

**WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Council held on 25 July 2018 at 4.30 pm**

**in the Council Chamber, Williton**

**Present:**

Councillor B Heywood ..... Chairman  
Councillor J Parbrook ..... Vice-Chairman

Councillor I Aldridge	Councillor B Allen
Councillor M J Chilcott	Councillor M Dewdney
Councillor G S Dowding	Councillor S Goss
Councillor A P Hadley	Councillor N Hawkins
Councillor I Jones	Councillor R Lillis
Councillor B Maitland-Walker	Councillor K Mills
Councillor C Morgan	Councillor P H Murphy
Councillor P Pilkington	Councillor S Pugsley
Councillor N Thwaites	Councillor A Trollope-Bellew
Councillor K Turner	Councillor T Venner
Councillor D Westcott	Councillor R Woods

**Officers in Attendance:**

Chief Executive (P James)  
Assistant Chief Executive (B Lang)  
Community and Housing Lead – Energy Infrastructure (L Redston)  
Economic Regeneration and Tourism Manager (C Matthews)  
Housing Initiatives Officer (B Brown)  
Assistant Director – Resources & Support (P Carter)  
Meeting Administrator (K Kowalewska)

At the start of the meeting the Chairman gave a warm welcome to Councillor Nicole Hawkins, the new ward member for Alcombe.

**C15      Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Clifford, H Davies, A Kingston-James and R Thomas.

**C16      Minutes**

(Minutes of the meeting of Annual Council held on 17 May 2018 circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that, subject to amending the resolution of Minute No. C7 Appointment of Leader to replace the word ‘third’ with ‘fourth’, the Minutes of the meeting of Annual Council held on 17 May 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

**C17      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 I Aldridge	All	Williton	Spoke and voted
Cllr M Chilcott	All	SCC	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 H Murphy	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All	Minehead	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Pilkington	All	Timberscombe	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	Spoke and voted
Cllr D J Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted

Councillor B Maitland-Walker declared a personal interest on agenda item 8, Hinkley Point C Section 106 DCO Housing Contribution as a Trustee of West Somerset Advice Bureau.

Councillors M Chilcott, S Dowding, S Pugsley, A Trollope-Bellew and D Westcott declared personal interests on agenda item 8 as private sector landlords.

**C18      Public Participation**

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

**C19      Chairman's Announcements**

28 May 2018	Attended Mayor of Taunton Deane Borough Council Civic Service at St Mary Magdalene Church, Taunton
25 June 2018	Armed Forces Day Event at West Somerset House
9 July 201	Accepted an invitation from Cllr Nigel Taylor, SCC Chairman, to an informal 'get to know you' lunch at Wildwoods Restaurant, Taunton
10 July 201	Attended the Dulverton Weir and Leat Conservation Trust's Garden Party
20 July 2018	Attended a Garden Party at Langford hosted by the newly appointed High Sheriff of Somerset

**C20      Inter Authority Agreement**

(Report No. WSC 62/18, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to amend the terms of the Inter Authority Agreement between Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) and West Somerset Council (WSC) by the dissolution of the Joint Partnership Advisory Group (JPAG) following the establishment of the Shadow Council arrangements.

The Monitoring Officer presented the report and provided background information.

Councillor S Pugsley proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor C Morgan.

**RESOLVED** that the Inter Authority Agreement between TDBC and WSC be amended by the dissolution of JPAG with the review and monitoring of the Implementation Plan being undertaken through the Shadow Council Governance arrangements.

**C21**     **Hinkley Point C: Section 106 Agreement – Stogursey Leisure Contribution and CIM Fund ring fenced for Stogursey Parish**

(Report No. WSC 46/18, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of this report was to receive an update on the Stogursey Victory Hall redevelopment project and to allocate an additional £110,000 from the leisure funds ring fenced to Stogursey Parish and £130,000 from the CIM Fund ring fenced for Stogursey Parish pursuant to the Hinkley Point C Site Preparation Works Section 106 agreement.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report and provided background information. He went on to propose the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor C Morgan.

The Ward Members for Stogursey emphasised the vast knock on effects to hosting the construction of HPC and the incredible impacts experienced by the local community, and urged Full Council to do all that it could to actively support this project considering the great deal of upheaval endured by the Stogursey residents.

