



## Minutes

of the Meeting of

## The Council

### Tuesday, 19th February 2019

held at the Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 pm Meeting Concluded: 8.47 pm

#### Councillors:

P David Jolley (Chairman)

P Reyna Knight (Vice-Chairman)

P Elfan Ap Rees

P Felicity Baker

A Karen Barclay

P Chris Blades

P Mary Blatchford

P Peter Burden

P Charles Cave

P Robert Cleland

P Andy Cole

A John Crockford-Hawley

P Bob Garner

Colin Hall

P David Hitchins

P Jill Iles

P Tom Leimdorfer

P Richard Nightingale

P David Oyns

P David Pasley

Marcia Pepperall

P Terry Porter

P Kate Stowey

P Richard Tucker

A Martin Williams

P Nick Wilton

P Nigel Ashton

P Jan Barber

P Michael Bell

A Ericka Blades

P Peter Bryant

P Mark Canniford

P James Clayton

P Sarah Codling

P Peter Crew

P Donald Davies

Judith Hadley

P Ann Harley

P Denise Hunt

P Ruth Jacobs

P John Ley-Morgan

P Jerry O'Brien

P Ian Parker

P Dawn Payne

P Lisa Pilgrim

P David Shopland

P James Tonkin

Liz Wells

A Roz Willis

P Deborah Yamanaka

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

**Officers in attendance:** Jo Walker (Chief Executive), Sheila Smith (Director of People and Communities), Nicholas Brain (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Richard Penska (Interim Head of Finance), Sue Efford (Corporate Services), Alex Hearn (Development and Environment), Jonathan Kirby (Corporate Services), Paul Morris (Corporate Services), Richard Turner (Corporate Services)

**COU  
93**                      **Public Participation: Ann Bunn, local resident –  
Safeguarding Vulnerable People/ Climate Emergency  
Motion (Agenda Item 1)**

Ms Bunn addressed the meeting, referring to the number of other local authorities that had adopted or were considering the Climate Emergency Motion and referring to the importance of supporting the Motion in the context of safeguarding vulnerable people.

The Chairman thanked Ms Bunn for her address. The matter would be considered later in the meeting under agenda item 6.

**COU  
94**                      **Public Participation: Nigel Bray on behalf of John Dixon,  
local resident – MetroWest Phase 1 and the Re-opening of  
the Portishead Line (Agenda Item 1)**

Mr Bray addressed the meeting on behalf of John Dixon, referring to the importance of re-opening the Portishead Line and of delivering the scheme without further delay. He outlined the many benefits offered by the proposed scheme and urged members to support the recommendations in the report and to proceed as soon as possible.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bray for his address. The matter would be considered later in the meeting under agenda item 19.

**COU  
95**                      **Public Participation: Hilary Burn, local resident - Climate  
Emergency Motion (Agenda Item 1)**

Ms Burn addressed the meeting on the Climate Emergency Motion, referring to the importance of working together to address the threat of climate change and of taking action now to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

The Chairman thanked Ms Burn for her address. The matter would be considered later in the meeting under agenda item 6.

**COU  
96**                      **Public Participation: Holly Law, local resident - Climate  
Emergency Motion (Agenda Item 1)**

Ms Law addresses the meeting on the Climate Emergency Motion, referring to the destruction across the planet as a result of global warming. She urged councillors to support the Motion and to show leadership in tackling climate change, and to work with Westminster and other partners to achieve the 2030 target.

The Chairman thanked Ms Law for her address. The matter would be considered later in the meeting under agenda item 6.

**COU  
97**                      **Public Participation: Tom Carey, local resident - Climate  
Emergency Motion (Agenda Item 1)**

Mr Carey addressed the meeting on the Climate Emergency Motion, seeking councillors support for the proposed action. He referred to general apathy around the issue of climate change and to the need for a major shift in behaviour in order to minimise the impact on the planet of global warming.

The Chairman thanked Mr Carey for his address. The matter would be considered later in the meeting under agenda item 6.

