

SWT Full Council - 19 February 2020

Present: Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey (Chair)

Councillors Simon Coles, Ian Aldridge, Benet Allen, Marcus Barr, Mark Blaker, Chris Booth, Sue Buller, Dixie Darch, Hugh Davies, Dave Durdan, Habib Farbahi, Ed Firmin, Roger Habgood, John Hassall, Ross Henley, Marcia Hill, John Hunt, Marcus Kravis, Andy Milne, Richard Lees, Sue Lees, Libby Lisgo, Mark Lithgow, Janet Lloyd, Dave Mansell, Chris Morgan, Simon Nicholls, Craig Palmer, Derek Perry, Martin Peters, Peter Pilkington, Andy Pritchard, Mike Rigby, Federica Smith-Roberts, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Phil Stone, Andrew Sully, Nick Thwaites, Anthony Trollope-Bellew, Terry Venner, Sarah Wakefield, Alan Wedderkopp, Danny Wedderkopp, Brenda Weston, Keith Wheatley, Loretta Whetlor and Gwil Wren

Officers: Dawn Adey, James Barrah, Emily Collacott, Lesley Dolan, Paul Fitzgerald, James Hassett, Kerry Prisco, Andrew Pritchard, Marcus Prouse, Lisa Redston, Clare Rendell, Richard Sealy and Scott Weetch

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm)

116. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors L Baker, P Bolton, N Cavill, K Durdan, C Ellis, A Govier, A Hadley, Mr M Hill, S Pugsley, F Smith, P Stone and R Tully.

117. Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr M Barr	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Blaker	All Items	Wiveliscombe	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Booth	All Items	Wellington and Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr H Davies	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr Mrs Hill	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr J Hunt	All Items	SCC & Bishop's Hull	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Lees	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted

Cllr S Lees	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Lisgo	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr J Lloyd	All Items	Wellington & Sampford Arundel	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr A Milne	All Items	Porlock	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Morgan	All Items	Stogursey	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Nicholls	All Items	Comeytrove	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Palmer	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Perry	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Peters	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr P Pilkington	All Items	Timberscombe	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr H Prior-Sankey	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Rigby	All Items	SCC & Bishops Lydeard	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith-Roberts	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr V Stock-Williams	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr T Venner	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr A Wedderkopp	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Wedderkopp	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	All Items	Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

Councillor H Prior-Sankey further declared a disclosable pecuniary interest on agenda item 13, Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review, as her husband worked for the Street Pastors.

Councillor T Venner further declared a disclosable pecuniary interest on agenda item 9, Off Street Car Parking Charges.

Councillor A Pritchard further declared a disclosable pecuniary interest on agenda item 13, Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review, as he worked for Mind.

Councillor A Trollope-Bellew further declared a personal interest on agenda item 13, Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review, as he was a member of Quantock Eco.

Councillor R Habgood further declared a personal interest on agenda item 13, Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review, as he was a member of the Street Pastors.

Councillor B Weston further declared a personal interest on agenda item 13, Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review, as a trustee of the North Taunton Partnership.

Councillor S Wakefield further declared a personal interest in agenda item 13, Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review, as a trustee of the Somerset Community Foundation.

Councillor L Lisgo further declared a personal interest on agenda item 13, Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review, as a trustee of the North Taunton Partnership.

Councillor V Stock-Williams further declared a personal interest on agenda item 13, Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review, as a trustee of Citizens Advice, Taunton.

118. **Public Participation - To receive only in relation to the business for which the Extraordinary Meeting has been called any questions, statements or petitions from the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rules 14,15 and 16**

Mr Alan Debenham made the following statement:-

To hear PM Johnson Commons' blather, especially at PMQs on Wednesdays, you'd think his "get it done" Brexit golden age of fantastic new opportunities was with us, instead we witness the opposite:-

- continued tight Local Government austerity despite big 4% Council Tax rise yet again and no attempt to restore any services previously butchered - fundamental review of unfair Council Tax, based on 1991 valuations, is needed;
- virtually no significant extra bus, bike, and rail investments yet, despite jocular Johnson's recent extra £5.5 bn centrally pledged support - maybe (?) re-instate recent savage cuts to local routes and timetables, and review old Beeching cuts including new Wellington station;
- nebulous promise of 20,000 extra police on the beat met by 137 last year for Avon & Somerset and probably the same this year, but paid for largely by 10% increase in police Council Tax levy last year and another extra 4% this year;
- road potholes and roadside waste dumping still forever growing;
- promises tackling climate emergency still much more Johnson fantasy, particularly related to recent storms and flood prevention, and urgent need for an end to GDP/economic growth and new development only tied to this (so says Greta Thunberg and Extinction Rebellion) - this Council's actions still in the pipe-line and underpinned by only £75.000 earmarked in the budget.

