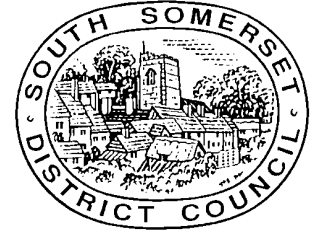


## South Somerset District Council

*Notice of Meeting*



# Scrutiny Committee

*Making a difference where it counts*

**Tuesday 1st March 2016**

**10.00 am**

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

(disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue)



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Members listed on the following page are requested to attend the meeting.

The public and press are welcome to attend.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, **Becky Sanders, Democratic Services Officer 01935 462596**, website: [www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)

This Agenda was issued on Monday 22 February 2016.

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

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



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

# Scrutiny Committee Membership

The following members are requested to attend the meeting:

**Chairman:** Sue Steele  
**Vice-chairmen:** Dave Bulmer and John Clark

Clare Aparicio Paul  
Jason Baker  
Gye Dibben  
Val Keitch

Tony Lock  
Sue Osborne  
Tiffany Osborne  
David Recardo

Garry Shortland  
Rob Stickland  
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 – Council Plan**

**Our focuses are:** (all equal)

- Jobs – We want a strong economy which has low unemployment and thriving businesses
- Environment – We want an attractive environment to live in with increased recycling and lower energy use
- Homes – We want decent housing for our residents that matches their income
- Health and Communities – We want communities that are healthy, self-reliant and have individuals who are willing to help each other

### **Recording and photography at council meetings**

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

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# Scrutiny Committee

**Tuesday 1 March 2016**

## Agenda

### *Preliminary Items*

**1. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 February 2016.

**2. Apologies for absence**

**3. Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (adopted July 2012), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the Agenda for this meeting. A DPI is defined in The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 1464) and Appendix 3 of the Council's Code of Conduct. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 2.8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 2.9. In the interests of complete transparency, Members of the County Council, who are not also members of this committee, are encouraged to declare any interests they may have in any matters being discussed even though they may not be under any obligation to do so under any relevant code of conduct.

**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*

**7. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 4 February 2016 (Page 13)**

**8. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 3 March 2016 (Page 14)**

**9. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Page 15)**

**10. Update on matters of interest (Page 16)**

11. **Scrutiny Work Programme** (Pages 17 - 18)
12. **Date of next meeting** (Page 19)

# Agenda Item 1

## South Somerset District Council

**Draft Minutes** of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held at the **Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT** on **Tuesday 2 February 2016**.

(10.00 am - 1.15 pm)

**Present:**

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

Jason Baker	Sue Osborne
Dave Bulmer	Tiffany Osborne
John Clark	David Recardo
Gye Dibben	Rob Strickland
Val Keitch	Mike Beech
Tony Lock	Linda Vijeh

**Also Present:**

Jo Roundell Greene	Angie Singleton
Henry Hobhouse	

**Officers**

Vega Sturgess	Interim Chief Executive
Donna Parham	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)
Laurence Willis	Assistant Director (Environment)
Helen Rutter	Assistant Director (Communities)
Steve Joel	Assistant Director (Health & Well-Being)
Paul Wheatley	Principal Spatial Planner
Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager
Emily McGuinness	Scrutiny Manager

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**108. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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**109. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clare Aparicio Paul, Garry Shortland and Martin Wale. Councillor Mike Beech was present as substitute for Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul, and Councillor Linda Vijeh for Councillor Martin Wale.

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

Councillors David Recardo, Tony Lock and Rob Strickland each declared a personal interest, as members of Yeovil Town Council, in relation to District Executive Agenda item 12 – Westland Leisure Complex.

#### **111. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)**

There were no members of public at the meeting.

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#### **112. Issues arising from previous meetings (Agenda Item 5)**

Councillor Sue Osborne sought clarification of the process going forward regarding property disposals as per the Call-In considered in January - this is detailed in Matters of Interest.