**COU  
98**                      **Public Participation: Jill Coleman, local resident - Climate  
Emergency Motion (Agenda Item 1)**

Ms Coleman addressed the meeting on the Climate Emergency Motion, referring to the action taken in her own local community to tackle the climate emergency and urging others to take similar measures to limit the impact of global warming. She urged councillors to support the Motion and to take measures to publicise what actions could be taken locally to tackle the climate emergency.

The Chairman thanked Ms Coleman for her address. The matter would be considered later in the meeting under agenda item 6.

**COU 99                                 Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 4)**

None

**COU 100                                 Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 January 2019 (Agenda Item 5)**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

**COU 101                                 Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14)  
Climate Emergency Motion (Councillor Tom Leimdorfer and  
Councillor Mike Bell) (Agenda Item 6.1)**

**Motion:** Moved by Councillor Leimdorfer, and seconded by Councillor Bell

“This council recognises:

1. The challenge and threat of climate change to residents and global community.
2. That to keep global warming below 1.5°C we must operate within a global carbon budget. In order to reduce the chance of runaway Global Warming and limit the effects of Climate Breakdown, we need to reduce our CO<sub>2</sub>eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from their current average of 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible.
3. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation and infrastructure, to make low carbon living easier.
4. North Somerset Council has already shown foresight and leadership when it comes to addressing the issue of climate change, having reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 28.5% between 2005 - 2015 and setting a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the equivalent of 5.8 tonnes per person, to 2.9 tonnes per person by 2035. (1)
5. Unfortunately, current plans and actions are not enough. The world is on track to overshoot the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit before 2050 (2). The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming (3) describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared to a 1.5°C rise, and told us that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector and local communities.
6. Councils around the UK and the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing resources to address this emergency. (4)

This council will:

1. Declare that it recognises a 'Climate Emergency'.
2. Take active steps to make North Somerset carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions. (5)
3. Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible.
4. Set up a cross-party Working Group to bring forward proposals and work with partners across the region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans.
5. Report to Full Council every six months with the actions the Council will take to address this emergency.”

Seven Members signified their support for a debate on the Motion.

In speaking on the Motion, Councillor Leimdorfer referred to an amendment to be put forward by Councillor Ashton.

**Amendment:** Moved by Councillor Ashton, seconded by Councillor Ap Rees

“that this Council

- (1) recognises the serious global Climate Challenge Emergency;
- (2) asks officers to prepare a report on the actions North Somerset Council could take with the aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 with an idea of costings, aiming to bring back a report to Council around June; and
- (3) asks the Chief Executive to write to the Government minister on our achievements and asks for resources when we know what the detailed proposals might be.”

In speaking to the amendment Councillor Ashton referred to the commitment already shown by North Somerset Council in reducing its carbon emissions and stated this Council would continue to be leaders on this issue. He made particular reference to the Council’s performance in terms of recycling and carbon efficiency, and stressed the Council was committed to doing as much as it could within the limited resources available and would look to do more if additional resources allowed.

Councillor Leimdorfer and Councillor Bell, as mover and seconder of the original Motion, indicated that as the amendment recognised the climate emergency and was in the spirit of the original Motion they were willing to take it on board. The proposed amendment subsequently became the substantive Motion.

Detailed discussion ensued on the substantive Motion, during which the following issues were raised: the need for the government to review its decision to revise building standards, and to make all buildings carbon neutral by design, and to consider the impact of other planning policy decisions such as the extension of permitted development rights; the importance of recognising climate change as an emergency in order to address the significant harm as outlined within the IPCC’s Special Report on Climate Change; the limited time available to address and reverse the worse impacts of climate change and the moral obligation towards future generations to take action now; the need to make low carbon living easier to encourage individuals to change their behaviour, with reference being made to recycling, public transport and cycling and walking routes; the importance of considering the climate implications of all decisions, such as the withdrawal of home insulation grants and the expansion of Bristol International Airport; the benefits to local residents of tackling this effectively and the economic benefits of supporting the green economy; the need to show leadership and to harness the ideas of others within the community to address the problems; the need for additional resources to be provided to fully tackle the climate change agenda; the importance of acting nationally and internationally in a coherent way and for policies to be backed up by sound scientific evidence; the benefits of setting up a working group to consider how best to address some of the local issues.

