

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held on **Thursday 18th December 2008** in the Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

(10.00 a.m. – 12 10 p.m.)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Dave Bulmer
John Calvert
Pat Martin
Derek Nelson

Tom Parsley
John Richardson
Keith Ronaldson
Andrew Turpin

Officers:

Emily McGuinness

Scrutiny Manager and Acting Democratic Services
Manager

David Julian
Pauline Burr

Head of Countryside, Heritage & Tourism
Arts Development Officer

54. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

55. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Geoff Clarke, Tony Lock and Sylvia Seal

56. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

57. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no questions from members of the public.

58. Issues Arising from Previous Meetings (Agenda Item 5)

There were no issues arising from previous meetings.

59. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

Councillor Tom Parsley stated that due to the scheduling of meetings, the minutes of the District Executive meeting had already been published. He made the following points:

- Sam Healy from SSVCA had made a very good presentation outlining to members the progress that the SSVCA has made over the past 12 months.
 - The Draft Corporate Plan is due to be finally adopted at the next meeting of the Full Council where further details will be provided on target setting.
 - The Member Development Plan referred to role descriptions for all councillors to establish roles and responsibilities.
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60. Progress on Scrutiny Commissions (Agenda Item 7)

Pioneer Somerset

The Chairman informed members that she had been involved in both Joint Scrutiny Panels looking at the Somerset Waste Partnership and Pioneer Somerset. Update reports from both panels would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in due course.

61. Discussion Paper – Options for the Governance of the Somerset Tourism Partnership (Agenda Item 8)

David Julian, Head of Countryside, Heritage and Tourism stated that this report had been brought to Scrutiny following an earlier report submitted in October last year. He went to state whilst the report outlined two options for the future governance of the Somerset Tourism Partnership, it was now generally agreed that the best option was to pursue the Pioneer Somerset shared services approach.

Members felt that they were unable to comment on the suitability of the suggested approach without a more detailed business model and it was therefore agreed that a further report would be submitted to the February Scrutiny Committee outlining a more detailed model including the specific details of any agreement (stating what each partner would be contributing and could expect to achieve). The model would also include a fully costed business plan.

RESOLVED: That David Julian, Head of Countryside, Heritage and Tourism will submit a further report to the February Scrutiny Committee meeting outlining the business model for the Pioneer Somerset approach to developing effective governance arrangements for the Somerset Tourism Partnership. The report to include a fully costed business case.

*David Julian, Head of Countryside, Heritage & Tourism - (01935 462279)
e-mail: david.julian@southsomerset.gov.uk*

62. Draft Cultural Strategy (Agenda Item 9)

Pauline Burr – Arts Development Officer introduced this item, stating that the strategy had been developed and produced by Somerset County Council. Members were asked to make comments on the draft strategy for consideration by SCC prior to the publication of the final document.

During discussion, members made the following points:

- The document didn't seem to include any reference to the important cultural role

played by Countryside, Heritage and Tourism and members felt this was a missed opportunity.

- There was no reference to the importance of smaller scale community cultural events that reflect unique community cultures – e.g. carnivals and the work these communities are already doing.
- There didn't seem to actually be a strategy to discuss – there were no targets, details of resource allocations, desired outputs and outcomes and no way of knowing what success would look like.
- What value does the strategy actually add to what is already being done?
- What resources will the County Council be providing to ensure the successful delivery of the final strategy?
- The document is difficult to follow and the aims and objectives are not clear.
- There is no mention of potential private sector involvement.
- What is the link with current and emerging regional and national strategies, for example – People, Places and Spaces?

RESOLVED: That the above comments are fed back to Somerset County Council for consideration prior to the publication of the final strategy.

63. Scoping the review on the Procedure of the Disposal of Assets report to the Scrutiny Committee in March 2009 (Agenda Item 10)

At a previous committee meeting, members had requested that a report be brought forward relating to the Council's procedure for the disposal of assets.

At the November Scrutiny training session, it was agreed that members would spend some time scoping officer reports in future to ensure all Scrutiny reports met the expectations of the Scrutiny Committee.

Following discussion, it was:

RESOLVED: That the report to the March Scrutiny Committee on the Council's procedure for the disposal of assets would cover the following points:

- What is the current policy – can members be provided with a written copy?
 - What financial considerations are made relating to the disposal of assets?
 - What redress do we have when situations change – e.g. economic climate?
 - What is our priority when disposing of an asset?
 - How consistently is the policy applied and how is this monitored?
 - How are SSDC Assets identified?
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64. Scrutiny Work Programme 2008/09 (Agenda Item 11)

Members requested that an item on report writing be included in the February Scrutiny Committee agenda. The report should look at the current committee report template and assess whether they reflect best practice and meet the needs and expectations of members and others reading the reports.

It was also agreed that briefing notes would be provided for members on public participation at meetings and the council's response to recent flooding incidents.

RESOLVED: That the Scrutiny Work Programme be noted with the updates as above.

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65. Executive Forward Plan (Agenda Item 12)

RESOLVED: That the Executive Forward Plan be noted.

Ian Clarke, Head of Legal & Democratic Services – (01935) 462184
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66. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 13)

Members noted that the next meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** would be held on **Thursday 15th January 2009** at **10.00am** in the **Main Committee Room**, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

Members of the Committee are invited to attend at 9.30a.m. to scope questions on the reports in the Agenda.

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Chairman