Mr Nigel Behan spoke on agenda item 12, Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies 2020/21 and made the following statement:-

Question 1

Paragraph 1.4 (Appendix)

Notes:

“SWTC has recent and emerging plans that are expected to see a significant increase in capital investment both in the short term and longer term, related to housing, regeneration and commercial investment to generate essential income to fund local services and priority projects. This will see growth in assets held on the balance sheet and a related growth in borrowing need. The Council actively pursues access to other sources of capital such as bids for government grant funding, and private sector investment where appropriate, and plans to utilise the majority of available New Homes Bonus income and Community Infrastructure Levy towards the Capital Programme.”

And Paragraph 3.5 (Appendix) notes:

“The implications of financing capital expenditure from borrowing is that the expenditure is not funded immediately but charged to the revenue budget over a number of years. The Council may defer the timing of external borrowing on a short to medium term by using temporary cash resources held in reserves and balances. This practice, which is referred to as ‘internal borrowing’, does not reduce the magnitude of borrowing required or the level of funds held in reserves and balances; the funds are merely being utilised in the short term until they are required for their intended purpose. The timing of external borrowing and the balance of external / internal borrowing is determined by market conditions and the Council’s cash flow position. Officers manage this position on a day to day basis in line with the overall Treasury Management Strategy.”

Can clarification be provided on the relative scale of “internal borrowing” (“...using temporary cash resources...”) by days/weeks/months in terms of magnitude of cash (flow) and movements of cash (external borrowing averted-temporarily)?

Question 2

Section 5 (appendix) Commercial Investments – Property

“5.1 The Council invests in a diverse investment property portfolio both locally and nationally with the intention of generating surplus income that will be spent on local public services delivered within the district. This is an essential response to significant reductions in government funding over recent years, in order to meet service delivery objectives and the place making role of the Council, and avoid service cuts. The council plans to increase its investment by up to £100m over the next 2-3 years.”

The government (and CIPFA) expressed some concern about Local Councils investing in Commercial Property etc.

How much property (commercial property assets) does SWT hold in other Local Authority areas (by valuation and in comparison with SWT property held in the District Council area) and similarly how much property/assets do other Local Authorities hold in the SWT District Council area?

Question 3

Where will the “borrowing” for investment come from (as the PWLB – Public Work Loan Boards interest rates were recently uplifted by the Government and reported as “PWLB rate hike sends shockwaves through council finance sector”)?

119. **To receive any communications or announcements from the Chair of the Council**

The Chair of the Council made the following announcements:-

- Councillors were reminded that the swimathon was taking place on Sunday 23 February 2020 and to submit their money if they had sponsored the team.
- The Songs for Springtime was being held on Saturday 29 February 2020 and tickets were still available.
- Councillors were reminded that to be able to vote on any of the items on the agenda, they must be present in the room for the whole debate.

120. **To receive any communications or announcements from the Leader of the Council**

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:-

- She wanted to note her thanks to Jason Bailey who had repaired the gates to Vivary Park free of charge after they had recently been vandalised.
- An update was given on the Future of Local Government in Somerset.
- She introduced and welcomed Dawn Adey, the Director for Internal Operations.
- Details were given on a scheme she wanted to launch to raise money for tree planting.

121. **To receive only in relation to the business for which the Extraordinary Meeting has been called any questions from Councillors in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13**

No questions were received in relation to Procedure Rule 13.

122. **Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Review**

During the discussion, the following points were made:-

- Concern was raised on housing numbers and whether the Council was able to achieve the figures stated.
A written answer would be distributed.
- Councillors stated that there were a lot of good sensible topics included in the document but raised concern that they might not achieve carbon neutrality.
The Leader agreed that the Council needed to achieve on climate change topics and that there were many grants available to the Council which were being investigated.

Resolved that Full Council:-

- 1) Approved the revised 30 year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan as set out in the report;
- 2) Approved the proposed vision for the Housing service along with three new service Objectives; and
- 3) Approved the proposed Housing Revenue Account Rent Setting policy 2020.

123. **Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budget and Capital Programme**

Budget 2020/21

In accordance with Standing Order 18(2)(i), the Chair called for a recorded vote to be taken and recorded in the Minutes.

