

SOUTH HAMS COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of the **South Hams Council** held on
Thursday, 16th February, 2023 at **10.00 am** at the **Council Chamber - Follaton House**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Austen
Vice Chairman Cllr Taylor

Cllr Abbott	Cllr Baldry
Cllr Bastone	Cllr Brazil
Cllr Brown	Cllr Chown
Cllr Foss	Cllr Hawkins
Cllr Hodgson	Cllr Holway
Cllr Hopwood	Cllr Jackson
Cllr Jones	Cllr Long
Cllr McKay	Cllr O'Callaghan
Cllr Pannell	Cllr Pearce
Cllr Pennington	Cllr Pringle
Cllr Reeve	Cllr Rose
Cllr Rowe	Cllr Smerdon
Cllr Spencer	Cllr Thomas

In attendance:
Councillors:

Cllr Sweett (via Teams)

Officers:
Chief Executive
Director – Place & Enterprise
Monitoring Officer
Democratic Services Manager
Head of Finance
Head of Revenues & Benefits
Senior Specialist – Human Resources

57.

Minutes

57/22

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 15 December 2022 were confirmed as a true and correct record.

58. **Declarations of Interest**

58/22

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of this meeting.

Cllrs P C Smerdon and D Thomas both declared an interest in agenda item 6 '2023/24 Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals' (Minute 59/22 below refers) and specifically recommendation part (xi). Cllr Smerdon declared his interest by virtue of being the appointed South Hams District Council representative on the Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) Outside Body. Cllr Thomas declared his interest by virtue of being a co-opted member of the DNPA. Both Members remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and vote thereon.

Having sought the advice of the Monitoring Officer as to whether or not they should declare an interest in agenda item 9: 'South Devon AONB Management Plan Extension' (Minute 62/22 below refers) by virtue of being the Council's two appointed representatives on the South Devon AONB Outside Body, Cllrs N Hopwood and B Taylor were advised that there was no need to make any such declaration.

59. **2023/24 Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals**

59/22

The Council was presented with a report that outlined the recommendations of the Executive in respect of a series of draft revenue and capital budget proposals for 2023/24 (Minute E.69/22 refers)

In debate, the following points were raised:

- a) A number of Members expressed their support for the Council's approach to the Budget setting process and the collaborative cross-party working that had resulted in the draft Budget proposals that had been presented to this meeting. By way of an example, Members particularly welcomed the fact that the two recommendations that had been generated by the Budget Advisory Committee (relating to Council owned public conveniences and an additional Tree Officer) had been taken forward;
- b) There was widespread disappointment stated amongst Members that an increase in Council Tax was necessary. In addition, there were calls for Central Government to provide increased grant funding to local authorities and for a fairer system of taxation to be employed;
- c) It was highlighted that the proposed increase recommended within the published agenda report represented only the District Council's share of the forthcoming year's Council Tax billing and that increases could also be expected from Devon County Council, the Police and Fire Authorities and local Town and Parish Councils.

In line with statutory requirements, a recorded vote was then undertaken on part (i) of the substantive motion. The voting was recorded as follows:

For the motion (21):- Cllrs Austen, Bastone, Brown, Chown, Foss, Hawkins, Hodgson, Holway, Hopwood, Jones, Long, McKay, Pearce, Pennington, Pringle, Reeve, Rose, Rowe, Smerdon, Spencer and Taylor.

Against the motion (6):- Cllrs Abbott, Baldry, Brazil, O'Callaghan, Pannell and Thomas.

Abstentions (0):

Absent (4): Cllrs Birch, Jackson, Kemp and Sweett

and the vote on part (i) of the motion was therefore declared **CARRIED**.

In line with statutory requirements, a recorded vote was then undertaken on parts (ii) to (xi) of the motion. The voting was recorded as follows:

For the motion (27): Cllrs Abbott, Austen, Baldry, Bastone, Brazil, Brown, Chown, Foss, Hawkins, Hodgson, Holway, Hopwood, Jones, Long, McKay, O'Callaghan, Pannell, Pearce, Pennington, Pringle, Reeve, Rose, Rowe, Smerdon, Spencer, Taylor and Thomas

Against the motion (0):

Abstentions (0):

Absent (4): Cllrs Birch, Jackson, Kemp and Sweett

and the vote on parts (ii) to (xi) of the substantive motion was therefore declared **CARRIED**.

