure (A Goodchild)
CIM Fund Manager (L Redston) – Item 9
Meeting Administrator (K Kowalewska)

Also in Attendance:

Steve Read, Managing Director of Somerset Waste Partnership

C98 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Davies, T Hall, N Twaites and T Venner.

C99 Minutes

(Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 16 December 2015, circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 16 December 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

C100 **Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

Name	Minute No.	Member of	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	All	Williton	Spoke and voted
Cllr D Archer	All	Minehead	Spoke and voted
Cllr S Goss	All	Stogursey	Spoke and voted
Cllr B Maitland-Walker	All	Carhampton	Spoke and voted
Cllr C Morgan	All	Stogursey	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Murphy	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All	Minehead	Spoke and voted
Cllr R Thomas	All	Minehead	Spoke and voted
Cllr A Trollope-Bellew	All	Crowcombe	Spoke and voted
Cllr K Turner	All	Brompton Ralph	Spoke and voted
Cllr D J Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted

In addition the following interests were declared:

Name	Minute No.	Description of interest	Personal or Prejudicial	Action Taken
Cllr S Goss	C104	Husband is a Blue Badge holder	Prejudicial	Left the Chamber
Cllr K Turner	C104	Blue Badge holder	Prejudicial	Left the Chamber
Cllr S Goss	C106	Involved in the Victory Hall project	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr C Morgan	C106	Involved in the Victory Hall project	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr R Lillis	C107	Chairman of SWP Joint Scrutiny Committee	Personal	Spoke and voted

C101 **Public Participation**

No members of the public spoke at the meeting on any items on the agenda.

C102 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no announcements to record.

C103 **Council Tax Rebate Scheme Review for 2016/17**

(Report No. WSC 183/15, previously circulated at the Council meeting held on 16 December 2015.)

The purpose of the report was to provide Full Council with information on our existing Council Tax Rebate (CTR) scheme and the context for reviewing our scheme for Working Age applicants from 2016/17; to advise Full Council of the outcome of the public consultation on our Council Tax Rebate scheme in 2016/17; and to advise Full Council of Cabinet's recommendation on the preferred revisions to our Council Tax Rebate scheme in 2016/17; to obtain agreement from Full Council on our Council Tax Rebate scheme for 2016/17.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report advising that the report had previously been discussed at the Council meeting held on 16 December 2015 and she requested all Members to confirm that by taking a vote they had read the documentation as requested.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendations of the report and which were seconded by Councillor M Dewdney.

RESOLVED (1) that having regard to the consultation response and the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA - see Appendix 4 of the report), the recommendation from Cabinet that the 2016/17 Council Tax Rebate scheme should be amended to that shown in Appendix 1 of the report, (and illustrated in Model 15) to revise support for working age applicants in 2016/17 by:

- disregarding maintenance received for children
- removing entitlement to applicants with capital over £6,000;
- applying a Minimum Income for Self-Employed applicants; and
- paying CTR at a level that would be no more than for a Band C property be approved.

RESOLVED (2) that the 2016/17 Council Tax Rebate Scheme be approved for 2016/17 only.

Administrator's Note: On circulation of the agenda, Members were advised to read the policy (Appendix 1 of the report), and to consider the implications detailed in the Equalities Impact Assessment.

C104 **Parking Fees and Charges**

(Report No. WSC 8/16, circulated with the Agenda.)

The report sets out the changes to the charging process that supports traffic management of tourist industry by seeking to influence driver behaviour with the following outcomes:

- Incentive for commuters to use car parks away for the main tourist sites, freeing up space for tourists and visitors to the area.
- Continue investment in parking assets.

The report sought approval for changes to the summer car park tariffs; removal of the three hour zero tariff when valid blue badges are displayed in vehicles; and an increase to six months and yearly permits; and also identified the ongoing investment needs to improve the assets, the customers experience and convenience.

The Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth presented the report highlighting the key issues contained within, and emphasised the proposed changes to the car parks' tariffs, including the introduction of providing an additional 60 minutes allowance if a valid Blue Badge was displayed and payment made. She stated that the Council was hoping to encourage commuters to use car parks away from the main tourist areas to free up spaces for visitors. Additional income generated from the tariff changes would be invested in car park maintenance and improvements and clearing sand from some coastal parking areas.

The Lead Member advised that a meeting would be held with Compass Disability Services to discuss the pay and display machines and that an article would be placed in their magazine as well as in the Somerset County Council's 'Your Somerset' magazine to inform the public of the proposed changes to the parking charges. Members were also informed that consultation and monitoring the effects of the charges would continue.

She went on to propose the recommendation set out in the report which was duly seconded by Councillor C Morgan.

Various questions and issues were raised regarding the blue badge charging. A particular concern was raised in relation to the reason for raising the income stream by abolishing blue badge concessions and a specific question was asked on how the Council assessed whether a car park was profitable or not for parking charges to be implemented accordingly.

The Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Development responded by stating the reasons for the introduction of blue badge charges was to remove the current inequality where blue badge holders were the only users of the car parks that did not contribute to the financial operation of the service, and it had been identified that most of the car parks had their own individual maintenance problems. She reiterated that any West Somerset resident could opt to purchase a parking permit which could provide a substantial saving.

RESOLVED that the changes to the fees and charges identified in the report be supported.