The recommendations, which are detailed below, were put and were carried with forty-six Councillors in favour and one abstaining:-

Resolved that Full Council approved:-

- 1) In accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's new Rent Standard from April 2020, the Dwelling Rent for 2020/21 for existing tenants would be an increase of CPI+1% to the average weekly rent, from £80.87 per week to £83.05 per week;
- 2) In accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's new Rent Standard from April 2020, the Dwelling Rent for 2020/21 for new tenants only would be an increase of CPI+1% plus an additional 5% for general needs to the average weekly rent, from £80.87 per week to £87.21 per week;
- 3) In accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's new Rent Standard from April 2020, the Dwelling Rent for 2020/21 for new tenants only would be an increase of CPI+1% plus an additional 10% for sheltered/supported and extra care dwelling rents to the average weekly rent, from £80.87 per week to £91.36 per week;
- 4) To increase non-dwelling rent and service charges in line with national policy by CPI+1% for 2020/21, with the exception of garages for private and shared ownerships tenants which would increase from £10.32 (including VAT) to £12.00 (including VAT);
- 5) The HRA Annual Revenue Budget for 2020/21; and
- 6) The HRA Capital Programme for 2020/21.

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors I Aldridge, B Allen, M Barr, M Blaker, C Booth, S Buller, S Coles, D Darch, H Davies, D Durdan, H Farbahi, E Firmin, R Habgood, J Hassall, R Henley, J Hunt, M Kravis, R Lees, S Lees, L Lisgo, M Lithgow, J Lloyd, D Mansell, A Milne, C Morgan, S Nicholls, C Palmer, D Perry, M Peters, P Pilkington, H Prior-Sankey, A Pritchard, M Rigby, F Smith-Roberts, V Stock-Williams, A Sully, N Thwaites, A Trollope-Bellew, T Venner, S Wakefield, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp, B Weston, K Wheatley, L Whetlor and G Wren.

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillor Mrs M Hill

124. **Off Street Car Parking Charges**

During the discussion, the following points were made:-

- Councillor T Venner left the room during the debate.
- Councillors queried why last year's surplus parking income had not been used for the park and ride scheme.
- Councillors stated that both on street and off street parking needed to be reviewed at the same time.

- Concern was raised on the towns where the car parks were not utilised and that an increase in charges would encourage people to park on street.
- Concern was raised on the blanket increase on parking charges across the district and that it would impact on the rural areas.
- Councillor R Habgood proposed an amendment which he was then advised by our Legal Officer to be invalid.
- Councillors wanted to change driver behaviour by encouraging them to use bike routes, public transport and the park and ride. Councillors agreed that improvements were required on the alternative options for drivers.
- Concern was raised that shoppers and visitors would go elsewhere if the parking charges were too high.
- Concern was raised on the emissions caused by drivers having to look for parking if the parking charges were too high and that they would park on street.
- Councillors were confused that the report stated there were no equality implications, when some people had no other option that to drive due to disability.
- Councillors suggested that changes needed to be made on the days people were charged to park. In the former West Somerset area, people were still charged to park on a Sunday, where in the former Taunton Deane area, parking was free on a Sunday.
- Councillors highlighted that a new Parking Strategy was urgently required and they suggested that work was carried out alongside Somerset County Council and that all key stakeholders were involved.

Councillor R Habgood requested a recorded vote be taken on the item, which was duly seconded by Councillor J Hunt. Upon a vote being taken, the request was carried.

The recommendations, which are detailed below, were put and were carried with twenty-six Councillors in favour, eleven against and eleven abstaining:-

Resolved that Full Council approved to raise car parking charges by 10% across the Somerset West and Taunton Council area.

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors B Allen, M Barr, C Booth, S Coles, D Darch, H Farbahi, E Firmin, J Hassall, R Henley, M Kravis, R Lees, M Lithgow, D Mansell, S Nicholls, D Perry, M Peters, P Pilkington, H Prior-Sankey, A Pritchard, M Rigby, F Smith-Roberts, A Sully, S Wakefield, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp and K Wheatley.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTION**: Councillors H Davies, D Durdan, R Habgood, J Hunt, A Milne, C Morgan, C Palmer, V Stock-Williams, N Thwaites, A Trollope-Bellew and L Whetlor.

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillors I Aldridge, M Blaker, S Buller, Mrs M Hill, S Lees, L Lisgo, J Lloyd, P Stone, T Venner, B Weston and G Wren.