It was then:

RESOLVED

- i) That Council Tax for 2023/24 be increased by £5 (Band D of £185.42 for 2023/24 – an increase equivalent to less than 10 pence per week or £5 per year – equating to a 2.77% increase). This equates to a Council Tax Requirement of £7,407,344;
- ii) That the financial pressures (as shown in Appendix A of the presented agenda report and amounting to £4,107,700) be approved;
- iii) That the net contributions from Earmarked Reserves of (£412,000) as shown in Appendix D of the presented agenda report, including the proposed use of £500,000 of New Homes Bonus funding to fund the 2023/24 Revenue Budget as set out in section 3.23 of the agenda report presented to the Executive meeting of 26 January 2023 and £400,000 from the Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve (as set out in section 3.17 of the published Executive report of 26 January 2023) be approved;
- iv) That the savings/additional income of £2,422,000 (as shown in Appendix A of the presented agenda report) be approved;
- v) That the take up of the 'stepped pension contribution rates' being offered by the actuaries of the Devon Pension Fund, following the

results of the Triennial Pension Revaluation (as set out in section 3.24 of the presented agenda report to the Executive meeting of 26 January 2023) be approved;

- vi) That the Council's total net expenditure for 2023/24 be set at £11,738,067 (as set out in Appendix B of the presented agenda report);
- vii) That the proposed Capital Programme Proposals for 2023/24 of £2,035,000 and the proposed financing of the Capital Programme (as set out in Appendix E of the presented agenda report) be approved
- viii) That Unearmarked Reserves continue to have a minimum level of £1.5 million (as set out in the adopted Medium Term Financial Strategy, Minute CM 52/22(c) refers), but an operating level of a minimum of £2 million;
- ix) That, in line with the requirement of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003, the level of reserves and the assessment of their adequacy and the robustness of budget estimates be noted;
- x) That the setting of fees and charges for the Dartmouth Lower Ferry (applicable for 2023/2024) be delegated to the Director of Place and Enterprise, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Executive Member for Assets and the Section 151 Officer; and
- xi) that £10,700 of New Homes Bonus funding be allocated to the Dartmoor National Park Authority for the delivery of housing growth within its area over the past three years.

60. **Council Tax Discounts and Premiums**

60/22

Consideration was given to a report that made recommendations on the changes to the levying of Council Tax premiums with effect from 1 April 2024 and also provided confirmation of the Council Tax discounts that were already in place.

The report also highlighted the changes contained within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill currently progressing through Parliament which would impact on Council Tax relating to second homes and long-term empty dwellings.

In debate, the proposed increase on Council Tax for second homes was widely welcomed.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That, with effect from 1 April 2023, the following Council Tax discounts be adopted:

- The discount for unoccupied and substantially unfurnished dwellings is 100% for a maximum period of 1 month;
 - The discount for unoccupied and substantially unfurnished dwellings for 1 month to 2 years is zero;
 - The discount for dwellings which are vacant and require major repair work to render them habitable is 50% for a maximum period of 12 months;
 - The discount for unoccupied furnished dwellings (second homes) is zero;
 - An empty homes premium of an additional 100% is levied on dwellings that have remained unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least two years, but less than 5 years;
 - An empty homes premium of an additional 200% is levied on dwellings that have remained unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least five years, but less than 10 years; and
 - An empty homes premium of an additional 300% is levied on dwellings that have remained unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least 10 years.
2. That, subject to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill receiving Royal Assent from 1 April 2024, the current 100% premium for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished will be levied after a period of one year; and
 3. That, subject to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill receiving Royal Assent from 1 April 2024, a premium of 100% will be levied on all dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially furnished (second homes).

61. **Business Rates Relief: 2023/24 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Scheme and 2023 Supporting Small Business Relief**

61/22

The Council considered a report that set out changes to discretionary relief for business rates that had been announced as part of the Autumn Budget 2022.

In discussion, the proposals contained within the presented agenda report were welcomed.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That the Business Rates Relief: 2023/24 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Scheme Policy (at Appendix A of the presented agenda report) be approved; and
2. That the implementation of the 2023 Supporting Small Business Relief scheme be approved.

62. **South Devon AONB Management Plan Extension**

62/22

Consideration was given to a report that sought an extension to the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan, in line with Defra recommendations.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the South Devon AONB Management Plan (2019-2024) be extended by up to 12 months to the end of 2025.

