

Scrutiny Committee – 31st January 2012

1. Minutes

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Committee** held on Tuesday 3rd January 2012 in the Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

(10.00 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.)

Present: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Cathy Bakewell
Dave Bulmer
John Calvert
Marcus Fysh
Carol Goodall
Tim Inglefield

Pauline Lock
Tony Lock
Paul Maxwell
Wes Read
Martin Wale

Also Present:

Councillors Henry Hobhouse, Peter Seib, Gina Seaton and Sylvia Seal.

Officers:

Donna Parham
Jo Gale
Emily McGuinness
Jo Morris

Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)
Scrutiny Manager
Scrutiny Manager
Committee Administrator

85. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 29th November 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

86. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Colin Winder, Graham Oakes, Tim Carroll and Jo Roundell Greene.

87. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

With reference to the District Executive Agenda, Item 7 – Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2016/17, Councillors Dave Bulmer and Carol Goodall mentioned that they were town council representatives on the Market Towns Investment Group.

88. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

89. Issues Arising from Previous Meetings (Agenda Item 5)**Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report – Removal of NI195 – Improved Street and Environmental Cleanliness**

Members noted that following the removal of the NI195 inspections, the Street Cleansing Team will monitor the quality of the cleansing service through regular, routine supervisors work monitoring. This information will be recorded on the same sheets that were used for the joint local area inspections with members. Complaints, requests and compliments relating to cleansing will also be monitored. The figures can be made available to members upon request.

Yeovil Town Centre Partnership

In response to concerns raised over the workings and deliverability of the Yeovil Town Centre Partnership, Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager informed members that she had received a lengthy response from the Area South Development Manager and that she would circulate the response to members.

Budget Scrutiny Session

Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager asked members to let her have any comments from the budget scrutiny session held on 15th December 2011.

Members noted that the programme of Portfolio Holders attending Scrutiny Committee to answer questions about the services within their portfolios would commence at the next meeting with Cllr Peter Seib, Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Democratic Services.

90. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman reported that she was due to attend the Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel meeting with Cllr Paul Maxwell on 9th January 2012 and that members were welcome to let them have any questions to go forward. The reports due to be considered by the Somerset Waste Partnership were available on the website. One of the current main issues was in relation to the fees and charges for green waste and bulky items being harmonised across the district.

The Chairman announced that she had been appointed as a representative on the Board of Governors for Musgrove Park Hospital representing South Somerset and Mendip. She welcomed any views/issues from members and confirmed that she would take these forward to the Board.

91. Verbal Update on Reports considered by District Executive on 1st December 2011 (Agenda Item 7)

Members noted the minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 1st December 2011 as outlined in the agenda. The minutes included the comments raised by members of the Scrutiny Committee.

92. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 5th January 2012 (Agenda Item 8)

Members considered the reports outlined in the District Executive agenda for 5th January 2012.

It was agreed that the following comments would be taken forward to District Executive.

Annual Monitoring Report 2010/11

Page 2 of the District Executive report refers to there no longer being a requirement to submit these reports to the Secretary of State and that the audience is expected to be the local electorate and communities. Members sought clarification on the future use of the monitoring reports and questioned how the reports will be published to its audience in the future?

With reference to page 44 of the appendices, clarification was sought on the recommended level of growth of 16,000 dwellings for the plan period 2006-2026. Scrutiny members were under the impression that the figure should be between 12,000 and 16,000 dwellings.

Members sought clarification over the use of South Somerset's Evidence base and whether it would be used to inform the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework as stated in the document, as members expressed concern that many of the documents were out of date and inaccurate.

Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2016/17

Scrutiny members request that District Executive seek more detail regarding the Capital Projects that have slippage and if appropriate rescore each project to assist members in deciding whether to continue with the projects and how to prioritise them in preparation for year-end.

Scrutiny members would like more information regarding the Other Reserves to be sought to enable members to effectively review the reserves and consider if they are still appropriate in advance of the capital programme being considered for approval.

Draft Proposals of the Community Governance Review of South Cadbury Parish Council

Members raised concerns over the costs associated with Community Governance Reviews and felt that there should be a separate budget heading within Democratic Services so that all costs are clearly identified.

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 item 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).

Transfer of responsibility of Ilchester toilet provision to Ilchester Parish Council (Confidential)

Scrutiny members supported the recommendations outlined in the report.

District Executive Forward Plan

With reference to the report on the new SSDC Corporate Plan, which was due to be considered in February, Members agreed to consider it as part of the District Executive agenda.

93. Verbal update on Task and Finish Reviews (Agenda Item 9)

Outside Organisations

Cllr Martin Wale, Chairman of the Review Group reported that an initial meeting had been held and that Members had requested advice on declarations of interest and liability information. It was noted that a questionnaire had been sent to each outside organisation asking whether they still required a representative and what the role of the representative entailed. The next meeting would be held on Thursday 19th January at 3.00pm – 5.00pm.

Social Housing Fraud

Cllr John Calvert, Chairman of the Review Group reported that an initial meeting had been held and that he was delighted with the support from the Portfolio Holder and the Housing and Welfare Manager. A Scrutiny Inquiry Day was due to be held on 22nd February where each housing association would be asked the same set of questions. The aim of the review was to build up a good practice template. The next meeting would be held on 20th January.

Choice Based Lettings Follow Up Review

Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager reported that there were some areas of concern and that she would be looking to investigate these further and was hoping to arrange a meeting with the Portfolio Holder.

94. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 10)

Reference was made to the agenda report, which informed members of the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Manager would invite the district representative appointed to the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board to attend the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to answer members' questions.

Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager advised members that the report on Student Engagement would be coming forward to the next meeting. She welcomed responses to the email she had previously circulated to members.

It was agreed to include an item in the Scrutiny Work Programme on the review of the Capital Strategy, as there could be a need to establish a Task & Finish Review in the future.

Members noted that the items put forward at the work programming session held on 30th August 2011 would be scored following the approval of the new Corporate Plan.

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

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95. Somerset Waste Board – Forward Plan (Agenda Item 11)

RESOLVED: That the Somerset Waste Board Forward Plan be noted as outlined in the agenda.

96. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda 12)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on Tuesday 3rd January 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