

**South Somerset District Council**

*Notice of Meeting*



# Scrutiny Committee

*Making a difference where it counts*

**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011**

**10.00 am**

**Main Committee Room  
Council Offices  
Brympton Way  
Yeovil  
Somerset BA20 2HT**

The public and press are welcome to attend.

Disabled Access is available at this meeting venue.



If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, **Jo Morris** on Yeovil (01935) 462462  
email: [jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk), website: [www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)

This Agenda was issued on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2011

*Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)*



2007-2008  
Neighbourhood and  
Community Champions:  
The Role of Elected Members  
2006-2007  
Improving Rural Services  
Empowering Communities  
2005-2006  
Getting Closer to Communities

**This information is also available on our  
website: [www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## Scrutiny Committee Membership

**Chairman**  
**Vice Chairman**

Sue Steele  
David Bulmer  
Carol Goodall

Cathy Bakewell  
John Calvert  
Marcus Fysh  
Tim Inglefield

Pauline Lock  
Tony Lock  
Paul Maxwell  
Graham Oakes

Wes Read  
Colin Winder  
Martin Wale

## 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; 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](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk).

The Council's Constitution is also on the website and available for inspection in council offices.

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

## **South Somerset District Council – Corporate Aims**

**Our key aims are:** (all equal)

- To increase economic vitality and prosperity
- Enhance the environment, address and adapt to climate change
- To improve the housing, health and well-being of our citizens
- To ensure safe, sustainable and cohesive communities
- To deliver well managed cost effective services valued by our customers

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# Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

## Agenda

### *Preliminary Items*

1. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011**
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, which includes all the provisions of the statutory Model Code of Conduct, Members are asked to declare any personal interests (and whether or not such an interest is "prejudicial") in any matter on the agenda for this meeting. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 10.

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*

### *Page Number*

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| 7.  | <b>Verbal Update on Task and Finish Reviews .....</b>   | <b>10</b> |
| 8.  | <b>Scrutiny Work Programme.....</b>   | <b>11</b> |
| 9.  | <b>Somerset Waste Board – Forward Plan .....</b>  | <b>16</b> |
| 10. | <b>Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011 .....</b> | <b>20</b> |
| 11. | <b>Reports to be considered by District Executive on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011 .....</b>           | <b>30</b> |
| 12. | <b>Date of Next Meeting .....</b>   | <b>31</b> |

Scrutiny Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

## 1. Minutes

### South Somerset District Council

**Draft minutes** of the **Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

*(10.00 a.m. – 1.15 p.m.)*

#### **Present:**

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

Cathy Bakewell  
Dave Bulmer  
John Calvert

Carol Goodall  
Pauline Lock  
Tony Lock

Paul Maxwell  
Graham Oakes  
Martin Wale

#### **Also Present:**

Councillors Tim Carroll, Henry Hobhouse, Terry Mounter, Jo Roundell Greene, Sylvia Seal, Gina Seaton, Peter Seib, Graham Middleton, Sue Osborne, Peter Gubbins and Angie Singleton

#### **Officers:**

Rina Singh	Strategic Director (Place & Performance)
Vega Sturgess	Strategic Director (Operations & Customer Focus)
Steve Joel	Assistant Director (Health & Well-Being)
Donna Parham	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)
Martin Woods	Assistant Director (Economy)
Neil Waddleton	Section 106 Monitoring Officer
Alison Cameron	Leisure Policy Co-ordinator
Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager
Emily McGuinness	Scrutiny Manager
Jo Morris	Committee Administrator

## 44. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment under Item 39 – Local Strategic Partnership: South Somerset Together (SST) Comprehensive Review

The following paragraph:

Several members supported the way forward and felt that it made sense to have a more simplified structure and that the partners should take on more of a lead in order for Local Strategic Partnership to be more cost effective. It was also felt that Partners should bring resources equal to those provided by SSDC.

to be replaced by:

The majority of members did not support the way forward and were in favour of the initial recommendations of the Partnerships Task & Finish Review. Some members did support the way forward and felt that it made sense to have a more simplified structure and that the partners should take on more of a lead in order for Local Strategic Partnership to be more cost effective. It was also felt that Partners should bring resources equal to those provided by SSDC

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**45. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Colin Winder, Wes Read and Marcus Fysh.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

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**47. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)**

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

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**48. Issues Arising from Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 5)**

There were no issues raised from previous meetings.

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**49. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)**

The Chairman welcomed members of Mendip District Council's Scrutiny Committee to the meeting. The Chairman of Mendip District Council invited the Chairman to attend their next meeting on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October at which they would be considering the Glastonbury Festival Debrief. The Chairman kindly accepted the invitation.

