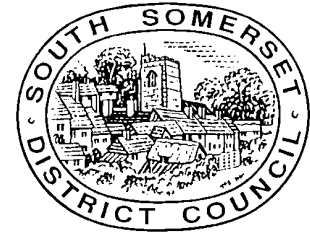


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Scrutiny Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Tuesday 31st May 2016

10.00 am

**Main Committee Room
Council Offices
Brympton Way
Yeovil
BA20 2HT**

(disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue)



Members listed on the following page are requested to attend the meeting.

The public and press are welcome to attend.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, **Becky Sanders, Democratic Services Officer 01935 462596**, website: www.southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Friday 20 May 2016.

Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)

This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Scrutiny Committee Membership

The following members are requested to attend the meeting:

Chairman: Sue Steele
Vice-chairmen: Dave Bulmer and John Clark

Jason Baker
Mike Beech
Val Keitch
Tony Lock

Sue Osborne
Tiffany Osborne
David Recardo
Garry Shortland

Rob Stickland
Martin Wale
One vacancy

Information for the Public

What is Scrutiny?

The Local Government Act 2000 requires all councils in England and Wales to introduce new political structures which provide a clear role for the Council, the Executive and non-executive councillors.

One of the key roles for non-executive councillors is to undertake an overview and scrutiny role for the council. In this Council the overview and scrutiny role involves reviewing and developing, scrutinising organisations external to the council and holding the executive to account

Scrutiny also has an important role to play in organisational performance management.

The Scrutiny Committee is made up of 14 non-executive members and meets monthly to consider items where executive decisions need to be reviewed before or after their implementation, and to commission reviews of policy or other public interest.

Members of the public are able to:

- attend meetings of the Scrutiny Committee except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- speak at Scrutiny Committee meetings; and
- see agenda reports.

Meetings of the Scrutiny Committee are held monthly on the Tuesday prior to meetings of the District Executive at 10.00am in the Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

Agendas and minutes of these meetings are published on the Council's website www.southsomerset.gov.uk.

The Council's Constitution is also on the website and available for inspection in council offices.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the agenda co-ordinator named on the front page.

South Somerset District Council – Council Aims

South Somerset will be a confident, resilient and flexible organisation, protecting and improving core services, delivering public priorities and acting in the best long-term interests of the district. We will:

- Protect core services to the public by reducing costs and seeking income generation.
- Increase the focus on Jobs and Economic Development.
- Protect and enhance the quality of our environment.
- Enable housing to meet all needs.
- Improve health and reduce health inequalities.

Recording and photography at council meetings

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

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Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 31 May 2016

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 May 2016.

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (adopted July 2012), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the Agenda for this meeting. A DPI is defined in The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 1464) and Appendix 3 of the Council's Code of Conduct. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 2.8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 2.9. In the interests of complete transparency, Members of the County Council, who are not also members of this committee, are encouraged to declare any interests they may have in any matters being discussed even though they may not be under any obligation to do so under any relevant code of conduct.

4. Public question time

5. Issues arising from previous meetings

This is an opportunity for Members to question the progress on issues arising from previous meetings. However, this does not allow for the re-opening of a debate on any item not forming part of this agenda.

6. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

7. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 12 May 2016
(Page 13)

8. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 2 June 2016 (Page 14)

9. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Page 15)

10. Update on matters of interest (Page 16)

11. Scrutiny Work Programme (Page 17)

12. Date of next meeting (Page 18)

Agenda Item 1

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held at the **Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT on Tuesday 10 May 2016.**

(10.00 am - 12.30 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Jason Baker	Tony Lock
Mike Beech	Sue Osborne
Dave Bulmer	Tiffany Osborne
John Clark	David Recardo
Tim Inglefield	Garry Shortland
Val Keitch	Rob Stickland

Also Present:

Henry Hobhouse	Jo Roundell Greene
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Officers

Rina Singh	Interim Chief Executive
Martin Woods	Assistant Director (Economy)
David Julian	Economic Development Manager
Jo Morgan	Equalities Officer
Gary Russ	Procurement and Risk Manager
Paul Wheatley	Principal Spatial Planner
Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager
Emily McGuinness	Scrutiny Manager

145. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

146. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clare Aparicio Paul, Gye Dibben and Martin Wale. Councillor Mike Beech attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor Martin Wale and Councillor Tim Inglefield as substitute for Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul.

147. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillors Tony Lock, David Recardo and Rob Stickland each declared a personal interest for item 14 on the District Executive agenda – Provision and Maintenance of Bus Shelters, as they are also members of Yeovil Town Council.

148. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of public at the meeting.

149. Issues arising from previous meetings (Agenda Item 5)

Councillor Sue Steele explained the Rural Broadband report that had been scheduled to go before District Executive later in the week was now going direct to Full Council. As this had been a matter that the committee were keen to monitor and be involved with she had requested the Assistant Director (Economy) and the lead officer for the report to attend this Scrutiny Committee meeting to provide an update and talk through the report under item 10 – Matters of Interest.

150. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

Councillor Sue Steele advised that she is part of the Transformation Board as an individual councillor not in her capacity as Scrutiny Chair and unless she has specifically consulted the Scrutiny Committee on an issue, all views expressed will be her own. It was agreed she will provide updates at each committee meeting regarding the work of the Transformation Board.

Councillor Dave Bulmer - Vice Chairman added that he is on the Income Generation Board and will also provide updates.

Councillor John Clark – Vice Chairman confirmed he is also on the Transformation Board.

151. Equality Objectives Report (Agenda Item 7)

The Assistant Director (Economy) provided a general overview of the Equalities Objectives Action Plan and highlighted the improvement in the decision making process with the introduction of the Equalities Impact Analysis (EQA).

The Equalities Officer gave examples where having conducted a full EQA has enabled SSDC to demonstrate the positive work it does to assess and evaluate impact for residents and therefore make good decisions on behalf of the South Somerset Community. She reminded members that as SSDC's decision making structures evolve with the inclusion of various Boards, some of which are decision making it is essential that they give 'due regard' to equality implications with all decisions.

In response to members' questions, the following information was provided;

- There should always be at least a paragraph in every decision making report with regard to equality and diversity implications otherwise a full EQA should be completed detailing the impact and where possible the mitigation that will be introduced.
- An update will be included in the Action Plan when it is considered by District Executive on the progress on Action 3.01 – We will work in partnership through attendance at the Independent Advisory Group, Strategic Partnership Against Hate Crime and Hate Crimes Conferences.

152. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 7 April 2016 (Agenda Item 8)

Members noted the update given by the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee.

153. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 12 May 2016 (Agenda Item 9)

The Scrutiny Committee considered the reports contained in the District Executive Agenda for the 12 May 2016 and made the following comments:

Report from Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (Agenda item 6)

- Members noted the report.

Intelligent Enforcement Proposal for Car Parks (Agenda item 7)

- Members requested that any potential SMS charges are made very clear in all communications – especially those relating to receiving confirmation text messages.

Community Infrastructure Levy – Draft Charging Schedule (Agenda item 8)

- Members noted the modifications to the scheme as noted in the report and that the viability of the proposed levy would be thoroughly assessed by the Independent Examiner.
- Members were pleased to note that the charging schedule will be reviewed in 2-3 years to take account of market changes.

Monthly News Snapshot (Agenda item 9)

- Members noted the report.

District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda item 10)

- Members noted that at the last Full Council meeting it was agreed that monthly updates would be submitted to District Executive outlining the progress in the Chief Executive Officer recruitment process – and questioned why this has not been factored into the Forward Plan and no update has been included in this agenda.
- Members noted that on occasion significant reports (such as the Superfast Broadband, Strategic Alliance, Management Arrangements) are going straight to Council and so are not included in the Forward Plan. Scrutiny Committee agreed to request that reports that are destined to go straight to Full Council are incorporated into the District Executive Forward Plan or that a Forward Plan for Council reports is created to enable Scrutiny committee to effectively plan their work programme and fulfil their function of holding the Executive to account

- Scrutiny Committee agreed to request that District Executive give some thought to how they will keep Scrutiny up-to-date and involved with work and decisions of the various themed boards. To enable effective Scrutiny, the committee request at least monthly updates.

