

Taunton Shadow Town Council

**Thursday, 1st December, 2022,
6.15 pm**

**Somerset West
and Taunton**

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

[SWT MEETING WEBCAST LINK](#)

Members: Tom Deakin (Chair), Brian Larcombe (Vice-Chair), Lee Baker, Chris Booth, Norman Cavill, Simon Coles, Dixie Darch, Caroline Ellis, Habib Farbahi, David Fothergill, Marcia Hill, Robert Isaacs, John Hunt, Dawn Johnson, Richard Lees, Sue Lees, Libby Lisgo, Derek Perry, Martin Peters, Hazel Prior-Sankey, Francesca Smith, Federica Smith-Roberts, Ian Talbot, Danny Wedderkopp, Brenda Weston and Keith Woodmason

Agenda

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Taunton Shadow Town Council

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 3rd November 2022.

(Pages 7 - 14)

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or prejudicial or personal interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The personal interests of Councillors of Somerset County Council, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes.)

4. Public Participation

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](#).

5. Programme Vision Statement

(Pages 15 - 36)

At the first meeting of the Shadow Town Council Councillors considered the suggested Programme Vision Statement which would provide a concise summary of the future state the Programme would deliver.

Officers presented the following statement at that meeting for comment:

“To create a safe, legal and functioning Town Council for the residents of Taunton that provides a representative body for the community that:

- *Enables the effective promotion of the well-being of residents,*
- *Contributes to the provision of services in the area in an economic and efficient manner*
- *Promotes community engagement and effective and convenient local government.”*

Councillors held a discussion and requested that this was placed on the next Agenda for a fuller discussion and finalisation. Comment was made on the Vision Statement and whilst it was understood and agreeable that the Council going forward was safe and legal it was considered important to add ‘and creating a viable future for this organisation’. Rather than a comment on financial stability the phrasing had been interpreted as ensuring any body was ‘fit’ for the future. Some concern was raised that the statement as originally presented was not sufficiently visionary or aspirational. Comment was made that ‘safe and legal’ couldn’t just mean that the Shadow handed over to elected members, it was important to caveat that it must be functioning e.g., if public conveniences are transferred on the 1st April, they can’t be locked and unclean etc.

The Shadow Town Council is recommended to:

- Approve and adopt a Programme Vision Statement.

6. Taunton Town Council Office Accommodation

(Pages 37 - 42)

This report sets out an option for accommodating the office and meeting space needs of the to be created Taunton Town Council.

Taunton Shadow Town Council are requested to make comment on the report and recommendations.

7. Technical Advisor - Project Overview and Assurance

Reg Williams, Technical Advisor to the Project from the Society of Local Council Clerks will provide an overview/assurance of the project for Councillors.

Reg is an experienced freelance consultant to the Parish Council Sector and works for SLCC with the National Association of Local Councils on various initiatives. Reg was the City Clerk to Salisbury City Council between 2009 – 2017 and was an instrumental figure in its formation after its creation when Wiltshire went Unitary. He had experience of immediate and close liaison with the Unitary Authority to ensure the new Council would operate correctly and oversaw all aspects of the transfer of functions and services from Wiltshire Council to the City Council at the time. He also set up systems and procedures such as financial, payroll, IT, Audit, employment policies, sourcing equipment identifying and acquiring office and depot accommodation. He also created and set up the staffing structure of the new Council, and recruited to various posts, as well as setting up the governance and procedural requirements. Prior to that role he was Parks and Street Services Manager Salisbury District Council.

It is recommended that the Shadow Town Council:

- Note the update from the Project Technical Advisor and provide any comments.

8. Town Clerk Recruitment

(Pages 43 - 44)

Reg Williams, Technical Advisor to the Project from the Society of Local Council Clerks will provide an overview of the recruitment activity associated with the employment of a Town Clerk for the new Council.

It is recommended that the Shadow Town Council:

1. Note the update from the Project Technical Advisor and

provide any comments.

2. Approve the nominations of Two Shadow Town Councillors (Cllrs Brian Larcombe and Dawn Johnson) to sit on the Interview Panel.

9. Implementation Plan Update

Officers will present a verbal update on this item at the meeting with slides.

It is recommended that the Shadow Town Council:

- Note the update on the Implementation Plan progress and provide any comments.

10. Judicial Review Update

Legal Workstream Lead and Deputy County Solicitor Tom Woodhams to give an update on the Judicial Review Action.

11. Taunton Shadow Town Council Forward Plan

To review the Forward Plan.

(Pages 45 - 46)



ANDREW PRITCHARD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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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 and you can only speak to the Committee once. If there are a group of people attending to speak about a particular item then a representative should be chosen to speak on behalf of the 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.

If you would like to ask a question or speak at a meeting, you will need to submit your request to a member of the Governance Team in advance of the meeting. You can request to speak at a Council meeting by emailing your full name, the agenda item and your question to the Governance Team using governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

Any requests need to be received by 4pm on the day that provides 1 clear working day before the meeting (excluding the day of the meeting itself). For example, if the meeting is due to take place on a Tuesday, requests need to be received by 4pm on the Friday prior to the meeting.

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The meeting rooms, including the Council Chamber at The Deane House, are on the first floor and are fully accessible. Lift access to The John Meikle Room (Council Chamber), 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.

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