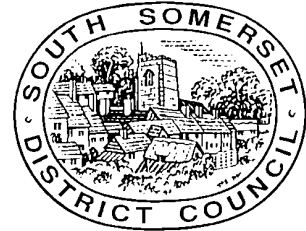


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Scrutiny Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Tuesday 2nd January 2018

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 Tuesday 19 December 2017.

Alex Parmley, *Chief Executive Officer*

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 2 January 2018

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes (Pages 4 - 9)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 December 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 7 December 2017
(Page 10)

8. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 4 January 2018 (Page 11)

9. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Page 12)

10. Update on matters of interest (Page 13)

11. Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 14 - 16)

12. Date of next meeting (Page 17)

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** on **Tuesday 5 December 2017**.

(10.05 am - 12.15 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Jason Baker	David Norris
Dave Bulmer	Alan Smith
John Clark	Rob Stickland
John Field	Gerard Tucker

Also Present:

Val Keitch	Sylvia Seal
Jo Roundell Greene	

Officers

Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Clare Pestell	Director (Commercial Services & Income Generation)
Chris Cooper	Streetscene Manager
David Norris	Development Manager
David Clews	Spatial Planner
Charlotte Jones	Performance Manager
Adam Burgan	Arts & Entertainment Manager
Nicola Hix	Corporate Accountant
Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager
Becky Sanders	Democratic Services Officer

80. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

81. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carol Goodall, Tony Lock, Martin Wale and Colin Winder.

82. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

83. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

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

There were no issues raised from previous meetings.

85. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman asked everyone present at the meeting to observe a moment of silence in memory of Ian Clarke (Solicitor to the Council and Director of Support Services). She noted he had been a great support to the Scrutiny Committee and would be greatly missed.

The Chairman noted that on 24 November, several members of the Scrutiny Committee had met with the Director of Strategy & Commissioning and the Performance Manager to discuss Performance Monitoring, which had been interesting and useful. She noted a formal report would come forward to the Scrutiny Committee in the New Year for discussion.

86. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 2 November 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.

87. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 7 December 2017 (Agenda Item 8)

Members considered the reports within the District Executive agenda for 7 December 2017 and made the following comments:

Somerset Waste Partnership Annual report and Draft Business Plan 2018-2023 (Agenda item 6)

- Page 24 – Core services contract review – members noted Viridor had many such contracts nationally and queried if there are likely to be other alternative providers.
- Page 5 – Purpose of the report refers to an agreement not being reached with the contractors, Kier, regarding the delivery plan and implementation of Recycle More. Members were concerned if similar issues may arise with alternative contractors. (although were reassured by the Officer and Portfolio Holder why this would be unlikely)

- Members noted the same report has gone, or will be going, to the other authorities within the Somerset Waste Partnership, and queried where we were in that process. i.e. first or last authority to consider the report.

Community Infrastructure Levy - Guidance and Governance (Agenda item 7)

- Rec B – Scrutiny queried if there would be a timeline associated with the Infrastructure Business Plan.
- Page 29 - Members sought clarification that the table at the top of the page did not take into account the parish or town councils that may be eligible to receive 25% of CIL receipts (ie those with Neighbourhood Plans).
- Members sought clarification that SSDC were continuing to encourage parishes to do Neighbourhood Plans.
- Members also queried if a parish has a need for a specific project but no Neighbourhood Plan, was there scope for the parish to bid for, or receive more than 15%. (Dave Norris did clarify the situation in response to this and provided examples of the 123 list)

SSDC Review of Operational Office Accommodation (Agenda item 8)

- Members supported the structured approach and more feasibility work being undertaken.
- Scrutiny queried the potential for losing car parking spaces in some of the proposals for development/relocation and what impact this would have and the cost implications.
- Members sought reassurance that that SSDC owned the freehold of all the properties concerned, and queried if there were any ground rents due on properties, and also that penalties associated with any leases would also be taken into consideration.
- Some members noted the Locality Working Group had met 3 or 4 times, but only now had the aspect of operational accommodation been added to the scope for the group. Members felt things could have been done in a different way as concerns had been raised previously, and it now felt like the issue was being rushed.
- One member requested reassurance around the commitment to the redevelopment of Chard given the changes in Officer roles.
- Members requested that regeneration groups were consulted as part of the feasibility work.
- Committee members requested more frequent Communications to keep members informed at each stage.

The Wincanton Neighbourhood Plan Referendum (Agenda item 9)

- Members acknowledged much work had been done to get to this stage, and endorsed the recommendations.

- Members queried which other parishes were also going through the process, and what obligations SSDC had for costs of the process.

Corporate Performance and Complaints Monitoring Report 2017/18: 2nd Quarter (Agenda item 10)

- Members commented that the summary of progress for each priority in the Council Plan was useful.
- Page 149 - Regarding priority 5, some members raised queries about the Superfast Broadband, and in particular if it was known if the SSDC area had lost out on any delivery as a result of not putting in our £640k?

Purchase of Land Adjoining Boden Street Car Park, Chard (Agenda item 11)

- It was noted the site was in the Chard Holyrood Ward – and hence report should refer to the ward member being Cllr Jason Baker not Cllr Dave Bulmer.
- Members queried which budget the money would be allocated from, and how much would remain in that budget after this purchase.