The Leader gave reassurance that he was well aware of what Stogursey was experiencing and gave his full support. Members recognised the pressure the parish was under and the conditions they had to deal with and reiterated that they very much cared for their welfare. Members wished the project the best of luck especially in terms of obtaining match funding.

The Community and Housing Lead – Energy Infrastructure Officer was thanked for her vast amount of help and support.

**RESOLVED (1)** that an additional £110,000 of the leisure fund ring-fenced to Stogursey Parish – making a total of £510,000 – is allocated towards the redevelopment of the Victory Hall in Stogursey be approved.

**RESOLVED (2)** that an additional £130,000 of the CIM Fund ring fenced for Stogursey Parish – making a total of £330,000 – is allocated towards the redevelopment of the Victory Hall in Stogursey be approved.

**C22**      **Hinkley Point C Section 106 DCO Housing Contribution**

(Report No. WSC 64/18, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to request the draw down and expenditure of monies from the HPC DCO s106 Housing Contribution for delivery of a Money and Debt Advice Service to tenants living in the Private Rented Sector.

The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing presented the report and highlighted the key points contained within. If Council was minded to approve the recommendations, £51,000 would be allocated to West Somerset Advice Bureau to provide qualified money and debt advice to the most vulnerable people in West Somerset. Concern was raised regarding lengthy delays experienced by applicants in receiving Universal Credit and it was hoped that the proposed initiative would help speed up the process. A written response to provide average turnaround figures in respect of Universal Credit was requested.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor C Morgan.

Reference was made to the fact that the reputation of West Somerset Advice Bureau was extremely high and their essential work was highly commended. Support was wholeheartedly expressed for this valuable project. The serious problems faced by people in the private rented sector were further identified during the discussion.

The hard work of the Housing Initiatives Officer was acknowledged.

**RESOLVED (1)** that an application be made to EDF Energy to draw down £51,000 funding from the HPC DCO s106 Housing Contribution.

**RESOLVED (2)** that on receipt of funding, to spend £51,000 on the Money and Debt Advice Service be approved.

**C23**      **Allocation of HPC S106 Tourist Information Centre Funds**

(Report No. WSC 63/18, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to consult with Council on a suggested approach for allocating Hinkley Point C Section 106 funds for Tourist Information Centres for 2018/19, and to consult with Council on a suggested approach for post 2018/19 allocations.

The Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth presented the report and provided background information. He proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor D Westcott.

The Tourist Information Centres were providing an excellent service as evidenced by visitor numbers and it was felt that the allocation of monies was being spent wisely.

A correction was highlighted in paragraph 14.1 of the report in that the building in which the former Watchet Tourist Office operated from was now leased to the Watchet Community Bookshop until December pending a result of an options appraisal on the future use of the building.

It was advised that the Council's Economic Development Team hugely supported the tourism function and their work was commended. The undertaking of a strategic review in 2019 was welcomed.

Members appreciated the great amount of work and support undertaken by the volunteers working in the TIC offices.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the allocation of £28,000 from HPC S106 allocations for tourist information centres from the Development Consent Order Works Agreement that makes allowance of £160,000 with the details in respect of drawdown outlined in paragraph 6.1 of the report be approved. Staggered payments to be made in line with service level agreements with individual centres, which total £28,000 for the purposes of supporting Minehead, Porlock and Watchet tourist information services for the financial years 2018/19.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership be requested to undertake a strategic review of the TIC allocations post April 2019, taking into account the tourism priorities of the three Coastal Community Teams that operate in Minehead, Watchet and Porlock as well as the individual requirements of the Centres.

**C24**      **HPC Planning Obligations Board – Allocation of CIM Funding**

(Report No. WSC 68/18, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the recent changes to the administration of the HPC Community Impact Mitigation (CIM) Fund; and to present the recommendations of the HPC Planning Obligations Board and West Somerset Council Cabinet for the allocation of monies from the HPC CIM Fund for grant applications received on 1 May 2018.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report and proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor C Morgan.

During the debate the following points were made:

- The two projects were incredibly worthy of the Council's support. Both projects were well thought out and well supported by the parishes, and would leave a sustainable legacy.