The Chairman also welcomed Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager to her first meeting since returning to work from maternity leave. Members noted that she would be working as Scrutiny Manager on Mondays and Tuesdays and that Emily McGuinness would be covering the remainder of the week.

Members were informed that Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager would be arranging a training session for members on questioning skills and that a date would be circulated in due course. All members were encouraged to attend this event.

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**50. Strategic Leisure Contributions (Agenda Item 7)**

The Assistant Director (Health & Well-being) introduced the report, which gave an overview of the current approach employed by the authority to secure planning obligations to remedy local deficiencies in strategic sport and recreation facility provision and to highlight future changes.

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During consideration of this item, members put forward various comments and questions, which included the following:

- What was the percentage of money going towards strategic facilities rather than site specific? Reference was particularly made to the Lyde Road site.
- How does the Council work out the percentage of money going towards strategic facilities?
- Reference was made to Appendix 2 - Page 50 - scoring of public transport. Where would the provision of public transport come from? It was felt that families who do not have a car should not be disadvantaged.
- How do you make a decision about the original aspects?
- In the current economic climate, is it likely that SSSC will be providing any form of strategic leisure facility for the foreseeable future? Would it not be a better use of increasingly scarce resources if the money gained through S106 agreements was retained within a certain radius of the contributing development?
- The Appendix states that the Council will pool resources – how are resources pooled and how does the Council make sure it is delivered in a fair and equitable way?
- Once monies have been pooled is it ever reviewed to see if that decision is appropriate?
- Many key sites are difficult financially to deliver – assuming there is not enough money – how do you prioritise? Do you apportion equally? Do members have an input?

The Assistant Director (Health & Well-Being) response to members' questions and comments as raised above included the following:

- With reference to the Lyde Road site, it was reported that a full assessment was undertaken in 2006 in terms of equipped play, youth facilities, strategic and playing pitch provision as described in the report. Members received all the appropriate information and approved the application. A full range of recreational provision will support the houses in this area;
- The percentage of money going towards strategic facilities is apportioned using the full cost schedule tool as outlined in Appendix 6 to the report;
- Currently Local Planning Policies set out standards of provision for play pitches and provision is calculated using these standards;
- The process involves trying to set a level of standard of provision by taking a balanced view and ensuring that an established network is reasonable. The main issue is about providing facilities that are within a reasonable travel time. Many of the rural needs were addressed through village and community halls and were not dealt with through the framework at the current time. Within the Core Strategy this would be met through a Village Hall Network. The provision of sporting four court facilities should be based on a 15 minute drive time;
- Under current legislation, it was not possible to keep back S106 money for the provision of public transport;
- Where the Council has assessed deficiency, there will always be two mitigation options set out (primary and secondary). The second option will always be a district wide option. Under current legislation, the Council is required to set out a relevant period in which contributions should be spent. In the current climate it was likely that the Council would be providing any bigger facilities. It was important to have a fallback position;
- The number of people generated by a development with the standards gives the requirement from the developer;
- In all cases the Council seeks to prioritise resources;

- The Infrastructure Development Plan will be based around what priorities members have made. Members will decide the infrastructure. If members decide they want to reduce levels of provision they will be able to take decisions as part of that process;
- All the standards are applied in a fair and equitable way no matter where the development is located across the district. As part of the planning portal, the summary sheet is always made available;
- In terms of pooling resources, the Community Infrastructure Levy will allow a lot more flexibility than the current policy by allowing resources to be pooled from across the district. If there is enough money in the pool, the facility can then be delivered;
- Contributions are reviewed on a quarterly basis using a specific monitoring process;
- Specialist surfaces for hockey and football were now available. There was no surface that would cater competitively for both sports;
- The Council looks to prioritise what it seeks from the developer. Housing takes priority and once a package has been agreed officers go back and reassess the impact and apply the funding pot in the best way possible. Members have input into the process through the Area Committees;
- On every site the Council pulls money for strategic development such as swimming pools as no site would ever be able to fund a pool or something of such considerable investment;
- S106 agreements cannot be changed including the location of a facility;
- Members were informed that the planning obligation process was agreed by District Executive earlier in the year;
- Since April 2010, the Council has achieved £1.8 million of contributions towards essential infrastructure;
- Officers use a specific model to make population forecasts and assessments were modified accordingly. Reviews were undertaken every 3-5 years;
- Timing of developments will always depend on the funding package. The Council was unable to seek loan finance;
- Assessments were undertaken for each area. There was a broad network of improvements envisaged across the district, which is prioritised on the biggest area of deficiency.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Director (Health and Well-Being) for attending the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the information contained in the report and the associated appendices be noted together with the responses from the Strategic Director (Health & Well-Being) to members' comments and questions as detailed above.