125. **General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2020/21 (fees and**

charges)

During the discussion on the amendment, the following points were made:-

- Councillor D Mansell presented his budget amendment which had been distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting.
- The Portfolio Holder for Climate felt that amendment was not needed as there were already several projects underway and had been included within the budget. He also highlighted that the Council already had officers in post that were involved in the Climate Strategy Group and looking at many options for climate work.
- Councillors discussed renewable energy options and some highlighted that a specialist officer was required to carry out the work needed on climate change.
- Councillors suggested that if the Council was serious about climate change, then they would need to support the amendment.
- Councillors believed that the sentiment was audible and could see that the amendment was a good idea, however, to employ someone as experienced as stated in the amendment, on the salary quoted, would be a challenge.
- Concern was raised on the figures included in the amendment for communications and studies.
- Councillors requested clarification on what happened if the amendment was carried.
- Councillors highlighted that the critical part of the work required was community engagement.
- Councillors gave clarification on the post's requirements and that it would generate income for the Council.
- Councillors that supported the amendment believed that the post would be the driver on climate change and that it would support work that had already been achieved.
- Councillor D Mansell closed the debate and highlighted that the Council had passed the climate change emergency over a year ago and that he wanted to push forward work to achieve their ambitions on climate change.

In accordance with Standing Order 18(2)(i), the Chair called for a recorded vote to be taken on the amendment and recorded in the Minutes.

Councillor D Mansell moved the amendment, which was duly seconded by Councillor G Wren that:

Full Council **resolved** to make the budget amendments shown in Table 1 for implementation of climate protection and energy projects as outlined in the report.

The recommendation, which is detailed above, was put and **FAILED** with seventeen for, twenty-seven against and 3 abstaining:

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors I Aldridge, M Barr, M Blaker, R Habgood, J Hunt, L Lisgo, J Lloyd, D Mansell, A Milne, C Palmer, A Pritchard, N Thwaites, A Trollope-Bellew, T Venner, B Weston, L Whetlor and G Wren.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTION**: Councillors B Allen, C Booth, S Buller, S Coles, D Darch, H Farbahi, E Firmin, J Hassall, R Henley, Mrs M Hill, M Kravis, R Lees, S Lees, M Lithgow, S Nicholls, D Perry, M Peters, P Pilkington, H Prior-Sankey, M Rigby, F Smith-Roberts, P Stone, A Sully, S Wakefield, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp and K Wheatley.

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillors H Davies, D Durdan and V Stock-Williams.

During the discussion on the budget, the following points were made:-

- The Section 151 Officer gave information on the final settlement and thanked his team for their hard work on the budget.
- Councillors were disappointed that Central Government had not made a decision on the local settlement.
- Councillors were disappointed that the Somerset Rivers Authority were still included in the precept and that they had not yet set up their own precepting powers.
- Councillors requested that the Constitution be amended so that the Council's fees and charges were included in the report.
- Councillors were impressed with the projects listed in the climate change budget information.
- Councillors highlighted the money given to the Brewhouse and how the Regal Theatre had not benefited from any money from the Council.
- Councillors were sad to see a reduction of 66% in funding from Central Government over the last 10 years and that services had suffered because of that.

In accordance with Standing Order 18(2)(i), the Chair called for a recorded vote to be taken and recorded in the Minutes.

The recommendations, which are detailed below, was put and **CARRIED** with forty-one for and five against.

Resolved that Full Council:-

- 1) Approved the General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2020/21;
- 2) Noted the forecast Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Reserves position and noted the S151 Officers Statement on the robustness of the budget and adequacy of reserves as set out in section 21;
- 3) Approved the setting of a basic band D council tax of £164.63, comprising £162.88 for services and £1.75 on behalf of the Somerset Rivers Authority;
- 4) Approved the Special Expenses Precept of £1.91 for a basic band D council tax in respect of the unparished area of Taunton;
- 5) Approved the additions to the General Fund Capital Programme Budget of £12.015m for 2020/21, as set out in Appendix A and Table 10; and
- 6) Approved the reallocation of £3.5m from the BRR Smoothing Reserve to the Investment Risk Reserve.

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors I Aldridge, B Allen, M Barr, M Blaker, C Booth, S Buller, S Coles, D Darch, H Davies, D Durden, H Farbahi, E Firmin, J Hassall, R Henley, Mrs M Hill, J Hunt, M Kravis, R Lees, S Lees, L Lisgo, J Lloyd, D Mansell, S Nicholls, C Palmer, D Perry, M Peters, P Pilkington, H Prior-Sankey, A Pritchard, M Rigby, F Smith-Roberts, P Stone, A Sully, T Venner, S Wakefield, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp, B Weston, K Wheatley, L Whetlor and G Wren.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTION**: Councillors R Habgood, A Milne, V Stock-Williams, N Thwaites and A Trollope-Bellew.