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#### **113. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

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#### **114. Shared Accommodation Project at Brympton Way Offices (Agenda Item 7)**

The Assistant Director (Environment) and the Portfolio Holder (Property and Climate Change) introduced the report. The report had been included in the agenda at the request of Scrutiny Committee members to update members on the first 12 months of the shared accommodation project. The Assistant Director (Environment) highlighted some of the projects successes:

- In terms of public interest the range of services available from Brympton Way has increased considerably.
- The majority of staff are able to work in the same place nearly every day.
- Most staff teams are based together.
- All Customer First staff are based on the ground floor; this gives the team much more flexibility in terms of managing customer demands.
- Licensing team who have the most visitors to reception are also completely based on the ground floor.
- Due to the change in layout of the carpark only 14 parking spaces were lost, surveys showed we could easily accommodate this.
- Specific hot desk area created for staff who work outside but use Brympton Way as an area to touch base.

During discussion, the following points were made:

- Car parking for elected members remained a concern of busy committee days, with some members saying they frequently used the Visitor parking bays.
- Recently members of the Audit Committee had witnessed some disruption to their meeting caused by a Social Services client – whilst this sort of event didn't happen often; there had been previous occurrences that were distressing. Members were assured that the recent incident was currently being investigated and discussions had with Somerset County Council to try and avoid a repeat in the future.
- Members commented that it is very difficult to book meeting rooms – especially for Scrutiny Task and Finish groups and that the County Council meeting rooms seemed to empty on a regular basis.



Members felt that the relocation of the Members' Room to the Yellow floor has resulted in fewer members using it. The room was previously well used by members between meetings and to use the computer. Members also commented that the Members' Room is often used for Officer Meetings, meaning it is not available to members. The Assistant Director agreed to look into these issues.

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**115. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 7 January 2016 (Agenda Item 8)**

Members noted the update given by the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee.

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**116. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 4 February 2016 (Agenda Item 9)**

The Scrutiny Committee considered the reports contained in the District Executive Agenda for the 4 February 2016 and made the following comments:

**Somerset Waste Partnership – Draft Business Plan (Agenda item 6)**

- Members were reassured that SSDC would be continuing with the current local arrangements for a discounted rate if a green waste bin was purchased for two years.
- Members suggested that there could be a more high profile publicity campaign to promote higher recycling rates and noted that social media campaigns are generally better received than mass mail outs.
- Members were concerned about the potential impact of the new service delivery model proposals on families with young children – especially in relation to the disposal of nappies etc. Members were reassured that SSDC would continue to offer individual solutions to such issues but asked that due consideration be given to the issue by the Board prior to any final decisions being taken.
- Members sought assurance that adequate Equalities Impact Assessment information would come forward prior to members being asked to approve any new Service Delivery Model.

**Revenue Budget 2016/17 (Agenda item 7)**

- Members queried what proportion of the RSG had been made up by the Rural Support Grant?
- Members noted the increased risk levels facing the authority and were reassured by the s151 officer's actions to mitigate these risks and the judicious use of Volatility fund and other balances.
- Members in particular noted the risk represented by the potential for NHS Foundation Trusts to be given charity status and therefore the ability to claim up to 80% mandatory relief – back dated!
- Members sought clarification that the 4 key projects mentioned at paragraph 13 were sufficiently resourced?
- Regarding the Transformation fund of £2.5 million, members sought clarification as to how this reserve would be allocated and what return on investment is expected?

- Best practice states that effective budget Scrutiny should look to ensure adequate resources have been allocated for the delivery of Corporate priorities – in the absence of an updated Corporate Plan members sought clarification as to when a refreshed Corporate Plan would be produced?
- Members thanked the 151 officer and her team for all their hard work in the challenging circumstances.

### **Funding for SSVCA (Agenda item 8)**

- Members noted the proposals for SSVCA to incorporate both Mendip's and Sedgemoor's VCA's and sought assurance that both Mendip and Sedgemoor District Councils would continue to provide current levels of funding going forward? Members were concerned that SSDC could in future be asked to contribute increased funding to a larger organisation, providing services in other districts.
- Members were concerned that there is potential duplication with the work of Community Council for Somerset and the SSDC Area Development Teams.
- Members noted the considerable amount of work that had been undertaken in order to review the current arrangements and thanked the officers involved. They noted that it is vital that accurate evidence regarding the impact of the SSVCA is captured before any future funding decisions are made, with particular focus on ensuring there is no duplication with SSDC services, to prevent SSDC effectively paying twice.
- Members were pleased to note the intention to work towards a managed reduction in funding to the SSVCA.