*(Steve Joel, Assistant Director - Health & Well-Being)*  
*(steve.joel@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462278)*

## 51. **Proposals for the Joint Scrutiny of the Somerset Waste Board (Agenda Item 8)**

Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager introduced the report, which proposed more effective future arrangements for the scrutiny of the Somerset Waste Board (SWB) by establishing a Joint Scrutiny Panel that would meet twice a year. Each partner authority was being asked to appoint two Scrutiny members and one substitute to the Joint Panel.

The Strategic Director (Operations & Customer Focus), who was a member of the Senior Management Group on the SWB commented that Steve Read, Managing Director of



SWB was willing to attend any Scrutiny meetings that were held about waste and that he welcomed the proposals put forward.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillors Paul Maxwell and Sue Steele be appointed as representatives on the informal Joint Scrutiny Panel. It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Carol Goodall be appointed as substitute.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That an informal Joint Scrutiny Panel be established as outlined in the report consisting of two non-executive members from each member authority (Plus one nominated substitute;
  - (2) That Councillors Sue Steele and Paul Maxwell be appointed as representatives on the informal Joint Scrutiny Panel;
  - (3) That Councillor Carol Goodall be appointed as substitute on the informal Joint Scrutiny Panel;
  - (4) That Officers produce the detailed Terms of Reference for the informal Joint Scrutiny Panel to be agreed by the first meeting of the panel;
  - (5) That the legislative position re: establishing Joint Scrutiny Committees be kept under review, and further reports submitted as necessary.

*(Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager)*

*(emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462566)*

*(Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager)*

*(joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462077)*

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## 52. Student Participation with Scrutiny (Agenda Item 9)

The Scrutiny Chairman introduced the report, which set out proposals to engage students in the Scrutiny function. She commented that she had a keen interest in working with young people and had been involved in the shadowing programme and Democracy Day. She felt that involving young people would be of great benefit to scrutiny.

During the ensuing discussion, the officers responded to members' questions and comments, which included the following:-

- Part of the Scrutiny development role was to engage young people in the decision making process;
- As the students were aged between 16-19 years old only a minimal level of support would be required;
- The tutors would undertake risk assessments and the schools would meet any mileage costs associated with students travelling to meetings;
- The application process proposed would involve the completion of candidate specifications and interviews would be undertaken;
- The proposals did not include setting up any additional Task and Finish meetings;
- Working with students as part of the Homefinder Task and Finish Review had been invaluable.

During consideration of the report, members made a number of comments and suggestions, which included the following:

- It was felt that it was not appropriate to have young people involved in Task and Finish Reviews as confidential issues relating to finance and other matters were often discussed and it would be better for young people to participate in Scrutiny Committee meetings;
- Several members supported the concept of working with young people but were unable to support the proposed method outlined in the report;
- Some members stated that there was already an active Youth Council in Yeovil;
- It was felt that two young people was not enough and there needed to be more;
- It would be useful if the schools could identify the most appropriate young people;
- It was not felt that this proposal was a good use of the Scrutiny Manager's time and that limited resources have to be seen to be 'well spent'.

Some members spoke of the positive experiences that they had observed whilst working with young people through the Homefinder Task and Finish Review and that the contributions the young people had put forward had been invaluable.

The majority of members were unsupportive of the proposals outlined in the report, which they considered to be unclear. They requested that the Scrutiny Manager rework the report and bring back alternative proposals for consideration at a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That the Scrutiny Manager 'rework' the report and re-submit alternative proposals to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

*(Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager)*

*(emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462566)*

*(Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager)*

*(joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462077)*

### **53. Verbal Update on Task and Finish Reviews (Agenda Item 10)**

Martin Wale reported that he had chaired a meeting of the Inescapable Bids Task and Finish Review held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011. He commented that the meeting had been a useful process and that the bid list was much smaller this year.

District Executive would consider the recommendations put forward by the Task and Finish Group as part of the budget setting process.

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

Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager reported that she would be working on evaluating the recommendations of the HomeFinder Somerset Review to ensure that they are being implemented. The evaluation process would be undertaken as a joint review across the district.

Members were informed that the Scrutiny Managers would be working up the suggestions put forward at the Work Programming Session and bring these forward to a future meeting for members to score following the Corporate Plan update being completed.

**RESOLVED:** That the Scrutiny Work Programme be noted as outlined in the agenda with the updates above.

*(Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager)  
(emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462566)  
(Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager)  
(joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462077)*

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## **55. Somerset Waste Board – Forward Plan (Agenda Item 12)**

Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager reported that this was the first time that the Somerset Waste Board work programme had been included in the agenda. It was hoped that by including this document members would have a greater awareness of the work of the Waste Board.

