

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the District Executive held at the Council Chamber, Brympton Way, YEOVIL, Somerset BA20 2HT on Thursday 4 August 2016.

(9.30 am - 10.40 am)

Present:

Councillor Ric Pallister (Chairman)

Clare Aparicio Paul	Sylvia Seal
Carol Goodall	Angie Singleton
Jo Roundell Greene	Nick Weeks

Also Present:

Jason Baker	Sue Steele
Val Keitch	Derek Yeomans
Mike Lewis	

Officers

Rina Singh	Interim Chief Executive
Vega Sturgess	Strategic Director (Operations & Customer Focus)
Ian Clarke	Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services)
Laurence Willis	Assistant Director (Environment)
Martin Woods	Assistant Director (Economy)
Alasdair Bell	Environmental Health Manager
Catherine Hood	Finance Manager
Andrew Gillespie	Performance Manager
Jo Morgan	Equalities Officer
Adam Burgan	Arts & Entertainment Manager
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Manager

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

37. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the District Executive meeting held on 7th July 2016, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

38. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Gubbins, Henry Hobhouse, Peter Seib and Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services).

39. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest made.

40. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of the public present.

41. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

There were no announcements from the Chairman.

42. Verbal Update on Recruitment of Chief Executive Officer (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman confirmed that Mr Alex Parmley of Eastleigh Borough Council had been selected by the Appointments Committee as the new Chief Executive Officer and this recommendation would be presented for confirmation at the next Full Council meeting on 18th August 2016. It was anticipated that he would start at South Somerset on Monday 3rd October.

43. Approval of South Somerset District Council's Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2016-2021 (Agenda Item 7)

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health advised that the new Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy was a comprehensive document as required by the Environmental Protection Act 1990. However, the report drew attention to revised Government guidance which had changed from a proactive approach to looking for contaminated sites, to, a reactive only approach as there had been a significant reduction in funding available to remediate contaminated land sites.

The Environmental Health Manager confirmed that the new policy reflected the current position regarding funding for this work and pointed out the high cost of remediating contaminated land sites.

During discussion, some minor text amendments and additions were noted by Members and it was agreed to amend the policy accordingly.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee said they had sought reassurance that the reputational risk to the Council was being managed and the Chairman confirmed that as the Government guidance had changed then the risk would be managed.

RESOLVED: That the District Executive approved as fit for purpose and agreed to adopt as council policy the South Somerset District Council's Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2016-2021, as attached at Appendix 1, subject to minor text amendments.

Reason: To adopt as fit for purpose South Somerset District Council's Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2016-21.

44. Draft Asset Management Plan 2016-17 (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman advised that previously, the Council's Asset Management Plan was managed through a Strategic Asset Management Group, however, it is now a Portfolio Holder responsibility. He noted that there was now an overarching strategy with an annual performance update.

During discussion, it was agreed that the Millers Garage site in Crewkerne should be added to the potential income generating assets.

In response to questions from Scrutiny Committee, the Assistant Director (Environment) confirmed that the workload of Engineering and Property Services was planned over the next two years to monitor the Asset Management Plan.

It was also confirmed the Asset Management Plan would be reported in the Medium Term Financial Plan reports and monitored by the three relevant Portfolio Holders.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to confirm the recommendations of the report.

RESOLVED: That District Executive:

1. approved the draft Asset Management Plan 2016-17
2. noted that detailed actions would be monitored by the Portfolio Holders and reported back to the Executive as part of the financial reporting process.

Reason: To approve the proposed Asset Management Plan 2016-17

45. Update on the Equality Objectives Action Plan (Agenda Item 9)

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Economic Development noted that equality objectives were a specific duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the objectives had been subject to a Scrutiny Task and Finish Review. She was pleased to report that equality issues were considered in all areas at SSDC.

In response to a question, the Equalities Officer confirmed that hearing loss may include those who were deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

During discussion, it was also noted that the Armed Forces Community Covenant arranged regular meetings with the wider community at Wyndham Park to bring them and armed forces personnel together, and, the armed forces were now represented on the Equalities Steering group. It was also noted that the Royal British Legion were campaigning to add questions in the next Census forms to identify ex-forces civilians in communities.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to approve the Equality Objectives 2016 – 2018 and the amended action plan.

RESOLVED: That District Executive:

1. noted the progress of the current Equality Objectives 2012-2016 (Appendix1);
2. approved the Equality Objectives 2016 – 2018 as amended;
3. approved the amended action plan (Appendix 1).

Reason: To update Members on the Equality Objectives action plan 2012-2106 for note and comment and to approve the Equality Objectives 2016 - 2018 and actions as amended.

46. 2016/17 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the period ending 30th June 2016 (Agenda Item 10)

The Finance Manager advised that this was the first quarterly revenue budget monitoring report and there were no issues to report at this time.

In response to questions from the Scrutiny Committee, it was confirmed that:-

- contract issues were delaying the introduction of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition scheme in SSDC car parks, and, although the major contract issue had been resolved, some small issues remained.
- The Transformation Programme savings would be clearly listed in future budget monitoring reports.
- There had been some major planning appeals within the last 12 months where it had been appropriate for SSDC to employ a QC to defend the Council's position. Some appeals had been won and some lost on certain elements but more were now being won than lost.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the recommendations of the report.

