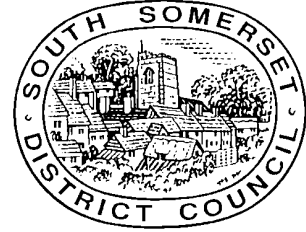


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Scrutiny Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Tuesday 31st October 2017

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)



The following members are requested to attend this meeting.

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

Jason Baker
John Field
Carol Goodall
Tony Lock

Paul Maxwell
David Norris
Alan Smith
Rob Stickland

Gerard Tucker
Martin Wale
Colin Winder

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please contact the Democratic Services Officer on 01935 462596 or democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Monday 23 October 2017.

Ian Clarke, Director (Support Services)

**This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk and via the mod.govapp**



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 (limited to up to 3 minutes per person and at the Chairman's discretion usually no more than a total of 15 minutes is allocated for public speaking); 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.

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

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. 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>

Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 31 October 2017

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes (Pages 4 - 8)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 October 2017.

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), 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.

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 5 October 2017 (Page 9)

8. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 2 November 2017 (Page 10)

9. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Page 11)

10. Update on matters of interest (Page 12)

11. Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 13 - 15)

12. Date of next meeting (Page 16)

Agenda Item 1

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held in the **Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil 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 |

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

Agenda Item 7

Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 5 October 2017

The Chairman will update members on the issues raised by Scrutiny members at the District Executive meeting held on 5 October 2017.

The draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 5 October 2017 have been circulated with the District Executive agenda.

Agenda Item 8

Reports to be considered by District Executive on 2 November 2017

Lead Officer: Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager
Contact Details: joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462077

Scrutiny Committee members will receive a copy of the District Executive agenda containing the reports to be considered at the meeting on 2 November 2017.

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 October 2017.

The Chairman will take forward any views raised by Scrutiny members to the District Executive meeting on 2 November 2017.

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

- Council Tax Support
- Homefinder Somerset
- Car Parking

Agenda Item 10

Update on matters of interest

Lead Officers: Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager
Contact Details: joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462077

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 |
|------------------|--|-------------------------------|--------|--|---------------------------|
| Nov TBC | Discretionary Housing Payment policy monitoring | ✓ | | An update report on the implementation and outcomes of the revised Discretionary Housing Payment Policy that came in to effect on 1 April 2017 following a Task and Finish review. | Ian Potter |
| Dec TBC | Yeovil Innovation Centre | ✓ | | An update report on the Innovation Centre's performance including progress of phase 2. With a brief overview of the work to achieve the related Economic focussed Council plan targets and related strategies. | David Julian |
| Feb / March 2017 | Council Tax Penalties and Civil Penalties in Housing Benefit | | | In April 2017 the council agreed to introduce penalties for those who have failed to notify the Council of change of circumstances that has resulted in them continuing to receive a Council Tax exemption, discount, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support award that they are not entitled. Scrutiny Committee agreed at their meeting on 4 th April 2017 for an item to be added to the forward plan for October to monitor the effectiveness of the policy. Figures with regard to the cost of issuing and collecting penalties have been specifically requested. | Ian Potter |
| Feb TBC | Monitoring of the implementation of Charges for Pre-Application Development Control Advice | ✓ | | In April 2017 Scrutiny Committee supported the introduction of charging for Pre- Application Development Advice and requested a monitoring report is brought forward to establish the effectiveness of recouping costs and to consider the re-evaluation of fees. | David Norris |
| TBC | Troubled Families Programme | ✓ | | Members requested an update report on the progress of the troubled families following a report covering the work of South Somerset Together, Local Strategic Partnership. A specific report request needs to be compiled. | Helen Rutter |

| 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 | Increased Joint Working Between Police Forces | | | At the meeting of Scrutiny Committee on 30 August 2016, the SSDC representative on the Police and Crime Panel requested that there be a report looking at the proposals for increased joint working between police forces across the South West. | |

The Somerset Waste Board and Somerset Waste Partnership Forward Plan of key decisions can be viewed at:
<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=196&RD=0>

Current Task & Finish Reviews

| Date Commenced | Title and Purpose | Members |
|----------------|--|--|
| February 2017 | Council Tax Support 2018/19 Monitoring the effectiveness of the current scheme and how best to manage the reductions in the Administration grant as part of efficiency savings and as a consequence of the changes with Universal Credit | Cllrs Jason Baker, Val Keitch, Andy Kendall, David Norris, Sue Osborne, Sue Steele, Alan Smith, Rob Stickland, Derek Yeomans |
| February 2017 | Accessible Homefinder Common Lettings Policy A review of the policy to ensure it is accessible for customers/the general public. Phase 1 completed with comments re style, layout and terminology fed back, phase 2 to commence June 2017 or later. | Cllrs Sue Steele, Carol Goodall |

| Date Commenced | Title and Purpose | Members |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| October 2017 | Council Tax Support 2019/20 Consider the merits/risks of moving towards a discount based policy. | Cllrs Carol Goodall, David Norris |
| TBC | Car Parking Charging/Strategy To ensure we have a strategy and policy that encourages an effective and efficient use of car parks for generating an appropriate surplus. To make sure the provision of car parking in terms of location, layout and cost helps to support the Objectives in the Council Plan and related strategies, for example Economic Development, Regeneration and Commercial Property. To ensure consistency across the District. | |
| TBC | Rural Allocations Policy The Disposal of Third Party properties had highlighted issues with the Rural Allocations Policy and some work now needs to be done to review the policy, no start date has been agreed for this as yet. | |
| The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are committed to ensuring they have capacity to contribute to the Council's Transformation programme and therefore fewer Task and Finish reviews may be conducted during the Transformation period. | | |

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 December 2017 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.