It was noted that members could refer any issues/comments to Councillors Jo Roundell Greene and Henry Hobhouse who were SSDC's representatives on the Board.

**RESOLVED:** That the Somerset Waste Board Forward Plan be noted.

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## **56. Verbal Update on Reports considered by District Executive on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 (Agenda Item 13)**

There were no comments/questions taken forward by Scrutiny Committee to District Executive on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011.

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## **57. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011 (Agenda Item 14)**

Members considered the reports contained in the District Executive agenda for 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

The following questions and comments would be taken forward to District Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011:

### **Draft National Planning Policy Framework Consultation**

One member commented that this was a vast important document and thanked Councillor Ric Pallister for his Portfolio Holder briefing on the issue.

In view of the document being a vast and important piece of work Scrutiny members were encouraged to attend District Executive to ask questions.

It was felt that there was a need to have a clear and legal view on what was meant by the term 'Sustainable Development'.

One member commented that she was encouraged by the Neighbourhood Plans but pointed out that there could be a resource implication for the District Council that needed to be considered.

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Clarification was sought on the relationship between Neighbourhood Plans and the Local Plan and it was felt that there was a need for a clear definition on how the two fit together.

### **SSDC Partnerships Review**

It was felt that it would be useful if a key could be included in Table A to explain what was meant by a Key, Substantial and Minor Partnership as listed under category.

### **Medium Term Financial Strategy & Financial Plan for 2012/13 to 2016/17**

The Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) updated members on the current position on the Medium Term Financial Plan (Revenue Budgets for 2012/12 to 2016/17).

Members noted that a Workshop would be held on 15<sup>th</sup> November for all members to consider the first draft of a new Corporate Plan.

Scrutiny members were invited to attend a meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber to review the Portfolio Holder Savings Plans.

Members were issued with a Budget and Corporate Plan Timetable for 2012/13.

### **District Executive Forward Plan**

Members noted that the report on Scrutiny arrangements for the Somerset Waste Board listed on the District Executive Forward Plan for November was not a District Executive report and would be removed from the Forward Plan.

### **Exclusion of the 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).

### **Redevelopment of Council owned building at Goldcroft, Yeovil**

Members expressed concern that the Ward Members had not been consulted on the proposals.

Members questioned whether the Council had a policy for the disposal of assets and felt that it would be beneficial for Scrutiny to look at this in the future.

To what extent had the Council considered selling the property on the open market?

### **SSDC Comprehensive (Efficiency) Review of South Somerset District Council**

Members continued to question the purpose of the Partnership and expressed reservations about its continued operation.

**Transfer of Community Activity Bus – Selection of Preferred Bidder**

Members questioned who would decide how the 30 days to be made available to SSDC would be allocated?

What was the level of member involvement in the tendering process?

What are the monitoring arrangements to ensure that the Partnership is delivering?

There is no mention under the financial implications of the report that the money would have to be returned to the Lottery if the Council were to sell the Bus. In view of this members sought clarification that all reports are seen and signed off by Finance prior to being seen by members.

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**58. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 15)**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

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

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Chairman

Scrutiny Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

**7. Verbal Update on Task and Finish Reviews**

The Task and Finish Review Chairs will give a brief verbal update on progress made.

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Scrutiny Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

**8. Scrutiny Work Programme**

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Performance Management	Budget	Background/Description	Corporate Aim	Lead Officer (Lead Member)
01/11/11	District Executive reports for Scrutiny consideration	✓			Each month Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on all District Executive reports.		
29/11/11	Items for the Work Programme	✓					Emily McGuinness Jo Gale Scrutiny Managers
29/11/11	District Executive reports for Scrutiny consideration	✓			Each month Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on all District Executive reports.		
29/11/11	Capital Schemes and update on MTFP			✓	Scrutiny Committee members to comment on the Capital Programme and the MTFP reports prior to District Executive.		Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)  Councillor Tim Carroll – Portfolio Holder - Finance & Spatial Planning

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Performance Management	Budget	Background/Description	Corporate Aim	Lead Officer (Lead Member)
29/11/11	Yarlington Homes Presentation	✓			Presentation from Gary Orr, new Chief Executive from Yarlington Homes about the future direction of Yarlington Homes.		
December 2011	Special Meeting reviewing Portfolio Holder Saving Plans	✓					Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)  All Portfolio Holders
05/01/12	District Executive reports for Scrutiny consideration	✓			Each month Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on all District Executive reports.		
05/01/12	Update on MTFP and Capital Programme			✓	Scrutiny Committee members to comment on the Capital Programme and the MTFP reports prior to District Executive.		Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)  Councillor Tim Carroll – Portfolio Holder - Finance & Spatial Planning
31/01/12	District Executive reports for Scrutiny consideration	✓			Each month Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on all District Executive reports.		



Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Performance Management	Budget	Background/Description	Corporate Aim	Lead Officer (Lead Member)
31/01/12	Final budget and capital Programme			✓	Scrutiny members to comment on the proposed 2011/12 Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and revised Capital Programme prior to consideration by District Executive and Full Council.		Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)  Councillor Tim Carroll – Portfolio Holder - Finance & Spatial Planning
31/01/12	Update on the Park Home Project	✓			At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 1 <sup>st</sup> February members received an update on the management of park home sites and requested a 12 monthly report on this issue.	To improve the housing, health and well-being of our citizens	Steve Joel, Assistant Director (Health and Well-Being)  Councillor Ric Pallister – Portfolio Holder - Leader, Strategy and Policy
28/02/12	District Executive reports for Scrutiny consideration	✓			Each month Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on all District Executive reports.		

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Performance Management	Budget	Background/Description	Corporate Aim	Lead Officer (Lead Member)
28/02/12	Monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the HomeFinder Somerset Review	✓			To give Scrutiny members an opportunity to ensure their recommendations as accepted by the HomeFinder Somerset Board are being implemented as stated.		Jo Gale Scrutiny Manager  Ric Pallister – Portfolio Holder - Leader, Strategy and Policy
28/02/12	Review of Partnerships Register	✓			District Executive at its meeting on 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2011 recommended that Scrutiny Committee review the Partnerships Register in order that recommendations can be taken into account during the budget setting process.		Alice Knight, Third Sector & Partnerships Manager  Sylvia Seal, Leisure & Culture
03/04/12	District Executive reports for Scrutiny consideration	✓			Each month Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on all District Executive reports.		
TBC	Update on Community Safety	✓			Scrutiny members to review the performance of Community Safety arrangements.	Ensure safe, sustainable and cohesive communities	Alice Knight, Third Sector and Partnerships Manager  Councillor Tony Fife – strategic responsibility for Community Safety

**Task & Finish Commissions**

<b>Date Commenced</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Members</b>
To be confirmed	Social Housing Fraud	John Calvert Nick Colbert Carol Goodall Derek Yeomans Barry Walker
October 2011	Capital Bids	
To be confirmed	Review of Member representation on Outside Bodies	

Scrutiny Committee – 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011

**9. Somerset Waste Board – Forward Plan**







Scrutiny Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

**10. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

*Lead Officers: Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager*

*Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager*

*Contact Details: emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462566 or  
joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462077*

The Chairman will update members on the issues raised by Scrutiny Members at the District Executive meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

Attached for information is a copy of the draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

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MEETING: DE.05: 11:12  
DATE 06.10.11

## South Somerset District Council

**Draft Minutes** of a meeting of the **District Executive** held on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

(9.30 a.m. – 12.50 p.m.)

**Present:**

**Members:** Ric Pallister (in the Chair)

Tony Fife  
Patrick Palmer  
Jo Roundell Greene

Sylvia Seal  
Peter Seib  
Angie Singleton

**Also Present:**

Nigel Mermagen  
David Norris  
Gina Seaton

Sue Steele  
Martin Wale  
Colin Winder

**Officers:**

Mark Williams  
Rina Singh  
Vega Sturgess  
Donna Parham  
Ian Clarke  
Steve Joel  
Martin Woods  
Helen Rutter  
Adron Duckworth  
Andy Foyne  
Alice Knight  
Colin McDonald  
Lynda Pincombe  
Emily McGuinness  
Angela Cox

Chief Executive  
Strategic Director (Place and Performance)  
Strategic Director (Operations and Customer Focus)  
Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services)  
Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services)  
Assistant Director (Health and Well-Being)  
Assistant Director (Economy)  
Assistant Director (Communities)  
Conservation Manager  
Spatial Policy Manager  
Third Sector and Partnerships Manager  
Corporate Strategic Housing Manager  
Community Health and Leisure Manager  
Scrutiny Manager  
Democratic Services Manager

**Note:** All decisions were approved without dissent unless shown otherwise.

### 54. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

### 55. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tim Carroll, Henry Hobhouse and Michael Lewis.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

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**57. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)**

It was agreed that members of the public present would speak at the time the Agenda item was discussed.

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**58. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)**

The Chairman reminded Members that there had been great pressure on Managers to identify 4% savings from their budgets for 2012/13 and he was particularly impressed by the Spatial Policy Manager who had identified more than the required 4%. He thanked the Spatial Policy Manager and his team for their exceptional efforts.

