

**WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Council held on 21 September 2016 at 4.30 pm**

**in the Council Chamber, Williton**

**Present:**

Councillor B Heywood ..... Chairman  
Councillor R Woods ..... Vice-Chairman

Councillor A Behan	Councillor M J Chilcott
Councillor M O Dewdney	Councillor S Goss
Councillor A Hadley	Councillor T Hall
Councillor R P Lillis	Councillor K M Mills
Councillor C Morgan	Councillor P H Murphy
Councillor S J Pugsley	Councillor R Thomas
Councillor N Thwaites	Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew
Councillor K H Turner	Councillor T Venner
Councillor D J Westcott	

**Officers in Attendance:**

Director of Operations (S Adam)  
Assistant Chief Executive (B Lang)  
Assistant Director – Energy Infrastructure (A Goodchild)  
CIM Fund Manager (L Redston)  
Meeting Administrator (M Prouse)

**C46      Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Aldridge, Archer, Clifford, Davies, Dowding, Jones, Leaker, Maitland-Walker and Parbrook.

**C47      Minutes**

(Minutes of the meetings of Full Council held on 20 July 2016, and Special Full Council held on 31 August 2016, circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 20 July 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of special Full Council held on 31 August 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

**C48      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:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Member of</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Cllr S Goss	All	Stogursey	Spoke and voted
Cllr R Thomas	All	Minehead	Spoke and voted
Cllr C Morgan	All	Stogursey	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Murphy	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Cllr N Thwaites	All	Dulverton	Spoke and voted
Cllr A H Trollope-Bellew	All	Crowcombe	Spoke and voted
Cllr K H Turner	All	Brompton Ralph	Spoke and voted
Cllr T Venner	All	Minehead & SCC	Spoke and voted
Cllr D J Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted

**C49**      **Public Participation**

Mr Peter Stephenson, Chairman of the West Somerset Inter-Cultural Friendship Group, drew Members attention to the statements made by Avon and Somerset Chief Constable Andy Marsh in July who was concerned about the apparent 150 percent increase in reported race hate crimes since the EU Referendum vote. Mr Stephenson’s organisation was concerned about this and in response held a public event in Minehead to celebrate the many positive aspects of immigration. Mr Stephenson then distributed his petition and factsheets that he had brought along to the meeting. The petition Mr Stephenson presented calls upon the Council to publically condemn racism and to promote community cohesion.

The Leader thanked Mr Stephenson for bringing this petition to the Council, and said there should be zero tolerance for this behaviour.

The Lead Member for Community and Customer stated that hate crime was taken very seriously in West Somerset. He attends the Safer Somerset Partnership which meets around four times a year, and discusses hate crime on its agenda. He informed Members that in the last year there had been up to six reported cases of hate crime in West Somerset.

Race crime should not be tolerated and reports to parish councils of local crime covered Somerset as a whole which was too broad, when the information was needed at a micro-level. This was felt to be a shortfall by the Police.

It was also felt that whilst this was something that West Somerset did not have a lot of, it was still expected that people of different nationalities should live harmoniously.

A further point was made that there was racism in our communities, but that it was not always obvious. Councillor P Murphy proposed a motion based on the text in the petition that “We call upon you and all West Somerset Councillors to publicly condemn racism and promote cohesion within our communities”, to show support for that sentiment, which was duly seconded.

**RESOLVED** that West Somerset Council wished to publically condemn racism and promote cohesion within our communities.

**C50**      **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman stated that he and his wife enjoyed a sumptuous tea at the Sedgemoor District Council Chairman's Civic Service at Wedmore on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July.

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August the Chairman and his wife attended the launch of the Dulverton Weir and Leat Conservation Trust in a marquee by the River Barle, opened by the Lord Dulverton.

On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September, the Chairman and his wife attended a Garden Party hosted by the High Sheriff in Bath at the American Museum.

The Vice Chair noted that she represented the Council at Shepton Mallet Jail after an invite from Mendip District Council. She also went to the Wells Dancing on the Green with the Mayor of Minehead.

**C51**      **HPC Planning Obligations Board – Allocation of CIM Funding**

(Report No. WSC 105/16, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to present recommendations of the Hinkley Point C Planning Obligations Board 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.

