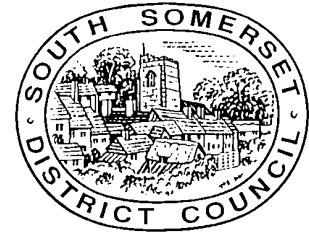


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Scrutiny Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Tuesday 2nd August 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 Monday 25 July 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
Neil Bloomfield
Amanda Broom

Val Keitch
Tony Lock
Sue Osborne
Tiffany Osborne

Garry Shortland
Rob Stickland
Martin Wale

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 2 August 2016

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes (Pages 7 - 13)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 July 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. Response to Scrutiny Questions to the Leader (Page 14)

8. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 7 July 2016
(Page 15)

9. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 4 August 2016 (Page 16)

10. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Page 17)

11. Update on matters of interest (Page 18)

12. Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 19 - 20)

13. Date of next meeting (Page 21)

Agenda Item 1

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held at the on **Tuesday 5 July 2016**.

(10.00 am - 12.10 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Jason Baker	Sue Osborne
Mike Beech	Tiffany Osborne
Dave Bulmer	Garry Shortland
John Clark	Rob Stickland
Val Keitch	Martin Wales

Also Present:

Jo Roundell Greene Angie Singleton

Officers

Ian Clarke	Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services)
Donna Parham	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)
Paul Wheatley	Principal Spatial Planner
Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager

13. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2016 were amended to show Cllr Amanda Broom was present not Cllr David Recardo, and then approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tony Lock and Amanda Broom.

15. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

16. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no questions raised by members of public at the meeting.

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

There were no issues raised from previous meetings.

18. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman informed the committee, that as a member of the Transformation Board, she had attended a Transformation Programme - technology platform – awareness event at the Innovation Centre. The event was for members to see presentations from suppliers showing the technology and solutions they provide that could support the future model - Agilisys, Verint, IEP (Intelligent Enterprise Solutions), Civica and IBM Optevia.

The next transformation board meeting is tomorrow where they will be making decisions with regard to procurement.

The Vice Chairman with the support of the Deputy Leader updated the committee on the work of the Strategic Alliance, explaining work was progressing on work streams and they had been learning from Sedgemoor with regard to lettings.

19. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 2 June 2016 (Agenda Item 7)

Members noted the update given by the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee this included a reminder regarding the forthcoming presentation and workshops on:

- Informing the forthcoming Economic Development Strategy 2016 - 2020 Economic Development.
- Transformation with consultants Ignite

20. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 7 July 2016 (Agenda Item 8)

The Scrutiny Committee considered the reports contained in the District Executive Agenda for the 7 July 2016 and made the following comments:

Five-year Housing Land Supply Update (agenda item 7)

The Principal Spatial Planner and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning (Place Making) introduced the report and raised the following points during discussion and in response to member questions:

- SSDC can currently demonstrate 4 years and two months housing land supply.
- SSDC is not unique in facing this challenge, a recent Savills report highlights approximately 50% of other Councils across the country are also not able to deliver a 5 year housing supply.
- There are implications to not having a five-year housing land supply, but it does not mean that the Council has to give an “automatic” approval to all schemes, the Council’s starting point is still the Local Plan, and if the scheme is a poor scheme that creates unacceptable impacts then it can still be refused.
- Ultimately the issue is affected by poor delivery against targets over the last 10/11 years, since 2006, which includes a period of major recession and lack of activity in the construction sector.
- The Council’s ability to set out a future supply of sites for housing remains healthy and has been fairly consistent – it is the fact that delivery figures (number of homes built each year) is falling behind target and makes the overall calculation more difficult..

- The delivery is not coming forward on some of the larger sites as quickly as expected.
- There are some complicated sites (mixed use, both housing and employment land and requiring substantial infrastructure) which are taking longer to deliver than had been expected.
- The solution is unlikely to be reached by reducing the number of homes that are required to be built in South Somerset, as population is growing, and so the housing requirement is likely to stay similar to what it is now. The forthcoming Strategic Housing Market Assessment will be publicised soon, and is likely to show a similar housing requirements figure.
- It's not just about giving the permissions, developers will only build where they are confident they can sell, and so there is an issue about market capacity. .
- To help larger sites come forward SSDC may need to consider underwriting some of the risks or infrastructure costs.
- CIL is unlikely to have an impact on sites coming forward.
- A planning Case Officer will always consider the policies relating to housing and the local plan, the context and circumstances of the site, the locality and the housing delivery in the local area. Although you cannot ignore SSDC has less than five years supply. In looking at future housing requirement figures there may be the opportunity to factor in issues such as the local wage economy.