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**59. Update on the Ropewalk, West Coker (Agenda Item 6)**

The Assistant Director (Economy) advised that there were two issues still outstanding at the site: the transfer of the lease and the repayment of money outstanding to SSDC. He said that a letter had been received from the Industrial Buildings Preservation Trust (IBPT) indicating that they were willing to transfer the lease to SSDC and to pay the £30,000 owing. This now required confirmation by a second representative of the IBPT and he expected that confirmation to arrive shortly.

Mr Ross Aitken, Chairman of the Coker Rope and Sail Trust, advised that following their grant application, they had received £180,000 from the Architectural Heritage Fund. This would ensure the project was fully funded apart from the machinery at the site and an application would be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for assistance with this. He thanked the Council for their continuing and vital support.

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) confirmed that once the lease had been surrendered by the IBPT it would only take a week or two to complete the legal transfer.

Mr Angus McPhee, Chairman of West Coker Parish Council, spoke of his concern at a notice sent to the Parish Council advising the withdrawal of a planning application at the site by the District Council. He felt any grant of planning permission may raise the value of the land, particularly to the person from whom the land was compulsorily purchased from. However, the Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) confirmed that the area of land which the planning permission had been applied and withdrawn was not part of the land which had been purchased under the compulsory purchase order so there would be no effect on the value of the land.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the verbal update.

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive noted the verbal update on the current position of the Ropewalk at West Coker.

**Reason:** To update Members on the current position of the Ropewalk at West Coker.

*(Adron Duckworth, Conservation Manager – 01935 462652)  
(adron.duckworth@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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## 60. Draft National Planning Policy Framework Consultation (Agenda Item 7)

The Chairman advised that the responses to the consultation had also been discussed at his Portfolio Holder briefing the previous week and Members comments together with the comments from the Scrutiny Committee would be fed into the final response, which he would circulate to all Members, prior to it being submitted on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

The Spatial Policy Manager noted that there were still some typographical errors within the consultation response which he would correct before it was submitted. He noted that the SSDC Core Strategy would be adopted within the next 12 months and it needed to tie in with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) therefore there was a need to establish transitional arrangements between the two documents.

During discussion the following points were made by Members:-

- Paragraphs 25 and 27 – the wording should be changed to ‘require’ Local Planning Authorities to co-operate – we cannot rely on ‘should’ and ‘expected’.
- Paragraph 39 must strongly reflect the need for communication between local planning authorities and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) regarding any future MOD development.
- Paragraph 40 – there was a real need to know and understand the stance of the Planning Inspectorate.
- Clarification was sought on the relationship between Neighbourhood Plans and the Local Plan and a clear definition was needed on how the two fit together.
- Concern at the cost to the District Council to assist with the production of Neighbourhood Plans, particularly in rural areas with many Parishes.
- Lack of definition of a neighbourhood and the possibility that Parishes may have to cluster together to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.
- A clear and legal view was needed on the term ‘Sustainable Development’.
- Planning applications can be delayed by statutory consultees failing to respond within the statutory time period and there should be some form of compulsion requiring them to do so.
- Paragraph 60 – strengthen this response to highlight the importance of safeguarding employment land in town centres.
- Paragraph 73 – there is great Government incentive for free schools and Academies to be established and there is concern as to who would build new schools to meet local demand if County Councils no longer had control.
- Paragraph 99 – no mention of the problems caused by developers making technical starts and then halting the development and its effect on the 5 year land supply.
- Need to keep the current Planning Policy Guidance to underpin the new NPPF, otherwise Local Authorities could face huge legal bills in its interpretation.

It was further agreed by Members that 3 priorities be highlighted in the consultation response, these being:-

1. Paragraph 60 - safeguarding employment land in town centres
2. Paragraph 73 - who would build new schools to meet local demand
3. Keep the current Planning Policy Guidance to underpin the new NPPF

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to endorse the proposed responses, subject to the above comments being incorporated into the final consultation response by SSDC.

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive:

1. Endorsed the proposed responses to the Government's consultation, as amended, on the draft National Planning Policy Framework as set out in the report;
2. noted the implications for the Council's emerging Core Strategy and operation of the Development Management service.

**Reason:** To inform members of the Government's published draft National Planning Policy Framework which is to replace all current main Planning Policy documents and to agree this Council's response to the Government's request for comments.