63. **Scheme of Members' Allowances - Review**

63/22

The Council considered a report that set out the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on an updated Scheme of Members' Allowances.

In her introduction, the Leader stated that the timing of the Review had been unfortunate and that it should be a matter for the new Council, post the District Council Elections in May 2023, to decide upon a new Scheme of Allowances and to that end **PROPOSED** an alternative recommendation that read as follows:

*that Council be **RECOMMENDED** that the Remuneration Panel is respectfully asked to agree to defer a decision and to agree to extend the arrangements valid until April 2022 for the present Municipal year 2022-23, and then to commit to reconvene in the summer to carry out an in depth review of all aspects of Member remuneration*

This wording was promptly **SECONDED** and, in the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:

- (a) Whilst accepting that the timing was attributed to the delay in the settlement of the annual national staff pay award, some Members echoed the views of the Leader that, given the proximity to the local Elections, an updated Scheme of Members' Allowances should be a matter for the new Council administration to determine. In contrast, other Members were of the view that the Independent Panel recommendations were reasonable and it would therefore be beneficial for the new Council administration for this meeting to approve its recommendations. Thereafter, it would be a matter for the Panel to again review the Scheme early in the new administration;
- (b) Despite the lack of responses to the Member survey, some Members were of the view that all of the roles that were currently entitled to claim a Special Responsibility Allowance would benefit from a comprehensive review;
- (c) Irrespective of approving the Panel recommendations regarding the Basic Allowance, some Members stated that it was still unlikely to be an incentive in encouraging a vast demographic of society to stand for Council at the upcoming local elections. This was felt to be regrettable and a barrier in helping to increase the diversity of the political composition of the Council;

- (d) Members stated that the workload and time commitment for elected Members had noticeably increased during this Council term and, given the need to be affordable, the Basic Allowance could not be proportionately increased enough to reflect that change.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the Remuneration Panel be respectfully asked to agree to defer a decision and to agree to extend the arrangements valid until April 2022 for the present Municipal year 2022-23, and to commit to reconvene in the summer to carry out an in-depth review of all aspects of Member remuneration.

64. Pay Policy Statement

64/22

In line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, Members considered a report that proposed adoption of the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the Pay Policy for 2022/23 (as set out at Appendix A of the presented agenda report) be approved.

65. Calendar of Meetings 2023/24

65/22

Consideration was given to a report that presented the draft Calendar of Meetings for 2023/24 for adoption.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the draft Calendar of Meetings for 2023/24 (as set out at Appendix A of the presented agenda report) be approved.

66. Reports of Bodies

66/22

That the minutes and recommendations of the undermentioned bodies be received and approved subject to any amendments listed below:-

(a) Salcombe Harbour Board - 14 November 2022

(b) Audit & Governance Committee - 24 November 2022

(c) Development Management Committee - 14 December 2022

- (d) **Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 12 January 2023**
- (e) **Development Management Committee - 18 January 2023**
- (f) **Budget Advisory Committee - 19 January 2023**
- (g) **Executive – 26 January 2023**

E.69/22 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals For 2023/24

It was noted that the Recommendations to Council contained therein had been considered earlier in the meeting at agenda item 6 (Minute 59/22 above refers).

E.71/22 Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023-24 And Other Council Tax Discounts And Premiums

It was noted that parts 5 and 6 of the Recommendation to Council contained therein had been considered earlier in the meeting at agenda item 7 (Minute 60/22 above refers).

For the remaining Recommendations, it was then:

RESOLVED:

2. That the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24 be approved as follows:
 - That no changes be made to Band 1 of the current banded scheme.
 - That Bands 2, 3 and 4 be uplifted by 20% (above current inflation) and, as detailed in paragraph 3.15 of the presented report, to take into account the Cost of Living crisis.
 - That the current range of earnings disregards be replaced with a single £25.00 disregard.
 - That changes be made to the Minimum Income Floor by adjusting the income calculation for self-employed claimants who receive carer's allowance, personal independence payments or disability living allowance.
3. That authority be delegated to the Director of Strategic Finance, in consultation with the Lead Executive Member for Benefits and the Head of Revenues and Benefits, to agree the uprating of working age regulations incorporated into the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme in line with those announced by the Department for Work and Pensions; and
4. That officers be instructed to take immediate steps to apply the £25 Council Tax Support Fund payment to eligible Council Taxpayers, which was announced by the Government on 19 December 2022, and bring forward proposals for a discretionary scheme in late spring 2023.