RESOLVED: That District Executive:

- a. noted the current 2016/17 financial position of the Council;
- b. noted the reasons for variations to the previously approved Directorate Budgets as detailed in paragraphs 3.2;
- c. note the transfers made to and from reserves outlined in paragraph 11.1 and the position of the Area Reserves as detailed in Appendix C and the Corporate Reserves as detailed in Appendix D;
- d. noted the virements made under delegated authority as detailed in Appendix B.

Reason: To update Members on the current financial position of the revenue budgets of the Council and to report the reasons for variations from approved budgets for the period 1st April to 30th June 2016.

47. 2016/17 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the period ending 30th June 2016 (Agenda Item 11)

The Finance Manager advised that this was the first quarterly capital budget monitoring report and there were no issues to report at this time.

In response to a question from the Scrutiny Committee, the Chairman confirmed that moving away from home improvement grants to loans had discouraged some potential applicants and therefore SSDC were looking at adopting the Exeter model which should make it easier and quicker for applicants to apply for assistance.

The Chairman then took each recommendation individually and Members were content to approve all the recommendations of the report.

RESOLVED: That District Executive:

- a. approved the revised capital programme spend as detailed in paragraph 6;
- b. noted the slippage over £50,000 in the capital programme as detailed in paragraph 8;
- c. approved the virements of £63,000 outline in paragraph 9;
- d. approved the allocation of any additional funding to be used within the capital programme as detailed in paragraph 11;
- e. noted the current position with regard to funds held by the Wessex Home Improvement Loans as detailed in paragraph 15;
- f. noted the progress of individual capital schemes as detailed in Appendix A;
- g. noted the total land disposals to registered social landlords as detailed in Appendix B;
- h. note the balance of S106 deposits by developers held in a reserve as detailed in paragraph 13;
- i. noted the schemes that were approved prior to 2011, as detailed in Appendix C, and confirmed that all the projects listed should remain in the programme;
- j. noted the post completion report outstanding from 15/16 in Appendix D.

Reason: To update Members on the current financial position of the capital programme of the Council and to report the reasons for variations from approved budgets for the period 1st April 2016 to 30th June 2016.

48. Draft Proposals of the Community Governance Review of Yeovilton Parish Council (Agenda Item 12)

The Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) confirmed that the 28% response to the survey was a positive response in favour and that the Parish Council intended to implement the increase in the number of Parish Councillors as soon as it was confirmed by resigning on bloc and so creating an early election.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services) confirmed that the cost of any election would be borne by the Parish Council. He also confirmed that previous to the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, SSDC had been able to effect a request to increase the number of Parish Councillors by a simple resolution of Full Council.

The Chairman noted that he had previously written to the DCLG regarding the overly bureaucratic process now involved and he proposed to write again as a new Minister and Prime Minister were now in place.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members agreed to propose the recommendations to Full Council for approval.

RESOLVED: That District Executive recommend to Council to:

1. note the results of the consultation;
2. note that the significant majority of the valid responses received were in favour of the original proposal by Yeovilton Parish Council and therefore the draft recommendation for further consultation to Council be: "To accept the majority vote from the people of Yeovilton and to agree to increase the number of Parish Councillors to seven".
3. agree to publish the results of the consultation;
4. note that a further period of consultation on the results of the initial consultation responses will take place;
5. note that a further report will be brought to Council in order that a decision may be made in respect of the final recommendations of the Review.

Reason: To report the outcome of the initial public consultation (Community Governance Review) which has taken place in the parish of Yeovilton on the proposal to increase the number of Parish Councillors (under the provisions of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007).

49. Monthly News Snapshot (Agenda Item 13)

Members were content to note the monthly news snapshot information.

RESOLVED: That the District Executive noted the monthly news snapshot information.

Reason: The report is provided for members information.

50. District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda Item 14)

The following additions and amendments to the Executive Forward Plan were noted:

- Affordable Housing Programme – September 16
- Changes to Private Sector Housing Grants and Loans Policy – October 16
- Recycle More Project – November 16

RESOLVED: That the District Executive:-

1. approved the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A, with the following amendments;
 - Affordable Housing Programme – September 16
 - Changes to Private Sector Housing Grants and Loans Policy – October 16
 - Recycle More Project – November 16
2. noted the contents of the Consultation Database as shown at Appendix B.

Reason: The Forward Plan is a statutory document.

51. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 15)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the District Executive would take place on Thursday 1st September 2016 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 9.30 a.m.

52. Exclusion of Press and Public (Agenda Item 16)

RESOLVED: That the following items 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).

**53. Westland Leisure Complex - Urgent Executive Decision (Confidential)
(Agenda Item 17)**

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture outlined the urgency to take the decision to enable the Council to appoint the Contractors and proceed with works at the Westlands Leisure Complex.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the urgent Executive decision taken by the Acting Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and confirm the remaining recommendations of the report.

RESOLVED: That District Executive agreed to:

1. note the urgent Executive decision taken by the Acting Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council under section 3.50(4) of the Constitution, to enable the Council to appoint the Contractors and proceed with works at the Westlands Leisure Complex;
2. confirm the remaining recommendations of the report.

Reason: To inform members of an urgent Executive decision taken by the Acting Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

(Voting: 4 in favour, 2 against)

.....
Chairman

.....
Date