*(Andy Foyne, Spatial Policy Manager – 01935 462650)  
(andy.foyne@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

## 61. **SSDC Partnerships Review (Agenda Item 8)**

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture advised that the review of SSDC partnerships had gone through a rigorous Scrutiny Task and Finish Review and had been discussed at Area Committees. She drew Members attention to the table of proposals on Agenda pages 24 to 26 and she asked that they also read the comments next to each recommendation. If the recommendations in the report were agreed, the number of partnerships on the SSDC Partnerships Register would be reduced from 37 to 15 and this could result in some financial savings to the Council.

The Third Sector and Partnerships Manager advised that there would be an annual review of SSDC partnerships in future and also, a Scrutiny Task and Finish Review would now look at Councillors appointments to outside organisations to check their relevance.

The Scrutiny Committee Chairman reported that during their discussion of the report, it was felt that an explanation of minor, substantial and key partners would have been useful. The Third Sector and Partnerships Manager agreed to include this guidance in future reports.

During discussion the following points were made by Members:-

- The recommendation was to retain the South Somerset Together (LSP) on the Partnerships Register, contrary to the recommendation of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Review.
- The Mendip and South Somerset Community Safety Partnership was currently in a new trial arrangement under the name of the Safer Somerset Partnership and this pilot would be evaluated in March 2012.

- The Area Community Safety Action Panels may continue to meet in the same form although it was recommended that they were no longer listed as an SSDC partnership.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to agree the recommendations of the report.

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive:

1. Agreed the recommendations made in Table A suggesting the removal and retention of partnerships on the Partnerships Register;
2. Agreed that the annual review of each of the remaining partnerships be reported back to District Executive or the relevant Area Committee by April 2012, together with any further partnerships identified by officers and members which do not currently appear on the partnerships register;
3. Agreed that the following definition of a partnership at SSDC be adopted:

A partnership is a formal working arrangement involving one or more independent bodies, from any sector, who pool resources and share responsibility for agreeing and then delivering a set of planned actions and outcomes. A formal agreement is made by all partners to work together for specific outcomes.

4. Agreed that the following definition of what a partnership is not be adopted:
  - Procured contract arrangements.
  - Grants with, or without, Service Level Agreements.
  - Community planning groups, forums or similar.
  - Collaborative working where members or officers belong to, or meet together, to discuss policy, strategy or similar issues. These may be similar to partnerships but the key difference is there is no formal agreement or in some cases outcomes. SSDC may participate in an advisory capacity or to gather information to benefit developments within SSDC.
5. Agreed that clear guidance be circulated to all SSDC services as to the information which should be recorded on the Partnerships Register, including the revised template recommended by Scrutiny Committee;
6. Agreed that the Partnerships Register be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee annually in the spring, in order that recommendations can be taken into account during the budget setting process;
7. Agreed that a Scrutiny review should be undertaken regarding councillor appointments to outside bodies.

**Reason:** To inform members of the discussion from the Area Committees, following their consideration of the SSDC Partnerships Review carried out by the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, and to consider the recommendations made by that Review.

*(Alice Knight, Third Sector and Partnerships Manager – 01963 435061)  
(alice.knight@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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## **62. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Financial Plan for 2012/13 to 2016/17 (Agenda Item 9)**

The Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) introduced her report to Members and drew their attention to

- The expectation that interest rates would not rise before December 2012.
- The possibility that more funding could come through the New Homes Bonus.
- Council Tax increases had again been frozen by the Government.
- Any large increase in Council Tax in the future could be subject to a call for a local referendum by local residents and the cost could potentially be £80,000 to £90,000.
- The 4% budget savings exercise had already identified £700,000 towards the next years target savings of £2.2m.
- There would be a Members Workshop on 15<sup>th</sup> November in the Council Chamber at Brympton Way for the Portfolio Holders to present a new Corporate Plan for discussion.
- There would be a special meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> December where Portfolio Holders would put forward their budget savings for the forthcoming year.

During discussion it was noted that the Strategic Asset Management Group were currently looking at all land and buildings owned by SSDC, in conjunction with Ward Members and the Area Committees, with a view to disposing of those with no strategic value.

Councillor Martin Wale confirmed that Conservative Councillors were meeting the Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) to discuss their budget proposals for 2012/13 and they would propose any variances in plenty of time for consideration in the normal budget process.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to agree the recommendations of the report.

- RESOLVED:** That the District Executive:
1. approved the current Medium Term Financial Strategy;
  2. noted the current position and timetable for the Medium Term Financial Plan;
  3. approved the use of £300,000 of general fund balances to replenish the Voluntary Redundancy Reserve.

**Reason:** To inform members of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the current position on the MTFP (Revenue Budgets for 2012/13 to 2016/17).