E.72/22 Housing Crisis - Changes To Financial Assistance And Enforcement Policies

RESOLVED

1. That the existing 2019-2022 Homes Assistance Policy be updated with the revised Better Care Fund Financial Assistance Policy 2022;
2. That the electrical safety standards Civil (Financial) Penalty Policy be approved, implemented and incorporated into the Council's Enforcement Policy, to allow officers to impose fines where necessary to landlords and improve Private Rented Properties; and
3. That the energy efficiency standards Civil (Financial) Penalty Policy, be approved, implemented and incorporated into the Council's enforcement policy to allow officers to impose fines where necessary to landlords and improve Private Rented Properties.

67. **Public Question Time**

67/22

The Chairman informed the Meeting that no Public Questions had been received for consideration at this Meeting.

68. **Questions**

67/22

The Chairman informed the Meeting that no Public Questions had been received for consideration at this Meeting.

69. **Notice of Motion**

69/22

It was noted that three Motions on Notice had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules.

a. From Cllr Hawkins and Cllr Pearce

'With South Hams' close connection with His Majesty's Armed Forces and, in particular, the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines, this Council formally adopts the Armed Forces Covenant. In so doing, the Council reaffirms its commitment to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community.

The Council recognises the contribution that Service Personnel, both regular and reservist, veterans and military families make to our Council, our community and to the country.'

During the ensuing discussion, Members were in full support of the proposed Motion on Notice.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That, with South Hams' close connection with His Majesty's Armed Forces and, in particular, the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines, the

Armed Forces Covenant be formally adopted. In so doing, the Council reaffirms its commitment to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community.

The Council recognises the contribution that Service Personnel, both regular and reservist, veterans and military families make to our Council, our community and to the country.

b. From Cllr Rose and Cllr Hodgson

'Background:

As a planning authority, we are caught between Central Government's whims on how many houses we need to build and profit-driven developers who monopolise the industry. Our hands are further tied by the lack of adequate policy in the NPPF to ensure developers truly meet our needs, socially and ecologically.

Full Council notes that:

Conventional approaches to development often have a detrimental environmental impact globally and locally, significantly contributing to global heating, flooding, pollution, ecological damage, species extinction and deforestation.

Conventional development routinely fails to provide adequately for the needs of our constituents, failing to produce sufficiently affordable housing, produce sufficient quality of housing, provide integrated means of community sustainability and resilience (such as community allotments/orchards, on-site power generation, and flood protection), or integrated support of community regeneration (sufficient space for community sports, games etc.)

Too often, new development reduces the quality of the local environment, where most people live, to the detriment of the whole, instead of meeting our needs, including for better places to live.

Full Council believes that:

Purely profit driven developments lack the necessary incentives and features to rapidly and radically reform development practices and outcomes in line with our ecological and social needs.

Whilst we are statutorily required to meet our development quota, necessitating our continued cooperation with, and support of, conventional developers, we also have a duty to welcome, seek, and support pioneering developers and projects who seek to demonstrate what is possible when ecological and social interest is put above profit within development.

Regenerative development shifts emphasis for land use planning from minimising and mitigating harm to maximising benefits and removing harm. In welcoming, seeking and supporting regenerative development we will be aiding and encouraging essential innovations that can raise the bar for development outcomes. This can seed greater autonomy within communities and provide incentive for conventional developers to keep up with rising expectations and aspirations through working with communities to genuinely meet their ecological and social needs.

Supporting regenerative development reflects the direction of travel of the Devon Carbon Plan and reflects the scale of the crises we face such that all forms of development, including those best suited to rural areas, able to produce the changes we need are supported and progressed, recognising that radical change and action in the way we shape places is needed, as the NPPF already lays out.