Approval of the Somerset District Authorities Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy 2015-2020 and the environmental Protection Enforcement Policy 2015-2020 (Agenda item 8)

Members supported the recommendations.

2015/16 Revenue Budget Outturn Report (Agenda item 9)

The Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) introduced the report. She raised the following points:

- An additional £1.9 million Council Tax collected this year compared to the previous year and £1.476 million collected of previous year's arrears.
- An additional £0.7 million Business Rates collected this year compared to the previous year and £2.56 million collected of previous year's arrears.
- The successful appeals for Yeovilton and the Doctors Surgeries have had an impact on business rates but there is money in reserves in readiness for this.

Members were concerned regarding the areas shown in the report where income was less than expected. Donna Parham explained the shortfall against the Crematorium was due to spending on improvements. She confirmed a report will be coming forward with regard to advertising on the web and the Brympton Way canteen for members to make a decision.

2015/16 Capital Budget Outturn Report (Agenda item 10)

Members supported the recommendations

Key4Life – At Risk Preventative Programme in Somerset (Agenda item 11)

During discussion members raised the following points:

- Is funding also being sought from the Police and Crime commissioner for this project?

- There are many organisations (estimated over 30) who work in a similar role to this organisation helping offenders in this area.
- There is estimated to only be 1 organisation who works to support victims of crime in this area.
- It may be beneficial for additional research to be undertaken with regard to this project.

Annual Review of SSDC Partnerships (Agenda item 12)

Members discussed the report and requested:

- A brief update in terms of review and performance of the Market Towns Investment Group and the Safer Somerset Partnership.
- Clarification of what the removal of the register could mean in real terms? Members were specifically concerned re the potential removal of the Strategic Partnership against Hate Crime, given the current reports of the increase of this behaviour.

Community Right to Bid Quarterly Update Report (Agenda item 13)

Scrutiny Committee considered the report and commented (based on experiences in their wards) that some communities are not giving appropriate consideration to the impact and implications of registering an asset on the list.

21. Scrutiny Committee Report - Request For Further Information On Newly Created Boards (Agenda Item 9)

The Chairman introduced the report and made reference to the previous meeting when members agreed to request a report.

During discussion members sought clarification of the decision making process for each of the boards from the Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and the Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services).

The committee raised the following points/questions:

- The Income Generation board has no delegated powers, all decisions regarding expenditure for income generation will go to District Executive. District Executive can utilise up to 5% of Unallocated Capital Receipts (currently up to £900,000 per annum), and if a single element exceeds £900,000 the decision will be taken by Full Council.
- Transformation Board has delegated powers to spend up to the amount that full Council allocated to the project.
- Donna Parham Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) is on the Transformation Board and it is part of her role to ensure monies are spent in accordance with planned expenditure.
- The actions of the Transformation Board will be recorded at each meeting and presented to members quarterly.
- Transformation Board will have no pre-decision Scrutiny. Can the meeting timetable be altered to enable this?
- There is no 'call-in' provision for decisions taken by the Transformation Board.
- Having Scrutiny Committee members on the Transformation Board doesn't preclude Scrutiny of Transformation.

- The decision of full council to proceed with transformation was on the basis of the report presented to it and the objectives set out within. It is a very important project and the decision did not mean that members would not be allowed to track progress against those objectives.
- Should non-executive members be on the transformation board if it is decision making?
- Are Councillors Sue Steele and John Clark going to have conflicts of interest being on both the Transformation Board and Scrutiny Committee?
- Can agendas and reports be made available to all – perhaps use ModGov.
- Can all members attend all board meetings to observe? Just like committee meetings.
- If I am on a board, am I there in a Scrutiny capacity? If I have to bring information back how do I go about reporting confidential information?
- The main purpose of Transformation is to save money, this needs to be clear in the Vision of the Transformation Board terms of reference. A specific figure should be included as detailed in the Business Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan.

Members agreed a document detailing the comments and concerns should be shared with the Leader of Council to ensure the discussions at August Scrutiny Committee are informed.

22. Rural District Council Network - Scrutiny of Rural Access to Health. (Agenda Item 10)

Members agreed to participate; no additional questions were suggested at the meeting.

It was agreed an invitation to participate should be sent to all members.

23. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Agenda Item 11)

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

Council Tax Reduction Review 2017

The Scrutiny Manager explained this Task and Finish group are due to meet again on 14th July. The group intend to consider all the evidence to date, including impact assessments and to make decisions regarding:

- What should be included in the consultation?
- Who should be consulted?
- How the consultation should be promoted?
- What work if any needs to be carried out with external organisations to encourage continual feedback?

Discretionary Housing Payments

This Scrutiny Manager explained the next meeting is scheduled for 15th July and will be attended by representatives from Shelter and Citizen's Advice to advise members on various sensitive issues relating to this review.

Consent to Dispose of Housing Stock / Local Connections Allocation Policy

The Scrutiny Manager explained a further meeting is arranged for 28th July to assess the evidence gathered so far and to consider SSDC's rural lettings policy.

NNDR

NNDR discretionary relief policy review – the changes from the revised policy have taken effect 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. This group has yet to be formed, invitations to all members will go out shortly when officer time permits.

24. Update on matters of interest (Agenda Item 12)

The Leader of Council submitted a request to establish a Task and Finish group to consider elements of the proposals to establish a combined authority should members agree at Full Council to make an 'in principle' decision to create a Combined Authority.

The suggestion was that the Task and Finish group would work to address the concerns raised by members and to provide clarity and reassurance prior to any formal commitments being made to allow members to support the 'in principle' decision in July, thus ensuring SSDC remains an active participant in the ongoing Devolution discussions whilst providing capacity to thoroughly investigate the pertinent issues.

The Committee agreed they would be happy to establish a Task and Finish group; however this would be to consider suggestions and evidence provided by an officer. This is due to the committee members and Scrutiny Managers already having a substantial workload.

Cllr Jon Clark volunteered to participate in the Task and Finish group.

25. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 13)

Members discussed that District Executive had agreed to defer the review of Performance Monitoring until after Transformation and agreed they would like opportunity in the work programme to consider:

- If the existing measures are still relevant and providing the specific detail that members feel they need, is it fit for purpose
- If amendments should be made now a new Council Plan has been adopted
- If different measures should be reported to better benchmark and measure the impact of the forthcoming changes as a result of transformation

The Scrutiny Manager informed the committee that Keeley Rudd, Chief Executive of Community Council for Somerset (CCS), had agreed to meet with members to discuss

how SSDC and CCS could work more closely together to achieve more for the community. She was awaiting a response regarding potential meeting dates.

26. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 14)

Members noted the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on 2 August 2016, in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way.

.....
Chairman

Agenda Item 7

Response to Scrutiny Questions to the Leader

At Scrutiny Committee on 5 July 2016, members identified a number of questions and concerns to be addressed to the Leader, regarding further information on the newly created Boards.

The Leader is preparing a response to these points which will be circulated in advance of the Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Agenda Item 8

Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 7 July 2016

The Chairman will update members on the issues raised by Scrutiny members at the District Executive meeting held on 7 July 2016.

The draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 7 July 2016 have been circulated with the District Executive agenda.

Agenda Item 9

Reports to be considered by District Executive on 4 August 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 4 August 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 2 August 2016.

The Chairman will take forward any views raised by Scrutiny members to the District Executive meeting on 4 August 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 10

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

- Council Tax Reduction Review 2017
- Discretionary Housing Payments
- Consent to Dispose of Housing Stock / Local Connections Allocation Policy
- NNDR (Business Rates)

Agenda Item 11

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	How the Community Council for Somerset and South Somerset District Council could work better together to achieve more and better outcomes for the community.			Committee members have invited Community Council for Somerset to work with them to identify areas where closer working could be of benefit to each organisation.	
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 April 2016	CTR Review 2016/17	Sue Steele, Sue Osborne, Amanda Broom, Rob Stickland, David Norris, Carol Goodall
13 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.
TBC	NNDR discretionary relief policy review –	The changes from the revised policy have taken affect from 1 st 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.
8 August 2016	How the Community Council for Somerset and South Somerset District Council could work better together to achieve more and better outcomes for the community.	Committee members have invited Community Council for Somerset to work with them to identify areas where closer working could be of benefit to each organisation.
TBC Summer 2016	Rural District Council Network – Scrutiny of Rural Access to Health joint review with other Somerset District Councils	
TBC	Review of elements and proposals to establish a combined authority should members agree at Full Council to make an 'in principle' decision to create a Combined Authority.	

Agenda Item 13

Date of next meeting

Members are requested to note that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held on Tuesday 30 August at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.