### **2015/16 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the Quarter Ending 31 December 2015 (Agenda item 9)**

- It was noted that Scrutiny Members have the ability to review outstanding Capital projects on a quarterly basis and this needs to be a robust process to ensure the best use of capital.

### **2015-16 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the Quarter Ending 31 December 2015 (Agenda item 10)**

No comments

### **Community Infrastructure Levy – Draft Charging Schedule (Agenda item 11)**

- The Committee noted that the consultation document would be amended to make it clear that developments of less than 6 dwellings would be liable for both the CIL and payments under HG3/4 as viability studies have shown such an approach is feasible.
- Members also queried if the definition of 'self-builder' could be clarified within the document?

### **Westland Leisure Complex – Progress Report (Agenda item 12)**

Before considering this item it was proposed and seconded that the Committee move into confidential session.

## **CONFIDENTIAL – Exclusion of the Press and 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 this 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).

- Members noted the amount of work that has been done to progress this project and that the project is on course to be delivered on time and within budget.
- Members asked if the Project Board had given consideration to incorporate PV installation in the design of the venue, members appreciate that a separate PV business case would need to be brought forward but feel significant savings could be made if PV installation and building works were done concurrently?
- Members noted that whilst it is disappointing that Brympton Parish Council have declined to make a financial contribution to the project, it has not affected the viability of the project.
- Members also noted the assurance from the Assistant Director that the Sport England bid is looking promising and if successful, will cover the risk of unbanked s106 monies in phase two of the project.

### **The Proposed Leasing of 72 South Street, Yeovil (Agenda item 13)**

No comments.

### **Transfer of responsibility for Pathways and Footbridge at Cocklemoor, Langport (Agenda item 14)**

No comments.

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## **117. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Agenda Item 10)**

The Scrutiny Managers updated the Committee on the work of the Task and Finish Group established to review the on-going Journey of Exploration. The next meeting was scheduled for the 5<sup>th</sup> February at 2.30 p.m. where members would consider the Solo Business case. The draft report of the Task and Finish Group would be circulated via email to Scrutiny Committee members due to the Council report deadlines.

Members were also informed that some members who had previously worked on the Choice Based lettings Task and Finish review had met to consider some proposed changes to the Home Finder Somerset Policy – they had made several suggestions that were being fed back to the Homefinder Somerset Partnership Board.

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## **118. Update on matters of interest (Agenda Item 11)**

The Scrutiny Manager informed members that in relation to the Call-in considered at the January Scrutiny meeting, officers had now received a response from the Homes and Communities Agency and were now in a position to establish a Task and Finish Group to consider the policy relating to the disposal of properties. Members would be contacted to ask for volunteers for this piece of work shortly.

**119. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 12)**

Members considered a request from Councillors Jason Baker and Val Keitch to establish a Task and Finish Group to look at specific elements of the Homefinder Somerset Allocations policy. The request followed a motion tabled at a recent Full Council meeting, and although the motion was defeated, the majority of Scrutiny members felt that the debate had raised a number of issues which merited further discussion via a Task and Finish Group. It was therefore agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group with the following remit:

To:

- Clarify existing allocations/ scoring policies and the ‘weighting’ given to local connections – how well are current scoring arrangements communicated?
- Is it possible to introduce local variations to the Somerset wide scheme?
- Are there any legal / financial / reputational / equality implications to adopting local variations?
- Review the percentage of market Town allocations given to those demonstrating a local connection within the last 12 months?

The Scrutiny Committee re-iterated that the Task and Finish Group should consider these points only and that the report should be completed in time to feed into a wider review of the Homefinder Somerset Policy due for consideration by District Executive in June 2016.