*(Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) – 01935 462225)  
(donna.parham@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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### 63. District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda Item 10)

The following amendments to the District Executive Forward Plan were noted:

- Substitute Members on Committees – November 2012
- Report on the Heritage Service – November 2012
- Review of South Somerset Together (LSP) – February 2012
- Review of SSDC Partnerships – April 2012

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive:

1. approved the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A of the agenda report, subject to the following additions:
  - Substitute Members on Committees – November 2012
  - Report on the Heritage Service – November 2012
  - Review of South Somerset Together (LSP) – Feb 2012
  - Review of SSDC Partnerships – April 2012
2. noted the contents of the Consultation Database as shown a Appendix B.

**Reason:** The Forward Plan is a statutory document.

*(Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services) – 01935 462184)  
(ian.clarke@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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### 64. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 11)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the District Executive would take place on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 9.30 a.m.

*(Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services) – 01935 462184)  
(ian.Clarke@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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### 65. Exclusion of Press and Public

**RESOLVED:** That the following items be considered in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under Paragraph 1: Information relating to any individual, and Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

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**66. Redevelopment of Council owned building at Goldcroft, Yeovil (Agenda Item 12) (Confidential)**

The Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy noted that the lease of the building to a social landlord was an ideal re-use of an empty town centre building.

The Corporate Strategic Housing Manager advised that the recommendations were subject to the appropriate planning permission being granted. He further proposed that a suitable break clause be written into the lease, so that SSDC may regain the building at any time if a suitable future development came forward in the area.

Members were content to confirm the recommendations of the report, as amended.

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive agreed subject to the appropriate planning permission being granted:

1. the grant of a 40 year lease at a peppercorn rate, with appropriate break clauses, to the named Housing Association for the property at Goldcroft, Yeovil;
2. to transfer the property at a peppercorn lease which was less than best consideration of the current value;
3. the named Housing Association meet the Council's legal and professional costs in respect of the grant of the lease;
4. payment of a capital subsidy to the named Housing Association to assist with the conversion works required.

**Reason:** To agree to the grant of a lease for the council owned building at Goldcroft, Yeovil to the named Housing Association and the payment of a capital subsidy to enable conversion to form two units of affordable housing.

*(Colin McDonald, Corporate Strategic Housing Manager – 01935 462331)  
(colin.mcdonald@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

**67. SSDC Comprehensive (Efficiency) Review of South Somerset Together (Agenda Item 13) (Confidential)**

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to confirm Option 2 as their preference for the future of the Local Strategic Partnership. They also agreed that a short progress report should be presented to District Executive in February 2012, detailing the partners and future aims, and a full review report in November 2012.

**RESOLVED:** That the District Executive:

1. noted that the Partnership, as currently constituted, no longer met anticipated needs and should now be replaced by the much simplified model described in the report;
2. confirmed that Option 2 be adopted for the continuing role of the District Council in South Somerset Together, with a review date of November 2012;



3. agreed that officers continue discussions with Partners to implement changes as quickly as feasible with a new model fully operational by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012, if agreed funding is forthcoming from Partners;
4. Agreed that a short progress report be presented to District Executive in February 2012.

**Reason:** To agree to the resourcing and future business model for South Somerset Together (SST) and the role that the Council should play in a sustainable, strategic partnership for the future.

*(Voting: 6 in favour, 1 against, 0 abstentions)*

*(Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities) – 01935 462060)  
(helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

**68. Transfer of Community Activity Bus – Selection of Preferred Bidder (Agenda Item 14) (Confidential)**

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture drew Members attention to the programme of proposed activities to be held on the bus by the proposed future operator.

Members were content to confirm the recommendations of the report.

- RESOLVED:** That the District Executive:
1. approved the selection of a suitable operator for the future management of the Community Activity Bus;
  2. accepted that by retaining the Community Activity Bus and transferring its future management to the suitable operator, the opportunity of selling the bus now was forgone;
  3. authorised the Community Health and Leisure Manager in conjunction with the Assistant Director (Health and Wellbeing) and Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture to negotiate and finalise the legal documentation associated with the transfer.

**Reason:** To agree to the appointment of an operator to manage Community Activity Bus.

*(Lynda Pincombe, Community Health and Leisure Manager – 01935 462614)  
(lynda.pincombe@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

.....  
Chairman

.....  
Date

Scrutiny Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

**11. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011**

*Lead Officers:*                      *Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager*  
   *Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager*

*Contact Details:*                      *emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462566*  
   *or 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 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011.

Members are asked to read the reports and bring any concerns/issues from the reports to be discussed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011.

The Chairman will take forward any views raised by Scrutiny members to the District Executive meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011.

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Scrutiny Committee - 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

Members are requested to note that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

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