

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the District Executive held as a Virtual Meeting using Zoom meeting software on Thursday 5 August 2021.

(9.30 am - 10.22 am)

Present:

Councillor Val Keitch (Chairman)

Jason Baker
Mike Best
John Clark
Adam Dance

Sarah Dyke
Peter Gubbins
Tony Lock
Peter Seib



Also Present:

Brian Hamilton
Mike Lewis
Sue Osborne
Gerard Tucker

Linda Vijeh
Gina Seaton
Martin Wale

Officers:

Jan Gamon	Director (Place and Recovery)
Kirsty Larkins	Director (Service Delivery)
Jill Byron	Monitoring Officer
Karen Watling	Interim Section 151 Officer
Toffer Beattie	Lead Specialist (Digital Change)
Cath Temple	Specialist (Performance)
Jo Wilkins	Specialist (Strategic Planning)
Adrian Moore	Locality Officer
Stephanie Gold	Specialist (Scrutiny & Member Development)
Jessica Power	Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning)
Angela Cox	Specialist (Democratic Services)
Becky Sanders	Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)

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

38. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 30th April, 13th May, 3rd June, 1st July and 8th July 2021 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman.

39. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Henry Hobhouse.

40. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest made by Members of the Executive.

41. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of the public present.

42. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman advised that although it appeared the worst of the pandemic was over, she asked that staff and Councillors continue to take care.

43. Community Grant to Stoke Sub Hamdon Parish Council - referred from Area North Committee (Agenda Item 6)

Councillor Adam Dance, as Chairman of Area North Committee, said the proposed grant had overall support at the Area North Committee meeting and he asked that District Executive would ratify their proposal

The Locality Officer advised that the Parish Council had worked very hard to achieve the funding for the project but had been unable to fundraise during the past year which was the reason for the additional grant request. He said it was a fantastic project in the heart of the community and was one of the best he had proposed.

During a short discussion, Members noted that the project was a worthy cause. The recommendations were proposed and seconded and Members unanimously agreed to propose the recommendations for confirmation by the Director for Strategy and Support Services.

RESOLVED: That following the endorsement by Area North Committee, the District Executive recommend that the Director for Strategy and Support Services award a grant of £17,245 to Stoke Sub Hamdon Parish Council towards the Hamdon Youth & Family Centre Refurbishment. The grant to be allocated from the Area North capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (Appendix A).

Reason: To recommend the awarding of a grant of £17,245 to Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council towards the Hamdon Youth & Family Centre Refurbishment.

44. Adoption of the Cyber Security Strategy (Agenda Item 7)

The Portfolio Holder for Protecting Core Services advised that following a review by the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP), some failings in the Council's cyber security had been identified and the Lead Specialist for Digital Change had drawn up a new Cyber Security Strategy to address this. He recommended that Members watch the accompanying training video and recommended that training in cyber security be mandatory for all Councillors due to its importance. He noted that members of the Scrutiny Committee had supported this at their meeting earlier in the week.

In response to a question, the Lead Specialist for Digital Change advised that one of the 10 steps in the National Cyber Security Framework on which the strategy was based referred to working from home and the National Cyber Security Centre continually updated their advice and guidance. It was also noted that there were e-learning packages available in cyber security.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee noted that they were supportive of cyber security training being mandatory alongside the GDPR training. He said they had asked a question regarding the use of personal devices and USB ports which had been answered during their meeting by the Lead Specialist for Digital Change.

At the conclusion of the debate Members were content to propose the recommendation for confirmation by the Director for Strategy and Support Services with the additional condition that the District Executive supported training in Cyber Security being mandatory for all Councillors and this was supported without dissent.

RESOLVED: That District Executive recommends that the Director for Strategy and Support Services approves the draft Cyber Security Strategy for publication on the SSDC public website.

That District Executive further recommends that the Director for Strategy and Support Services agrees that training in Cyber Security be mandatory for all Councillors.

Reason: To approve the SSDC Cyber Security Strategy for publication.

45. Corporate Performance Report 2021-22: 1st Quarter (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman introduced the report and advised that demand for SSDC services remained high and staff continued to support communities and businesses as Covid restrictions eased.

The Specialist for Performance said that she was working on producing a more readable version of the report for mobile devices for the following quarter 2. She also noted that some of the Scrutiny Committee comments regarding the planning service would be discussed with the People Lead Officer for Service Delivery the following week.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development said that the Key Performance Indicators relating to the economy should be regarded as provisional at the current time and would be signed off for the Quarter 2 report.

At the conclusion of the debate Members were content to note the Corporate Performance Report for 2021/22 (Quarter 1).

RESOLVED: That District Executive noted and commented on the reports of the Council's agreed key performance indicators.

Reason: To note the current position of the Council's agreed key performance indicators and covers the period from April to Jun 2021 (Q1).

46. Scheme of Delegation for the A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling (Agenda Item 9)

The Specialist for Strategic Planning stressed the importance of the scheme of delegation in the Development Consent Order (DCO) process. She also drew attention to paragraph 23 which requested that District Executive support the principle of the Statements of Common Ground if it became necessary.

The Chairman expressed her disappointment that the scheme did not include the upgrading of the Ilminster by-pass at the current time.

During discussion it was noted that the Ward Members affected by the proposals should be included in all discussions so they were aware of any potential short cuts (rat-runs) taken by drivers during the implementation of the works.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee said they had noted that all the affected Town and parish Councils along the route should be engaged and they were assured by the Specialist for Strategic Planning that they had been.

At the conclusion of the debate Members were content to propose the recommendations for confirmation by the Director for Strategy and Support Services.

RESOLVED: That District recommended that the Director for Strategy and Support Services approves the Scheme of Delegation for the A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

Reason: To agree a Scheme of Delegation to support the A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling scheme Development Consent Order (DCO) process.

47. District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda Item 10)

The Chairman noted that there were a large number of reports for presentation at the next meeting but they were necessary to be discussed. She said she would take advice from officers on the moving of any reports to a later month. It was also noted that a number of reports were related to each other.

It was agreed to add the Local Plan Refresh with a date to be agreed.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee said they would be happy to assist the District Executive with the One Somerset proposal.

RESOLVED: That the District Executive:-

1. approved the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A:
2. noted the contents of the Consultation Database as shown at Appendix B.

Reason: The Forward Plan is a statutory document.

48. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 11)

Members noted that there would be a Special meeting of the District Executive on Tuesday 17th August at 1.00pm as a virtual meeting using Zoom meeting software.

The next scheduled meeting of the District Executive would take place on Thursday 2nd September 2021 as a virtual meeting using Zoom meeting software commencing at 9.30 a.m.

49. Exclusion of Press and Public (Agenda Item 12)

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

50. Briefing on Local Government Reorganisation (Confidential) (Agenda Item 13)

The Director for Place and Recovery provided Members with an update on the Local Government reorganisation in Somerset. She said that an informal update would be provided at the conclusion of all future District Executive meetings to keep Members fully informed.

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Chairman

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Date