On behalf of members the Chairman thanked the public speakers for their contributions earlier in the meeting and those in the public gallery for their attendance.

Following discussion, the substantive Motion was put to the vote and it was, unanimously,

**Resolved:** that this Council

- (1) recognises the serious global Climate Challenge Emergency;
- (2) asks officers to prepare a report on the actions North Somerset Council could take with the aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 with an idea of costings, aiming to bring back a report to Council around June; and
- (3) asks the Chief Executive to write to the Government minister on our achievements and asks for resources when we know what the detailed proposals might be.

**COU  
102**                      **Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 8)**

The Chairman announced that he would be representing the Council at the funeral of former councillor Derek Walker. The funeral was taking place on Monday 25 February at 12 noon at Sedgemoor Crematorium in Bridgwater

**COU  
103**                      **Forward Plan dated 31 January 2019 (Agenda Item 11)**

Councillor Ashton presented the Forward Plan.

**Resolved:** that the Forward Plan be noted.

**COU  
104**                      **Question Time (Standing Order No. 18) (Agenda Item 13)**

Oral questions were directed to Members concerned and the summary notes and the topics involved are contained in Appendix 1.

**COU  
105**                      **Report and matters referred from the Executive – 5 February  
2019  
EXE 66 – Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20 (Agenda  
Item 14 (1))**

Councillor Ashton presented the reference from the Executive.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the representative of the Interim Head of Finance highlighted the key elements within the Executive report.

**Motion:** Moved by Councillor Ashton, seconded by Councillor Ap Rees and

**Resolved:**

- (1) that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20 as shown in Appendix 1 of the Executive report which includes the requirement to borrow £63.7million during the period 2018-2022 as funding for the approved capital programme be approved;
- (2) that the Prudential Indicators for 2019/20 as shown in Appendix 2 of the Executive report be approved; and
- (3) that the Minimum Revenue Provision policy for 2019/20 be approved.

**COU  
106**                      **Report and matters referred from the Executive – 5 February  
2019  
EXE 67 Capital Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Capital  
Strategy (Agenda Item 14 (2))**

Councillor Ashton presented the reference from the Executive.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the representative of the Interim Head of Finance highlighted the key elements within the Executive report.

In discussing the Commercial Investment Strategy reference was made to the risk of retail investment at the current time and whether the future strategy would move away from retail to commercial investments. Councillor Ashton responded that recent investment decisions had been taken on good advice, with the figures for both sites making good investment sense as well as protecting important sites within the Weston area. He explained the problems in investing in affordable housing when the aim of the investment was to generate income to support services, and confirmed that £29 million remained uncommitted until the right investment opportunity presented itself.

In response to concerns around the openness and transparency of Property Investment Board decisions Councillor Ashton referred to the commercial confidentiality with such decisions and the importance of being in a position to act quickly in any negotiations. However, he noted the request for greater member involvement in decisions around the strategic approach to be taken and the management of assets.

**Motion:** Moved by Councillor Pasley, seconded by Councillor Ashton and

**Resolved:**

- (1) that the Capital Strategy 2019/20 to 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 of the Executive report be approved;
- (2) that an increase to the capital programme of £18.213million for a range of transport, housing, school and social care schemes as set out in Appendix 2 of the Executive report be approved;
- (3) that the substitution of £5.811million of funding from headroom resources allocated to North South Link with Accelerated Development Funding be approved, once confirmation of the grant funding has been received; and
- (4) that the Commercial Investment Strategy as set out in Appendix 3 of the Executive report be approved.

**COU  
107**

**Report and matters referred from the Executive – 5 February 2019  
EXE 68 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update and Revenue Budget 2019/20 (Agenda Item 14 (3)); and Revenue Budget Update and Council Tax Setting 2019/20 (Agenda Item 15)**

The Chairman proposed that agenda items 14(3) and 15 be considered together as both made recommendations on the revenue budget.

The Chairman ruled that the report be considered as urgent because it is necessary to consider this information at the meeting so that the Council can approve a budget and set a council tax within the statutory timescale, and the information required from the other precepting authorities was not available at the time of despatch.