Full Council resolves:

- 1) *In addition to the current strategy in the JLP, Council resolves to be supportive of and seek out additional strategies and forms of development able to produce radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and strong uplifts in carbon sequestration, nature recovery and community and individual wellbeing;*
- 2) *Support and progress, where possible, all forms of development that are able to produce the changes that we need to fulfil our social and ecological needs;*
- 3) *Officers will provide information to Members about regenerative development projects that it is already, or becomes, aware of. This information will include details on how the expected/documented outcomes differ from those of conventional developers; and*
- 4) *SHDC will publicly state its support for regenerative development, explaining clearly how regenerative development differs from conventional development through its social media channels and on its website.'*

“Full Council resolves that:

While recognising that planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations suggest otherwise; and that changes to the development plan are subject to a statutory process, without fettering any discretion with regard to the determination of such matters, the Council:

1. *Will be supportive of and seek out additional strategies and forms of development able to produce radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and strong uplifts in carbon sequestration, nature recovery and community and individual wellbeing; and*
2. *Supports and progresses, where possible, all forms of development that are able to produce the changes that we need to fulfil our social and ecological needs*
3. *So as to support Members to be informed about and, where appropriate, engaged with community-led regenerative developments, and in line with existing communications and newsletters, officers will provide information to Members about regenerative development projects that it is already, or becomes, aware of. This information will include details on how **the expected outcomes** differ from those of conventional developers **that can be provided from the regenerative development projects themselves.***
4. *Through its social media channels and on its website, SHDC will publish an information piece about the benefits of regenerative planning for the education of the public*

In his introduction and with the consent of the meeting, the proposer amended the Recommendation to that set out above (changes highlighted in red font).

In the consequent debate, Members were supportive of the proposals, particularly as the amended wording would permit the aims of the Motion to run in parallel with the requirements of the Joint Local Plan.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That, while recognising that planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations suggest otherwise; and that changes to the development plan are subject to a statutory process, without fettering any discretion with regard to the determination of such matters, the Council:

1. Will be supportive of and seek out additional strategies and forms of development able to produce radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and strong uplifts in carbon sequestration, nature recovery and community and individual wellbeing;
2. Supports and progresses, where possible, all forms of development that are able to produce the changes that we need to fulfil our social and ecological needs;
3. So as to support Members to be informed about and, where appropriate, engaged with community-led regenerative developments, and in line with existing communications and newsletters, officers will provide information to Members about regenerative development projects that it is already, or becomes, aware of. This information will include details on how the expected outcomes differ from those of conventional developers that can be provided from the regenerative development projects themselves;
4. Through its social media channels and on its website, SHDC will publish an information piece about the benefits of regenerative planning for the education of the public.

c. From Cllr Rose and Cllr Hodgson

'Background:

(Credit to Cllr Alex Catt – Norwich Council)

It is increasingly recognised that meat and dairy production is a significant contributor to climate breakdown, with the livestock sector accounting for at least 14% of global greenhouse gas emissions (1), as well as being a major contributor to global deforestation (2). The catastrophic effects of climate breakdown mean climate and risk experts predict a world with systemic cascading risks related to food insecurity including food shortages, societal tensions, hunger and malnutrition, unrest and conflict (according to a Chatham House report from 2021), which furthermore predicts a 50% chance of synchronous crop failure in the decade of the

2040s (3). Producing a kilo of beef creates, on average, 12 times more CO₂e than a kilo of tofu or other soya based proteins (4). Meanwhile, producing a litre of dairy milk uses, on average, at least four times as much land as producing a litre of plant milk (5).

As well as a smaller carbon footprint, eating more plant-based foods also reduces the land footprint of our diets and would improve UK food security and self-sufficiency, thereby making our diets more local. As a country, we currently import much more food than we export. In 2021 we had a trade deficit for all dairy products of £1.04 billion (6) and a trade deficit for just beef, pork and lamb of £1.7 billion (7). Only 55% of the world's crop calories feed people directly with 36% going to feed livestock; only a fraction of the calories in feed given to livestock make their way into the meat and milk that we consume which is a huge food waste issue on top of making our food production much more carbon intensive (8). While some people criticise people who follow a plant-based diet for eating imported soy, the vast majority of soy - 77% - goes to feeding livestock, which research has shown is an inefficient use of resources. (9) East Anglia is predominantly arable farming and there are many local predominantly plant-based food businesses we could support.

Henry Dimbleby, in the Government commissioned National Food Strategy concluded that a 30% reduction in meat consumption is necessary for future food security. The National Food Strategy also states that obesity alone accounts for 8% of annual health spend in the UK, or £18bn (10)(11). Savings to the NHS will come from healthier, plant-based diets. Sustain estimates that meat over-consumption costs the NHS directly £1.2 billion, and 45,000 deaths annually (11). Over 40% of Britons are trying to reduce their meat consumption and 14% already follow a flexitarian diet, but plant-based food options are not consistently available at all events or food venues (12). Other countries have taken a stance, for example in Portugal it is a legal requirement for all public catering – including local authority facilities – to provide plant-based food options, and other local authorities such as Oxfordshire County Council and Cambridge City Council have decided to promote plant-based food via serving a fully plant-based menu at Council meetings and events.

