

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **District Executive** held at the **Council Chamber, Brympton Way, YEOVIL, Somerset BA20 2HT on Thursday 2 November 2017.**

(9.30 am - 11.00 am)

Present:

Councillor Ric Pallister (Chairman)

Peter Gubbins	Peter Seib
Val Keitch	Angie Singleton
Jo Roundell Greene	Nick Weeks
Sylvia Seal	Derek Yeomans

Also Present:

Nick Colbert	Sue Steele
Tony Lock	

Officers

Ian Clarke	Director (Support Services)
Netta Meadows	Director (Strategy & Commissioning)
Clare Pestell	Director (Commercial Services & Income Generation)
Martin Woods	Director (Service Delivery)
Catherine Hood	Finance Manager
Helen Rutter	Communities Lead
David Crisfield	Third Sector and Equalities Co-ordinator
Katherine Nolan	Manager, SPARK Somerset
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Manager

Note: All decisions were approved without dissent unless shown otherwise.

65. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the District Executive meeting held on 5th October 2017, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

66. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Henry Hobhouse and Alex Parmley, Chief Executive.

67. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest made.

68. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of the public present.

69. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman reported that Somerset County Council had reacted swiftly following the sudden closure of the Nippy Bus company. School transport had been arranged within 24 hours but the demand responsive transport was still an issue and it was hoped that this could be picked up by the voluntary services.

70. Presentation by SPARK Somerset (Voluntary and Community Action) (Agenda Item 6)

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture introduced Katherine Nolan, manager of SPARK, who provided a presentation on the work of SPARK during the past financial year with a particular focus on their impact and achievements. She highlighted:-

- In April 2016, the South Somerset Association for Voluntary Action (SSVCA) had joined with Mendip Community Support (MCS) and rebranded as SPARK.
- They offered guidance and support to groups and provide a volunteer brokerage service across South Somerset, Sedgemoor and Mendip.
- 271 new volunteers had registered and they had invested in a new volunteer database.
- 200 people attended a Lets End Loneliness event.
- They had 82 different volunteering opportunities.
- They had carried out 300 DBS checks.
- They held 8 forums which were an opportunity for community groups to get together and discuss issues.
- They had worked with students at Yeovil College to design a webpage.

She concluded that SSDC was their core funding organisation and although they had attracted funding for other projects, it was the core funding which enabled them to continue their partnership work.

The Communities Lead confirmed that Area Development officers worked closely with SPARK and often referred cases to them. She also noted that the number of volunteers was reducing and there was a need to capture younger volunteers.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture confirmed that the funding was essential and SSDC would continue to support the organisation. At the conclusion of the debate, the Chairman thanked the manager of SPARK for her interesting and informative presentation. It was suggested that each Area Committee would benefit from also hearing the presentation and the Chairman agreed to leave that decision to each Area Chairman.

RESOLVED: That the District Executive noted the presentation on the work of SPARK Somerset (Voluntary and Community Action)

Reason: To note the presentation on the work of SPARK Somerset (Voluntary and Community Action)

71. 2017/18 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30th September 2017 (Agenda Item 7)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services introduced the report and advised that this was the mid-year review of the councils revenue budgets. He noted there had been some initial difficulties with the Westland Complex as some start-up costs below £10,000 had to be funded from revenue rather than capital and that a revised business plan for the complex would be presented to District Executive in December. He also drew attention to the Council Tax support budget, the Council Tax hardship scheme and the current collection rate. He confirmed that the General Fund balances were sufficient to cover the council's assessed risk and he noted the future risks of New Homes Bonus and the UK exit from the EU.

In response to questions from the Scrutiny Committee, the Finance Manager confirmed that the quarterly council tax and business rates collection rates were submitted to the Government. She also agreed to provide further information on the cost of operating the canteen in Brympton Way offices.

Councillor Nick Weeks advised that he would be meeting with Building Control officers to discuss their budget shortfall and any proposal to address this.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to confirm the recommendations of the report.

RESOLVED: That District Executive agreed to:-

- a. note the current 2017/18 financial position of the Council
- b. note the reasons for variations to the previously approved Directorate Budgets as detailed in paragraph 7;
- c. note the transfers made to and from reserves outlined in paragraph 23 and the position of the Area Reserves as detailed in Appendix C and the Corporate Reserves as detailed in Appendix D;
- d. note the virements made under delegated authority as detailed in Appendix B.

Reason: To confirm the revenue financial position and budgetary variations of the Council as at 30th September 2017.

72. 2017/18 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the quarter ending 30th September 2017 (Agenda Item 8)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services introduced the report and advised that the capital budget had changed following agreement of the Council's Commercial

Strategy. There was now a property investment acquisition fund and the progress of capital projects was listed in the report.

In response to questions from Members, the Finance Manager confirmed that the Somerset Waste Partnership were repaying their loan as agreed. Some minor amendments to the presentation of the figures in the report was also noted.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services confirmed that any investment in market housing would be opportunity driven when an appropriate property or scheme came forward. The Director for Support Services also confirmed that the Home Farm site in Somerton was being monitored by Building Control officers but was not currently deteriorating.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to confirm the recommendations of the report.