Councillor Ashton presented the Executive reference and the report. He thanked all staff for a remarkable achievement in getting to this position and expressed particular thanks to Richard Penska, Interim Head of Finance, Mel Watts and the finance team for preparing the budget report. These sentiments were echoed by the other group leaders. In presenting the budget proposals he highlighted some of the key elements as follows:

- (i) £600,000 for additional demand-led pressures for Special Educational Needs transport and mainstream transport pressures.
- (ii) £75,000 increase in the budget for school improvement and early years attainment.
- (iii) £70,000 for the Street Scene contract (Glendale) to fund initiatives which directly benefit communities such as verge clearance, and the provision of litter and dog bins.
- (iv) £10,000 additional funding for the waste contract to provide added resilience.
- (ii) £250,000 additional funding to deliver the car parking review to ensure parking charges are used effectively and reduced where possible.

He stated that North Somerset Council continued to perform well in difficult circumstances and suggested everyone should be pleased with this achievement.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Interim Head of Finance explained the figures within the budget report and confirmed that this was a robust and deliverable budget. He referred to the council tax increase of 2.75% which gave an average Band D council tax bill for council

services in the coming year of £1,378.50. He drew members attention to Appendix 1 of the report which set the context of the budget, referring to the savings of £100 million made since 2010, and outlined key issues and uncertainties looking forward to the next spending review.

In discussing the budget proposals there was general support for the budget increases proposed. During discussion the following issues were raised: in response to comments around poor customer service in respect of the recommissioned Care and Repair service (PCA2) the Interim Head of Finance undertook to look in to this; disappointment was expressed that concerns raised at the January Council meeting in relation to the Council Tax Support Scheme had not been addressed; the need for additional resources for SEND services, affordable housing provision and a Night Shelter in Weston; the cumulative impact of budget cuts and concerns that these cuts impacted disproportionately on the most vulnerable residents thereby increasing the inequality gap; questions were raised in relation to budget priorities, together with the decision to increase Council Tax by 2.75% rather than the maximum 2.99%; the rationale for increasing the contingency budget rather than increasing spending on frontline services; the justification for the 2.99% increase in the police authority precept.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services reminded members that Standing Order 22A required a named vote to be taken on the budget decision. It was noted that recommendation (1) of the Council report superseded recommendation (1) within the Executive reference (Minute no. EXE 68 (1)).

**Motion:** Moved by Councillor Ashton, seconded by Councillor Ap Rees and

**Resolved:**

(1) that the 2019/20 net revenue budget for North Somerset Council services of £153.976million be approved, which forms the Council Tax Requirement of £158.828million, being the value including town and parish council precepts, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;

(2) that a council tax increase of 2.75% for 2019/20 be approved;

(3) that the directorate gross income and expenditure budget allocations as detailed in the body of the report and as set out in Appendix 1 be approved;

(4) that the council tax charges for 2019/20 be approved in accordance with the formal Resolution as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, which provides for an average Band D council tax charge in respect of North Somerset Council services for 2019/20 of £1,377.50, plus special expenses, where such charges apply, giving an overall charge of £1,378.50, as follows:

## **COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION**

### **The Council resolves as follows:**

- 1 It be noted that on 31st January 2019 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for 2019/20:
  - (a) for the whole Council area as **79,371.8** [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")] and,
  - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in the attached Appendix B.
- 2 Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2019/20 (excluding Parish precepts and Special Levies) is **£109,413,853**

- 3 That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2019/20 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

a	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils <i>(Gross Expenditure)</i>	377,523,146
b	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act <i>(Gross Income)</i>	263,257,046
c	Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act). <i>(North Somerset Council Tax Requirement, inc. special expenses, town and parish precepts and special levies)</i>	114,266,100
d	Being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts). <i>(Band D Council Tax for North Somerset Council including an average of special expenses and town and parish precepts)</i>	1,439.63
e	Being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix C) <i>(Area related expenditure, i.e. town and parish precepts and special expenses)</i>	Precepts 4,852,247.41 Spec Exp 79,190.00 4,931,437.41
f	Being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precepts relates. <i>(The Band "D" amount for North Somerset Council excluding "area" related expenditure, i.e. special expenses and town and parish council precepts)</i>	1,377.50
g	The amount of Special Expenses (expressed in Band D)	1.00
h	The total Relevant Basic Amount for North Somerset Council	1,378.50

#### 4 Precepting Authorities

To note that the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area, as shown in the table below

Precepting Authority	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Police & Crime Commissioner	145.21	169.41	193.61	217.81	266.21	314.61	363.02	435.62
Fire Authority	48.99	57.15	65.32	73.48	89.81	106.14	122.47	146.96

- 5 That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table on the following page, as the amounts of Council Tax for 2019/20 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.



