

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held at the **Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT on Tuesday 3 October 2017.**

(10.00 am - 12.30 pm)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

|               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| John Field    | Rob Stickland |
| Carol Goodall | Gerard Tucker |
| Alan Smith    | Martin Wale   |

**Also Present:**

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Henry Hobhouse     | Angie Singleton |
| Jo Roundell Greene |                 |

**Officers**

|               |                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Alex Parmley  | Chief Executive                     |
| Netta Meadows | Director (Strategy & Commissioning) |
| Martin Woods  | Director (Service Delivery)         |
| Jo Wilkins    | Senior Policy Planner               |
| David Clews   | Spatial Planner                     |
| Caron Starkey | Strategic Lead for Transformation   |
| Jo Gale       | Scrutiny Manager                    |
| Becky Sanders | Democratic Services Officer         |

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**56. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**57. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jason Baker, Dave Bulmer, John Clark, Tony Lock, David Norris and Colin Winder.

**58. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**59. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)**

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

**60. Issues arising from previous meetings (Agenda Item 5)**

One member sought reassurance that District Executive were providing comprehensive answers to questions raised by the Scrutiny Committee, particularly with reference to the

Westlands Entertainment and Conference Centre. In response the Scrutiny Chairman noted that she felt an adequate response had been provided at the last District Executive meeting. The Deputy Leader also clarified that the Westlands report in September was a completion/sign off report, and that a further detailed report was due later in the year which would provide a full financial breakdown.

#### **61. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)**

The Chairman welcomed Netta Meadows, the new Director of Strategy and Commissioning, to the meeting.

The Chairman also provided members with brief verbal updates regarding:

- The Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Joint Scrutiny. Councillor Gerard Tucker provided members with some feedback following a tour of SRA sites which had been very interesting and showed where the investment in flood prevention was being spent and explained the aspirations and vision for the future.
- The Centre for Public Scrutiny South West Event.
- A presentation from the National Health South West Senate about grass roots (in her role as a governor at Musgrove Park Hospital).

#### **62. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 7 September 2017 (Agenda Item 7)**

The Chairman noted that the Scrutiny comments had been considered and were included in the District Executive minutes which had been circulated.

#### **63. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 5 October 2017 (Agenda Item 8)**

Members considered the reports within the District agenda for 5 October 2017 and made the following comments:

##### **The Issue and Use of Section 19 and Section 22 Permits for Road Passenger Transport in Great Britain – Implications for Community Transport Schemes Within SSDC (Agenda item 6)**

- Members sought clarification about whether the two local MPs had been contacted about the matter,
- Members requested clarification of additional services to those mentioned in the report that could also be adversely affected.
- Scrutiny members endorsed the recommendations.

##### **Floating Support for Vulnerable Individuals in South Somerset (Agenda item 7)**

- Scrutiny made no comments.

##### **South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report (September 2017) (Agenda item 8)**

- Page 25 – members sought clarification that the points regarding employment would be included in the Local Plan Review.

- Members also felt that house price information would be very relevant. It was acknowledged this Monitoring Report would be an important 'feed-in' document to the Local Plan review.

### **Local Plan Review – Issues and Options Document for Consultation (Agenda item 9)**

- Members requested that following be circulated to all members
  - the presentation from the recent member briefing
  - details of the programme for public consultation
  - the final agreed consultation document
  - the simplified accessible summary consultation document
  - copies of the individual settlement leaflets are sent to the district Councillor representing those areas
- Some members suggested it would be useful to have an additional appendix with all the Questions duplicated and collated in one section for ease of reference.
- Page 91, point 12 - regarding the change in the number of dwellings to 13,200, members queried how the figure compared to that in the existing adopted Local Plan, and how it would affect the status of our five year land supply.
- Scrutiny sought clarification that the higher delivery of housing in market towns and lower delivery in Yeovil and Chard, had been reflected in the consultation document.
- Some members queried some parish specific detail in the consultation document where outline planning consent had recently been granted. It was queried if this made the proposed consultation document already out of date?
- Members felt that the table on page 64 of the agenda – Figure 10.2 in the Monitoring Report should be included in the consultation document for clarity, as it detailed residential completions and commitments against the adopted Local Plan requirements.
- Members felt many parishes would want to see clear information about the current position with the five year land supply detailed within the consultation document.
- Scrutiny were otherwise content that the recommendation go forward.