Applications to the CIM fund were considered by the Planning Obligations Board against nine criteria outlined in the Section 106 legal agreement for the Site Preparation Works at Hinkley Point. A recommendation was subsequently made to West Somerset Council's Cabinet. Any proposals above £25,000 also required approval by West Somerset's Full Council.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report and provided background information. The Lead Member reassured members that every single project was carefully monitored. She emphasised that the Board wanted to state quite clearly that the Bridgwater Town Support Scheme would be regarded as a 'package of mitigation' for the proposed roadworks in Bridgwater Town Centre. The second project would enhance the environmental aspects of walking and cycling through Bridgwater and formed part of a larger Somerset County Council scheme.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendations of the report which were seconded by Councillor Morgan, who considered that anything that could alleviate the discomfort of residents with all the roadworks and building work going on around Bridgwater was beneficial to see.

During the discussion, the following comments were made:

- The Health and Wellbeing comments included within the report were welcomed as this was an important initiative which encouraged people to walk and cycle for their health.
- An update was requested regarding the Wembdon Village Hall Project, which came to a halt before Christmas. Could it be confirmed that the project was still being delivered, if the money had been released and who was responsible if it had been for its completion?
- Clarification was provided that the project had been halted as the contractors had gone into administration. The Village Hall Committee went out and re-tendered for a new contractor, but that left them with a shortfall which Sedgemoor District Council had met, with work re-started.
- Pleasure was expressed to see the involvement of Bridgwater Town Council in both of these projects in the report, and that town councils were getting involved and tapping into these mitigation funds.
- Members were reminded that a little while ago Scrutiny set up a Task and Finish Group to look at the application process of the CIM fund. The Task and Finish Group felt the Council could be more pro-active. It was discovered that there was piece of work in the pipeline, which was an 'overarching funding review'. It was understood this was this Council's way of trying to identify projects and communities and groups to bring applications forward, but that it was being held up by the decision on Hinkley which had yet to have been taken, but now that it had the Chairman of Scrutiny posed a question to the Officers to give a bit more of a flavour of how the mitigation fund was to be relaunched to encourage communities to bid for this money remaining and what support this council could offer to communities?
- It was explained that that the relaunch of the CIM fund would include the small application form and the change in criteria of releasing those funds, and the streamlined approach to distributing those funds, taking on board Scrutiny's Task and Finish comments.
- It was clarified that the push in communication and support from Engage and the officer team here would hopefully see some more applications from the West Somerset area come forward. In the officer's opinion Grassroots activity had always been done well in the district.
- It was reported that the commitment Cabinet made after receiving the Task and Finish Report was to involve all members in those conversations. The relaunch of the CIM Fund was not going to be just a media campaign, it would be grassroots, with workshops being held in the community. £1million had been given to West Somerset already.
- The need for more active projects was emphasised and it was acknowledged that the Exmoor National Park provided some difficulties. The burden did fall onto Watchet, Williton and Minehead, and their representatives to come forward and take up the money on offer, otherwise others would take it and this area would miss out.
- Members were reminded of concerns around impacts that had not yet materialised, and that funding was being spent before it was clear what impacts could yet happen, counselling patience.

- Full support was expressed for these projects, and the need to maximise the amount of matched funding was an important aspect.
- In response to a question whether the funds were released dependent on the positive acquisition of matched funding, or would the money be released in any case, the Lead Member replied that it was not a written definitive criteria that each project had to have matched funding, but that each project was looked at in its entirety by the Board.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the recommendation of the Hinkley C Planning Obligations Board and West Somerset Cabinet to release £116,070 from the CIM fund ring-fenced fund for Sedgemoor (and in particular Bridgwater) be endorsed, with the following conditions:

- CIM Fund Manager and Sedgemoor District Council to review the budget and the allocation of funds towards each element of the project with the applicant after all tender processes have been completed to ensure the project remains affordable.
- Applicant to provide regular monitoring reports that provide details of spending against each element of the project.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the recommendation of the Hinkley C Planning Obligations Board and West Somerset Cabinet to release £344,850 of CIM funding for the Southern Bridgwater and North Petherton Community Mitigation Scheme. £242,776 from the Sedgemoor (in particular Bridgwater) ring-fence and £102,074 from the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Payment be endorsed, with the following conditions:

- That funds are not released until full tender processes are completed and delivery plans have been agreed with SCC and a decision has been made on match funding bids.

The meeting closed at 5.29 pm.