126. **Council Tax Resolution 2020/21**

In accordance with Standing Order 18(2)(i), the Chair called for a recorded vote to be taken and recorded in the Minutes.

The recommendations, which are detailed below, were put and were **CARRIED** with forty-six Councillors in favour:-

Resolved that:-

- 1) Full Council approved the formal Council Tax Resolution in Appendix A of the report; and
- 2) Full Council noted that if the formal Council Tax Resolution at Appendix A was approved, the total Band D Council Tax would be:-

	2019/20	2020/21	Increase
	£	£	%
Somerset West and Taunton Council	157.88	162.88	3.17
Somerset West and Taunton Council - SRA	1.75	1.75	0.00
Somerset County Council	1,138.80	1,163.47	1.99
Somerset County Council – Social Care	88.09	112.89	2.00
Somerset County Council – SRA	12.84	12.84	0.00
Police and Crime Commissioner	217.81	227.81	4.59
Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	86.52	88.24	1.99
Sub-Total	1,703.69	1,769.88	3.89
Town and Parish Council (average)	37.42	43.86	17.21
Total	1,741.11	1,813.74	4.17

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors I Aldridge, B Allen, M Barr, M Blaker, C Booth, S Buller, S Coles, D Darch, H Davies, D Durden, H Farbahi, E Firmin, R Habgood, J Hassall, R Henley, Mrs M Hill, J Hunt, M Kravis, R Lees, S Lees, L Lisgo, J Lloyd, D Mansell, A Milne, S Nicholls, C Palmer, D Perry, M Peters, P Pilkington, H Prior-Sankey, A Pritchard, M Rigby, F Smith-Roberts, V Stock-Williams, P Stone, A Sully, N Thwaites, A Trollope-Bellew, T Venner, S Wakefield, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp, B Weston, K Wheatley, L Whetlor and G Wren.

127. **Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies 2020/21**

Resolved that Full Council:-

- 1) Noted that the Executive approved the Treasury Strategy contained within the consolidated report on 10 February 2020;
- 2) Approved the Capital and Investment Strategies and Minimum Revenue Provision policy as set out in Appendix A; and
- 3) Noted and supported the requirement for a review of the Constitution for completeness and further clarity on responsibilities for all aspects of the strategies included within this report.

128. **Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Annual Fund Review**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- The Chair of the Council left the room during the debate.
- The Leader of the Council was proud of the support given through the grants issued to many organisations across the district.
- Councillors advised of a typo in the report under section 5.1 and that it should read 'In July 2016 TDBC and WSC entered into an agreement with Somerset Community Foundation'.
- Councillors advised that they had read in a local publication that the Citizens Advice Bureau were possibly due to cut the Local Support Assistance. Concern was raised as that fund was used as crisis support and would leave a huge gap in local funding.

Resolved that Full Council:-

In relation to the VCS grants within the scope of the review:

- 1) Continued funding VCS organisations at current levels for 2020/21 whilst the key points raised during the review detailed in the paper were addressed;
- 2) Requested that officers, in consultation with Councillors, carried out a review of current areas of funding and set new funding objectives in line with the Councils corporate objectives and current needs within the community and reported to the Scrutiny Committee, Executive and Full Council in September/October 2020;
- 3) Requested that officers worked closely with all grant recipients to ensure targets were met and grants were offering value for money during 20/21;
In relation to the Taunton and West Somerset Citizens Advice Organisations:
- 4) Agreed an additional allocation of £25000 within the Councils 2020/21 budget for a 'one off' grant in order to help maintain the Local Assistance Scheme and to provide staffing capacity to enable Citizens Advice Managers to engage with transformation related work;
- 5) Agreed an additional allocation of £8000 within the Councils 2020/21 budget to enable the joint commissioning of a consultant to work alongside the Citizens Advice (CA) services;
- 6) Jointly commissioned (with other District Councils and Somerset County Council) a consultant to work with the CAs to explore different operating

models, transformation of service delivery, use of technology and interventions to reduce service demand;

- 7) Undertook a comprehensive review of SWT financial support for CA services during Summer/Autumn 2020 following receipt of the consultant's report; and
- 8) Worked proactively with Citizens Advice Taunton (CAT) and West Somerset Advice (WSA) to explore suitable accommodation options.

(The Meeting ended at 9.10 pm)