

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Motions to Council – Assessment Form

On receipt of a Motion from a Councillor, the Governance Team will carry out an assessment as to its contents to establish whether there are likely to be significant consequences to the Council should the Motion be carried at the subsequent Full Council meeting.

The first question to be addressed will be:-

“Can the Motion, 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 Motion can proceed towards discussion and resolution.

An example of a Motion 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 motion 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 Motion on ‘Climate Change’, the answer to the above question would clearly be ‘no’.

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

Such analysis will include:-

- What additional resource would be required to ensure the Motion (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 Motion onto the agenda of the Full Council meeting so all Members are aware that further investigation will be required before the Motion – even if it is carried – can be implemented.

Motions to Council – Assessment Proforma

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

Brief Details of the Motion – The motion is for the Council to support the Local Electricity Bill, lobby our local MPs on the issue, publicise our support and let the organisers of the campaign know about our support.

The Bill will make it possible for local community energy companies to supply local people with locally generated electricity and will make the costs of setting up and running this model more proportionate. Community energy is an important initiative that can bring forward more much-needed clean energy, retain economic benefits locally, and engage more people in where their energy comes from. It has the potential to be a key part of delivering on the UK's legally binding net zero target by bringing forward locally supported renewable projects. However, it is currently unable to compete on a level playing field with utility companies, as to do so costs millions of pounds. Considering the volume of energy that community energy companies generate and would be able to sell to local customers in comparison to established utility companies, these costs are highly disproportionate. The Local Electricity Bill proposes to obligate OFGEM to make it easier for local electricity generators to sell their electricity to local customers and to make the costs of doing so more proportionate.

The emerging SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Action Plan states the importance of community energy and includes potential actions to “*Build awareness and capacity for community energy projects and play a more direct and proactive role in enabling*”; and “*Lobby Government to remove artificial barriers...to delivery of renewable energy including onshore wind in the district*”. The recommendations of this motion would align with these actions.

Motion

Full Council – 29 September 2020

Motion to support the Local Electricity Bill

Motion proposed by Councillor Peter Pilkington, seconded by Councillor Sarah Wakefield

Preamble:-

That Somerset West & Taunton District Council notes that and;

(i) Acknowledges the efforts that this council has made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy.

(ii) Further recognises;

- That very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so,
- That making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would enable and empower new local businesses, or councils, to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local customers, and
- That revenues received by new local renewable electricity providers could be used to help improve the local economy, local services and facilities and to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions;

Recommendations:-

This Council therefore resolves to:-

1. Support the Local Electricity Bill, supported by 187 MPs which, if made law, would establish a Right to Local Supply which would promote local renewable electricity supply companies and co-operatives by making the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate to the size of the supply operation; and
2. Inform the local media of this decision; and
3. Write to local MPs, asking them to support the Bill, and;
4. Write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NNorinfo@powerforpeople.org.uk) expressing its support.

Questions to be addressed

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What additional resource would be required to ensure the Motion (if approved) could be implemented?</i> |
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Answer – No additional staffing or financial resource would be required. The ability to write letters to our local MPs and the campaign organisers and prepare a press release on the matter can be met from existing staffing resources. There are no financial resource implications of the motion.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?</i> |
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Answer – No further work is required to understand what is necessary.

- ***Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?***

Answer – Only approvals required are from task/line managers for relevant officers to prepare the letters and press releases.

- ***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.***

Answer – No

Likely timescale involved – Half a day, maximum