

South Somerset District Council

Draft minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 4 June 2013 in the Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

(10.00am –11.40am)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Dave Bulmer
Nigel Gage
Pauline Lock

Graham Middleton
Sue Osborne (from 10.10am)

David Recardo
Martin Wale

Also present:

Councillors Ric Pallister and Nick Colbert

Officers:

Martin Woods
Garry Green
Nigel Collins
Donna Parham
Ian Clarke
Becky Sanders

Assistant Director, Economy
Engineering and Property Services Manager
Transport Strategy Officer
Assistant Director, Finance and Corporate Services
Assistant Director, Legal and Corporate Services
Democratic Services Officer

1. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 7 May 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cathy Bakewell, Carol Goodall, Tony Lock and Paul Maxwell.

3. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of public at the meeting.

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

There were no issues raised from previous meetings.

6. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman welcomed Councillors David Recardo and Nick Colbert to Scrutiny Committee.

She also reminded members:

- that SSDC had been shortlisted by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, Good Scrutiny Awards 2013 for two awards and the outcome would be known on the 11 June.
 - An evening workshop was being arranged for July so that all interested members could be involved in discussions about items for the Scrutiny Work Programme. If members had any suggestions for items to be included they were requested to contact one of the Scrutiny Managers.
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7. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 9 May 2013 (Agenda item 7)

The Chairman noted that the Scrutiny comments were included in the District Executive minutes that had been circulated.

8. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 6 June 2013 (Agenda item 8)

Members considered the reports outlined in the District Executive agenda for 6 June 2013. It was agreed that the following comments and questions would be taken forward to District Executive for consideration:

SSDC ICT Strategy Review – item 6

- Some members raised concerns about security regarding 'BYOD – Bring Your Own Device' (p. 9)
- Activity 20 on page 18 – workshops about social media awareness - Scrutiny felt this was essential and should include training as well as awareness. Members also felt the scheduling should be brought forward.
- Scrutiny were content that the recommendations go forward.

SSDC Web Strategy Review – item 7

- Some Scrutiny members suggested that use of Skype and Facetime could be explored as a means for customers contacting SSDC.
- Scrutiny were content that the recommendations go forward.

Yeovil Innovation Centre – Future Operating Arrangements Committee – item 8

- As the recommendation started 'subject to', Scrutiny queried the likelihood of, and when, SCC and the HCA would be entering into the deed of variation.
- Scrutiny were generally content that the recommendations go forward.

District Wide Car Parking Strategy Review – item 9

- Scrutiny members were content that changes suggested at Scrutiny and DX in May had been incorporated into the report
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2012/13 Revenue Outturn Report – item 10

- Top of page 50 – Scrutiny queried the figure and whether the option to pay for green bins for a two year period had been factored in.
- Scrutiny were concerned that some adverse variances had been caused by unrealistic targets
- Building Control – It was queried if the reduced income situation would get worse as private companies were taking on more of the business.

2012/13 Capital Outturn Report – item 11

- Scrutiny were concerned about the delayed projects (p.60) and the time frames involved.
- It was also queried if the new boiler at the Octagon could be funded by S.106 monies.

Upgrade of Payroll and HR System – item 12

- Scrutiny did not raise any comments and were content the recommendation go forward.

CONFIDENTIAL - 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).

CONFIDENTIAL**Scrutiny Task and Finish Review of Councillor Representation on Outside Bodies – item 15 (Confidential)**

- Scrutiny made no further comments for District Executive

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

The Chairman informed members of the latest updates which had been provided by the Scrutiny Managers.

Council Tax Benefit Changes

A monitoring report would be considered by the Task and Finish Group in July to see if there are any areas of concern or if the scheme might need to be altered in any way for the forthcoming year.

Countywide Review of Homelessness Strategy

The group have met on two occasions to review the draft strategy. Concerns have been expressed about the complexity of the document and the lack of plain English. The group are hoping to work with the Somerset Housing Partnership to develop the strategy over the coming months.

Business Rates – Discretionary Rate Relief

The Scrutiny Manager has met with key officers regarding timescales for development of the policy, and ideally the review will run between end of June and January. Invitations to members to be on the review group would be circulated shortly.

County Wide Review of Flooding

The final report will be discussed by Leaders and Chief Executives on 18 June, and will also be discussed by each individual Scrutiny Committee. The nature of the recommendations mean there will be a need for some further Scrutiny work.

ACTION: Members to note the updates.

10. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 10)

The Chairman reminded members an evening workshop in July would be arranged for discussion about future items for the work programme.

ACTION: Members to note the Scrutiny Work Programme.

11. Somerset Waste Board – Forward Plan (Agenda item 11)

ACTION: Members to note the Somerset Waste Board Forward Plan.

12. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on Tuesday 2 July 2013 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

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Chairman