Locally, the University of Cambridge Catering Service reduced food-related greenhouse gas emissions by a third via replacing beef and lamb with plant-based products (13).

In September 2021, Norwich City Council formally adopted the Glasgow Declaration on Food and Climate which committed the council to try and reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with food. Norwich City Council can build on its achievements to date and lead by example to promote and normalise consumption of plant-based food, recognising that plant-based meals are frequently nutritious and low cost food options. This is in line with its vision for Norwich City to be net-zero carbon by 2045.

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/sep/07/20-meat-and-dairy-firms-emit-more-greenhouse-gas-than-germany-britain-or-france>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/sep/04/global-food-producers-climate-crisis>
3. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/09/climate-change-risk-assessment-2021/03-direct-climate-impacts>
4. <https://josephpoore.com/Science%20360%206392%20987%20-%20Accepted%20Manuscript.pdf>

5. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301890948_Systematic_review_of_greenhouse_gas_emissions_for_different_fresh_food_categories
6. <https://ahdb.org.uk/dairy/uk-dairy-trade-balance>
7. <https://ahdb.org.uk/agri-market-outlook>
8. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/feeding-9-billion/>
9. <https://ourworldindata.org/soy> 10. <https://inews.co.uk/news/national-food-strategy-cut-meat-consumption30-per-cent-henry-dimbleby-food-tsar-1104517#:~:text=July%2015%2C%202021%2012%3A01%20am%20%28Udated%207%3A49%20am%29,latest%20instalment%20of%20the%20country%E2%80%99s%20National%20Food%20Strategy>
11. National Food Strategy (published July 2021) - <https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/07/National-Food-Strategy-Recommendations-in-Full.pdf>
12. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-58831636>
- 13- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-49637723>

Motion:

Council therefore resolves to:

- 1) *Follow the lead of many other councils around the country in ensuring that food and drink provided at all meetings and events hosted by SHDC be plant-based, and where possible, provided by a local caterer.*
- 2) *After engaging with a wide variety of catering options (including consideration of social enterprises), use SHDC events and online platforms to promote and showcase environmentally friendly plant-based food and drink options, alongside displayed information about the climate and health benefits and relative cost of different protein/food sources and educating people about how to achieve a balance plant-based diet.*
- 3) *Secure through a contract specification when re-tendering for suppliers that environmentally friendly, locally sourced plant-based food and drink options are to be available at providers on SHDC open spaces (where reasonably possible). Similarly when possible, via future contract specification when re-tendering for suppliers for Council run cafes, kiosks or leisure centres, specify that vegetable/legume rich plant-based options are listed prominently on menus, above non plant-based options.*
- 4) *Continue to use council communications channels to promote sustainable (and affordable) food and drink practices throughout the district, including details of the climate and health benefits of plant-based food and drinks and educating people on the best ways to achieve a balance plant-based diet.*
- 5) *Write to the government supporting UK endorsement of the Plant Based Treaty and invite all Party Group Leaders to sign the letter.'*

In his introduction, the proposer made clear that the Motion was intended to reaffirm what the Council was already doing and was complementary to the Council's declared Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) Members felt that an element of personal choice was paramount and that numerous food and beverage options should be available at all Council premises, meetings and events;
- b) With regard to sustainability, a Member highlighted that a 'plant good, meat bad' argument was far too simplistic and cited the difference in water consumption that was required to produce some vegetables and nuts as compared to some dairy products. Notwithstanding this point, a Member did respond that a reduction in global meat consumption would be beneficial to the environment;
- c) An amendment was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** that read as follows:

'That South Hams District Council will continue to ensure that food and drink provided at all meetings and events hosted by the Council will, whenever possible, be locally sourced and provided by a local caterer. The caterer to ensure that plant based options are always available.'

This wording was subsequently accepted by the proposer and seconder of the original motion and therefore became the substantive motion.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That South Hams District Council will continue to ensure that food and drink provided at all meetings and events hosted by the Council will, whenever possible, be locally sourced and provided by a local caterer. The caterer to ensure that plant based options are always available.

The Meeting concluded at 12.40 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