- 6 The Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2019/20 is not determined to be excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.

and

(5) that the refreshed Pay Policy for 2019/20 be approved in accordance with the details set out in Appendix 5 of the report.

**Named Vote as required under Standing Order 22A**

**For the Motion (30):**

Elfan Ap Rees, Nigel Ashton, Felicity Baker, Jan Barber, Christopher Blades, Mary Blatchford, Peter Bryant, Peter Burden, Charles Cave, Robert Cleland, Sarah Codling, Peter Crew, Bob Garner, Ann Harley, David Hitchins, Jill Iles, Ruth Jacobs, David Jolley, Reyna Knight, John Ley-Morgan, Richard Nightingale, Jerry O'Brien, David Oyns, David Pasley, Dawn Payne, Lisa Pilgrim, Terry Porter, David Shopland, Kate Stowey, Nick Wilton

**Against the Motion (6):**

Mike Bell, Mark Canniford, Donald Davies, Denise Hunt, Richard Tucker, Deborah Yamanaka

**Abstentions (5)**

James Clayton, Andy Cole, Tom Leimdorfer, Ian Parker, James Tonkin

**COU  
108**

**Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto: Avon Fire Authority (Agenda Item 18 (1))**

Councillor Davies reported on the meeting of the Avon Fire Authority (AFA) held on 13 February 2019 and outlined the main issues discussed as follows: the approval of a 2.99% increase in the precept; the challenges around the impact of reduced levels of business rate retention; uncertainty over future funding. He then responded to questions from members around current public consultations relating to AFA responses to fire alarms given the high number of false alarms attended, and whether resources would be better spent on fire prevention.

**Resolved:** that the report be noted.

**COU  
109**

**Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto: Severnside Sirens Trust (Agenda Item 18 (3))**

Councillor Knight presented the report from the Trust. She referred to an updated booklet on Major Emergency Safety Advice and had copies available for any councillors who would like one.

**Resolved:** that the report be noted.

**COU  
110**

**MetroWest Phase 1 Progress on the Submission of Development Consent Order Application and Associated Approvals (Agenda Item 19)**

Councillor Ap Rees presented the report, making reference to the progress on the Portishead Line.

At the invitation of the Chairman, a representative of the Chief Executive outlined the key elements within the report and the substantial progress being made with the technical

development of the project. He referred to minor amendments to recommendations (1) and (3) as set out in the report, proposing that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in both cases rather than the Leader and the Director of Development and Environment as set out.

In discussing the report members expressed support for the project and referred to the importance of the scheme both for the local area and the region. Councillor Ashton referred to a meeting he was attending on 25 February with Chris Grayling, Secretary of State for Transport and his team, and confirmed the importance of Portishead Line was well recognised and all the necessary works were progressing as planned.

**Motion:** Moved by Councillor Ap Rees, seconded by Councillor Pasley and, unanimously

**Resolved:**

(1) that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader, the Interim Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to finalise the Initial Promotion Agreement (IPA) version 3 with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA);

(2) that the further spend of £11.650M of Local Growth Funding be approved from the already secured project funding, profiled as £4.491 million for 2019/20 and £7.159 million for 2020/21, to complete all technical work feeding into the Full Business Case, including completion of the Development Consent Order process (DCO). This is subject to:

- (a) Agreed allocation from the West of England Committee and subsequent legally binding agreements from West of England Combined Authority (WECA), as the accountable body.
- (b) Approval to submit the DCO by West of England Committee.
- (c) Approval to submit the DCO by North Somerset Full Council;

(3) that authority be delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader and the Interim Head of Finance, in accordance with prior approvals given in November 2017, to enter into land option agreements to progress the strategic land assembly for the scheme. The total estimated cost of the land option agreements including legal costs is up to £300,000; and

(4) that, subject to confirmation by the Business Rates Pooling Board and subsequent approval from the administering body WECA via binding agreement, £15 million of North Somerset Council's Tier 3 business rate funding be allocated to the MetroWest Phase 1 project to reduce the capital funding gap.

