

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 29 November 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present

Councillors

F W Letch (Chairman)
C Adcock, M D Binks, D Broom,
E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski, S J Clist,
G Cochran, F J Colthorpe, C Connor,
L J Cruwys, A Cuddy, G Czapiewski,
J M Downes, G Duchesne, B Fish,
M Fletcher, A Glover, C Harrower,
B Holdman, M Jenkins, S Keable,
L G J Kennedy, L Knight, J Lock, S J Penny,
J Poynton, R Roberts, S Robinson,
G Westcott, J Wright and D Wulff

Apologies

Councillor(s)

J Frost, R Gilmour, N Letch, L Taylor, H Tuffin and
N Woollatt

Also Present

Officer(s):

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Maria De Leiburne
(District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Jackie Murphy
(Electoral Services Manager), Laura Woon (Democratic
Services Manager) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services
Officer)

Councillors

Online

N Bradshaw, J Cairney, S Chenore, M Farrell,
L G J Kennedy

Officers Online

Richard Marsh

87 APOLOGIES (08:10)

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Frost, Cllr R Gilmour, Cllr N Letch, Cllr L Taylor, Cllr Tuffin and Cllr Mrs N
Woollatt

88 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (08:46)

There were no public questions received relating to the business on the agenda.

89 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (12:12)**

Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests when appropriate.

None were declared under this item.

90 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (09:00)**

The Chairman had the following announcements to make:

On the 3rd November he attended Diverse Devon Together at the Mint Exeter with entertainment in the form of, singing, dancing and food.

On the 4th of November he attended Petroc Degree ceremony in Barnstaple, he was impressed with the wide range of degrees offered for example engineering, caring and teaching.

On the 10th of November he greeted the poppy train at Tiverton Parkway which arrived at 7.58 and travelled on to Paddington Station in London.

On the 11th November he officiated at the Tiverton Remembrance ceremony. The event was well attended by members of the public.

On the 12th November he attended the Crediton Remembrance Service.

On the 23rd he attended the Tiverton Sea Cadets annual presentation event, it was a wonderful evening and had a wide range of interests and exploits.

91 **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS 2023 (12.23)**

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Working Environment, Cllr Jane Lock, to introduce the report, the Electoral Administration Act 2013 requires each authority to carry out a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations every 5 years. The current review must take place between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2024. This review has now taken place. By publishing on 1 December 2023, polling districts can be brought in line with future parliamentary constituencies to prepare for a snap Parliamentary General Election.

The following was highlighted:

- Approximately 100 polling stations in Mid Devon, each polling station caters for up to 1500 voters and some of the larger venues have multiple polling stations in the same building.
- Each polling venue needs to be as accessible as possible for voters, with good access, space and parking.
- The review has enabled a tidy up of parts of the electoral register, including some minor changes mostly due to boundary changes for District, Parish, County and Parliamentary. Also to ensure better facilities for all voters to have a suitable polling station and to exercise their democratic rights in person if they wish.
- Complaints are fortunately rare and polling staff have the opportunity to feedback on the suitability of the locations at every election.

- The revised polling district lettering reflects the new parliamentary constituencies and also the district ward. At a glance it is now easier to identify which ward an elector is in by their elector number. This will help at election time, for candidates, political parties and for voters receiving poll cards.

Consideration was given to:

- The concerns about less votes with Uffculme moving to Magelake instead of the village hall as this was a suitable venue.
- The high level of traffic previously at the village hall and Magelake being a more suitable location.
- When the last Parish Council elections were which was May 2023.

Following discussion and upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTION**: Cllr J Poynton

92 **THE PROPOSED WITHDRAWAL AND DISSOLUTION OF THE HEART OF THE SOUTH WEST JOINT COMMITTEE (22:20)**

The Chair invited the Chief Executive, Stephen Walford, to introduce the report, this report had been provided from Somerset Council regarding the Heart of the South West Joint Committee.

The following was highlighted:

- This report followed a steer from the Leaders / senior members of several Constituent Authorities for proposals to be brought forward to all Constituent Authorities to consider their withdrawal and dissolution of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee (the Joint Committee).
- Changes in Government policy over the last five years, the development of the devolution deal and forthcoming integration of the HotSW LEP into local authorities meant that the purpose of the of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee (the Joint Committee) had largely been superseded and other existing partnership arrangements between the constituent authorities could deliver their aims.
- Due to the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee (the Joint Committee) not being quorate they had been unable to make a decision therefore it been brought before Council today for it to make the decision.

Consideration was given to:

- The Mid Devon District Council Leader was in agreement with this proposal.
- The finance impact and the return of outstanding balances.
- The mechanism in place for the future.
- The procurement processes and impact of this.
- The summary and recommendations to dissolve of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee (the Joint Committee) on 31st December.

Following discussion and upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTION**: One

(The meeting ended at 18.40pm)

CHAIRMAN