

**SWT Executive**

**Wednesday, 15th February, 2023,  
6.15 pm**

**Somerset West  
and Taunton**

**The John Meikle Room - The Deane  
House**

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**Members:**           **Federica Smith-Roberts (Chair), Derek Perry (Vice-Chair),  
Benet Allen, Chris Booth, Dixie Darch, Caroline Ellis,  
Mike Rigby, Francesca Smith, Andrew Sully and  
Sarah Wakefield**

## **ADDENDUM**

### **4. Public Participation**

(Pages 3 - 6)

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

We are now live webcasting most of our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, but you can also access them on the [Somerset West and Taunton webcasting website](#).



**ANDREW PRITCHARD  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Please note that this meeting will be recorded. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded and webcast. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy. Therefore unless you are advised otherwise, by entering the Council Chamber and speaking during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact the officer as detailed above.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions. There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions. Speaking under "Public Question Time" is limited to 3 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chair will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate. Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chair will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group. These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room. Full Council, Executive, and Committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: [www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](http://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

The meeting room, including the Council Chamber at The Deane House are on the first floor and are fully accessible. Lift access to The John Meikle Room, is available from the main ground floor entrance at The Deane House. The Council Chamber at West Somerset House is on the ground floor and is fully accessible via a public entrance door. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are available across both locations. An induction loop operates at both The Deane House and West Somerset House to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. For further information about the meeting, please contact the Governance and Democracy Team via email: [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

If you would like an agenda, a report or the minutes of a meeting translated into another language or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please email: [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

## **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

### **Petitions to Council – Assessment Form**

On receipt of a Petition from the requisite number of people appealing to the Authority (more than 200 for it to be debated at the next ordinary Full Council), the Governance Team will ensure an assessment is made as to its contents to establish whether there are likely to be significant consequences to the Council should the request(s) in the Petition be approved at the subsequent Full Council meeting.

There are Excluded Matters which are matters that are excluded from the scope of the petitions duty and these are:

- a) Any matter relating to a planning decision, including about a development plan document or the community infrastructure levy;
- b) Any matter relating to an alcohol, gambling or sex establishment licensing decision;
- c) Any matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment;
- d) Any matter which the Chair of the Council or relevant Committee believes to be scurrilous, offensive, improper, repetitious, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable.

Petitions submitted to the Council must include:

- a) A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the Council to take;
- b) The name and address and signature of any person supporting the petition;
- c) The name and address of the petition organiser

If valid, the first question to be addressed when assessing the Petition will be:-

“Can the request of the petitioner, if approved, be implemented without the need for any resource (financial and otherwise) to be identified outside existing budgets or staffing capacity?”

If the answer is ‘yes’, then the Petition can proceed towards discussion and potential resolution.

An example of a Petition which would fall into the above category would be where the Council is being asked to lobby the Government, Somerset County Council or other body on a particular issue. If the Petition is carried, the action required will usually involve no more than a letter being prepared and sent to the intended recipient.

However, as in the case of the recent Petition on The Brewhouse, the answer to the above question would clearly be 'no'.

In such circumstances, detailed analysis of the wording of the Petition will be required to identify what will be needed if the Petition – when it comes before Full Council – is carried.

Such analysis will include:-

- What additional resource would be required to ensure the Petition (if approved) could be implemented?
- What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?
- Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?
- Will this require reports to be submitted through Scrutiny and the Executive? If a Supplementary Estimate is required, Full Council approval will be required too.

If such analysis is required, the Governance Team will arrange for the attached pro-forma to be completed and this will accompany the relevant Petition onto the agenda of the Full Council meeting so all Members are aware that further investigation will be required before the Petition – even if it is carried – can be implemented.

The Council will decide how to respond to the petition which may include;

- a) To take the action requested.
- b) Not to take the action requested for the reasons given in the debate.
- c) Refer the matter for further investigation.
- d) Refer the matter to the Council Executive for final decision.

A petitioner has the right to request a review of the steps taken in response to the petition if they are unhappy and that request shall be made to the Council's Scrutiny Committee.

## Petitions to Council – Assessment Proforma

(To be used in circumstances where it appears the wording of a proposed Petition will commit the Council to providing further financial or staffing resources which cannot be met from existing budgets)

### Details of the Petition -

#### Petition

**We the undersigned petition the Council to:**

**Withdraw their proposal to construct a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the River Tone between Morrison’s bandstand and Coal Orchard, Taunton (Planning Application 38/22/0347) on the grounds that:**

- There is no need for an additional bridge as there is an adequate and safe river crossing for cyclists and pedestrians at Morrison’s Bridge
- The bridge is designed primarily for cyclists and it will be dangerous for pedestrians
- The bridge and access ramps are detrimental to the visual and recreational amenity of the area.
- There will be the loss of 5 important mature trees

#### Questions to be addressed

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>What additional resource would be required to ensure the Petition (if approved) could be implemented?</i></b></li> </ul> |
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<p>On face value, there is no additional resource required to implement the request of the petition, if the proposals as currently written were withdrawn. There is however significant resource required to then design, consult, procure and deliver an alternative scheme within the timelines of the Future High Street Funding grant funding (which needs to be spent or substantially committed by 31<sup>st</sup> March '24).</p>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?</i></b></li> </ul> |
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<p>There are no requirements to identify additional resource if the bridge proposal is simply withdrawn.</p>
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<p>An analysis of alternative schemes, approvals from DHLUC and would require approx. 30 hours (15 hours per Asst Director and Programme Manager), for alternative scheme proposals</p>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?</i></b></li> </ul> |
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<p>No</p>
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- ***Will this require reports to be submitted through Scrutiny and the Executive? If a Supplementary Estimate is required, Full Council approval will be required too.***

No

**Likely timescale involved –**