### **SSDC Transformation Programme – Progress Report (Agenda item 10)**

- Members sought clarification that when staff left the authority they would no longer have access to Yammer.
- Scrutiny requested reassurance that the new website will be user friendly and have offered to assist from a grass route perspective to provide suggestions and carry out testing.
- Page 101 - Budget - Members queried the budget for 'Programme Office' and what it covered. It was also noted £21,721 had been spent under 'misc' which didn't appear to have been allocated and members queried if it would come from the contingency?
- Scrutiny queried if there were any additional risks associated with bringing forward phase 3.
- Scrutiny sought re-assurance with regard to the number of risks categorised as Medium at this stage of the project and asked if there should be any reason for concern.
- Members noted that Locality Working was not specifically mentioned anywhere in the report and queried if there was a reason for this? Scrutiny raised some concerns about how the aspect of Locality Working was progressing, and if all

members would have the opportunity to feed into ideas about the future of Locality Working.

- Page 107 – Scrutiny noted it would be useful if future reports could indicate if the savings per quarter were above or below target.

#### **Community Right to Bid Half Year report – April 2017 to September 2017 (Agenda item 11)**

- Scrutiny made no comments.

#### **District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda item 12)**

- Scrutiny made no comments.

### **64. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Agenda Item 9)**

Members noted the updates provided by the Scrutiny Manager on each of the Task and Finish Groups currently in progress or commencing in the near future.

**Council Tax Support** – there was no update regarding the 2018/19 scheme. Members were reminded that it had been agreed to not make any changes for 2018/19 but officers would look to streamline administration processes to reduce costs. Now was the time to start looking ahead to 2019/2020 and the possible move to a discount based scheme as the administration costs would be lower.

**Homefinder Somerset** – there were no updates.

**Car Parking** – an email seeking members for the group would be circulated shortly. The Scrutiny Manager was currently undertaking some research in preparation for the first meeting of the group.

### **65. Update on matters of interest (Agenda Item 10)**

The Scrutiny Manager confirmed she had been in contact with the Centre for Public Scrutiny regarding the arrangement of training for performance monitoring and monitoring of investments, and a draft specification was currently being devised.

### **66. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 11)**

The Scrutiny Manager informed members that the report on Council Tax Penalties would now be in February or March as it had taken longer than anticipated to implement the process

She also informed members that locality working was taking a slightly different course to originally anticipated and Scrutiny was likely to have less of a role. She had had a meeting with the Chief Executive to discuss the role of Scrutiny in Transformation.

The Scrutiny Manager proposed from a critical friend perspective that the Committee would look at performance monitoring throughout Transformation and make a defined list of what members wanted and needs to be monitored. During discussion members expressed some hesitation and noted that each time systems changed some of the data for monitoring seemed to be lost. Members felt that Scrutiny needed to be clear about what information members wanted for monitoring, and did not feel a Task and Finish

Group was necessary, but an agenda item or workshop for members to indicate the information of interest would be more beneficial.

As discussed at previous meetings, the Scrutiny Manager had circulated a draft report request, with background information, to Scrutiny members for comment regarding a report about the Yeovil Innovation Centre. For clarity she asked members to review and confirm the final version of the document, and this was done on screen during the meeting. Members asked for the order of the document to be changed slightly but for the content to remain the same as discussed, amended and agreed during this Scrutiny Committee meeting. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Manager circulate the final version of the report request document to members prior to sending to the appropriate officers.

During discussion members also agreed that the Troubled Families Programme and Increased Joint Working Between Police Forces items remain on the Work Programme with a date to be confirmed.

**67. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 12)**

Members noted the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for 10.00am on 31 October 2017, in the Main Committee Room.

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Chairman