CONFIDENTIAL – Exclusion of the Press and Public

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the Committee resolved that the press and public be excluded from the following items in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, i.e. “Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Restricted Covenant Removal – Dunster House, Castle Cary (Confidential) (Agenda item 13)

- No comments

The Provision and Maintenance of Bus Shelters in the Yeovil Area (Confidential) (Agenda item 14)

- Members supported the recommendations as the best solution at this current time.

154. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Agenda Item 10)

Members were updated as follows on the progress of the Task and Finish Groups currently underway:

Council Tax Reduction Review 2017

The first meeting of this Group has been held to agree the review parameters – it would be beneficial to increase the membership of this group to ensure a cross section of views and experiences are fed into the review. If any member wishes to join the group please contact either of the Scrutiny Managers.

Discretionary Housing Payments

This group was due have an initial meeting on 13th May where they planned to set the review Terms of Reference and scope.

Consent to Dispose of Housing Stock / Local Connections Allocation Policy

These two Task and Finish Groups have combined for the purpose of meeting with senior officers from South Somerset’s 5 key Housing Association Partners. This evidence gathering session was scheduled for 11th May and has been designed as an opportunity for members to meet directly with the Housing Providers and discuss the various issues associated with this topic.

NNDR

NNDR discretionary relief policy review – the changes from the revised policy have taken affect from 1st of April, this has resulted in some more feedback from ratepayers, the Task and Finish group will review this and changes in legislation regarding mandatory

relief to ensure the policy still achieves what it set out to do and that the impact of the changes to mandatory relief are taken into account.

Community Council for Somerset

The Scrutiny Manager explained that Members had previously agreed to establish a Task and Finish group to look at the roles and responsibilities of the Community Council for Somerset. The ambition was agreed to establish how best the two organisations can work together to achieve more for the SSDC Community and address any areas of potential duplication.

Members agreed with the current number of reviews this item of work could be started with an invitation to Community Council for Somerset attending Scrutiny Committee to provide an overview of the organisation.

155. Update on matters of interest (Agenda Item 11)

Scrutiny Comments on Superfast Broadband Extension Programme – Council 19th May 2016

The Assistant Director (Economy) gave an overview of the background and history to this report and explained that Cllr Ric Pallister felt it was appropriate that all members should be involved with this decision and that the report should go directly to Full Council.

Members raised the following questions, views and observations:

- Scrutiny members acknowledged that this a difficult decision – the provision of Superfast Broadband is an acknowledged priority of this Council and the only viable vehicle would appear to be through the Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) Proposal.
- Members are concerned CDS are unable to provide a mechanism to enable members to track where the money has been spent/monitor the return on a significant investment of over £640k, this is a concern.
- Members noted that Devon County Council was contributing on behalf of the Devon District authorities – and therefore also underwriting the risk on their behalf.
- Members accepted that the officers had attempted to address the conditions identified by members when this £640k was agreed in principle, but had not been able to secure conclusive confirmation that business premises would be a priority or that SSDC funds would be spent within South Somerset.
- It is not ideal that prior to committing this funding , SSDC is unable to ascertain what the level of coverage will be in South Somerset at the conclusion of Phase 1 of the project, the target of which was to have 90% coverage across the country – The Superfast Extension Programme is to take the average from 90 to 95% coverage.
- Scrutiny Committee Members would like confirmation regarding the match funding, If we do not agree to contribute towards the Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) Superfast (broadband) Extension Programme (SEP).

- It would seem that there is no viable 'Plan B' at this stage, if we looked to go it alone, we would be excluded from the CDS programme due to double funding and state aid rules.
 - Members accepted that there would be no more information forthcoming and that the information currently available would have to suffice as the basis on which to make a decision.
 - Scrutiny members discussed the risk of taking the decision and of not being able to clearly demonstrate what the investment had delivered versus the risk to South Somerset residents of not investing the money and therefore potentially threatening future broadband provision in 5% of the less commercially viable parts of the district.
 - Members noted that there are a number of issues where the Broadband provision has been made available to an area/the exchange box. Due to it being the individual's responsibility and therefore cost to have the fibre cables laid to their property or business premises the perception is the provision has not been made available, some costings are as high as £10,000 for the properties to be connected.
-

156. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 12)

Members agreed in place of a report coming forward in June regarding the role of the Scrutiny Manager, to have a brief training session with an external Scrutiny specialist, to be arranged in the next couple of months.

157. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 13)

Members noted the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on 31 May 2016, in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way.

.....
Chairman

Agenda Item 7

Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 12 May 2016

The Chairman will update members on the issues raised by Scrutiny members at the District Executive meeting held on 12 May 2016.

The draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 12 May 2016 have been circulated with the District Executive agenda.

Agenda Item 8

Reports to be considered by District Executive on 2 June 2016

Lead Officer: Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager
Contact Details: emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462566

Scrutiny Committee members will receive a copy of the District Executive agenda containing the reports to be considered at the meeting on 2 June 2016.

Members are asked to read the reports and bring any concerns/issues from the reports to be discussed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 31 May 2016.

The Chairman will take forward any views raised by Scrutiny members to the District Executive meeting on 2 June 2016.

Please note:

The Press and Public will be excluded from the meeting when a report or appendix on the District Executive agenda has been classed as confidential, Scrutiny Committee will consider this in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under paragraph 3 (or for any other reason as stated in the District Executive agenda):

“Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).”

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption from the Access to Information Rules outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Agenda Item 9

Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews

The Task and Finish Review Chairs or Scrutiny Manager will give a brief verbal update on progress made.

Current Task & Finish Reviews

- Homefinder Somerset allocations policy
 - Consent for disposal of housing stock
 - Discretionary Housing Payments
 - Council Tax Reduction – review 2016/17
-

Agenda Item 10

Update on matters of interest

Lead Officers: *Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager*

Contact Details: *emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462566*

Action Required

That members of the Scrutiny Committee note the verbal updates as presented by the Scrutiny Manager.

Purpose of Report

This report is submitted for information to update members of the committee on any recent information regarding matters of interest to the Scrutiny Committee, and for the Scrutiny Manager to verbally update members on any ongoing matters.

Scrutiny Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Budget	Background/Description	Lead Officer/ Lead Member
TBC	Review of Economic Development Strategy	✓		This Strategy is due for review and Scrutiny members have previously been involved in the review and development of this Policy. The Lead Officer has agreed that Scrutiny involvement will be factored in to the review process and we will be kept informed regarding the most appropriate point for effective Scrutiny engagement.	David Julian / Cllr Jo Roundell Greene.
TBC	Review of Performance Indicators	✓		Officers previously indicated to the Scrutiny Committee that work was planned to review the current suite of performance indicators. This work is dependent on the revision of the Council Plan and assurance has been given that provision will be made for effective Scrutiny engagement in this process.	Andrew Gillespie Charlotte Jones Cllr Ric Pallister

The Somerset Waste Board and Somerset Waste Partnership Forward Plan of key decisions can be viewed at:
<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/cabinet-forward-plan/>

Current Task & Finish Reviews

Date Commenced	Title	Members
January 2016	Consent for disposal of housing stock	Cllr Sue Steele (Chair) Cllrs Jason Baker, Val Keitch and Sue Osborne
25 Feb 2016.	Homefinder Somerset Allocations Policy	Sue Steele, John Clark, Val Keitch, Jason Baker, Dave Bulmer, Sue Osborne, Nick Colbert, Gina Seaton
29 th April	CTR Review 2016/17	Sue Steele, Sue Osbourne, David Norris, Carol Goodall
13 th May 2016	Discretionary Housing Payment Policy (DHP)	TBC – to be commenced only upon completion of the Journey of Exploration Task and Finish.
June 2016	Review of Street Trading Policy	Requested by Service Manager to look at reviewing current Street Trading Policy with a view to producing a report for November 2016 Council.

Agenda Item 12

Date of next meeting

Members are requested to note that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held on Tuesday 5 July 2016 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.