RESOLVED: That District Executive agreed to:-

- a. note the content of the report;
- b. approve the revised capital programme spend as detailed in paragraph 6:
- c. note the review of schemes as detailed in Appendix B and approve Leadership Board proposals.
- d. note the review of schemes as detailed in Appendix B.

Reason: To confirm the current financial position of the capital programme of the Council and to report the reasons for variations from approved budgets for the period 1st July 2017 to 30th September 2017.

73. The installation of a 14.8 kW photovoltaic array at Yeovil Innovation Centre Extension (Agenda Item 9)

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Economic Development advised that work on the extension to the Innovation Centre was due to commence in late November and the proposal to install 44 PV panels on the roof of the new building would generate 8.4% return on investment.

In response to questions from Members, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that:-

- The panels would be in the ownership of SSDC whereas the Innovation Centre building was a consortium between the HCA and Somerset County Council.
- The electricity generated would be used by the businesses at the Innovation Centre.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee confirmed that their technical questions had been answered by the Portfolio Holder at their meeting.

During discussion it was noted that the Government were not currently looking at revising Feed In Tariff (FIT) targets and it was also proposed that SSDC could look at joining with developers to install PV panels on new build properties in the future.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to confirm the funding for the installation of a photovoltaic array on the roof of the Yeovil innovation Centre extension.

RESOLVED: That District Executive agreed:-

- a. to approve the spending of £16,111.70 (or any revised quote that does not compromise the rate of return) to install a photovoltaic array on the roof of the Yeovil innovation Centre extension;
- b. that the net savings of £1,020 should be added to the medium term financial plan for 2018/19 and beyond.

Reason: To confirm the investment in a 14.8 kW photovoltaic (PV) array on the roof of the new Yeovil Innovation Centre Extension.

74. Increase in Councillors and change of name of Barwick Parish Council - Community Governance Review (CGR) (Agenda Item 10)

The Portfolio Holder for Area West and Democratic Services advised that the request had been received from the Parish Council to amend their name and increase the number of parish councillors.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee said they had acknowledged the parish council wished to change its name and the reasons why. However, they did note that the number of councillors requested seemed high for a parish of its size, and the reason for the increase in councillors did not appear to be based on population or representation.

There was no debate and Members agreed to propose the request to Full Council.

RESOLVED: That District Executive agreed to recommend that Full Council agree:-

- a. to note the receipt of the request and its validity;
- b. to undertake a Community Governance Review of the Parish of Barwick;
- c. the Terms of Reference of the review as detailed in Appendix A, including the timetable and arrangements for public consultation;
- d. that the review be carried out by the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with Ward Members, Area Development Lead Officer (South) and the Area South Committee;
- e. that further reports would be brought to Council in order that decisions may be made in respect of draft proposals and final

recommendations of the Review.

Reason: To confirm the requests from Barwick Parish Council (under the provisions of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) to conduct a Community Governance Review

75. District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda Item 11)

The following addition to the Forward Plan was noted:

- Heart of the South West Joint Committee – Dec 2017
- Refresh of the Council Plan to be included within the Medium Term Financial Plan report – Dec 2017

The following new consultations were noted:-

- Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse - DCLG Consultation
- Funding for supported housing – two consultations covering housing costs for sheltered and extra care accommodation, and one on housing costs for short-term supported accommodation

RESOLVED: That the District Executive:-

1. approved the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A, with the following amendment;
 - Heart of the South West Joint Committee – Dec 2017
 - Refresh of the Council Plan to be included within the Medium Term Financial Plan report – Dec 2017
2. noted the contents of the Consultation Database as shown at Appendix B.
 - Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse - DCLG Consultation
 - Funding for supported housing – two consultations covering housing costs for sheltered and extra care accommodation, and one on housing costs for short-term supported accommodation

Reason: The Forward Plan is a statutory document.

76. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the District Executive would take place on Thursday 7th December 2017 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 9.30 a.m.

77. Exclusion of Press and Public (Agenda Item 13)

RESOLVED: That the following items be considered in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

78. Notification of an Urgent Executive Decision: Disposal of 11-12 South Western Terrace, Yeovil (Confidential) (Agenda Item 14)

The Chairman explained the reasons for the original purchase of the building and the subsequent decision to sell.

The Director - Commercial Services and Income Generation, outlined the reasons for the sale of the property.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Area South Chairman.

RESOLVED: That District Executive agreed to note that the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Area South Chair approved:

- a. the marketing for sale of 11-12 South Western Terrace in line with the District Valuer's advice through an open market tender process;
- b. the acceptance of an offer to purchase, following the marketing period, in conjunction with the third party owner.

Reason: To note the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Area South Chair under Section 3 – 47 (4) of the Council's Constitution

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Chairman

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Date