Members noted the Work Programme with the addition of a review of the Economic Development Strategy (due to be updated in 2015) and a review of the current suite of Performance Indicators (such a review is pending the adoption of a refreshed Council Plan). Both these items will be included in the Scrutiny Work Programme with a date to be confirmed.

- ACTIONS:** That the following items be added to the Scrutiny Work Programme:
- Task and Finish Group – Homefinder Somerret Allocations Policy
  - Review of the Economic Development Strategy
  - Review of Performance Indicators

**120. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 13)**

Members noted the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016 in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way.

.....  
Chairman

# Agenda Item 7

## **Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 4 February 2016**

The Chairman will update members on the issues raised by Scrutiny members at the District Executive meeting held on 4 February 2016.

The draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 4 February 2016 have been circulated with the District Executive agenda.

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# Agenda Item 8

## **Reports to be considered by District Executive on 3 March 2016**

*Lead Officer:* Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager  
*Contact Details:* emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462566

Scrutiny Committee members will receive a copy of the District Executive agenda containing the reports to be considered at the meeting on 3 March 2016.

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 March 2016.

The Chairman will take forward any views raised by Scrutiny members to the District Executive meeting on 3 March 2016.

### **Please note:**

The Press and Public will be excluded from the meeting when a report or appendix on the District Executive agenda has been classed as confidential, Scrutiny Committee will consider this in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under paragraph 3 (or for any other reason as stated in the District Executive agenda):

“Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).”

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption from the Access to Information Rules outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

# Agenda Item 9

## **Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews**

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

### **Current Task & Finish Reviews**

- Homefinder Somerset Allocations Policy
-

# Agenda Item 10

## **Update on matters of interest**

*Lead Officers:*            *Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager*  
*Contact Details:*        *emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462566*

## **Action Required**

That members of the Scrutiny Committee note the verbal updates as presented by the Scrutiny Manager.

## **Purpose of Report**

This report is submitted for information to update members of the committee on any recent information regarding matters of interest to the Scrutiny Committee, and for the Scrutiny Manager to verbally update members on any ongoing matters.

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## Scrutiny Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Budget	Background/Description	Lead Officer/ Lead Member
May '16	Equalities Action Plan 2012-16	✓		Scrutiny were involved in the original creation of the plan and has a role in monitoring performance and considering equalities across all of the Councils decisions.	Jo Morgan/ Martin Woods
TBC	Review of Economic Development Strategy	✓		This Strategy is due for review and Scrutiny members have previously been involved in the review and development of this Policy. The Lead Officer has agreed that Scrutiny involvement will be factored in to the review process and we will be kept informed regarding the most appropriate point for effective Scrutiny engagement.	David Julian / Cllr Jo Roundell Greene.
TBC	Review of Performance Indicators	✓		Officers previously indicated to the Scrutiny Committee that work was planned to review the current suite of performance indicators. This work is dependent on the revision of the Council Plan and assurance has been given that provision will be made for effective Scrutiny engagement in this process.	Andrew Gillespie Charlotte Jones Cllr Ric Pallister

The Somerset Waste Board and Somerset Waste Partnership Forward Plan of key decisions can be viewed at:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/cabinet-forward-plan/>

### Current Task & Finish Reviews

Date Commenced	Title	Members
January 2016	Consent for disposal of housing stock	TBC – Following a call-in considered by the Scrutiny Committee at their January meeting, it was agreed that Scrutiny would review the policies and processes associated with the disposal of housing stock. This review will be carried out by a Task and Finish Group as soon as the outcome of a pending HCA decision is known.
25 Feb 2016.	Homefinder Somerset Allocations Policy	Sue Steele, John Clark, Val Keitch, Jason Baker, Dave Bulmer, Sue Osbourne, Nick Colbert, Gina Seaton
TBC	Discretionary Housing Payment Policy (DHP)	TBC – to be commenced only upon completion of the Journey of Exploration Task and Finish.

<b>Date Commenced</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Members</b>
June 2016	Review of Street Trading Policy	Requested by Service Manager to look at reviewing current Street Trading Policy with a view to producing a report for November 2016 Council.

# Agenda Item 12

## **Date of next meeting**

Members are requested to note that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held on Tuesday 5 April 2016 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

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