- Attention was drawn to the Exit and Transition Strategy as detailed in Appendix B to the report and various questions and issues were raised regarding the Somerset Community Foundation and the administration of the Somerset Community Fund, as well as how it differed to the CIM Fund. Concerns were expressed about its openness and transparency, the set of criteria being used, the decision making process and to what extent would the decisions made be subject to scrutiny. The new Council needed to ensure that public funds were administered in an open, transparent and fair way.
- It was agreed to invite Val Bishop from the Somerset Community Foundation to a future meeting of the Corporate Policy Advisory Group so she may provide further information on the issues raised.
- Clarification was provided that the Holford and District Village Hall project had received confirmation from the Big Lottery that they would receive £30,000 match funding.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the recent changes to the administration of the HPC CIM Fund as set out in paragraphs 5.1 – 5.7 and Appendix A of the report be noted.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the recommendation of the Hinkley C Planning Obligations Board and West Somerset Cabinet be endorsed as follows:

(i) The allocation of £69,000 from the 2nd Annual HPC CIM Fund Payment to Fiddington Village Hall for the Village Hall Improvement Project be approved.

(ii) The allocation of £30,000 from the 2nd Annual HPC CIM Fund Payment to Holford and Village District Hall Committee for the Holford and District Village Hall Fit for Future project be approved.

## **C25 Revenue and Capital Outturn 2017/2018**

(Report No. WSC 67/18, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with details of the Council's financial outturn position for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information regarding end of year reserve balances, for the financial year 2017/18.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support outlined the details of the report and advised that the auditors had recently complemented the Council on its current financial performance.

The Lead Member went on to propose the recommendations of the report which were seconded by Councillor A Trollope-Bellew.

During the debate the following points were made:

- A question was raised on the 2017/18 outturn position regarding the current budget gap compared to that presented to Members via the Transformation business case in 2016. The Assistant Director – Resources & Support agreed to provide in writing information on the overall position of the authority.
- Officers were congratulated for achieving the in-year savings.
- Issues concerning the volatility of Hinkley Point B business rates were highlighted, and the Leader confirmed that he would continue to pursue central government for an answer as to what would happen with the business rates for Hinkley Point C.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the Council's reported General Fund Revenue Budget underspend of £100k for the financial year 2017/18, which takes into account proposed earmarked reserve transfers including budget carry forwards be noted.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the net Earmarked Reserve transfers as set out in Appendix A of the report, including recommended Budget Carry Forward of 2017/18 underspends for specific service costs in 2017/18 totalling £295k be approved.

**RESOLVED (3)** that the proposed Capital Programme Budget Carry Forwards totalling £7.850m for general schemes to be funded using capital receipts, capital grant and S106 contributions and borrowing (as set out in Appendix B of the report) be approved.

**RESOLVED (4)** that the proposed Capital Programme Budget Carry Forwards totalling £3.208m for Hinkley S106-funded schemes (as set out in Appendix B of the report) be approved.

**RESOLVED (5)** that the residual net overspend of £19k in relation to the Capital Programme for general schemes in 2017/18 be noted.

**C26**      **Somerset Rivers Authority**

(Report No. WSC 61/18, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to seek support from Council for a letter to be drafted and sent to the Local Member of Parliament asking him to lobby the government on this issue on behalf of the Authority.

The Leader of Council presented the report and thanked David Warburton, MP for his attempts to try and steer The Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill through the House of Commons, as detailed in the report. The Leader also emphasised the need to support the Somerset Rivers Authority.

The Leader proposed the recommendation which was duly seconded by Councillor B Maitland-Walker.

Members fully supported the Bill as it was important to get it regularised and the significant impacts of flooding in West Somerset were underlined.

**RESOLVED** that a letter be drafted and sent on behalf of the Authority to the local Member of Parliament (MP), Ian Liddell-Grainger to urge him to use his position as West Somerset's national representative to encourage Government time be found for the passage of a bill to regularise the SRA administratively, thus enabling it to become a precepting body in its own right. It was also agreed to write to Sir Christopher Chope MP asking him not to oppose the Private Members Bill should it come before Parliament.

**C27**      **Standards Advisory Committee**

(Minutes of the Standards Advisory Committee held on 27 March 2018 circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Standards Advisory Committee held on 27 March 2018 be adopted.

The meeting closed at 6.18 pm