C105 **HPC Planning Obligations Board – Allocations of CIM Funding**

(Report No. WSC 10/16, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to present the recommendations of the Hinkley Point C Planning Obligations Board (POB) and West Somerset Council Cabinet, for the allocation of monies from the Community Impact Mitigation (CIM) Fund secured through the Section 106 legal agreement for the Site Preparation Works at Hinkley Point.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report in detail and highlighted the comments and recommendations contained within the report in relation to the applications submitted to the POB, namely The Princes Trust's Building Brighter Futures and Sedgemoor District Council's Blake Gardens Enhancement Project.

She went on to propose the recommendations set out in the report which were duly seconded by Councillor K Mills.

Various comments and issues were raised regarding the two refused applications. It was suggested that The Princes Trust would benefit at looking at the work of the Our Place programme specifically in connection with the Employment Hubs and concerns were raised as to what was the demand for the Building Brighter Futures project and who would benefit. With regard to the Blake Gardens project it was noted that there was no breakdown of project costings and no undertaking of community consultation.

In response to a question regarding how these two projects might be funded from the CIM Fund, the Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure provided clarity and advised that the POB had not discussed which pots of funding the Princes Trust application would come from given their overall concerns with the proposal, and confirmed that POB had discussed that in the past projects within ring fenced areas would normally use ring fenced funds initially and funds less geographically specific would be used thereafter.

RESOLVED (1) that the decision of Cabinet to release £7,500 from the CIM Fund ring-fenced for West Somerset to the Watchet War Memorial Ground Committee for the Pavilion Enhancement project be noted.

RESOLVED (2) that the following recommendations of the Hinkley C Planning Obligations Board and Cabinet be endorsed:

- (i) The application from The Princes Trust be refused and the applicant invited to work with the Employment and Skills Operations Group and Somerset County Council in its role as Local Education Authority with a view to developing a revised project that reflected the scale of unmet provision in West Somerset, Sedgemoor and Taunton Deane.
- (ii) The application from Sedgemoor District Council for the Blake Gardens Enhancement Project be refused and that the applicant is asked to resubmit their application and provide additional information that addresses the following:

- Mitigation of the impacts of the HPC workforce on the community such as social cohesion and integration.
- The potential for increased levels of match funding from Bridgwater Town Council and other s106 funding streams.
- Submission of 3 quotes for the works.

C106 Request for Allocation of Hinkley Point C Planning Obligations Funds

(Report No. WSC 9/16, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was for Council to consider the recommendation of Cabinet for the allocation of £400,000 of leisure funds ring-fenced to Stogursey Parish towards the redevelopment of the Victory Hall in Stogursey.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report and advised the rules and guidelines differed for the Stogursey ring fenced fund and that it was for the parish to decide on how the money was spent. She went on to propose the recommendation set out in the report which was duly seconded by Councillor D Westcott.

Members were fully supportive and during the discussion the following points were made:

- A great deal of consultation had taken place at every stage of the Victory Hall project to ensure the parishioners remained informed, and it was noted that there had been a very impressive 25% response rate.
- Members were made aware of the significant impacts and disruptions that the Hinkley Point C project would have on the residents of Stogursey and surrounding areas.
- The Quantock Vale ward members were congratulated for their work on the steering group.
- Members felt it was an excellent flagship project which would be of huge benefit to the community and a great legacy.

RESOLVED that the allocation of £400,000 of the leisure fund ring-fenced to Stogursey Parish towards the redevelopment of the Victory Hall in Stogursey be approved.

C107 Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2016-2021

(Report No. WSC 11/16, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to seek approval for the Somerset Waste Partnership's Draft Business Plan for 2016 - 2021.

The Lead Member for Environment presented the report and welcomed to the meeting Steve Read, the Managing Director of Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) who was in attendance to answer questions on the draft Business Plan. In addition to identifying the key points from the report, the Lead Member made reference to the savings position, improvements to the recycling service, and the key actions, aims and priorities. Actions which were particularly highlighted related to the restructuring of Minehead Recycling Centre to help alleviate congestion problems, and the development of a Collection Day Reminder app.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendations of the report which were seconded by Councillor R Lillis.

The main points of discussion focussed on:

- The new service model - the types of materials collected/recycled and frequency of collections.
- Vehicle recycling centre permits and time restrictions for vans and trailers.
- Charging for asbestos and plasterboard disposal.
- Recycling centre congestion and opening hours.
- Concerns the changes could lead to an increase in fly-tipping.
- New regulations and guidelines had, in the last year, been imposed on local authorities in order to provide a national minimum level of what was collected/recycled; and the Recycle More scheme operated on a weekly basis.
- Clarification was provided that no benefit was gained from levy schemes to help pay for the cost of disposal of certain products.
- The hard work of the SWP team and those who collected the recycling/refuse was acknowledged and greatly appreciated.
- Steve Read advised that an indexation had been agreed with the contractor on how the contract was uplifted every year and if fuel costs increased this would have an impact on the savings figure.
- Members were urged to encourage residents in their respective parishes/towns to fully participate in the council's recycling scheme and to increase the amount of waste they recycle.

The Vice-Chairman thanked Mr Reid for his attendance and time taken in answering questions.

RESOLVED (1) that the Somerset Waste Partnership's Budget for 2016 – 2017 be reviewed and approved.

RESOLVED (2) that the content of the business plan 2016 – 2021 be noted.

Note: With the agreement of the Chairman this item was heard at the end of the meeting due to a delay in the arrival of Steve Read, SWP Managing Director. During this item the Chairman left the meeting and the Vice-Chairman, Councillor B Heywood, chaired the remainder of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 5.50 pm