

Joint Area Committee – West – 18th February 2009

9. Joint Area Committee - West Forward Plan

*Lead Officers: Andrew Gillespie, Head of Service - Area Development (West) SSDC
Julian Gale Group Manager, Community Governance SCC*

Agenda Co-ordinator: Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator, Legal and Democratic Services SSDC

Contact Details: andrew.blackburn@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01460) 260441

Purpose of the Report

This report informs members of the proposed Joint Area Committee - West Forward Plan.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to:-

- (1) Comment upon and note the proposed Joint Area Committee - West Forward Plan as attached at appendix A (pages 7-9).
- (2) Identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Joint Area Committee - West Forward Plan, jointly developed by the SSDC / SCC lead officers.

Forward Plan

The forward plan sets out items and issues to be discussed by the Joint Area Committee - West (JACW) over the coming few months. As the JACW is only in its first month, the attached forward plan (pages 7-9) is largely drawn from the previous forward plan of the SSDC Area West Committee.

The forward plan will be reviewed and updated each month by the joint lead officers from SSDC and SCC, in consultation with the JACW Chairman. It is to be included each month on the Joint Area Committee agenda. Members of the JACW may request amendments.

The agenda topics will be various and may include:

- Reports that allow members of the JAC to monitor performance (*for example, expenditure of budgets under its control; progress of projects it has promoted or supported*)
- Reports seeking a decision from the JAC (*for example: a grant towards a local community project, or additional funding for a service to meet a specific local need*)
- Reports on the local impact of services to allow discussion and comment based on local knowledge and experience (*for example, programmes of work for local environmental services or increasing the supply of affordable housing*)

JAW

- Reports to promote debate or raise awareness of local issues and policies, (*for example, activities to promote and support the local economy; strategies for improving local access to services*)
- Agenda items may also include a presentation and question session from a local organisation or a public body providing services. The public nature of the meeting can help promote awareness of important local issues or new opportunities or changes. (*For example, corporate re-structuring of services for children and young people; or a new government funding programme for reducing fuel poverty*)

Members of public, councillors, service managers, and partners may request that an item is put on the forward plan by contacting the agenda co-ordinator.

Although further time for democratic debate can always be found, on average around 1.5 hours per meeting or around 18 hours each year is available to consider all other agenda items, in addition to time devoted to determine planning applications. At each meeting time is needed to consider a small number of routine business items, and for public participation or representations from town and parish councils.

So, to make the best use of the JAWC the focus for topics will be on issues where local involvement and influence may be beneficial, and where local priorities and issues raised by the community are linked to SSDC and SCC corporate aims and objectives.

The table below provides a summary of SSDC and SCC corporate aims.

Somerset County Council	South Somerset District Council
Making a positive contribution	Increase economic vitality and prosperity
Living sustainably	Enhance the environment, address and adapt to climate change
Ensuring economic well-being	Improve the housing, health and well-being of our citizens
Enjoying and achieving	Ensure, safe, sustainable and cohesive communities
Staying safe	Deliver well-managed, cost effective services valued by our customers
Being healthy	
Enhancing the effectiveness of Somerset County Council	

Both organisations are also partners to the Somerset Local Area Agreement (made with the Government affecting how resources are allocated across Somerset) and the South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy, which sets out a 20-year vision and plan for a sustainable community for all. Both of these important documents will act as reference points for the business of the JAWC, where local debate and participation will add value and aid delivery.

Schedule of Future Meetings

All meetings commence at 5.30 p.m. Determination of planning applications generally start at 7.00 p.m., but each agenda will confirm the earliest start time for these items.

Date	Venue
18th February 2009	Shrubbery Hotel, Station Road, Ilminster TA19 9AR
18th March 2009	Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP
15th April 2009	Henhayes Centre, Off South Street, Crewkerne TA18 8DA

Date	Venue
20th May 2009	Shrubbery Hotel, Station Road, Ilminster TA19 9AR
June 2009	No meeting because of SCC elections
15th July 2009	Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP
19th August 2009	TBA
16th September 2009	TBA
21st October 2009	TBA
18th November 2009	TBA
16 th December 2009	TBA

Background Papers:*SSDC Full Council – Oct 08**SCC Full Council – Nov 08**Proposal to establish SCC/SSDC Joint Area Committees.*