

Scrutiny Committee – 1st May 2012

1. Minutes

South Somerset District Council

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

(10.00am – 12.40pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Cathy Bakewell
Dave Bulmer
Carol Goodall

Pauline Lock
Paul Maxwell

Also Present:

Councillors Tim Carroll, Henry Hobhouse, Ric Pallister, Peter Gubbins, Sylvia Seal and Jo Roundell Greene

Officers:

Emily McGuinness	Scrutiny Manager
Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager
Vega Sturgess	Strategic Director (Operations and Customer Focus)
Jo Morgan	Community Cohesion Officer
Martin Woods	Assistant Director (Economy)
Becky Sanders	Committee Administrator

115. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 28th February 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

116. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Calvert, Marcus Fysh, Tim Inglefield, Tony Lock, Wes Read, Martin Wale and Colin Winder.

117. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

118. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of public at the meeting.

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

There were no issues raised from previous meetings.

120. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- That Emily McGuinness and herself had attended the South West Councils Scrutiny Network in Taunton on 1st March. The Chair of Cornwall Council's Scrutiny Committee had now been appointed Chair of the network and he will be supported by the Scrutiny officers from Gloucester City Council and Emily McGuinness from SSDC. This would hopefully ensure that the network covered issues pertinent to all tiers of local government in the future. The network would meet twice a year and primarily focus on providing training and development opportunities for Scrutiny members across the region.
 - That she had attended a meeting of the Somerset Waste Board on 30th March, where there had been discussion about VAT issues affecting the Somerset Waste Partnership.
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121. Verbal Update on reports considered by District Executive on 1st March 2012 (Agenda Item 7)

Members noted the draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 1st March as outlined in the agenda. Many of the comments raised by Scrutiny were noted in the minutes, and the following points were also noted:

Statutory Pay Policy for Senior Officers

Members were informed that councillors were not included within the Council's definition of lowest paid employees.

Community Health and leisure facilities – Standards of provision

Age of the population was not taken into consideration, as the standards allowed parishes to identify deficiencies regardless of age.

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

Members considered the reports outlined in the District executive agenda for 5th April 2012. It was agreed that the following comments and questions would be taken forward to District Executive for consideration.

Adoption Of Equality Objectives

Scrutiny wished to commend the action plan within the report which was easy to understand and with SMART objectives.

Public Consultation on Proposed Car Park Charges and Introduction of Evening and Sunday Charging in Selected Car Parks in Yeovil

Scrutiny members could accept the principle of establishing evening and weekend car parking charges in Yeovil, but were of the opinion that it should be a pilot monitored for 12 months and that there should be a nominal flat rate fee for evening and weekend parking of up to £1 across the recommended car parks in Yeovil. Scrutiny requested a report after 12 months to assess the actual income against projected budgets and the social and economic impact on the town.

Scrutiny members were also of the opinion that the car parking strategy should have been reviewed prior to this process.

Draft Recommendations On The New Electoral Arrangements For Somerset County Council

Scrutiny members expressed their dissatisfaction with the proposed loss of ward / division 'co-terminosity', with many ward members having to liaise with more than one county division member.

Councillor Tim Carroll had indicated he would circulate information regarding the new arrangements to all members – this would include a map indicating the new division boundaries and the relationship to the SSDC ward boundaries.

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).

Community Resource Centre – Options Appraisal

The report was discussed and questions directed to the Assistant Director (Health & well-Being) before the Scrutiny Committee meeting would be taken forward to District Executive.

Wincanton Community Sports Centre Restructuring of Contractual and Funding Arrangements

Scrutiny members supported the recommendations outlined in the report.

123. Verbal Update on Task and Finish Reviews (Agenda Item 9)

Social Housing Fraud

Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager noted that a report to consider the recommendations of the Task and Finish review would be made to the Scrutiny Committee in May. The report would then be made to Council.

Housing and Council Tax Benefits

Councillor Carol Goodall informed members that the review group had met twice and both meetings had been quite intense, with a lot of background information to understand.

Performance Management

Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager, thanked those members who had attended the Performance Management Task and Finish Group and the subsequent workshop arranged by the Strategic Director (Place and Performance). She explained that the comments made by Scrutiny members would be considered alongside those made by Executive Members at their workshop and would be reported to District Executive at their May meeting. As usual, Scrutiny Committee would consider the report prior to District Executive.

124. Police and Crime Panels (Agenda Item 10)

Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager, introduced the report as shown in the agenda, and highlighted that the Police and Crime Panel would essentially be a scrutiny body designed to hold the Police Commissioner to account. No final decision had been made as to how appointments to the panel would be made.

Councillor Cathy Bakewell, gave a brief update on key points raised during a presentation to Somerset County Council's Scrutiny Committee on the same subject.

125. Scrutiny Work Programme – Selection of Items (Agenda Item 11)

Due to the absence of several members of the committee, it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

126. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 12)

Reference was made to the agenda report, which informed members of the Scrutiny Work Programme. The Scrutiny Managers informed members of updates including:

- Report on the Homefinder Somerset review would not be discussed at the May meeting and at the current time it was unknown when the report would be made.
 - Report on the Temporary Accommodation Strategy would be put back to June.
 - The update on Community Safety would be made to the May meeting
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Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager, also informed members that a presentation had been arranged for all council members on 3rd May on the Impact of the Localism Act.

RESOLVED: That the Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.

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

127. Scoping for Portfolio Holder Presentation – May Meeting (Agenda Item 13)

Members were reminded to forward any questions or suggestions to the Scrutiny Manager, for matters they would like to be discussed with the Portfolio Holder for Area South, Yeovil Vision and Community Safety.

128. Somerset Waste Board – Forward Plan (Agenda Item 14)

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

129. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 15)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on Tuesday 1st May at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

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

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Chairman