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Chairman

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## Appendix 1

**North Somerset Council  
Council Meeting, 19 February 2019  
Question Time (Agenda Item 13)**

**Question 1  
From Councillor Bell**

## **To Councillor Ashton, Leader of the Council**

### **Plans for Retail Offer in Weston-super-Mare**

Councillor Bell asked Councillor Ashton if he could expand on his plans to drive improvements to the retail offer in Weston-super-Mare.

In response Councillor Ashton referred to the work undertaken by the Council's consultants Montagu Evans to encourage retailers in to the Sovereign Centre. He agreed it needed to be more exciting but suggested the shopping centre didn't have the same problems as some other town centres as it offered more than traditional retail, with the seaside and events on offer too. A report was awaited from the consultants and discussions were taking place with those who had expressed an interest.

In a supplementary question Councillor Bell asked whether given the Government's High Street Futures report there had been any reconsideration of the Town Centre BID. Councillor Ashton referred to the action being taken in respect of car parking, with no annual increase in parking charges proposed for the coming year and with an additional £250,000 funding included in the budget to review charges and make improvements where possible.

As a point of information, Councillor Ap Rees stated that he sat on the Town Centre Partnership along with the BID and confirmed there was a good relationship with both.

### **Question 2**

**From Councillor Canniford**

**To Councillor Pasley, Executive Member for Human Resources, Asset Management, Capital Programme, Transformation**

### **Council Tax Bills**

Councillor Canniford referred to the same question he had raised last year, suggesting there was a problem with Council Tax bills with many not being received. Councillor Pasley had previously undertaken to look in to it but he had not received a reply and therefore asked if this had been addressed.

In response Councillor Pasley confirmed he had looked in to it and apologised if he had not replied. He suggested the numbers were small and there were no major issues but agreed to follow up his response to Councillor Canniford in writing.

### **Question 3**

**From Councillor Hunt**

**To Councillor Ashton, Leader of the Council**

### **Code of Conduct and Findings of Standards Sub-Committee**

Councillor Hunt asked Councillor Ashton if he agreed that councillors should not only adhere to Council Codes of Conduct but also abide by the decisions of the North Somerset Standards Sub-Committee. If so, could he ask Councillor Nightingale when he was going to apologise to her as directed by the North Somerset Standards Sub-Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> November so far he had failed to do so.

Councillor Ashton responded that councillors should adhere to the Code of Conduct but was unsure whether this was a question for him.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services clarified that this was not a matter for the Executive but rather for the Planning and Regulatory Committee, as the Standards Sub-Committee was one of its sub-committees.

### **Question 4**

**From Councillor Yamanaka**

**To Councillor Ap Rees, Executive Member for Planning, Highways, Transport, Housing, Economic Development****Review of Speed Limits on A370**

Councillor Yamanaka asked Councillor Ap Rees if he intended to review speed limits on the A370.

Councillor Ap Rees responded he was not aware of any intention to do so.

In a supplementary question Councillor Yamanaka asked whether there was a policy to review speed limits at regular intervals, referring to the increasing amount of traffic on that route. Councillor Ap Rees confirmed officers did review speed limits where there were changes such as increasing accident statistics or new housing developments but not as a matter of course.

**Question 5****From Councillor Tucker****To Councillor Ap Rees, Executive Member for Planning, Highways, Transport, Housing, Economic Development****Parking of Vehicles on Grass Verges**

Councillor Tucker referred to the number of vehicles parked on grass verges, especially on Locking Road, and asked if it was possible to carry out regular checks and enforcement where appropriate.

Councillor Ap Rees responded that depending on the circumstances this was not always a matter for the Council but confirmed the sale of cars was not allowed on the highway. He suggested that Councillor Tucker pass on any evidence he may have of this to officers.