Yeovil Refresh – Delivery Arrangements (Agenda item 12)

- Some members commented that funding for quick-win projects to be delivered in the Old Station area of town was needed and would be welcomed.
- Page 161 – Rec C – It was queried if the Programme Manager would be a contractor or an officer employed by SSDC, and for how many years?
- Page 162 – para 9 – Scrutiny noted that Appendix A had been published as a confidential document, however the report did not indicate it was confidential which may be confusing for the public.
- Page 167 – the table – members sought clarification regarding the ownership of Foundry House.

Westlands Revised Business Plan (Agenda item 13)

- Members queried what assumptions had been used in order to generate the revised Business Plan?
- It was also noted that some tenants had re-located from other SSDC premises to Westlands, and it was acknowledged that while this had improved the business at Westlands it may have had a knock on effect at other venues such as the Innovation Centre.
- Members noted that Steve Joel had been referred to by name rather than job title several times in the report, which was unusual and they did not feel it was the correct way to refer to an officer in a report.

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).

Appendix for Westlands Revised Business Plan (Agenda item 13)

- Scrutiny made several comments in confidential session with regard to details in the confidential appendix.

District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda item 14)

- The Medium Term Financial Strategy and Council Plan had been on the Forward Plan for December but had now been moved to January.
- Update on Yeovil Crematorium Refurbishment – The Chairman noted she had been surprised that the report had been circulated direct to members by email rather than a report on the District Executive agenda. Members asked when there would be opportunity to ask questions either by them or the public.

88. Monitoring the SSDC Council Tax Support Scheme - Report and Findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group (November 2017) (Agenda Item 9)

The Scrutiny Manager presented the report which summarised the monitoring activity and work conducted since the last Task and Finish report in December 2016 about the Council Tax Support Scheme. The report also detailed recommendations for the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2018/19. Members of the Scrutiny Committee were asked to endorse the report to District Executive.

The Chairman, Task and Finish members and Scrutiny Manager responded to points of detail. Some members queried if it was cost effective to be running the scheme and sought re-assurance of the monitoring of the costs of collection.

At the end of the short discussion, members were unanimously in agreement to endorse the report of the Task & Finish Group to District Executive. Members also wished to thank all the officers involved for their work.

ACTION: Scrutiny Manager to forward Task & Finish report to appropriate officers.

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

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 Scheme 2018 – This Task and Finish work was now complete. The report and recommendations would go forward to be considered by District Executive and Full Council in January.

Council Tax Support Scheme 2019 – The Task and Finish group had held their second meeting and were progressing with potential options to reduce administration time for the scheme.

Homefinder Somerset - No updates since the last meeting.

Transformation – Customer accessibility - this review would commence in January 2018.

Car Parking Charges – The review would commence when resources permit.

Members briefly discussed the priority for Car Parking Task and Finish work and agreed it had a low priority until resources became available.

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

The Scrutiny Manager noted that an update regarding Performance Monitoring had been provided earlier on the agenda under Chairman’s Announcements. A member also briefly provided some feedback to those who had been unable to attend the Performance Monitoring meeting on 24 November.

91. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 12)

It was noted a Performance Monitoring report would come forward to the January meeting, as mentioned under Chairman’s Announcements earlier on the agenda.

92. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 13)

Members noted the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for 10.00am on Tuesday 2 January 2018 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way.

.....
Chairman

Agenda Item 7

Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 7 December 2017

The Chairman will update members on the issues raised by Scrutiny members at the District Executive meeting held on 7 December 2017.

The draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 7 December 2017 have been circulated with the District Executive agenda.

Agenda Item 8

Reports to be considered by District Executive on 4 January 2018

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 4 January 2018.

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 January 2018.

The Chairman will take forward any views raised by Scrutiny members to the District Executive meeting on 4 January 2018.

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 Scheme 2019
- Homefinder Somerset
- Transformation – Customer Accessibility

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
30 Jan '18	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/Cllr Peter Seib
30 Jan '18	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/ Cllr Jo RoundellGreene
TBC 30 Jan 2018	Crematorium Update	✓		A general update report regarding the Crematorium was circulated to members December 2017. Scrutiny Committee requested that a report be made publicly available to ensure transparency, the Portfolio Holder has agreed and welcomed questions and input from Scrutiny Committee.	Cllr Peter Gubbins
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/Cllr Peter Seib
TBC pending national fee increase regulation coming in (Jan/Feb)	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.	Simon Fox/ Cllr Angie Singleton

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Budget	Background/Description	Lead Officer/ Lead Member
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
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	<p>Accessible Homefinder Common Lettings Policy</p> <p>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.</p>	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
Due to start January 2018	Working with the Transformation Team to identify, and deliver, Best Practice to provide accessible on-line information and services for all.	TBC
TBC	<p>Car Parking Charging/Strategy</p> <p>To ensure we have a strategy and policy that encourages an effective and efficient use of car parks for generating an appropriate surplus.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>To ensure consistency across the District.</p>	
TBC	<p>Rural Allocations Policy</p> <p>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.</p>	
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 30 January 2018 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.
